

# Flat Out – Essentials Fund –

## Loose change can lead to big change



**StreetSmart Grants: 2011 \$4,500, 2012 \$3,000, 2013 \$3,000**

Flat Out is very grateful for the kind support provided by StreetSmart.

Women who are supported by Flat Out are often homeless as a result of being criminalised and imprisoned.

When a woman leaves prison she has to rebuild her life from scratch. Brick by Brick. Criminal records discrimination makes it very difficult for women to achieve an independent income, especially in the short term. It's a daily struggle to be able to meet the very basic costs of achieving daily health and wellbeing, alongside meeting costs associated with securing and maintaining housing. These financial pressures are interlinked. Over the past year Flat Out has supported a total of 89 women and their children. StreetSmart has improved the quality and success of our support by relieving the stress and pressure associated with surviving on limited funds.

Funds for daily essentials are hard to come by. It's particularly hard to obtain financial assistance in a timely way for items like:

- Emergency accommodation expenses (where other funds are not available)
- Cooking equipment
- Manchester: sheets/doona/pillows
- Proof of identification documents
- Baby bottles, baby monitors, nappies, baby wear, comforters for baby
- Women's underwear and other essential clothing and footwear
- Toiletries including sanitary supplies
- Mobile phones and phone cards (we work on an assertive outreach model, phone contact is essential to this model)
- Refurbished computer/IT hardware for women seeking education and employment
- MYKI tickets and travel costs associated with family reunification
- Emergency food where Vic food bank and other sources aren't available
- Pharmacotherapy and other prescription medication
- Diaries (in particular for women with memory loss and cognitive impairments associated with ABI, intellectual disability and poor mental health)

The grant from StreetSmart has meant that women are adequately supported and resourced to get their lives on track, and in many cases keep their lives on track. Thank you StreetSmart.