



CatholicCare
DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

2024/25
ANNUAL
REPORT

A series of
truly
inspiring
stories

Cover artwork credit: Susan, Boonah artist & Jubilee of Artists competition winner

In this annual report, you'll find reflections on our impact, stories of resilience and connection, and a celebration of the people - staff, volunteers, clients and community members - who make our mission possible.

We have changed the names and photos of some clients to protect their privacy.



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land across our Diocese. We recognise Aboriginal people as holding the memories, the traditions and the culture of the lands we live and work upon.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



VISION

We strive for a world where people are safe, well and connected with each other in inclusive communities.

MISSION

We support and enrich the lives of individuals and families. We live out the Gospel by walking alongside people to find and build solutions to their needs. We deliver evidence based services, and do so with commitment, regardless of the difficulties faced.

VALUES

FAITH
Respect
EXCELLENCE
Compassion
Social Justice
COURAGE

Guided by Catholic Social Teaching, we remain dedicated to upholding values that place people at the centre of our mission:



RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

Everybody, regardless of their age, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs, is of great value and worth. The work of CatholicCare upholds the dignity of all.



AN OPTION FOR THE POOR & VULNERABLE

CatholicCare gives priority to those in the greatest need, the most vulnerable, isolated and at risk.



SUPPORTING THE WHOLE PERSON

CatholicCare recognises the importance of supporting the needs and aspirations of people and communities in a complete way – we support them in body, soul and spirit.



COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON GOOD

Every one of us has a responsibility to consider the good of others and the good of us all, including future generations. CatholicCare hopes for a society in which every person has their needs met and can reach their full potential.



CARE FOR CREATION

Social, economic and ecological issues are interrelated and cannot be solved separately. CatholicCare operates in ways that nurture the web of life on earth. We are good stewards of all that is given to us.



WALKING WITH PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES IN SOLIDARITY

People thrive through relationships. We need each other and are responsible for one another. CatholicCare walks with people, supporting them to face challenges and celebrating with them in times of joy.



SUBSIDIARITY IN DECISION MAKING & ACCOUNTABILITY

CatholicCare respects the right of people to make decisions about their lives. We are accountable to the people and communities we serve in our decision making.



**Most Rev Anthony Randazzo
Bishop of Broken Bay**

During the Holy Year of 2025, as Pilgrims of Hope, we have all been invited to open our hearts, and with the transforming grace of God reach out to those who are in need or vulnerable amongst us, who may be experiencing homelessness or grief, or perhaps just seeking someone to listen without judgement.

Everyday our CatholicCare Broken Bay teams inspire hope in so many people, families and children in our communities on the Northern Beaches, the North Shore, and on the Central Coast.

This is one of the most powerful and compassionate things a person can do. It is authentic human communication that can transform discouragement into optimism, sadness into joy.

I am always deeply grateful and continually inspired by our CatholicCare teams who take the mission of Jesus Christ to our streets and support centres.

For those experiencing physical, health or financial hardship, struggle does not mean defeat, and it does not mean failure.

With care and commitment, the staff, volunteers, and supporters of CatholicCare uphold the dignity and respect of every person, and when some people might not be able to hope for themselves, they hold it with them.

To each one of you, know you make an incredible difference in the lives of many, each and every day, and often in difficult and challenging times.

Thank you for your service, generosity, and compassion as you continue to inspire us all, and open our eyes to the many reasons for which we have hope.

With every blessing in the Lord,

+ Anthony Randazzo



**Ted Wziontek
Advisory Council Chair**

In reviewing the recent financial year, the most startling observation is the cost-of-living crisis in Australia and the impact it is having on all families. The Diocese of Broken Bay is not immune from these financial pressures, resulting in increased demand in many services that CatholicCare provide including financial support, counselling, homelessness and domestic violence. This is at a time where both Federal and State

Governments have their own financial crisis and are attempting to cut, scrutinise and delay their expenditure. A great example is the 15% wage increase to federally funded childcare workers, announced in September and paid by CatholicCare to staff from December, but only paid by the Commonwealth Government to us in August, some 8 months later.

Despite these pressures, the management of CatholicCare performed well, increasing services and delivering a surplus for the year. The Advisory Council approved the purchase of a property in Wyong to be used for the Permanency Support Program. They also reviewed and recommended the acceptance of the 2025/26 budget with a 9% increase in revenue. This budget includes delivering Home Care Packages for seniors, a new service for CatholicCare.

Discussions on the potential incorporation of CatholicCare

continued with the new entity being registered in December. The Advisory Council was involved in the review of the Trust Deed and Constitution and the development of the project implementation plan.

Despite no change to staff or services, and a strengthening in governance arrangements, both the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission have mandated that CatholicCare must go through the entire registration process for the new entity from the beginning. This exercise will cost over \$100,000 and take some 18 to 24 months to complete in the case of NDIS registration due to extensive blowouts in processing times at the NDIS Commission.

I would like to thank all members of the Council and all CatholicCare staff for their diligent approach to this potential corporate transition.



**Tim Curran
Executive Director
CatholicCare Diocese
of Broken Bay**

2025 is a Jubilee Year in the Catholic Church. Jubilee Years are celebrated every 25 years, and they are special years of reflection, reconciliation and forgiveness, where people are invited to return into a renewed relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

Despite the many challenges confronting our organisation during the year - from an increasingly broken NDIS and the poorly designed and executed national Aged Care reforms, to cost of living pressures and the seemingly inexorable rise in numbers of people battling anxiety and depression, we have created events and occasions to pause, reflect, and express our gratitude to God and each other in accord with the Jubilee Year.

During 2024/2025, we walked alongside families in crisis, isolated seniors, people living with disability, and children in need of safety and belonging. The Jubilee Year helped to remind us that each of these encounters was not just a service but a relationship, a moment where dignity was upheld and a flicker of hope rekindled.

Just before I penned this report, Pope Leo XIV published his powerful letter *Dilexi te* (2025), in which he reminds us that "contact with those who are lowly and powerless is a fundamental way of encountering the Lord of history." This profound insight calls us to recognise that in every encounter with the poor, the vulnerable, and others in need, we are not merely offering assistance, we are meeting Christ himself.

This understanding transforms our approach to our work and mission. It demands that we approach our work with humility and openness, listening deeply to those we serve and allowing their stories, some of which are captured in this annual report, to shape our vision for a more just and compassionate society.

It also compels us to challenge the systems and structures that perpetuate poverty and cause division, and to advocate boldly for change. In this way, our mission becomes a sacred partnership with those on the margins, united in the shared hope of building a world where everyone's dignity is honoured and protected.

Throughout the Jubilee Year, we have been challenged to embody hope in a world too often marked by despair and apathy. As this sacred season closes, CatholicCare recommits to being a visible sign of God's love in broken systems, to partner with the vulnerable, and to pursue justice with courage, steadfastness and humility.

I am deeply grateful to our staff and volunteers who embody Christ's love every day - not through grand gestures but in quiet faithfulness, persistence, and service to others. This work is not easy. But it is necessary.

OUR SERVICES

Welcome to the annual report of the social care agency of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Broken Bay.

Across the Northern Beaches, North Shore and the Central Coast, CatholicCare has long been a trusted presence - supporting people through life's most difficult moments and walking with them in hope.

For over 35 years, we've worked at the heart of our communities, delivering care that is compassionate, inclusive, and rooted in the values of courage, respect, and social justice.

Inspired by the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, we extend our services to all - regardless of background, belief or circumstance.

This year, we delivered just over \$83 million in services with the support of Government funding, generous donors, and community partners.

Backed by a dedicated team of more than 940 staff, we continue to offer a wide range of programs designed to meet the evolving needs of those we serve.



**FAMILY
SUPPORT
SERVICES**



**CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**



**DISABILITY
& NDIS
SUPPORTS**



**DOMESTIC
& FAMILY
VIOLENCE
SUPPORTS**



**HOUSING &
HOMELESSNESS
SUPPORTS**



**THERAPY
SERVICES**



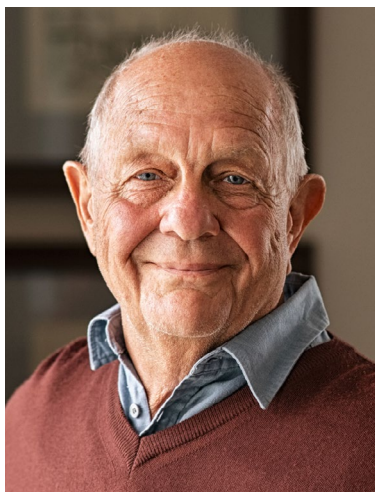
**SERVICES
FOR SENIORS**



**HOSPITAL
CHAPLAINCY &
PASTORAL CARE**



**PERMANENCY
SUPPORT
PROGRAM**



WE CELEBRATE 2024/25

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

Our services expanded significantly over the past year, enhancing support for individuals and families across the region.

Men's Behaviour Change Programs were broadened to include tailored pilots for men with cognitive impairments and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds - initiatives already delivering promising outcomes in safety and behaviour change.

The family preservation team responded to community need by expanding their skills to support families with children from birth through the MST-CAN program. They also collaborated with our Permanency Support Program to pilot a dual service model that offers more integrated, wraparound care for at-risk families.

Our family law mediation team successfully adapted to legislative changes, helping families navigate difficult times and avoid court proceedings wherever possible.

The scope of our domestic and family violence (DFV) services expanded to include male victims, sexual assault survivors, and clients requiring hearing support in court.

The counselling team continued to deliver essential mental health support, while a new partnership with CatholicCare Hunter Manning (CCHM) means that the team can now offer mental health support to individuals with no prior service connection – ensuring no-one is left behind.

HOMELESSNESS & FAMILY SERVICES

Our programs expanded their impact this year through housing initiatives, community partnerships, and culturally responsive support.

Building on the success of achieving registration as a Tier 3 Community Housing Provider, the team successfully secured two capital works grants to construct new crisis refuges for women and children. These refuges will provide a total of 18 additional units (8 in Northern Sydney and 10 on the Central Coast), offering safe accommodation for families escaping domestic and family violence. Onsite services will include specialist supports such as court advocacy, safety planning, targeted counselling, and therapeutic group programs that promote recovery and healing.

Emergency relief efforts expanded through formal partnerships with local food rescue organisations. These collaborations facilitate the delivery of nutritious food to those in need. Across Dom's Place, Mary Mac's Place, Waitara Family Centre and Artarmon Family Centre, over 1,000 meals were distributed weekly to vulnerable families.

The KEYS program, supporting young parents experiencing homelessness on the Central Coast reviewed its impact, engagement and cultural responsiveness. In response to rising First Nations clients, our Aboriginal Community Engagement Manager dedicated time every week to connect clients with community and kinship supports, improving case outcomes.

Dom's Place also strengthened as a sustainable support hub through partnerships with TAFE and local employment services, providing skill building and job readiness programs that help reduce repeated periods of homelessness.

DISABILITY & NDIS SUPPORTS

Our programs have seen significant growth and revitalisation over the past year. Renovations at McAuley Place in Waitara, along with investment in equipment, have brought renewed energy to programs onsite, with more developments anticipated in the year ahead.

At the Clarke Road Hub, the *Flavourable* cooking program, the *Click & Connect* computer program, the life skills volunteering programs, and the *Green Thumbs* gardening program have all received strong engagement from participants and their families.

Brookvale continues to expand, most notably through the inclusive dog walking program, *Paws for a Cause*. This initiative offers participants much joy, plus meaningful work and community connection.

Creative expression remains central across our disability services. The Boonah and Tarooki art studios continue to enable artists to showcase their talents and build confidence.

In community settings, the rebranded *Kids Club* after school program now offers structured, engaging activities for school aged children in supportive, inclusive environments.

All our Supported Independent Living (SIL) homes are now at full capacity following several successful participant transitions. The team is collaborating with SDA provider Good Housing to deliver two new developments at Terrey Hills and Thornleigh, further expanding housing options for people with disability.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We supported over 3,000 children through our Out of School Hours (OSHC) programs. Many sites serve more than 75 children daily, with Waitara OSHC averaging 150 children per day. Four new OSHC services were launched in Asquith, Epping, Wahroonga and Pennant Hills, strengthening our long-standing partnership with Catholic Schools Broken Bay.

Our Early Learning Centres enjoyed a strong year of assessment and rating outcomes, achieving two additional 'exceeding' ratings. The team's commitment to best practice and delivering high quality programs remains strong, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This ensures the centres provide safe and stimulating environments that support learning and social development. Their work is guided by National Regulations and Standards, with Child Safe Standards fully integrated into programming and interactions with children. Ongoing staff training and support ensure confident, consistent and appropriate practices are maintained.

We secured the retention payment grant to support a 15% wage increase over two years for staff working in child care subsidy services, including long day care and out of school hours care. This funding is part of a broader commitment to work towards a sustained pathway for ongoing wage growth, ensuring staff are fairly compensated.

