

# St Kilda Mums are working to support south-west mums

- Clare Quirk

FOR any new mum a pram could be considered a ‘freedom machine’ giving them access to the outside world.

A Melbourne based charity has made this a priority to south-west mothers and young families struggling to make ends meet.



HERE TO HELP: St Kilda Mums regional service coordinator Danielle Ryan-Gledhill brought a van full of goods to give to south-west mums. Picture: Christine Ansorge

St Kilda Mums regional service coordinator Danielle Ryan-Gledhill said part of the charity's strategic plan was to be able to reach every baby in every town.

“We decided it would be wonderful if we could help any child that was born into poverty in Victoria and not have their geographic location an extra level of disadvantage,” she said.

An example of those needing support locally included a mother with two children who'd experienced a natural disaster and needed clothing and bed linen and a mother escaping domestic violence who needed clothing, a bassinet, bed linen and all the other baby essentials.

“The one thing we know that we can't quantify is that piece of mind that we can provide and the sense of security,” Ms Ryan-Gledhill said. “The main thing that we know we can't quantify is the sense of dignity we can provide.

“We know that the first 1000 days of a baby's life are the most influential in their whole life.

“So if we can provide the very basic material needs to get that family through those 1000 days then that parent's energy can then go into loving their child, playing with their child, making eye contact and bonding with their child doing anything rather than being constantly stressed or constantly out of pocket or maybe going without something else.”

The volunteer powered organisation uses recycled and donated goods and re-homes them via case workers and social workers who then provide them to the families they support.

Ms Ryan-Gledhill praised the work done by the Victorian Freight Specialists who were represented in Warrnambool by Patons Transport.

Patons Transport move the donations to local case workers for free.