

Media Release

coles | Value the Australian way

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BAGGING RIGHTS FOR COMMUNITY CAUSES

A unique range of colourful, reusable bags has helped Coles to reach an exciting fundraising milestone this month, with more than \$5 million raised for community organisations.

The Coles Community Bags designed by Aussie schoolkids were launched in 2018 when single-use plastic bags were removed from stores, with ten per cent of every bag sold directed to community organisations to support grassroots sport, the environment and vulnerable Australians.

The funds raised by the reusable bags have helped **Guide Dogs Australia** to breed and train 23 Guide Dogs to support Australians with low vision or blindness; **SecondBite** to provide the equivalent of 4.3 million meals to feed Aussies in need; **Clean Up Australia** to buy more than 5,000 first aid kits for volunteers cleaning up waterways, parks and beaches; and 376 grassroots **Little Athletics** centres to purchase \$1.68 million worth of new sports equipment to help kids live healthier, happier lives.



Guide Dog puppies with the bags which have helped raise funds for their training.

Additional community bags designed by talented young artists have also raised more than \$230,000 for **Autism Spectrum Australia** (Aspect) schools and nearly \$200,000 to support homeless and disadvantaged people through Collingwood Football Club Foundation's **Magpie Nest**, taking the community fundraising tally to \$5 million.

Guide Dogs Australia CEO Group Dale Cleaver said the funds raised through the sale of community bags have enhanced the lives of Australians living with low vision or blindness.

"The community bags have allowed Guide Dogs Australia to breed, raise and train 23 Guide Dogs, which means that 23 Australians with low vision or blindness are now living with greater independence. We can't thank shoppers enough for getting behind this initiative and the four young artists who helped design such wonderful bags," he said.

Clean Up Australia CEO Terrie-Ann Johnson said the community bag donations have provided bags, gloves, rakes and pickers for communities cleaning up after natural disasters as well as provided community and youth Clean Up volunteers with first aid kits.

"The first aid kits are ideal for on-the-day cuts and abrasions – and we know that many then find their way into backpacks or glove-boxes where they are on-hand all year round. Thanks to the shoppers who chose a reusable bag, more than 5,000 of these first aid kits are now annually distributed nationally – helping us all to stay safe," she said.

Coles Group CEO Steven Cain thanked customers for supporting the community and helping to reduce single use plastic bags.

"We are delighted to have raised more than \$5 million through the sale of our community bags to support six wonderful community organisations. The community bags initiative has been a winning partnership for the environment, customers and community and it's one way we are working better together to become Australia's most sustainable supermarket," he said.

Coles customers can show their support by buying a specially marked Coles Community Bag at the checkout, with ten per cent from the sale of each bag going to a Coles community partner.

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For further information, please contact

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