In addition, CatholicCare has received other Commonwealth grants to support providers and Children's Services staff, including the flexible initiative grant and the paid practicum grant, which assists staff who are pursuing higher qualifications.



SENIORS SERVICES

We continue to deliver high quality, person centred care to older Australians, with a strong focus on social connection, cognitive wellbeing and overall quality of life.

CatholicCare provided support to more than 200 seniors, delivering over 7,000 hours of in-home services. These services offer vital day-to-day assistance, enabling older people to remain safely and comfortably in their homes, while also providing much needed respite for carers and families.

Through the Memory Innovations Centre and our allied health programs, the team delivered more than 5,300 hours of group therapy, supporting seniors in maintaining their cognitive health and social networks. These programs received overwhelmingly positive feedback from both participants and their families.

A major milestone this year was CatholicCare's successful accreditation as a Home Care Package provider - a recognition achieved by only 4% of applicants. This accomplishment reflects CatholicCare's commitment to excellence in service delivery and its ability to meet rigorous national standards. Preparations are now underway to transition to the new Support at Home program, due to launch next year. Staff training and systems planning are in progress to ensure service continuity during the rollout.

PERMANENCY SUPPORT PROGRAM

In February, a new Therapeutic Supported Independent Living (TSIL) program was launched, featuring individual one bedroom units set on a quiet acreage. Staffed overnight and focused on building life skills, the program has already supported four young people into safe, supported living.

We introduced a driving education program for young people in Therapeutic Supported Independent Living (TSIL). To date, two young people have earned their provisional licenses - boosting access to education, employment and community life, while building personal agency and independence.

Family reconnection has become a key area of focus and the PSP team has made significant progress in helping young people reconnect with their personal histories and family networks. Young people have been reunited with relatives from places as far as Tasmania, Grafton, England, New Zealand and Hervey Bay. For many, this has involved meeting family members for the first time or uncovering previously unknown parts of their family story. The casework team employs every available resource - searching through old files, community records, social media, and ancestry platforms - to facilitate these connections. These efforts help restore a sense of belonging, culture and identity, reminding young people that they are not alone and that they are part of a larger narrative, with meaningful family ties and relationships worth rebuilding.

RACHEL FINDS HER VOICE AGAIN

When Rachel first connected with CatholicCare's clinical care services nine months ago, she was grappling with the profound effects of complex PTSD, stemming from traumatic experiences of sexual assault and domestic violence. Her emotional load was further compounded by the recent loss of her husband - her life partner and primary carer. Overwhelmed by grief, she was struggling to cope with even the most basic aspects of daily life.

But from the moment our team met Rachel, it was clear that beneath the trauma and tears was a resilient, deeply spiritual woman who longed to reconnect with herself and the world around her.

In those early days, sessions were very emotional, and Rachel became easily overwhelmed. Over many sessions, we worked together to guide her gently back into a life she thought she had lost.

One of the first breakthroughs came when Rachel began leaving her house again. It was a small step, but it opened the door to rediscovering her passions. Her faith, once a source of comfort, slowly returned. She found the courage to rejoin her church community where she was asked to play piano and do readings at services. Church quickly became a space where she grew in confidence and experienced a sense of belonging.

Rachel expressed curiosity about theology, and she revealed a long-held interest in exploring it further. For the first time in years, she started envisioning a future filled with learning and personal growth.

There were challenges too. When she met someone new and concerns about his behaviour arose, we

talked about healthy relationships and coercive control. Rachel listened, reflected, and ultimately made the bold decision to put her wellbeing first, choosing not to pursue the relationship. It was a powerful act of self-respect and growth.

Perhaps the most poignant moment came when Rachel told us she felt truly seen and heard by our team.

“**“You were the only ones who listened,” she said.**”

She had spent so long feeling judged and dismissed. Over time, Rachel came to understand that much of her struggle stemmed from unresolved grief. Naming that pain helped her begin to release it.

As our program neared its natural conclusion, we talked about stepping back. Rachel, now more grounded and self-assured, made the decision herself - she was ready. Ready to take the next steps with the tools she had gained and the community she rebuilt.

Through the support of our team, Rachel faced the depths of her pain and began to rebuild. In place of brokenness, she cultivated resilience, embraced self-compassion, and rediscovered a renewed sense of purpose.



THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX TO HOUSE FAMILIES IN CRISIS

In the summer of 2024, two families in Sydney found themselves on parallel journeys escaping domestic violence. The Baker family (a mother and her six children) had fled from Western Sydney, while the Williams family, (mum plus her five children), had escaped from regional New South Wales. Both had broken free from the grip of domestic violence, but their newfound safety came with its own set of challenges.

Living out of a motel, they faced the uncertainty of securing accommodation for just three days at a time. Each day brought a new set of anxieties. Would they have a roof over their heads tonight? How would they feed their family? The emotional toll of their past experiences compounded the stress of their present circumstances.

"Both families had multiple complexities, and they were both First Nations," says General Manager, Angela.

For families like these, temporary accommodation in motels is often the only immediate refuge. Yet, this solution is far from ideal.

"Living in temporary accommodation is incredibly challenging," Angela explains. "You're in survival mode for so long."

Motel rooms lack essential facilities like cooking amenities and laundry services. "Families often find themselves sharing cramped spaces, with children missing out on schooling. The uncertainty of securing accommodation for just a few days at a time adds to the stress," Angela says.

Meanwhile, a property in Waitara became available that had been previously used by CatholicCare's Permanency Support Program (PSP). "We discovered they no longer needed the property, which triggered our team to scope it out," explains Angela. "Initially, we thought that the property could be used as a women and children's drop in space, but we quickly established it would be better as transitional accommodation for the Baker family."

Several teams across CatholicCare sprang into action. Fleet and Facilities Administrator Kerrie was able to negotiate a temporarily reduced rental rate, and Homelessness Services Practice Manager Rebecca coordinated with DCJ/Homes a weekly contribution to assist with affordability. As a result, the Baker family were housed transitionally for six months at a rental rate they could afford.

Meanwhile, Lisa from CatholicCare's Women's Domestic Violence and Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS) team worked hard to keep the family engaged, aware that the overwhelming nature of their situation could have led to disengagement from support services.

By addressing the root causes of instability, the team helped prevent further trauma for the children by allowing them to remain in the care of their mother.

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"Not only did we resolve their homelessness, but we prevented these kids from needing to go into care," says Angela.

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Securing this transitional accommodation so quickly enabled CatholicCare to free up another unit they had earmarked for the Baker family, thereby providing the Williams family with housing as well.

The success of these two cases serves as a model for future responses to homelessness and demonstrates the power of community collaboration and innovative thinking. "I'm so proud of how CatholicCare identified the gaps in the system, and fixed them in a creative, out-of-the box way," says Rebecca. "Instead of saying, 'We've got no properties so we can't do anything,' we were creative and took action. It's easy to sit back and think, 'What a shame,' but we didn't do that ... and look at the outcomes we had." Angela agrees, "In our work, we always have to think quickly and on-the-go and be prepared to take some risks."

Angela emphasises that while stable housing is a crucial first step, the journey doesn't end there. "There's still a lot of work to do with both families, but stable housing is a big step forward in getting the services they need."

FROM BLAME TO ACCOUNTABILITY - JOHN'S MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE JOURNEY

When John, 32, first stepped into CatholicCare's *Back on Track* Men's Behaviour Change Program, he didn't come willingly - and he certainly didn't come with hope. Referred by Community Corrections and under court orders, John was a long way from accepting the impact of his violent behaviour.

John's story is not unique. Like many men in the program, he was initially defensive, blaming others, minimising harm and justifying his actions. But thanks to the consistent work of experienced practitioners, a commitment to victim safety, and strong interagency collaboration, John's story took a turn toward accountability and change.

John had two apprehended domestic violence orders (ADVOs) against him - one from a former partner, and one from his current. He was on bail, separated from his family, and struggling with the loss of employment and financial stress.

At home, his behaviour had created an unsafe and frightening environment. His actions ranged from physical and verbal abuse to psychological manipulation - affecting not only his partner but also his two biological children and stepchild.

One particularly serious incident - where John pushed his partner, causing her to hit her head on a coffee table - marked a crisis point that led to court proceedings and a deeper look at his pattern of coercive control and violence.

John's first sessions in the *Back on Track* program were marked by resistance. He was argumentative, dismissive and unwilling to acknowledge a pattern of abuse.

"When John attended the assessments, he blamed his partner, stating, 'If she didn't provoke me, I wouldn't lose it,'" says Practice Manager, Cathy. "He would justify his actions by claiming, 'I was stressed because of the lies at court, she knew that.'" Cathy describes the way that John would minimise the severity of his behaviour and say things like, 'I didn't even push her that hard, she lost her footing - that's why she fell and hit her head.'

But Cathy's team of practitioners knew this behaviour well. Through individual case management and structured group sessions, practitioners worked to hold John accountable without colluding with his justifications. They consistently named the abusive behaviours and brought the conversation back to those most impacted - his partner and children.

"We consistently challenged his harmful beliefs and created a space for honest reflection and meaningful growth, while continually holding him accountable," says Cathy.

With time and persistent support, early signs of change began to appear.

John started echoing the language of the program. At first, it was just words - statements like 'I know I can't yell anymore' - but soon, deeper reflections emerged.

He began to recognise that his approach to parenting was harmful, not corrective. He said, 'I demanded respect without giving it.' He accepted that trust with his stepdaughter might never be fully rebuilt and acknowledged that accountability meant respecting boundaries, not trying to force forgiveness.

John enrolled in a parenting course and a maintenance program for behaviour change. He started expressing empathy, understanding how his actions had caused long-term emotional harm to his family.

Part of John's growth involved confronting ingrained ideas about masculinity, leadership and entitlement. He learned that healthy masculinity includes listening, apologising, being emotionally present, and nurturing - not dominating - his family.

He began supporting his son emotionally, allowing him to cry, express himself, and play freely without enforcing outdated gender norms.

"John's journey was not linear, with setbacks and resistance," explains Cathy. But the combined efforts of CatholicCare practitioners, Community Corrections, and Family Safety workers ensured that safety remained the top priority.

His partner and children received ongoing risk assessments, safety planning and access to support services. Practitioners continuously assessed John's progress and behaviour, both during and outside of sessions, as a way of monitoring safety and risk.

John's story is not about redemption - it's about responsibility.

As facilitators of the *Back on Track* program often emphasise, attendance alone does not equal change. Real transformation is slow, inconsistent and always the participant's responsibility.

The program equips men with tools to build respectful, non-violent relationships, but using those tools is a choice they must make, every day. Those affected by his use of violence have the opportunity to see what John does with this new information and self-awareness and make decisions about safety and their family's future.

Today, John continues his journey. He's learning to show up as a father and partner in ways that promote safety, respect and emotional growth. There is no guarantee of a happy ending - but there is a growing foundation for healthier relationships and, potentially, healing.



A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THREE SISTERS

For many Year 12 students, the end of their HSC exams marks the start of a carefree time - filled with lazy summer days, impromptu outings, and celebrations with friends. But for Kristen, that freedom was a distant thought. While her peers were preparing for a well earned break, Kristen was balancing the stress of her own exams with the responsibility of caring for her two younger sisters, aged 14 and 12. With their father living overseas and providing minimal support, Kristen had become the anchor of their household, managing everything from schoolwork to household chores, and quietly carrying the burden of keeping her family together.

"The family was referred to us by the Education Child Wellbeing Unit, who had concerns about three sisters living alone while attending a local high school," says Sue, Specialist Lead for the Family Connect & Support (FCS) program.

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"Their parents had separated, and the father, who had custody, moved overseas and started a new family. He was unable to support his children properly in Australia and had no plans to return."
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Despite these challenges, Kristen was determined to care for her sisters, and she did so admirably. "Their school attendance was strong, and they were always well presented," Sue notes. However, the reality of an 18 year old carrying such a heavy responsibility was unsustainable. The situation became even more concerning when Kristen's younger sister, Clare, revealed a history of self-harm, highlighting the fragility of their circumstances.

With no financial support coming in, the girls were often arriving at school without lunch, concerned about the cost. "When we reached out to the school, they weren't aware that the girls weren't bringing

lunch," says Sue. Our team quickly sprang into action. They worked with school staff to ensure the girls received not only lunch but also uniforms, textbooks, and help with any other school related expenses. Counselling services were also arranged for all three girls, providing them with much needed emotional support.

To further relieve their burden, FCS began delivering weekly supplies of frozen meals, ensuring the girls had nutritious food each week. They also provided financial assistance in the form of grocery vouchers and new clothing. Additionally, toiletry bags and clothes donated by the community were given to the girls. These contributions offered practical help and a much needed sense of relief, showing the girls that support was available when they needed it most.

