



## **An SVP Conference guide to supporting Young Vincentians**

We are so lucky to have SVP members of all ages in our community. As an adult SVP Conference, you have useful knowledge and resources to share with the Young Vincentians in your local area and beyond. Here's some useful information about how you can support your fellow SVP members: the Young Vincentians. **Please let the Membership Services team know when you are approaching a school or parish group.**

### **Who are the Young Vincentians?**

The Young Vincentians are the youngest members of the SVP.

- Primary aged children are known as our **Mini Vinnies**
- Secondary aged young people are known as **Youth SVP**
- Young adults are known as **SVPI833**

Together with the adult Conferences, they are all part of the Vincentian family.

#### Mini Vinnies and the Youth SVP

**Mini Vinnies** and the **Youth SVP** groups meet in schools and parishes across England & Wales to carry out the Vincentian ethos, with a formula of 'See, Think, Do'. With the help of their VC (Vincentian Coordinator), the groups identify the needs in their community and what action they can take. This could be visiting a care home, writing a letter to their MP, putting on fundraising events and much more.

#### SVPI833

**SVPI833** is open to 18 – 35-year-olds at universities, colleges and parishes. Members can meet regularly as an SVPI833 Conference (most take on unregulated activities as auxiliary members; however, there are some full Conferences). SVPI833 members can also be members of adult SVP Conferences. Named after the date the SVP was founded, it is the closest apostolate to that of our founder's. SVPI833 members give their time to help those in their community and get involved in local and national SVP events.

# Who facilitates and supports the Young Vincentians?

- A Vincentian Coordinator (VC) is the adult facilitator to the groups, usually a teacher or chaplain at the school, or a parishioner at the parish. It is a student-led initiative, but the VCs are there as the support, helping to guide children and young people to turn their concern into action.
- A Young Vincentians Development Officer (YVDO) is a regional volunteer who supports the setting up and continuation of Young Vincentians' groups. YVDOs can be involved simply as a link between an adult Conference and Young Vincentians' group (known as a Young Vincentians' Champion), or they can support lots of groups in the diocese.

## The Membership Services Team

The Membership Services Team facilitates the setting up and running of all 3 apostolates in England and Wales. Each new group has correspondence with the team from the start of their Vincentian journey. The Membership Services Team creates resources and runs campaigns for the Young Vincentians to get involved in and helps connect them locally and nationally with other groups, including adult SVP Conferences.

Contact us: [youngvincentians@svp.org.uk](mailto:youngvincentians@svp.org.uk)

Find us on social media and on our website: [www.svp.org.uk/involve-young-people](http://www.svp.org.uk/involve-young-people)

## How to get involved

### Help to start a Young Vincentians' group in your parish/school/university

If you are keen to set up a group, or you are in contact with a school that's expressed interest, please direct them to the "start a new group" application on our website: <https://svp.org.uk/newgroup>

From there, an online meeting is then organised with the interested party. You will be warmly invited to attend this meeting; however, it is not an expectation.

## Links and collaboration

If a Young Vincentians' group is being set up nearby, the Membership Services Team may get in touch with your SVP Conference to see if you would like to connect. There is no pressure if you don't have the capacity to make a link, but if you would like to, this is what you can do:

### A friendly face

Be the friendly face of the SVP family by becoming a Young Vincentians' Champion, the link between your Conference and local Young Vincentians' group. If you are planning to make a visit to the school or parish, do update the Membership Services Team.

### Highlight areas of work

You can put them in contact with local projects and care homes.

### Pass on items to where most needed

Lots of groups wish to do a Harvest collection or hampers, which could support your beneficiaries or be distributed between our Community Support Projects.

### Get involved

You could get the group involved in supporting your work as a Conference. This might include getting groups to make cards at Christmas and Easter for your beneficiaries. Groups may also be able to assist with your projects.

### Offer your expertise

You can offer to give the Young Vincentians some more context about the founding of the SVP and its core mission. However, please be aware that many of our younger Vincentians know learn a lot about our history and our Vincentian saints through the resources we provide. You can also give advice on how to put their ideas into action, explaining the stages of planning an event such as a fundraising event.

## **Support**

Why not gift your local primary school/parish a Vinnie Bear and Kindness Diary for them to keep track of their acts of kindness? This can be bought from the SVP Youth shop: <https://stvincentsshops.com/collections/svp-youth> – Members often leave Vinnie Bear with the children and say they'll be back in a month to hear about the actions they've taken.

You could also offer to purchase the SVP starter kits, available for £35 on the SVP shop, for your local group, which includes everything they need to get started.

## **FAQs**

### **How do I reach out to a school/parish without having a contact?**

Email us at [youngvincentians@svp.co.uk](mailto:youngvincentians@svp.co.uk) – we'll approach the school/parish and link you up where possible.

### **How do I find out from a school if there are any families/children that need the SVP's support?**

We can provide postcards with SVP messaging on and a space for your Conference's details. These cards are ideal to accompany hampers/other items which you might pass on to the school for those families in need as a way for the recipient to make direct contact with you. This is helpful because schools cannot give out information about families in need, but could pass on the SVP card.

### **I'm not sure our conference has the capacity to support a Young Vincentians' group...**

Although we might reach out to your Conference, you are not obliged to get involved. However, if you would like to be, involvement can be as simple as offering advice via email.

### **I'd love to share good news about the school/parish's Young Vincentians' event!**

The Membership Services Team love to hear all about what the Young Vincentians have been doing in their community. All we ask is that you get the school's/parish community's permission first and get signed photo consent. We can provide consent forms for the parents/teachers. Photo consent is also required for SVPI833 members.

Thank you for all the support you give the SVP. If you have any further questions, you can contact us at [youngvincentians@svp.org.uk](mailto:youngvincentians@svp.org.uk).