

Independence

Summer 2018



MISSION
AUSTRALIA

Blossoming parents, thriving kids

Thanks to your generosity, children and families across Australia are developing the confidence and skills they need to enjoy independent lives filled with potential.

Parents Staying Connected is an early intervention program that supports young families experiencing poverty, social anxiety and isolation.

Your donations are helping families build strong connections with their community, and equipping parents to nurture their children from infancy to primary school, setting them up for happy, fulfilling lives.

This year, your donations have supported 14 families to participate in this vital program in Tasmania, which receives no government funding and couldn't continue without your help.

You've helped families like Jade* and her three children. Their journey with Mission Australia dates back five years, to the months following the birth of Jade's first child.

As a young mum who was socially isolated and struggling financially, Jade felt ill-equipped to raise her little girl. She worried for her future.

An invitation to join our Parents Staying Connected program was a godsend for Jade.

Initially shy and anxious, Jade slowly learned

to trust the staff and parents in the group. She enjoyed meeting in a safe space, helping her kids learn and play with other children, and benefitted from sessions on health and wellbeing topics.

Each week we've seen Jade's confidence grow. She's now a popular member of the group and a highly capable parent. She's even completed mentoring training and helps to support families who are new to the group.

"The program at Mission Australia has been a life-changer. I'm so grateful that my kids are happy and healthy and aren't going to miss out on anything. I can't say thank you enough." Jade

Jade is just one of many parents who is now blossoming with confidence, and whose children are thriving, because of your donations. Thank you.

Looking back & looking forward

The Christmas season is a special time of reflection, celebration and renewed hope, says our Executive for Community, Family and Children's Services Ben Carblis.

In a world that seems to spin faster by the day, it's easy to forget to stop and reflect on the week, month or year that has just whizzed by.

One of the things I appreciate most about Christmas is how it encourages us to shift our focus back; remembering the very reason we celebrate it in the first place, the birth of Jesus, and the hope that flows from it.

In a similar vein, I paused recently to reflect on the information on the next page, which highlights the number of people that received help this year thanks to your generosity. Your support helped almost 120,000 Australians take steps towards lives of independence last year. That's more than one person every five minutes, on average!



Ben Carblis

Executive, Community, Family and Children's Services

It gives me real joy to share with you a handful of their stories in this newsletter. I hope you enjoy hearing about them as much as I did.

Despite the many challenges facing families and communities across the country, your continued support makes me optimistic about the year ahead and the impact we can continue to make together in the lives of Australians in need.

Thank you once again for helping vulnerable Australians take vital steps towards lives of independence this year. We couldn't do it without you.

I wish you and your family a safe and joyous Christmas.



Christmas reflection



My name is Caroline. I live with Mission Australia in Cairns and I'm happy because I'm not going to be on the streets at Christmas.

The thing I'm looking forward to this Christmas is not being alone. All the people here are the same as me with nowhere to go. We're not with our families, but we'll be here together celebrating. We're having Christmas dinner, doing decorations and having a service with the chaplain.

Christmas to me means that God's been looking over us this year. He hasn't left us even though we've been through the lowest part of our life. It's a very hopeful time.

On behalf of everyone that lives here, we all thank you very much for being there for us and supporting us. I think my life would have really gone downhill if I wasn't here. The staff have helped me a lot. They got me back on my feet.

I hope you and your family have a good Christmas.

Caroline

Resident at Woree
Supported Accommodation

Connect with us:



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Purpose Inspired by Jesus Christ, Mission Australia exists to meet human need and to spread the knowledge of the love of God.

Values Compassion • Integrity • Respect • Perseverance • Celebration

Summary of the year

2017-2018

Thanks to your generosity,
together we supported

119,185

Australians on their journey
towards independence last year



Homelessness & housing

20,264 

people assisted
through 67 services

Families, children & early learning

29,362 

people assisted
through 116 services

Youth

8,775 

people assisted
through 25 services

Strengthening communities

13,094 

people assisted
through 24 services

Employment & skills

11,998 

people assisted
through 76 services

Alcohol & other drugs

9,150 

people assisted
through 26 services

Mental health

10,149 

people assisted
through 52 services

Disability

4,160 

people assisted
through 27 services

Other services¹

12,233 

people assisted
through 48 services

1. Includes Domestic & Family Violence, Financial Support and Justice & Corrections

An enduring journey of care

Do you ever wonder why your regular donations are so vital for helping vulnerable Australians? It's thanks to your consistent generosity that people facing serious challenges can receive long-term support on their road to independence – sometimes spanning months or even years.



Jimmy* is one young person who has benefitted from your loyal support.

Jimmy's life got off to an unimaginably traumatic start. Removed from his mother's care as a baby, he spent years being moved between

family members. After being re-housed with his mother, Jimmy was sexually abused by a family friend, triggering a downward spiral that saw him drop out of school.

By the time he was a teenager, he was sleeping rough and using drugs to cope with his pain. At 19, his mother passed away, which led to a dramatic decline in Jimmy's mental health.

Over the past six years, Mission Australia's intensive, inner-city youth homelessness service, The Crossing, has been the one consistent place of support for Jimmy.

Many times he's been turned away from other services who have told him he's run out of second chances, but Jimmy knows that Mission Australia remains committed to standing by him.