Recognising the need for long-term financial security, FCS referred the family to financial counselling and arranged appointments with Centrelink to assess their eligibility for Government benefits. After persistent advocacy, the appropriate financial assistance was secured, giving the girls a level of financial stability that had previously been out of reach.

Understanding that the sisters would need ongoing support as they moved forward, FCS also arranged for each of the two older girls to be paired with a youth worker. This would provide them with consistent guidance as they transitioned into adulthood. Throughout the process, FCS remained committed, conducting regular home visits and offering support whenever needed. "We were always available to take calls and offer help wherever we could," says Sue.

Kristen, once burdened by the responsibility of caring for her sisters, has now successfully started university this year, realising her dream of higher education. Meanwhile, her younger sisters are thriving at school, supported not only by the services provided but also by the strong, unbreakable bond they share at home.

Together, they have shown remarkable resilience, proving that with comprehensive, wraparound services, even the toughest situations can lead to new possibilities and brighter futures.





PAULA'S STORY OF DETERMINATION, HOPE & COMMUNITY

After nearly two years of perseverance and teamwork, Paula - a vibrant, bubbly and cherished participant in CatholicCare's disability day programs - is about to embark on an exciting new journey - moving into her own home!

At 51 years old, Paula - who lives with a moderate intellectual disability - had been residing with her parents, Trish and Peter. Like many families in similar circumstances, the Floods had long worried about what the future might look like for their daughter, especially as they grew older.

In August 2023, CatholicCare's team began advocating alongside the family to have home and living supports included in Paula's NDIS plan. The journey was far from easy. Over 18 months, the family and CatholicCare navigated a complex process of assessments, rejections, appeals and multiple tribunal mediations. But their resilience never wavered.

Just before a third tribunal mediation was due to take place, a breakthrough came. In April 2025, the NDIS approved Paula's request.

"It was one of those moments you never forget," said Disability Engagement Manager Des, who has supported Paula from day one. "There were tears of joy - relief, pride and so much emotion from everyone involved."

Now, Paula is moving into CatholicCare's Wahroonga House, where she will live with peers she already knows from her day programs. The transition is a huge milestone - not just for Paula, but for her whole family.

"My husband, Peter and I cannot even describe the level of support we received from CatholicCare," said Paula's mother, Trish. "Des stood beside us through every knockback. She believed in Paula from the beginning. Now, Paula is excited beyond words. We've been setting up her bedroom - she chose pink for everything!"

Paula is looking forward to her new life filled with friends, independence and continued support.

"Moving out has always been Paula's goal," said Des. "She's recently turned 51 and ready for this next step, just like her brother and sister took years ago. It's a natural progression for her - a desire to live a life like everyone else."

Her new living arrangement will also bring balance to her relationship with her parents, allowing Trish and Peter to return to the role of mum and dad, rather than full-time carers. "We're not unrealistic," Trish added. "There will be ups and downs. But I know she will be well supported and loved by the team at CatholicCare."

“It’s beautiful to see how proud Paula is of herself,” says NDIS Support Coordinator Kerry.

"She is confident, enthusiastic and lights up any room she enters. We know she will thrive in this next chapter."

Des adds, "There's so much joy in this story. It's a testament to the power of persistence, community support and a shared belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to achieve their goals."

The CatholicCare team, along with external allied health professionals and legal advocates, worked hand-in-hand with Paula and her family every step of the way. Paula will now continue her journey in a supportive environment, building independent living skills, deepening friendships, and embracing all the experiences that come with having a place to call her own.

Her new chapter is just beginning, and the future is bright.

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SUPPORTS GUIDE STEFAN THROUGH DEBT TO STABILITY

At 73, Stefan never imagined he'd find himself alone, in debt and facing homelessness.

As the owner of a small handyman business, Stefan was a well known figure in Sydney's close-knit Croatian community - respected for his confidence, independence and generous spirit. Then came an ankle injury, a divorce, an eviction notice, and a looming \$40,000 debt and Stefan's life took a frightening turn.

"When I first met Stefan, what struck me was his strong work ethic. He took great pride in himself and what he had achieved with his small business," recalls Financial Counsellor Alessandra.

But when a workplace ankle injury left him unable to perform the physical tasks his job demanded - like climbing ladders - his sense of identity and purpose began to unravel. Determined, he tried to keep working but eventually had to accept that his body wouldn't allow it. With no other income, Stefan became fully reliant on the age pension. After his divorce was finalised and his wife moved out, he was left to shoulder a \$700 weekly rent alone. It simply wasn't possible, and Stefan was handed an eviction notice.

"Stefan's debts were a mix of business debts and tax debts, and they were complex," explains Alessandra. "With business debts, you are ineligible to apply for debt waiver requests."

As part of our holistic financial counselling process, Alessandra worked with Stefan to review his income, budget and debts. Together, they looked at every option. With no remaining assets or income to support a repayment plan, bankruptcy became a doorway, not a defeat.

"At first, Stefan was very reluctant to declare bankruptcy because of the stigma associated with it, but over many sessions he made up his own mind that this was his way out of further financial stress and homelessness," explains Alessandra.

"Once we lodged the bankruptcy paperwork online, I was with him for over two and a half hours," Alessandra says. "He smiled and kept thanking me. It brought him a deep sense of peace."

With the bankruptcy in place, the endless calls from creditors stopped. And some more good news followed - his application for social housing was approved. Stefan now has a safe, affordable place to live and a renewed sense of dignity.

His gratitude was overwhelming.

"He invited me and another Case Worker to a Croatian restaurant to celebrate," Alessandra says, smiling. "Of course, we had to politely decline, but instead, he brought me a big box of nougat. He was so generous."

Through all the hardship, Stefan's strength never wavered. A man who held onto his independence as long as he could, finally found peace in asking for help.

Stefan's story is a testament to the power of agencies working together. The partnership between CatholicCare and The Northern Centre, which helped secure social housing for Stefan, shows the impact that's possible when organisations work together to support individuals with dignity, care, and collaboration.

For Stefan, it's a fresh start. And at 73, a new beginning is nothing short of a triumph.



FIGHTING ISOLATION WITH & PRESENCE, PATIENCE & CARE

After running a successful real estate business for many years, Philip sold the company three years ago and began looking for ways to contribute to his local community. At 56 and semi-retired, he wasn't ready to slow down completely. Looking for a way to stay engaged, he explored volunteer opportunities - eventually finding his way to CatholicCare's Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS), where he began his journey with Jan and Trish.

Philip describes feeling drawn to work with older people - an often overlooked group facing growing isolation. "I knew it was an area of need," Philip says. "But until I met people experiencing loneliness, I never fully understood the extent of the problem. These elderly people are extremely lonely."

That sense of need became clear when Philip began visiting Jan, a woman in her late 70s. "She has family around and she would like to see more of them, but like all families they have their own lives," Philip says.

Although Jan has a carer and a close friend nearby, her daily social interactions are limited. For her, Philip's weekly visits offer an important connection. His visits provide stimulation mentally, and he finds out what's going on for her in her life.

Jan reflects on what Philip's visits have meant to her. "He's very caring and thoughtful - he always brings something. If he comes in the morning, he will bring morning tea. We both love the AFL and we talk about everything. Nothing is too much trouble. He takes us to restaurants and pays for our dinner."

Philip explains that his visits give Jan space to share how she's really feeling. "Since I'm not part of her close social circle, I can be a neutral listener where she feels comfortable letting off steam and expressing herself," Philip says.

After almost two years of visiting Jan, Philip received an unexpected phone call.

"I was away at the time, and I got a phone call from an unknown number," Philip recalls. "It was an elderly lady called Trish. She said, 'Hi, I am a friend of Jan's. I heard you visit her and take her out. Can you come to me too?'"

Trish lives alone in the house she shared with her late husband. Her story is marked by profound loss and disconnection from her remaining family.

"Aside from a weekly bingo outing on Wednesdays, she rarely leaves home," Philip says. "Two of her four children have died, and while one son lives in Queensland and stays in touch about once a month, her other son lives locally but they are estranged. She hasn't seen him in years. Trish also has numerous grandchildren in their early 20s, but unfortunately, she has no contact with any of them."

Philip is gently working to reconnect Trish with her family.

"When I asked Trish why her son doesn't talk to her, she had no idea," he says. "I've reached out to her grandkids - one of them responded, so I'm now supporting them as they take steps toward reconnecting."

Trish has also asked me to speak with her son directly. I'll be visiting him soon to introduce myself, let him know I'm from CatholicCare and have been spending time with his mum, and see where the conversation leads."

But Trish's vulnerability also makes her a target - particularly for scammers, who exploit her loneliness. "When she first told me what was happening, she said, 'I've got this person who's trying to ring me ...' and that's when I realised what was going on," Philip says. "The scammers maintain contact with her for weeks, essentially filling the deep need she has for connection. She often asks them about their lives and where they're from."

It's a difficult situation that Philip is working to change through support and education. "In some cases, Trish initiates contact with scammers. They stroke her ego. I have been educating Trish about scammers and told her not to give them anything. One day when I was out at lunch with Trish and Jan, Trish showed me her phone and it was full of viruses so I helped her buy a new phone."

For Philip, it's clear that loneliness can drive people to take risks, just to feel seen. "She has little to occupy her days," Philip says. "Many older people are so lonely that, even if they lose some money to scammers, the sense of connection makes it worthwhile for them."

With loneliness surging and vulnerable seniors turning to scammers just to feel a connection, Philip's role is more important than ever.





ONE YOUNG MUM REWRITES HER FUTURE

At just 20 years old, Sarah has lived more than many twice her age. From the age of 13, Sarah experienced the harsh realities of homelessness - couch surfing between friends and family, unsure where she would sleep each night. But today, she stands proudly as the leaseholder of her very own home, with her young son by her side, and a 30 year plan for a future she's determined to build.

This transformation didn't happen overnight. It came through determination, courage, and the vital support of CatholicCare's KEYS program that supports young parents who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

Sarah's early teens were marked by instability. After leaving home at 13 due to a strained and volatile relationship with her mother, she entered a cycle of insecure housing and short stays with friends. As she moved into late adolescence, Sarah formed a relationship and began using drugs - a path that quickly led to addiction.

Despite these challenges, life began to look up. She and her partner managed to secure a rental, and Sarah, having ceased drug use, found out she was pregnant. But this moment of hope was quickly overshadowed by domestic violence. The relationship became abusive, and Sarah was forced to flee with her newborn son in search of safety.

Once again homeless, Sarah moved back in with her mother. It was a place to stay, but far from stable.

"Life was very challenging," says Kristy, Sarah's Case Worker.

“There was constant arguing, and it wasn't a great environment for her or her child.”

Kristy describes Sarah's greatest strengths as her fierce independence and relentless drive. "She's got a 30 year plan. That's something you almost never see in our cohort. She's incredibly motivated and determined to build a better life not just for herself, but for her child."

"Our initial support was making sure Sarah had a live application with housing," explains Kristy. "From there, we supported Sarah to become approved for the Homes NSW Rent Choice Youth subsidy."

While housing was hard to come by in her preferred area near school, Sarah didn't give up. Through persistence and a family contact, she secured a private granny flat. It was still a fair distance from her school, but it was a space she could call her own. Thanks to CatholicCare's support in linking her with the Rent Choice Youth program, Sarah will be able to sustain this tenancy while continuing her education and working towards employment.

Sarah is focused on completing her HSC and eventually completing a Certificate III in Business Studies. Her dream is to one day do a university degree and open her own business.

HOW MST-CAN HELPED A FAMILY HEAL

Sarah and Jason, along with their young children, were connected with CatholicCare's Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN) program at a time of acute crisis. Through their engagement with the program, they began to take steps toward healing and stability.

Under the guidance of MST-CAN Therapist Silvia and with the support of Case Worker Holly, the couple embarked on a structured program aimed at addressing the underlying causes of their challenges. Through a combination of cognitive behavioural strategies, emotional regulation techniques, and positive parenting approaches, they learned to recognise and challenge destructive thought patterns, interrupt reactive responses before they escalated, and understand the connection between their emotions, thoughts and actions. Most importantly, the therapy helped them reconnect with their children in consistent, nurturing ways that prioritised trust and stability.

"Throughout their time with MST-CAN, Jason and Sarah consistently participated in scheduled sessions and remained committed to the process," says Silvia. "From the outset, they acknowledged that aspects of their parenting and emotional regulation were impacting their family, and they expressed a clear desire to make meaningful changes - particularly in the area of positive discipline."

The family was able to establish a routine with built in breaks from child rearing. Holly helped organise childcare for the younger children. Sarah and Jason learned to better communicate their needs, and a new granny flat meant the family had more space.

Sarah and Jason implemented various strategies to reinforce their learning. They placed worksheets around the home as visual reminders of the calming strategies and cognitive restructuring techniques they had learned. They also established morning and evening routines to support their children.

