

Employing tactics a smart move

Homelessness | Nic Price

JENNA Tipuamantimirri was 23 and pregnant with her third child when her boyfriend passed away two years ago.

As she tried to piece her life together again, Ms Tipuamantimirri and her young children moved from her native Tiwi Islands to stay with an aunt in Melbourne.

But after a year that fell through and, unable to find a house, the family was forced into a youth refuge and are now in temporary housing.

"It's really hard with the three kids and it's bloody cold in Melbourne," Ms Tipuamantimirri said.

But she has not given up. Ms Tipuamantimirri studies social work and indigenous studies part-time at Victoria University and dreams of landing a job that would allow her to work in the Aboriginal communities in Australia's north.

There are 46,000 homeless women in Australia every night and *The Big Issue* magazine recently launched the Women's Subscription Enterprise to provide safe work for some of them.

For every 100 subscriptions of the magazine sold, *The Big Issue* will employ a homeless woman to work as an assistant in its distribution centre. The organis-

ation hopes to employ up to 90 women around Australia, and 30 in Melbourne, in the first year.

Natalie Susman said the support of the business community was also critical to the success of the initiative.

"There are women out there like Jenna, who are bright girls who want opportunities and want to work. This provides an opportunity that is right for them," Ms Susman said.

► For more information on the Women's Subscription Enterprise, visit thebigissue.org.au



Jenna Tipuamantimirri with Women's Enterprise Subscription program co-ordinator Natalie Susman