

Media Release

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COLES SHOPPERS RAISE VITAL FUNDS FOR AUSSIE VETERANS AT THE CHECKOUT **Coles raises more than \$222,000 for veterans and their families in the lead up to Anzac Day**

In just five days leading up to Anzac Day, Coles team members and customers have raised \$222,250 for veterans' support agency, Bravery Trust, to help Australian service people struggling with injuries and illness.

From April 21 to April 25, shoppers at more than 800 supermarkets across the nation supported Bravery Trust through the purchase of Coles Bakery cookies and biscuits, with 50 cents from every pack sold going directly to the not-for-profit organisation. Customers also made donations at Coles supermarket checkouts.

The fundraising campaign came as new data from Bravery Trust showed COVID-19 has created significant challenges for veterans and their families, with the organisation receiving 10,000 calls for assistance since the start of the pandemic, and a 20 per cent surge in requests for assistance since pandemic financial support ended last month.

Funds raised will help support around 150 veterans and 600 family members who have been impacted physically or mentally by service. The funding will also assist an additional 50 families with financial counselling to help with longer-term financial wellness.

Bravery Trust CEO Belinda Wilson welcomed the ongoing support from Coles and its customers.

"We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of Coles and their customers in the lead up to Anzac Day, helping to support vulnerable veterans and their families in financial crises. This support will help so many families with their financial wellness," she said.

"The bravest journeys can't be taken alone, and we thank everyone for supporting our partnership with Coles this year."

Bravery Trust Ambassador Kevin Sheedy said: "I am proud to be associated with Bravery Trust which does such important work helping a group of people we owe so much for their service and sacrifice."

"The money raised through this campaign will help support and transform the lives of around 150 veterans and their families. This is vital, urgent assistance because some of these people will have lost their jobs during the pandemic, or simply suffered a setback caused by sickness or an unexpected bill," he said.

"Our support is a small price for us all to pay but will make a massive difference to this group of brave Australians."

Coles General Manager Corporate Affairs Sally Fielke thanked customers and team members for their support.

"We're so proud of the generosity shown by our team members and customers across the country to support such an important cause. Shoppers can feel proud knowing their donations will help to provide immediate financial relief to cover costs for day-to-day expenses such as rent, food, fuel, electricity, gas and water for our service people and their families doing it tough," she said.

Since 2014, Coles has raised more than \$5.4 million nationally for Bravery Trust to support Australian veterans.

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