Over time, the family began to replace conflict with connection. They learned to pause, reflect, and most importantly, listen. As a result of their efforts, Sarah was able to return to the family home and feel safe and stable. There have been no recent reports of self-harm by their son, marking another significant milestone in the family's progress.

"I really appreciated Silvia's time, and her heart," says Sarah. "She is so genuinely caring and calm, and a great example. She is a shining light, helping me to use words, and to talk differently. She is open minded, humble, caring and genuine. I cannot say enough good things. I also appreciate and want to thank Holly, my Case Worker, who has done so much and is really on top of things."

Silvia commends Sarah and Jason for their communication style that has evolved to become calmer, more respectful and honest. "They have shown openness to learning and have integrated concepts of cognitive reconstruction, positive parenting and emotional regulation into daily life."



OUR PRIMARY PREVENTION TEAM EMPOWERS CHILDCARE EDUCATORS TO ADDRESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In June, CatholicCare's primary prevention team collaborated with council run childcare centres across the Central Coast to help combat domestic and family violence. Through targeted workshops, educators were equipped with essential knowledge and strategies to detect early signs of abuse and how to respond with compassion, confidence and care.

The idea for these workshops emerged from a clear and growing concern - childcare educators were encountering families affected by domestic violence but lacked the training and guidance on how to respond. Reports from centres revealed that educators often felt helpless - unsure of what to say, who to refer to or how to offer support without crossing professional boundaries.

It was a need echoed by Councillor Leah Haydon, who had been hearing similar concerns.

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She approached us with a proposition, “Can we fund CatholicCare to upskill our staff?”

Her commitment to addressing the issue was instrumental in scaling the initiative across all council run childcare services on the Coast.



Traditionally, our education initiatives had been delivered to individual centres or small groups. This time, however, the initiative was taken to a whole new level. Workshops were conducted for both the northern and southern regions of the Central Coast, ensuring that every council run centre could participate.

The sessions were interactive and thought provoking. One exercise challenged participants with the question, “Is physical violence the most serious form of abuse?” Educators physically moved to different sides of the room to reflect their views, prompting discussions about emotional, psychological and financial abuse - often more hidden, but equally damaging.

Real life scenarios were shared, like a chilling account where a child arrived at a centre and said, “Half of mummy’s head is ripped off.” Educators needed tools not only to handle such disclosures safely, but also to respond with the empathy and reassurance children so desperately need.

“Educators don’t need to be domestic and family violence specialists - but they are uniquely positioned to make a difference,” says Domestic Violence Project Specialist Danielle. Their daily connection with children and families allows them to observe subtle warning signs. As Danielle puts it, “Our childcare educators are the angels who look after children. If kids are going through horrendous times at home, educators can’t fix that - but they can offer love, kindness and a safe attachment. That makes all the difference.”

The workshops reinforced the critical importance of that attachment and the lasting impact it can have. Many educators were moved, with several expressing after the session, “I didn’t realise the impact I could have on children.”

Another core theme was understanding the role of gender and power dynamics in domestic and family violence. Participants were encouraged to reflect on how rigid gender stereotypes can perpetuate cycles of violence. Teaching gender equality from an early age was highlighted as a long-term strategy in preventing violence and building a culture of respect.

One powerful takeaway was that violence against women is not random - it is rooted in systems of inequality and discrimination. Addressing those systems, even in subtle ways through everyday interactions with children, has the potential to create generational change.

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“I now understand how young children can be affected - and how one adult can change a child’s life.”

A comprehensive support pack with service contacts was praised by directors and educators alike. Clips like Dr Bruce Perry’s video on brain development made the lasting neurological impacts of trauma real and urgent.

Some educators quietly disclosed that they were experiencing violence themselves. The workshops became a moment of validation and hope for them too.

Due to the success and demand, our team has been invited to deliver more sessions. As one passionate young educator, Tyler, asked, “Where can I do more of this? I’m so interested to learn more.”

The work isn’t finished. But this initiative has shown that primary prevention is possible - and it starts with awareness, education and community care. Childcare centres are sanctuaries, lifelines and potential catalysts for change.

SAM'S JOURNEY FROM TRAUMA TO TRUST

When Living Skills Worker Angela first met Sam, she was nervous.

"I'd read his file - 24 placements, a history of serious trauma. I remember thinking, 'What if he hates me? What if he doesn't understand my accent? What if he never opens the door?'" Angela says.

Sam was 18 at the time, living with PTSD, high anxiety and depression. After spending most of his childhood in foster care and Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC), he was accepted into CatholicCare's Therapeutic Supported Independent Living (TSIL) program, which supports young people transitioning to independent adulthood. Sam was deeply distrustful, overwhelmed by the world, and utterly closed off to those trying to help him.

"He used to swear all the time," Angela says. "He didn't trust anyone and to him, the world was dangerous. He had to be on guard constantly."

Angela and her team saw the trauma beneath Sam's behaviour. Removed from his family at a young age, Sam had been in dozens of placements, many of which had further harmed rather than helped him. "He was abused by people he should have been able to trust," Angela shares.

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“It’s no wonder he couldn’t trust us. He thought that the only reason we did anything for him was because we were paid.”
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The beginning was tough. "There were days I cried. Days I didn't know what to do," Angela admits. "Sometimes he wouldn't open the door. Sometimes he'd tell me to leave. But I came back. Every time."



Angela started small - grocery shopping, offering company, sitting outside his door. Slowly, Sam began to open up.

"One day, he just started talking," she remembers. "He cried and told me about his dad. He said, 'Why did that happen to me? Why did my dad do that?' And in that moment, it wasn't about programs or therapy. It was about being human and showing him someone really cared."

Eventually, their bond grew strong enough that Sam began looking forward to her visits. "He'd be outside waiting for me, saying 'You're late!' That was huge. He was outside. He was waiting for someone."

Over time, Sam began imagining a future - something he had previously refused to do. "When I asked him early on, 'What do you want to do with your life?' he'd shut down and say, 'Don't ask me that. I don't want to think about the future.'"

But now, at 20, Sam plans to finish Year 12 through TAFE and is considering a future in the army. "He's planning," Angela says, smiling.

"He's asking about documents he needs. He's thinking ahead. It's incredible." For someone whose entire life had been survival-focused, his ability to imagine a future for himself is huge.

"He even takes daily showers now," Angela adds. "That sounds small, but he used to avoid looking in the mirror. Now he says he can look at himself and not hate what he sees."

Though Sam has since moved to an Individualised Living Option (ILO) where he is supported through the NDIS, Angela still sees him every few weeks.

"He still says he's the same person," she laughs. "But he's not. He's calmer, more respectful. He makes jokes, sometimes still shows me the finger - but in a funny way, not angry. He's learning how to feel safe with people."

Angela credits the support of her CatholicCare team for making it through the harder times. "There were moments I was stuck, unsure, exhausted. We talked a lot as a team - should I go in, should I stay outside, how far do I push? You need that when you're doing this work. None of us could do it alone."

Reflecting on her journey with Sam, Angela says the biggest lesson she's learned is about the power of presence and love.

"These kids - they know," she says. "They can feel when you really care. You don't need to say it. They know. Sam used to say about other workers, 'She's just pretending.' But with me, he said, 'I know how you feel. I know you care.'"

Angela gets emotional talking about Sam's transformation. "He says the thing he's most proud of is just being alive. That breaks your heart and lifts it at the same time."

"It's not the kind of success that gets headlines - he's not at university or in full-time work - but it's success. He's starting to believe he's worth something. He's got dreams. He's choosing life. And that, to me, is everything."

MARY MAC'S PLACE OFFERS A LIFELINE & A FEELING OF HOME

It was December 2019 when Keira, pregnant and reeling from the devastation of the South Coast bushfires, lost everything. With nowhere to go, she and her little family made their way to the Central Coast. "We were advised that Mary Mac's Place in Woy Woy offered a place where we could wash our clothes, so we came for a visit," Keira says. "Mary Mac's Place has changed our life in every way possible."

Every morning, Keira and her young family arrive at the gates of Mary Mac's Place. "We never leave with at least two bags full of food," Keira says. "We receive fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, snacks for school lunches, and even essentials like shoes and toiletries. It's also a place to shower, access other services, even to get a haircut, and feel human again." For Keira, it's not just about survival, it's about belonging. "That sense of routine and belonging keeps us going. Mary Mac's is our home and our family."

One moment stands out vividly in Keira's memory. After her partner returned to custody and COVID hit their household, she had no one. "Sally [who runs Mary Mac's Place] met us at the gate with a trolley full of food. She would have hugged me if she could. My children still remember it. We had food to last us days so we didn't need to leave the house." In a time of complete isolation, Mary Mac's was there. "I didn't have anybody. But I had Mary Mac's."

That kind of care, Keira says, has been consistent. "Sally is absolutely amazing. My children adore her - they call her the secret ice cream lady!"

In February 2024, Keira and her young family faced homelessness once again after receiving a termination notice with no explanation. "We were homeless for the next 12 months, and Mary Mac's saved us in ways that are indescribable," she says. Each day became a mission for survival. "Our Mary Mac's visit was our daily adventure."



By Christmas, nearly a year without stable housing had taken its toll. Keira was collecting bottles every day through the Return and Earn scheme just to afford another night in a motel. "I didn't wrap Christmas presents because I didn't know if I'd make it," she says. "I was empty, deflated, and ready to give up." But on 31st December, everything changed. CatholicCare secured crisis accommodation for her family.

“My kids still have a mum, and I’m so grateful. I literally owe my life to CatholicCare.”

Keira is passionate about sharing the impact of Mary Mac's Place with others in the community. Whenever she meets someone doing it tough, she tells them, "Come with me." One young mum with four boys, who was also homeless at the same time as Keira, now visits Mary Mac's daily. "She uses the food for school snacks and lunches - she can't get by without it," Keira says.

For Keira, spreading the word about Mary Mac's is a way of paying forward the care and support that changed her life.

For Keira, one of the most powerful parts of Mary Mac's Place is the dignity it restores through simple acts of care. "Just to know that you can wash your clothes here while you're showering, get a haircut and feel like you're a human being - my goodness," she says. In the midst of hardship, being able to feel clean, cared for, and seen makes all the difference.

From arriving as a pregnant mum with a little baby to now raising three children who have grown alongside Mary Mac's, Keira's journey is deeply intertwined with this special community. For Keira, Mary Mac's is a place of belonging and the closest thing to family she has ever known, "Both my partner's parents have passed away, and mine aren't around. Mary Mac's is my family. I am loved here."

EMILY'S SMALL STEPS TO BIG CHANGES

When 11 year old Emily first came into contact with CatholicCare's Intensive Family Preservation (IFP) program, she wasn't going to school. She wasn't speaking. She was barely leaving the house. Her sleep cycle was so disrupted that, according to her parents, it would "reset every five days" - a sign of just how far her life had spiralled out of rhythm.

"There were hygiene issues, she hadn't been to school for five terms, and she wasn't talking at all," recalls Zara, the CatholicCare Case Worker assigned to support Emily and her family. "At one point she was showering just a couple of times a month."

Emily, diagnosed with autism in 2020, was experiencing severe school refusal and escalating emotional distress. If she did manage to attend school, things often deteriorated quickly. Eventually, CYMHS (Child Youth Mental Health Service) had to involve the police for support, and Emily required hospitalisation for mental health reasons.

It was a concerning situation. But what followed was a powerful story of patience, perseverance and the impact of wraparound support.

Referred by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in October 2024, CatholicCare's brief was clear - help Emily return to school and build formal supports around her autism and mental health.

"At first, Emily wasn't leaving the house at all," Zara explains.

“She wouldn’t speak, and there was a complete lack of routine at home.”

Language and cultural barriers added layers of complexity. Emily's family, a Mandarin speaking household, had limited understanding of the autism diagnosis and the support systems available.

"Initially, one of the greatest barriers was her parents' hesitation to accept the diagnosis," Zara says. "But that's one of the areas where we've seen the most growth."

Zara coordinated culturally appropriate support, including Mandarin speaking occupational therapists and interpreters for medical and educational appointments. "We even used flash cards with English cues, Mandarin translations, and pictures to help Emily communicate when she wasn't speaking," Zara shares.

Emily's journey back to school didn't happen overnight. In fact, she didn't attend at all during term 4 in 2024. But behind the scenes, critical groundwork was laid. Zara and the CatholicCare team arranged regular attendance review meetings with Emily's independent school. They helped set small, achievable attendance goals and worked closely with Emily's parents to establish realistic expectations.

"We supported them in accessing the NDIS, submitted an access request, and began collecting the clinical assessments needed to build a case for long-term support," Zara says.

One significant breakthrough came when Emily agreed to work with an occupational therapist. "She stayed and engaged for the whole time. That was off the back of her starting to go out more, talking more, and establishing a routine at home. She'd even started swimming lessons."

Despite a hopeful start at her original school in term 1 of 2025, Emily faced another hurdle. After just a few days, she refused to return.

"We'd already discussed that if things didn't work out, we'd explore a different school environment," Zara explains. Though the family initially preferred independent schooling, they made the huge decision to transition Emily to a public school. "That was a big shift, especially considering their values around academic achievement. But they saw that the public system offered more of the targeted support Emily needed."

Emily's new school crafted a gradual return plan. Today, she stays until recess and has transitioned to doing more of the same academic work as her peers. She was recently accepted into a dedicated support class for students with a history of attendance challenges - a class with only 14 students, two teachers, and two learning support staff.

"It's a much more flexible, supportive environment," Zara notes. "This setting is really tailored to children like Emily, and it's exactly what she needs right now."

Emily's parents - once hesitant and uncertain - are now fully engaged in her support network. "They've come such a long way," Zara says.

“They understand her diagnosis now, they’ve adjusted their expectations, and they’re actively involved in her NDIS planning.”

From a girl who once barely left her room, Emily is now attending school 75% of the time based on her current plan. She's developing friendships. She has a much better sleep routine and she's also started on medication to help with sleep and anxiety.

"There's still a long road ahead," Zara admits. "She's not really speaking with her peers or teachers yet, but her progress is undeniable."

Emily's story is an example of what's possible when wraparound supports, cultural sensitivity, and family involvement come together. From a place of deep struggle, she and her family are moving forward, bit-by-bit, step-by-step.



VACATION CARE ADVENTURES SPARK IMAGINATION & DISCOVERY



When OSHC Coordinator Sarah received several requests from children for space themed activities, she knew it was time to bring something truly special to MacKillop College vacation care - Starr's Planetarium. Using its cutting edge 360° immersive theatre and surround sound, the planetarium gave children the experience of travelling through space while exploring the wonders of the universe.

Meanwhile, at St John the Baptist Woy Woy, the children were whisked away to the enchanting world of The Wizard of Oz for a day filled with creative crafts and imaginative play. Both events, held during the April 2025 school holidays, were inspired by the children's interests, aiming to make the holidays a time of fun, learning and endless imagination.

"When we plan our vacation care programs, we aim to offer experiences that children can't get elsewhere," Sarah explains. "We also ensure our activities connect with areas of developmental need

or cultural significance. The decision to bring Starr's Planetarium into the program was based on the children's interests and planning started 12 weeks before the event."

At the planetarium, Gary, the presenter, guided the children through a captivating exploration of the night sky, teaching them about stars, planets and the Earth's rotation. One revelation that sparked the children's curiosity was the idea that the sun and stars don't actually move - the Earth does! The children were fascinated and eagerly shared their new knowledge.

The experience also included a cultural dimension, as the children listened to an Aboriginal Dreamtime story from the Yolngu people of Arnhem Land. The story of Walu, the Sun woman, who lights a fire each morning to create dawn, helped the children understand the connection between the Earth and the sun, adding a rich layer to their cosmic

adventure. The session wrapped up with a fun, educational mini-movie, *Tycho Goes to Mars*, where a space loving dog travels to the Moon and Mars to learn about water on the red planet.

Back at St John the Baptist Woy Woy, the children embraced the whimsical world of The Wizard of Oz with a day full of craft, creativity and play. The highlight was the "house" craft, where children designed their own versions of Dorothy's house using colourful materials. Their creations featured yellow brick roads, swirling tornadoes, and vibrant bushes, with the kids proudly admiring their detailed work.

The creative fun continued with sparkle bottles filled with rainbow glitter and rainbow pens made with sand, giving the children the chance to create unique, colourful items. And for a sweet touch, the children decorated cookies to look like the melting Wicked Witch.

True to the spirit of imaginative play, educators dressed as iconic characters from The Wizard of Oz, including Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Wicked Witch and the Cowardly Lion. The children loved interacting with the characters and had a blast at the photo booth, capturing memories with their favourite fantasy figures.

CatholicCare's vacation care programs focus on play based learning and align with My Time, Our Place, the national learning framework.

"We aim to provide a well balanced program with a focus on getting the kids to develop social and emotional skills,"
Sarah says.

Through both these experiences, the children had their curiosities sparked and their imaginations expanded, turning the school holidays into a time of exploration, creativity and memorable adventures.



SUPPORT WITHOUT STIGMA THE NON-CLINICAL MODEL OF DOM'S PLACE

For people experiencing homelessness or housing instability, access to support often comes with barriers - formal settings, intake processes, and environments that can feel impersonal or intimidating.

Unlike traditional service models, Dom's Place is intentionally non-clinical. There are no sterile assessment rooms. People drop in for a meal, to talk, to play a game of pool, or to get support when they need it. That design isn't just comforting - it's strategic. For many who have been homeless, isolated, or let down by systems in the past, trust takes time. Dom's Place gives people the freedom and safety to build that trust at their own pace.

Rick came to Dom's Place after nearly a year of living in his car with his dog, Magic. "I've been coming to Dom's Place for a few years now. When I first arrived, I was living in my car with my dog. They helped me find housing, and that changed everything."

While support with housing and case management helped Rick find stability, it was the atmosphere of Dom's Place that made it possible for him to stay connected and engaged.

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"I finally feel like a human being again."

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Rick had disengaged from previous services. Bec, Practice Manager Homelessness at CatholicCare, explains why Dom's was different. "He said that the reason he disengaged was because he didn't know if he could trust us in such a clinical environment. Because of the way Dom's Place is set up with an open door policy, he instantly felt at ease."

That ease created room for real progress. Rick attended the drug and alcohol support group at Dom's, which he says made a huge difference. "The people running it were smart, kind and supportive - they used CBT, DBT, and mindfulness approaches that really helped."

Though Rick no longer has a case manager at Dom's, he still visits regularly. That ongoing contact keeps him focused. "I know they'll always help me ... when I speak to Bec, she makes sure I am heard and supported."

That sense of ease and openness isn't unique to Rick. 22 year old Jarrod (pictured) is much newer to Dom's Place, had a nearly identical experience when he first walked through the doors.

"I've been coming to Dom's Place for about two months now. I found out about it from other homeless friends at the park," Jarrod says. "I was nervous to come here for the first time, and I was surprised how cool it was. I thought it would be like a clinic. But it's not like that at all ... I get to play guitar, chat to people and eat."

Like Rick, Jarrod had expectations shaped by past experiences - places that felt clinical, where support was available but difficult to access. What surprised him most was how different Dom's Place felt - informal, inclusive, and built around community.

"There's this stereotype of people who are homeless," Jarrod explains. "But at Dom's, nobody judges because everyone's fighting their own battle: court stuff, kids, money issues"

For Melissa, Dom's Place provides a sense of safety and connection that she doesn't experience anywhere else. "I've faced discrimination and judgement my whole life but there is an innocent inquisitiveness of the people here. They ask me questions about who I am, which has touched my heart and filled a hole in my body."

Melissa currently has stable housing after a history of homelessness, but her small living space makes day-to-day life difficult. "My unit is tiny ... I can't do crafts or art at home, but at Dom's I can sit and work on stuff."

Melissa played a major role in creating the Dom's Place garden, a project that gave her a great sense of pride and purpose. "If I am ever lucky enough to get employment, I have had experience of fronting up somewhere every day," Melissa says.

Doreen, another regular at Dom's Place, sees the centre as part of her daily life. She is no longer homeless and now lives nearby with her granddaughter. She visits most days to help out and connect with others.

"I love everything about Dom's Place - the creativity, the art, the wellness vibes, and the staff are just wonderful."

What stands out most is how Dom's Place has supported her granddaughter, who struggled to engage with mental health services in a traditional, clinical setting.

"The only way her granddaughter accepted psychology support was through us," Bec explains.

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"She didn't want to be in a clinical setting, so the psychologist came here to see her; we were a place where she felt comfortable."

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Dom's Place works because it was built around people, rather than systems. By creating an environment that feels safe, people access the support they need when they might otherwise walk away from it altogether.



SARAH BLOSSOMS AT CLARKE ROAD

When Sarah first joined the *Click & Connect* computer group at CatholicCare's Clarke Road Disability Hub in Waitara, she barely spoke. Shy and apprehensive, she sat quietly as the group around her chatted and typed.

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“Over the months,
her voice grew louder,
and her smile grew
bigger,” says Community
Programs Manager
Menatalla.
”

“She participated in discussions and learned about email, internet searching and storytelling. Each little - and sometimes big - success, like finding a picture online, brought a wider smile to her face.”

With support, encouragement and a structured approach to learning, Sarah's confidence grew rapidly. “Today, Sarah is the first one to arrive in the morning,” says Menatalla. “She turns on the computer and begins typing. She makes tea for her friends, shares pink cookies, and chats, her voice full of joy and belonging.” What started as a computer class became something more - a space where Sarah found her voice, made friends and built self-belief.

Sarah's story is one of many that highlight the impact of *Click & Connect*, our new 40 week digital literacy program which covers topics like internet safety, social media, online banking and smartphone use - tailored to each participant's needs and learning style.

It is a structured, step-by-step approach that ends with a final presentation, where participants showcase what they've learned to family, therapists and coordinators.

“They're so proud of what they achieve,” says Menatalla. “The other day, someone asked me if I knew why the 'F' and 'J' keys on the keyboard have grooves. They were so excited to sit me down and explain why. That's the magic of it.”

The program is already drawing interest from local schools exploring post Year 12 pathways for students who are passionate about technology.

The launch of *Click & Connect* is part of a broader transformation at Clarke Road, where several new and revamped programs have been introduced to better support people with disabilities. This change is guided by a clear goal - to build confidence, independence and practical life skills.

Menatalla's background is in disability employment services and her passion for skill development are helping redefine what support programs can look like.

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“This new direction gives
participants practical
tools to build their skills
and confidence at their
own pace.”
”

For people like Sarah, it's not just about learning how to use a computer - it's about gaining independence, forming real connections and becoming more comfortable in herself and her place in the community.





BRIGHT BEGINNINGS AS WE OPEN OUR NEW OSHC AT EPPING

In May 2025, CatholicCare proudly inaugurated its newest out of school hours care (OSHC) service at Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School in Epping. This milestone was the result of months of planning, collaboration, and shared dedication between the architects, the parish, the school, and the wider community.

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“One of the most inspiring aspects of this journey was the active involvement of our local community,” says Practice Manager Amy.

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“From the outset, we invited participation through the parish bulletin, calling for expressions of interest from educators within the parish who felt called to be part of this new venture.”

One such individual is Spencer, a local parishioner who is now a valued team member. “I have been attending Epping-Carlingford Parish my whole life and have been actively involved in parish life for the past year,” Spencer shares. “One day when I was browsing through the bulletin, I noticed that they were advertising for staff at the new OSHC. I was looking to expand my experience, so I applied. It’s been five weeks now since the OSHC opened and I love the community we have built already. The kids are great and eager to get involved and explore the new facility.”

The design of the OSHC service was a collaborative effort – with the goal to ensure it would be more than just functional. The space was envisioned as a calm, welcoming environment where children could feel at home after a long school day. “The use of neutral tones throughout the space reflects our

commitment to creating a soothing atmosphere where the children can relax, unwind, and enjoy their time outside of school hours,” says Amy.

Joana, the service Coordinator has been with CatholicCare for the past 9 years and recently transferred to Epping from another OSHC service. Joana has quickly built strong and meaningful relationships with the children and their families, creating a warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Her positive energy, professional experience, and genuine care have been deeply appreciated by everyone in the community.

Kingsley, a parent whose son Eden attends the OSHC, describes the centre as a “home for children after a long day at school.” He adds, “What makes this centre unique is the genuine care that the children receive. It is an amazing place with a strong focus on the development of the kids.”

Integral to the success of this project was the partnership with Deacon Richard Houwing, whose guidance and logistical support were invaluable. Deacon Richard liaised with builders and coordinated efforts to ensure the space would effectively serve the children and families of the community.

“Delivering a new OSHC at Epping was a truly joyful and collaborative journey,” says Deacon Richard. “With the Parish, school, OSHC, retired living and aged care spaces all part of a larger new build, the project was full of complexity and interdependencies.

Despite the stretched resources in today’s building industry and the compliance demands of the Education Department, every stakeholder leaned in with heart and purpose. It was inspiring to see tradies, project managers, and CatholicCare teams go above and beyond, driven by a shared commitment to support working families.”

A particularly special moment in our opening of the OSHC was the blessing of the service by Bishop Anthony. His presence and words of encouragement brought a deep spiritual significance to the occasion and reminded all involved of the sacred mission behind our work with children and families.

The opening of the Epping OSHC is more than just the start of a new service - it is a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together with a shared vision and purpose.

PAT GETS A REASON TO KEEP MOVING

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, 89 year old Pat arrives at CatholicCare's Memory Innovations Centre (MIC), his steady walking stick in hand and a welcoming smile on his face. That's Pat - delightful, chatty and always ready with a joke. He's proof that life, even amid grief and mobility challenges, can still be full of laughter and purpose.

Pat is a regular face at MIC's *Let's Get Moving* and *Brain Games* sessions. "From my point of view, these classes are everything," Pat says with his signature gentle humour.

"I've got peripheral neuropathy, so my legs aren't what they used to be. But I keep going," he says.

Diagnosed in 2016, Pat's condition affects the nerves in his legs, limiting his mobility and making balance a daily challenge. Despite this, he shows up twice a week for exercise classes, carefully adapting movements to suit his abilities.

"He's improved so much," says MIC facilitator Jacqui. "At first, he was very cautious, but now he gives everything a go. His awareness of how his body moves has grown, and he's more confident. We all love having him in the group - he brings such energy and joy."

A father of five and a lifelong sports enthusiast, he's spent much of his life giving back to the community - especially through sport. Once a keen cricketer and squash player, Pat later found his niche in field hockey.

"I was an administrator in field hockey for years," he recalls. "My son picked it up, and no one was managing the team. My wife Carol elbowed me and said, 'Put your hand up!' And that was that." It wasn't just a hobby - it became a passion.

Though he can no longer actively participate in sport, MIC has given Pat a new way to stay connected to movement and teamwork. The *Let's Get Moving* program keeps him active and engaged, offering a structured and supportive environment where he can still feel part of something physical and purposeful. "Even sitting down, I can still exercise and build strength," he says.



While the physical benefits of the program have helped Pat maintain strength and stability, it's the social connection that lights him up. "Jacqui is like the conductor of an orchestra - she makes sure everyone feels important, even if we're not doing the exercises perfectly. You always feel like you matter here," says Pat.

Pat began attending MIC a few months after his wife passed away in April 2024 and he found comfort through the sense of belonging and comradery.

"He talks about his wife with such love," says Client Liaison Administration Officer, Jessica. And the community he has formed at MIC are always there to provide a listening ear.

Brain Games, held once a week, has also become a favourite for Pat. While he jokes that names sometimes escape him and directions occasionally get mixed up, he lights up when solving puzzles and mathematical challenges.

"It keeps me going," Pat says. "I've never done anything quite like it before. It's good for my brain."

Pat is a beloved member of the MIC family. His resilience, humour, and openness to try new things - even when life throws curveballs - are a quiet inspiration to everyone around him.

"He's right at home here," says Jacqui. "He's sweet, kind, and incredibly entertaining. You can tell how much it means to him to be surrounded by people who care."

Pat isn't focused on slowing down. Instead, he's focused on staying connected, moving when he can, and embracing each day with purpose.

SHARED FAITH, SHARED CARE - HONOURING MADELEINE'S LIFETIME OF SERVICE

When staff from CatholicCare's Hospital Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care Program gathered at St Mary's Church in Manly for the funeral of Madeleine Le Surf, OAM, they weren't just honouring a long time volunteer. They were acknowledging a deep relationship - one that connects CatholicCare, parish life, and the wider community through shared care, faith, and responsibility.

Madeleine gave over 30 years of service to Pastoral Care at Manly Hospital and was woven into both parish and hospital life. Her presence was never loud or self-promoting - it was steady, consistent, and deeply personal.

At her funeral, her son Allan shared insights into her life shaped by early experiences of uncertainty and loss. Raised by her grandparents on a farm near Kells, Ireland, Madeleine never knew her mother until adulthood and likely never met her father. When her grandfather died, she lost her voice at age 10 and underwent speech therapy. These challenges built in her a quiet resilience and a strong sensitivity to those who might otherwise go unnoticed.

In her youth, Madeleine cared for five cousins when their mother contracted tuberculosis. She worked as a secretary at Headfort House, a boarding school for English boys, studied at the Augustinian Convent School in Kells, and briefly considered religious life before training as a nurse in England. It was while working at Lingfield Children's Hospital that she met her future husband, Leslie William Le Surf. They married in 1960 and soon moved to Manly, Australia, where Madeleine became deeply involved in St Mary's Parish.

Madeleine's keen awareness extended beyond parish walls. She noticed the invisible struggles even in Manly - a picturesque Sydney suburb - where there were people who lacked homes, food, or help. Her compassion led her to support efforts that would grow into vital community services such as the Manly Soup Kitchen and the Manly District Relief Fund.

Her most enduring legacy began in the late 1970s after two brain surgeries, when she founded what became the Manly Parish Caring Program. Allan recalled that the program initially helped aged and infirm parishioners attend church but quickly expanded to assist with shopping, medical appointments, home repairs, and simply providing companionship over a cuppa.

This grassroots initiative evolved further. Madeleine became a Minister of the Eucharist, bringing communion to the sick at home and in hospital, often visiting several people on Sundays before attending to Manly Hospital. Hospital staff came to depend on her calm presence, inviting her into difficult conversations for her gentle listening and non-judgmental support.

Today, CatholicCare's pastoral care training teaches this approach as "deep listening," but Madeleine practiced it naturally. Parish Pastoral Care Volunteers speak of their privilege in preparing for and becoming Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at their parish and in local hospitals, training with and working alongside our CatholicCare Hospital Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care team members.

Her story highlights how parish life and CatholicCare collaborate to fulfill a shared mission, creating programs and networks that support the community. Madeleine worked with quiet determination, persistence, and purpose - embodying the heart of CatholicCare and the Church's mission. Her life was not marked by grand gestures but by faithful, steady companionship with others on their journeys.



EMPOWERING THROUGH CULTURE

At CatholicCare, we believe that healing starts with connection - to community, to support, and to culture. For Aboriginal Community Engagement Manager Judith, this philosophy is at the heart of everything she does. A key part of Judith's role is guiding clients on their journey to connect with their Aboriginal culture and find a sense of belonging.

When 14 year old Emily came into CatholicCare's Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) program, she was grieving the loss of her grandmother and the life she left behind on the Central Coast. Emily had spent most of her childhood in the care of her grandmother after being removed from her mother at a young age. In July 2024, Emily's grandmother passed away and she was placed in one of CatholicCare's Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) houses in Sydney. "Emily has struggled to settle in," Judith says.

Judith visits Emily once a week. "She has a strong interest in her culture. The day I met her she pulled out a bunch of papers with information about her family. She was so proud to have it and to show me," Judith says.

Judith has been guiding Emily in understanding cultural respect. "She often uses language that's not appropriate when speaking to our Aboriginal Elders," Judith says. "When she shows disrespect, I remind her about cultural respect and she immediately corrects herself and apologises. She's starting to experience a cultural understanding around communication."

Plans are underway to take Emily to Aboriginal community events and ceremonies. "She really wants to know who she is, and this is something she's deeply interested in," Judith says. There are still a lot of trust issues to work through, but Judith is slowly building a relationship with Emily that is based on mutual respect.

When Emily experiences outbursts of anger, she often tells Judith, "It's not about you." Judith understands that Emily's anger is largely directed at her mother and the loss of her grandmother. "She needs someone to talk to, someone who can just listen while she vents. I can be that person for her," Judith says.

In the coming weeks, Judith will begin looking through Emily's paperwork to uncover more about her Aboriginality and where she is from. "She desperately wants to know who she is, where she is from and how she can connect," Judith says.

Another one of Judith's clients is Lauren, a mother of three. Her journey has been one of courage, resilience and determination. Escaping a domestic violence situation and working hard to overcome addiction, Lauren has been sober for over 100 days - a major milestone on her path to restoration and healing.

Judith meets with Lauren every Friday as part of her recovery journey and preparation for a potential reunion with her children, who are currently living with her ex-partner in regional NSW. These visits are informal yet vital - a time to talk, share resources and plan the next steps.

"Lauren is taking all the right steps," Judith says. "She is staying in one of our short-term accommodation properties, while attending a program that will support her case to have her children restored. She has been engaging with the local Aboriginal community and has constant contact with her children. The other day she hired a car to visit and spend some quality time over a weekend with them, with the intention of increasing these visits and building trust with her young family. She's showing real initiative and commitment."

Judith has helped Lauren connect with her culture by encouraging her to attend NAIDOC Week events, access Aboriginal services, and gather documentation that demonstrates her involvement with community. With court proceedings on the horizon, these efforts could be key to restoring custody of her children. "She's proving she's open to community, to culture and to support," says Judith. "I just help her see what's possible."

For both Emily and Lauren, the journey forward is not without its obstacles - but it's filled with hope, driven by their desire to connect with culture and build a better future. With Judith's culturally informed, patient and compassionate approach, she is helping them embrace their Aboriginal identity and lay the groundwork for healing and personal growth.



ATTACHMENT, EMPATHY & A NEW BEGINNING FOR HENRY'S FAMILY

By the time 14 year old Henry and his family were referred to CatholicCare's Targeted Early Intervention (TEI) program, they were reaching breaking point. Henry spent hours each day isolated in his room, immersed in video games and shutting out the world around him. He had begun threatening to take his own life, and his outbursts at home had become increasingly violent. His relationship with his mother was tense and disconnected - he didn't feel seen, heard or safe. The family was overwhelmed and unsure of how to move forward.

"There were some traumatic experiences in Henry's childhood, especially with his dad, that were having a deep impact on his emotional state," explains Giuliana, the Case Worker who worked closely with the family. "His mother, who is his primary carer, had never acknowledged how much he was hurting. His mum was seeing the behaviour - anger, defiance, outbursts - but not the pain underneath. What Henry needed was connection and validation from his mum, but at that time, she wasn't able to give that to him."

“**"If his mum ever asked him to do anything, even something small, it would quickly spiral," Giuliana recalls.**

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"There were a lot of big behaviours - yelling, throwing things like remote controls, plants, vases. Once, he threatened to kill himself with a knife and the police had to be called. His mum didn't know how to respond. She would panic, beg him not to do it, then call emergency services. It was terrifying for her, and it just kept escalating." Underneath all of it, Henry was communicating in the only way he knew how.

"Mum's parenting style had a strong focus on discipline," Giuliana explains. "Validating emotions

didn't come naturally to her - it just wasn't something she had grown up with or seen modelled. So, it took time for her to understand why this was important. I used the whiteboard a lot during our sessions to break down concepts in a really practical, visual way. That helped her start to shift her perspective and approach."

When Giuliana started working with Henry's mother, she focused on understanding the reasons behind Henry's behaviour. "I introduced his mum to the anger iceberg model - explaining that while Henry's anger was the part she could see, underneath were sadness, fear and shame," Giuliana explains. "Two of the non-negotiable needs for any young person are to feel safe and unconditionally loved, and that includes feeling safe enough to express their emotions to a caregiver. Much of my work centred on repairing the broken connection between Henry and his mum. I used the *Circle of Security* model, helping her understand that she needed to be the 'secure hands' - a safe base for Henry to return to when he was distressed. That was our goal - for Henry to know his mum was someone he could trust and turn to, no matter what."

Over the course of a year, the family participated in regular sessions grounded in attachment theory and slowly, trust was rebuilt.

Henry's mother learned to approach difficult moments with empathy rather than discipline. Instead of reacting to slammed doors and silence, she began saying things like, "You seem upset. How was your day?" This seemingly small change opened the door to emotional connection.

She also began looking for ways to connect with Henry through his interests, particularly his love of gaming. "Even though she wasn't interested in games, I encouraged her to ask questions and get curious," Giuliana explains.

One milestone came when Henry, who had always eaten dinner alone, began sitting at the family table a few nights a week. "It may seem small, but for this family, it was huge," says Giuliana.



A significant breakthrough came when Henry's mother began respecting his boundaries around seeing his father.

“**"He didn't feel safe with his dad, but visits were being forced," Giuliana shares.**

”

"We gently challenged Mum to reconsider - if she had left the relationship for her own wellbeing, why require her son to endure it?" That conversation was a turning point. Henry began to feel his voice mattered and that his mum was finally hearing him.

By the end of their time with CatholicCare, the transformation in Henry and his family was remarkable. His mental health had noticeably improved, the self-harming and violent behaviours had stopped, and he was regularly attending school again.

Most importantly, the home environment had shifted - Henry felt safer, more connected, and began to rebuild trust with his mother. "What Henry needed was to feel safe and unconditionally loved," Giuliana reflects. "These are the foundations of healthy development for any child. Once he felt that, everything else started to shift."

Henry's story is testament to what's possible when families are supported early, compassionately, and consistently. CatholicCare's TEI program meets families in their hardest moments and walks alongside them, helping them find their strength and rewrite their story.

ERIN NAVIGATES PREGNANCY & INDEPENDENCE IN CARE



Erin entered an Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) placement with CatholicCare at age 12, after spending much of her childhood moving between foster carers. "She was one of the most challenging clients we've supported, due to her complex trauma history and significant diagnoses," recalls ITC House Supervisor Nathan. Beneath her resistance, however, was a young person striving to make sense of a world that had rarely felt stable or safe.

"Erin is witty and incredibly resourceful," Nathan adds. "There's a unique charm about her that really stands out," says Youth Worker Chloe.

At 15, Erin's life became more complex when she fell pregnant. Throughout this time, CatholicCare stood by her side - attending appointments, answering her questions and advocating fiercely to ensure her wishes for her baby were both heard and respected.

Although Erin was ultimately unable to parent her child, she was clear about one important wish - she wanted her baby to stay within her family. CatholicCare worked closely with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and Erin's extended family to make this possible.

“Erin was very firm about wanting her baby placed with one of her aunts,” Chloe explains.

"We made sure that happened and worked hard to maintain Erin's connection with her child through regular family visits."

Supporting Erin during this period meant adapting to her needs and working closely with her to facilitate regular visits with her baby. CatholicCare adjusted routines and arrangements to ensure she could maintain that connection as much as possible.

As Erin approached 18, the team focused on the task of transitioning her out of care and into independent living.

"When I joined CatholicCare 18 months ago, Erin was still facing many challenges, especially with daily living skills," Nathan reflects. "But over the last six months, she has surprised us all with how much she has grown and developed her independence."

What some initially perceived as stubbornness was really Erin's determination to do things her own way. With the right support, she proved just how capable she truly is.

With ongoing support and advocacy, Erin has transitioned into a semi-independent Supported Independent Living (SIL) placement through the NDIS. She now lives in a small granny flat attached to a group home, where she continues to build her independence with regular assistance. She has demonstrated remarkable maturity and strength.

JACKSON'S JOURNEY TO RESTORATION

At eight years old, Jackson's life was irrevocably changed by a car crash. He was sitting in the backseat with his sister while his mother, under the influence of methamphetamine, was driving. While the family survived, the incident led to his mother's incarceration and the children's placement into foster care.

Despite the trauma of his early years, Jackson harboured a deep yearning to be reunited with his mother. This longing remained constant, and at age 15, he expressed it for the first time. "He always felt very connected to his mum and was desperate to get back to her," says Case Manager Cordelle. "Mum was equally as keen. She was committed to have Jackson home and was ready to do everything she needed to do to rebuild their relationship."

A lot of work was done by the team at CatholicCare to assess the situation and, ultimately, to prepare both Jackson and his mother for restoration if it was deemed safe by the courts. "Jackson's mum went onto have two more children, and we needed to ensure that Jackson wouldn't be taking on a parenting role. It was a role that Jackson had taken on in the past while in his mother's care and we needed to be 100% sure that this wouldn't happen again, especially with the young baby. We supervised family contact and carefully assessed the family dynamics. Mum was sober and had stable housing, and from our many observations, there weren't any red flags that Jackson would fall into a parenting role should he be restored," says Cordelle.

Jackson's mother attended rehabilitation, she completed parenting courses, and she had a comprehensive restoration assessment. "A lot of drug and alcohol testing took place when she was out of rehab," explains Cordelle, "and we supported Jackson to see a psychologist."

Cordelle and the team at CatholicCare can confidently say that Jackson's mother has turned her life around. "Throughout the process of working towards reunification, she demonstrated a strong awareness of how her past choices have impacted her children. She was aware of her role within her children's trauma and worked incredibly hard to repair that," says Cordelle.



In February 2025 Jackson was officially restored to the care of his mother. "Getting the reunification orders in court was a pretty huge moment," says Cordelle. "Mum and Jackson both messaged me afterwards, thanking me for everything that I've done. They were clearly very, very happy."

Cordelle explains that being with family is the best place for a child if it's safe. "Regardless of what the risks are, we know that children often return to family when they're older. So, we have to make sure that when possible, we can support that to happen in a safe way."

Now 17, Jackson embodies resilience and ambition. He juggles two jobs - working as a delivery driver and a warehouse assistant - while pursuing studies in fitness. His passion for fitness is evident, and he is determined to build a successful future.

Despite his busy schedule, Jackson remains deeply connected to his family. He often takes his younger sister to the movies during school holidays, but he no longer must be the "parent". Jackson can be himself and pursue his goals, and his mum is his biggest supporter.

RIYA'S JOURNEY TOWARDS HEALING THROUGH COUNSELLING & SELF-CARE



At the age of 64, Riya vividly recalls her painful experience of counselling many years ago. "I told myself I would never see a counsellor again," Riya says. That was until Riya's relationship descended deeper into emotional abuse and neglect, and she knew that she had to do something. Determined to reclaim her life, she took a courageous step and walked through the doors of CatholicCare. That decision marked the beginning of her journey to healing.

Over several months, Riya participated in counselling sessions with CatholicCare counsellor, Peter. Throughout their sessions, Peter observed that Riya was articulate and self-aware. However, it became evident that she had become accustomed to having her emotions overlooked and dismissed over the years.

“She has been through two marriages, both marked by violence,” Peter explains.

"Her current relationship is emotionally abusive, but for various reasons, she feels compelled to stay. The work we did was to help her regain a sense of her own life and independence in the context of the relationship."

Peter's approach was empowering rather than directive. "He didn't tell me what to do. Instead, he gave me options and information, helping me feel in control," Riya says. Throughout their sessions, she explored her past, her pain, and the path that led her here. Slowly, she learned to say no and set boundaries - skills that had once seemed impossible.

Riya says that one of the biggest takeaways from her sessions with Peter was the importance of self-care. "I'm still trying to work out what that looks like for me as it's not something I've ever given any thought to in the past," Riya says.

Reflecting on her sessions with Peter, Riya shares that she always felt accepted and understood. "I told Peter a lot and there was no judgement there, no matter what I said," Riya says.

The journey is far from over as Riya strives to prioritise her own wellbeing in the context of a complex, emotionally abusive relationship. But she has been given strategies, options and a greater appreciation of the importance of boundaries. Most recently, Riya has been invited to attend Regaining Self - CatholicCare's six week group program for survivors of domestic and family violence that explores how to recognise abuse, the impact on women and children, exploring healthy relationships, changing and moving on.

As Riya contemplates her next steps, she is determined to be proactive, drawing strength from her inner resilience and recognising her self-worth.

EMPOWERING & CONNECTING SENIORS

Pope Saint John Paul II once described ageing as a privilege, viewing it as an opportunity to reflect on the past, deepen one's understanding of the Paschal Mystery, and serve as a role model within the Church for all God's people (US Catholic Conference, 1988). While old age brings many blessings, it also presents challenges such as loneliness, health issues and navigating the complexities of the aged care system. Recognising these difficulties, CatholicCare has dedicated recent months to parish-based initiatives aimed at supporting seniors, fostering connection, and ensuring they receive the care and respect they deserve.

Every Wednesday fortnight, a group of seniors from Ku-ring-gai Chase Catholic Parish and some neighbouring churches gather for a morning of fellowship and learning. What began as a student led social work project with Excelsia College, has evolved into a collaborative initiative between CatholicCare and Ku-ring-gai Chase Parish. This partnership aims to provide ongoing support and connection for seniors in the area.

"The ministry has many benefits," says Ku-ring-gai Chase Parish's Seniors Ministry Leader, Mary. "It is educational, it addresses loneliness, and it gives people an opportunity to build friendships and connections."

Each session a speaker from the community is invited to present on a different topic. "One of the most popular sessions was on the topic of online scams," says Mary. "Our speaker from Services Australia described common scams and what to look out for. Many seniors shared personal stories of being targeted by scams or nearly falling victim, but we all left the session feeling informed." Mary also spoke highly of the talk on elder law by Cecilia Castle from Castle Lawyers, "She provided clear, accessible information on enduring guardianship, enduring power of attorney, and wills, along with other helpful resources."

CatholicCare has also been engaging with parishes to offer information sessions about accessing aged care services. "Accessing Government funded aged care is confusing and complex," says CatholicCare's Community Engagement Coordinator Kathy. "In my presentations, I explain the *My Aged Care* system, how to access services and what services



can be provided to keep our seniors living at home independently. Everyone has a beautiful life story, and I see it as a privilege to assist seniors in their ageing journey."

CatholicCare's Executive Director Tim Curran is committed to addressing the needs of seniors by working closely with parishes.

“Loneliness has become one of the most pressing issues facing older Australians today, with around one in four people over 75 reporting feelings of social isolation,” says Tim.

At CatholicCare, we recognise this as more than a statistic - it's a call to action. By working closely with parishes, we're addressing this epidemic head-on, creating spaces where seniors can reconnect, find purpose, and know they are not alone.

NINA RECLAIMS HER LIFE AFTER VIOLENCE

For Nina, her workplace became more than just a job, it was a rare pocket of safety in an otherwise controlled and frightening world. It was the only place where she could speak openly with her Case Worker, free from surveillance and intimidation. In this safe space, she regained control, set goals and took the crucial steps to leave her perpetrator and start a new life.

“When Nina was referred to our service by Uniting Supporting Families, she was still living with her ex-partner and their two year old child,” explains CatholicCare Case Worker Fernanda. “Although the relationship had ended, Nina remained in the home due to a complex web of coercive control, fear, cultural isolation and limited access to support.”

Nina’s ex-partner - an Australian citizen familiar with the system - used his knowledge as a weapon. Constantly watching her through in-home cameras, he controlled who she could talk to, and when. He mocked her Portuguese heritage and banned her from speaking her native language, stripping away a vital part of her identity. The abuse was relentless - verbal insults, cultural denigration, psychological torment and physical aggression. Nina lived in fear, isolated and was unsure where to turn.

But everything began to shift when she connected with Fernanda, who shared her cultural background and language. “We communicated in our shared first language, which allowed her to express herself freely and without fear of being monitored,” says Fernanda. “Cultural safety was a core component of our work together. To maintain secure communication, we provided Nina with a safe phone, kept at her workplace, as she strongly suspected her main phone was being monitored.

All engagement was trauma-informed and centred around restoring Nina’s sense of control, safety and dignity. She was never rushed. Each step was taken collaboratively and at her pace, ensuring she always felt informed and empowered.”

Over time, Nina’s resilience shone. She engaged in safety planning, learned about domestic violence, and set long-term goals. With support, she accessed financial help through the escaping violence payment and victims services.

These funds allowed her to save for upfront rent, take driving lessons and buy a small car. She even purchased safety cameras for her future home and began furnishing the new space.

A referral to Legal Aid helped her understand her rights and Nina was supported to prepare a detailed report which included gathered evidence and a timeline of events. On the day that Nina left the home, she submitted this report, and a protective apprehended domestic violence order (ADVO) was issued for her and her child.

Her ex-partner, oblivious to the report, tried to rewrite the story. He told friends Nina was experiencing a mental health crisis and had taken their child. He showed up uninvited at their homes, attempting to track her down. But thanks to careful safety planning, Nina spent the weekend with a trusted friend away from the Central Coast. When he went to the police station to report her, he was served with the ADVO instead.

After her escape, Nina stayed at a women’s refuge for about a month. During this time, CatholicCare helped her search for rentals. Her new car gave her independence to attend inspections, and with the start safely subsidy approved, she smoothly transitioned into a long-term rental without the financial burden of full rent.

A safety audit of her new home ensured she felt secure. Referrals to victims services connected her to counselling, helping her heal emotionally. Nina also began studying at TAFE, determined to build a stable future for herself and her child.

A milestone came when her child was enrolled in daycare - an opportunity her ex-partner had previously denied. CatholicCare assisted in providing clothing for both Nina and her son, including professional attire for job interviews, and referred her to employment support services.

Perhaps most powerfully, in court, Nina showed profound compassion and strength by requesting a variation to the ADVO. She wanted her child to maintain supervised contact with his father, reflecting her deep commitment to her child’s wellbeing and healthy boundaries despite the trauma she endured. It was a powerful act of reclaiming choice and autonomy.

At case closure, Nina expressed deep satisfaction with the life she was rebuilding. “My life has done a complete 360,” she said. There had been no breaches of the ADVO, and for the first time in years, she feels truly safe.



HOW EMERGENCY RELIEF IS SUPPORTING LISA'S FAMILY THROUGH CRISIS



When Lisa reached out for help, she was holding together the fragile pieces of a family in crisis. Eight weeks earlier, her 18 year old daughter had experienced a traumatic assault, and the emotional and financial strain had taken a toll on everyone at home.

Lisa's business, once her anchor, was struggling. With no income from her work and her husband's earnings barely covering rent, the family was stretched beyond its emotional and financial limits. Their son, 16, was showing signs of a possible cognitive or intellectual disability but without the resources to pursue a diagnosis, his needs remained unmet and misunderstood.

With so much going on, Lisa was referred to CatholicCare's emergency relief program for basic food support. It was a practical request to help ease daily pressures and give her a little breathing room to focus on her children.

"We provided Lisa and her family with emergency relief twice now, once in October and most recently in June," explains Support Worker Margaret. "She is caring full-time and trying to pay \$1400 a week for their private rental, which is extremely tough when you're relying on Centrelink. Her husband is a contractor and has had no work since December. The family have been struggling to meet their basic needs like food, clothing and school fees."

"We had extra funding for the area which came from the Ku-ring-gai council," says Margaret. "This meant that we were able to support Lisa with more than we normally would."

When Coles vouchers arrived, Lisa was over the moon. "I can't thank you enough," Lisa wrote. "I'm taking my daughter now to do a shop. She is excited because we can buy some special food items we normally can't afford. Thank you! And even better she is leaving the house!"

For a young woman who hadn't stepped outside in weeks, that trip to the supermarket was more than a grocery run. It was an encouraging sign of progress with the right support in place.

Since their initial connection with CatholicCare in October, Lisa and her husband have started attending our free financial counselling - an important step in helping them manage their debts and plan for a more secure future.

The family continues to face challenges, but with urgent needs addressed and longer-term financial planning underway, they are beginning to see a path toward greater stability.

I WAS TERRIFIED HE WOULD KILL ME

When police arrived at Kayla's home following a neighbour's report of property damage and verbal abuse, they found more than just a domestic dispute. What unfolded was the beginning of a carefully coordinated response to years of abuse - a response that would eventually help Kayla and her three young children find safety and start again.

Kayla had been in an on-and-off relationship with her ex-partner for eight years. He was a member of a motorcycle gang, with access to firearms and a long history of violence, both inside and outside the home. Despite his threats and control, Kayla had stayed - out of fear, out of caution, and out of concern for her children.

At the time of referral to CatholicCare's Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Service (IDFVS), Kayla and the perpetrator were still living under the same roof.

"Kayla was terrified that her ex-partner would kill her if she was to report his violence," says Tina, the Case Worker who took on her case. "His membership of a motorcycle gang meant that he had access to firearms and weapons ... which contributed to her being at serious risk of homicide."

Kayla experienced physical, sexual, psychological, financial and verbal abuse - along with stalking, harassment and coercive control. Her case was referred to the local Safety Action Meeting, which brings together agencies to respond collaboratively to people at serious risk of harm.

But her fear didn't just stem from her ex-partner. Kayla had her own history with child protection services, having been removed from her parents as a child due to domestic violence in the home. She was deeply afraid of her children being taken from her. And while she lived in fear, she also resisted, doing everything she could to shield her children from harm.

"Despite everything she was going through, Kayla was incredibly protective of her children," says Tina.

Working with Coast Shelter, we helped Kayla and her children move into crisis accommodation. For the first time in years, she had space to think and make decisions without fear of retaliation.

"I supported Kayla with personalised safety planning and connected her with legal services and counselling support," Tina explains. "She also received the Escaping Violence Payment, which helped cover relocation and basic needs, including storage for their belongings."

While in the safe house, Kayla began to see a path forward. With support, she decided to relocate interstate to be closer to extended family. Tina organised a referral to a domestic and family violence service in her new community to ensure she would be supported through the next stage of her journey.

"As we planned the move, I kept working with her on safety planning," says Tina. "We liaised with police through the Safety Action Meeting space to explore safe options for Kayla to report her experiences of violence, if this was a decision she wanted to progress with."

In just six weeks, Kayla and her children had gone from living in a home marked by daily fear to arriving in a new state, surrounded by people who care for them, with the tools and support to begin again.

Kayla recently shared that her eldest daughter is enrolled to start school next term. Kayla has also commenced counselling through victims services and is finding that to be a very healing experience. Her ex-partner has not been in contact since they relocated.

"Kayla and the girls are feeling very happy and safe in their new accommodation, surrounded by family support," says Tina. "They've started to make plans for school, day care, employment and are on the path healing from the trauma they've endured."





PEOPLE & CULTURE

A full review of the Workplace Injury Management Policy and Practice Guidelines was completed, followed by training sessions across the organisation to reinforce safe work practices and shared responsibilities.

The AccessEAP program was relaunched to increase awareness of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Webinars focused on mental health and wellbeing were made available to employees and their families, offering practical strategies to support personal resilience and professional growth.

Introduction of a partnership with Bupa, offering employees access to exclusive corporate health plan discounts. This initiative demonstrates CatholicCare's ongoing commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of its workforce.

We celebrated the first anniversary of our HRIS, *Bob* which has transformed HR processes, boosting efficiency, transparency and user-friendly functionality. From streamlined onboarding to improved data insights, it has become essential to daily operations.

We welcomed three key additions to our team to support strategic growth and enhance organisational capability. A new Talent Acquisition & Engagement Manager was appointed to bring fresh energy and expertise to recruitment and employee engagement.

A Senior HR Business Partner was hired to provide strategic support across the organisation and we introduced a new Learning & Development Manager role to lead capability building and continuous learning initiatives.

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Played a pivotal role in strengthening CatholicCare's profile as a trusted and purposeful presence in the community.

With more than 6,500 enquiries triaged into our new CRM, we streamlined lead management and nurturing, ensuring every individual received timely support and information.

A series of targeted campaigns showcased our disability day programs and accommodation options, driving strong community interest and connections. To support growth, we welcomed a new Business Development role focused on expanding disability services.

We deepened engagement across the Diocese through initiatives such as the August homelessness fundraiser and a special collaboration with Ku-ring-Gai Parish on their Seniors Ministry.

Cultural awareness remained a priority, with our team developing and delivering an in-house training package to over 200 frontline staff.

We proudly led CatholicCare's Jubilee Year 2025 celebrations, including art competitions and the Twilight Mass & Celebration with Bishop Anthony, marking the Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents and the Elderly.

Looking ahead, we refreshed the CatholicCare logo and style guide, with a launch planned for August 2025 ensuring our brand reflects both tradition and a modern, forward looking spirit.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Implemented security awareness training delivered via the *KnowBe4* platform. This program includes interactive eLearning modules, phishing simulations and regular policy reviews. As a result, staff confidence in identifying threats has improved, and the organisation's phish-prone rate now outperforms many peers in the sector. These efforts have strengthened the human firewall, reduced risk exposure and fostered a culture of ongoing threat awareness.

Introduced *Elker*, a centralised incident reporting system, to our Disabilities and Integrated Services teams. This platform has simplified reporting processes and led to a significant increase in logged incidents. It will soon be rolled out to every service line. The ICT team is mining data for trends and root cause insights, using analytics to prioritise preventive actions and shape targeted training. These data driven insights will bolster CatholicCare's operational resilience and drive continuous improvements in safety and compliance frameworks.

We initiated a strategic process review project for Integrated Services and Permanency Support Program. Through process mapping workshops with frontline teams and service managers, current workflows were documented, gaps identified and future state processes mapped. The outcomes will guide the development of a technology solution designed to support teams with automation and streamlined workflows, aiming to achieve measurable efficiency improvements and enhance consistency, quality and transparency across programs.

QUALITY, RISK, COMPLIANCE & SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is our proactive commitment to protecting the rights, wellbeing and safety of everyone who engages with our services. We focused on strengthening awareness and embedding safeguarding practices across the organisation through face-to-face sessions, online training, and tailored support. A key focus was Children's Services, where leaders participated in a new training program covering safeguarding awareness, harm prevention and incident response. Delivered via a train-the-trainer model, it empowered leaders to build capability in their teams. Staff appreciated the practical, scenario-based approach tailored to their program realities.

Across quality, risk, and compliance, we delivered organisation wide risk management training aligned with CatholicCare's risk management framework. This equipped leaders with tools to integrate risk thinking into daily operations, strengthening our ability to identify and respond to risks early and support safer service delivery.

We launched a new client outcomes measurement initiative to better understand client experiences and improve programs. By capturing voluntary self-reports against wellbeing criteria, we assess how effectively we support positive change. This outcomes focused approach enhances our responsiveness to client needs and strengthens practice through data informed decision making, beginning with our Integrated Services teams.

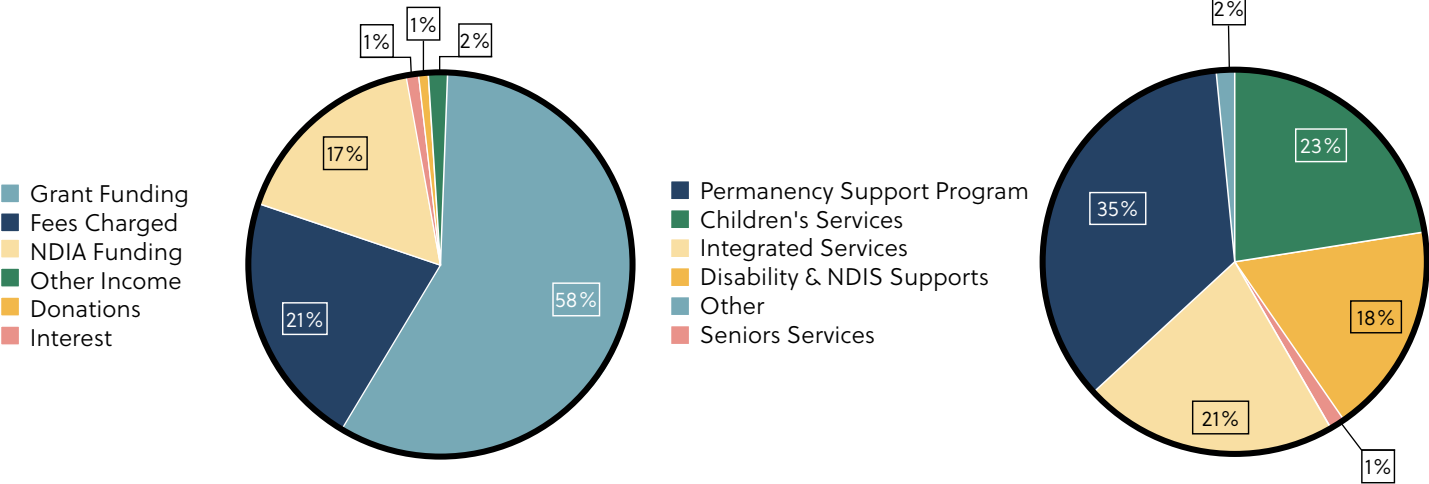
Artwork credit: Elinor, Tarooki artist

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

- CatholicCare experienced another year of significant growth with income increasing by \$13m (or 16%).
- We continue to receive great support from State and Commonwealth Government along with a host of non-Government donors. We remain grateful for their support.
- The Permanency Support Program (PSP) continued to expand to meet need with additional care homes in Northern Sydney and the Central Coast whilst also undertaking several emergency placements during the year. Unfortunately, we continue to struggle to attract new foster carers (a sector wide issue, not unique to CatholicCare) with placement numbers reducing as a consequence.
- Our Integrated Services suite including domestic violence, homelessness, emergency relief and financial counselling programs, benefited from continued Government funding allowing us to operate these much needed community services.
- Support in the form of fundraising donations allowed us to maintain the financial stability of the unfunded drop-in services at Mary Mac's Place in Woy Woy and Dom's Place in Hornsby. We also commenced development of two new refuges during the year which we hope to open in 2027.
- Our Children's Services operations continued to grow with further expansion of OSHC services and the stabilisation of our ELC/LDC centre performances.
- Our disability day programs at Waitara and Brookvale continue to navigate the ongoing challenges of the NDIS. We continued to grow our Supported Independent Living service with new sites commencing late 2024 and settling into operation in 2025. The service as a whole however continues to operate at a deficit after allocation of overheads.
- We operated at a surplus of \$2.8m for the year, with interest income and capital grant funding contributing to the surplus from our Children's Services operations. This ensures our financial viability and allows us to continue with our important work.
- Whilst we continue to manage our costs in this challenging environment, we still recognise the need to also continue to invest in areas that will keep the agency viable in the longer term. A significant investment was made during the year with the acquisition of a second semi-rural property at Wyong on the Central Coast, adjacent to a similar property we purchased last year. These properties were commissioned for use in our PSP service during the year.

INCOME BY SOURCE

INCOME BY PROGRAM



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (000's)

	2024/25	2023/24
REVENUE		
OPERATING REVENUE	83,256	71,653
OTHER INCOME	2,653	1,523
INTEREST INCOME	1,013	908
TOTAL REVENUE		
	\$86,922	\$74,084
EXPENSES		
STAFF AND AGENCY COSTS	66,846	57,412
PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY COSTS	4,025	4,122
OCCUPANCY COSTS	2,051	1,324
DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION	3,431	3,440
OTHER EXPENSES	7,741	6,781
INTEREST EXPENSES	283	266
TOTAL EXPENSES		
	\$84,094	\$73,079
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		
	\$2,828	\$1,005

BALANCE SHEET (000's)

	2024/25	2023/24
TOTAL ASSETS	43,355	33,345
TOTAL LIABILITIES	26,740	19,558
NET ASSETS/TOTAL EQUITY		
	\$16,615	\$13,787

A full copy of our annual financial report is available on the ACNC website.

CatholicCare

DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

P: 1800 324 924
E: info@catholiccaredbb.org.au
W: www.catholiccaredbb.org.au