We've helped Jimmy find safe accommodation, set up his home and provided intensive support throughout his challenging journey.

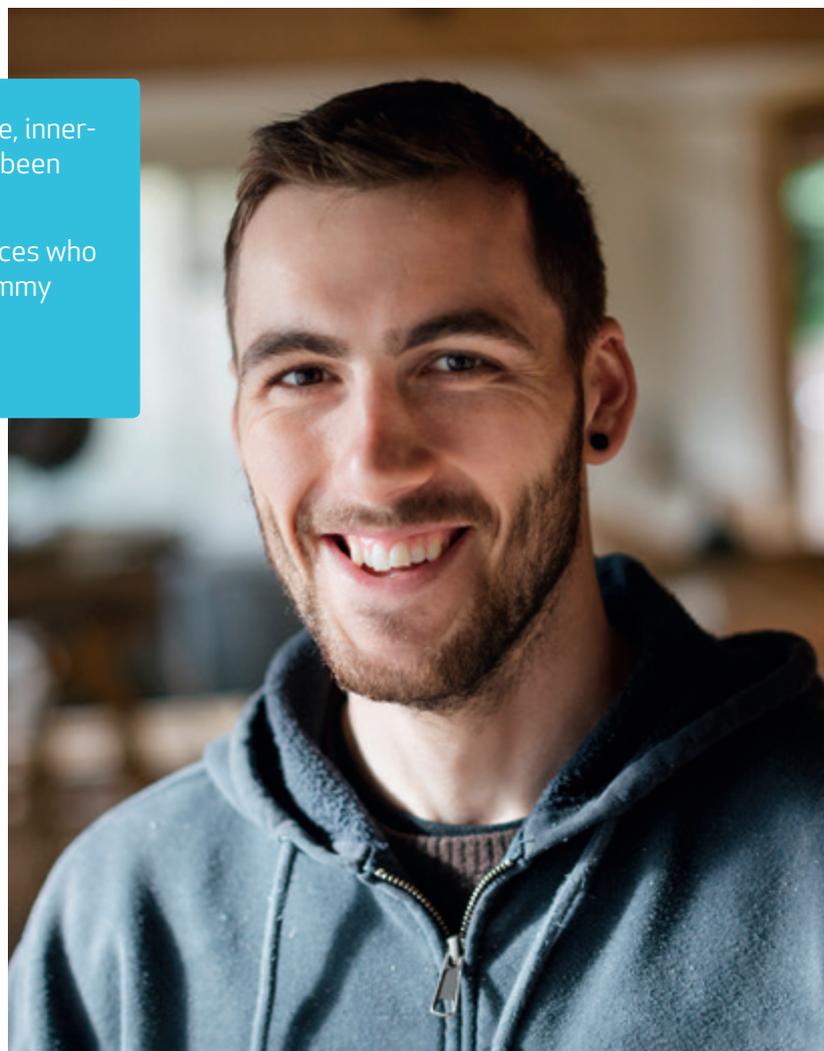
The past year has been a difficult one for Jimmy, but his case manager Anastasia is optimistic that his future can be a fulfilling one.

Without your generous donations, young people like Jimmy have no one to care for them. Thank you for having compassion for vulnerable Australians and standing alongside them through their toughest times.

"Breaking that intergenerational cycle of abuse is hard. But we don't give up on people like Jimmy because we know where they've come from and understand why they've made the choices and mistakes they have.

My hope is that over time we can work through his trauma, build his capacity, help him learn new skills, and eventually achieve his goals and dreams."

Anastasia, Jimmy's caseworker



A little love goes a long way

Mission Australia's Western Sydney services support hundreds of children and families experiencing homelessness and disadvantage every year.

Our staff recently helped Felicity*, who at the time was just two weeks away from giving birth to her first child.

Heavily pregnant, Felicity had no income and was staying with her partner's family. She had no support from her own family, who kicked her out of home the day she turned 18.

Felicity felt ashamed to ask her partner's family for help purchasing things she knew she



would need for her baby, as they were already stretched for essentials like food themselves.

When one of Mission Australia's case workers offered her a baby gift hamper and a shopping voucher, Felicity couldn't stop crying.

"This is the first time I've ever felt valued and respected," Felicity said. "Thank you for not judging me and showing me compassion and love." Felicity

Your generosity helps parents like Felicity care for their children and ensure that they get the start in life that every child deserves. Thank you.

Adam's new bike

Your generous donations are helping young people like Adam*, who is receiving support from one of our family mental health services.

A few months ago Adam's mother told our staff that Adam's bike had been stolen, and that it was negatively impacting his school attendance, his ability to socialise with friends, his physical health and his overall independence. The family's financial situation meant they weren't able to replace it.

Though our service didn't have funds to purchase a new bike, that didn't stop them looking high and low for a solution. Their search led them to a bicycle recycler that specialises in bringing pre-loved bikes back to life and selling them at low cost.

When the recyclers heard Adam's story, they invited him along to pick his favourite bike and gave it to him for free. Mission Australia provided Adam with a helmet to keep him safe on his new set of wheels.

Our staff noticed an immediate change in Adam's mental health, which has made a big difference as we continue our support of him.

Adam's story is a great example of our team's dedication to go above and beyond and the enormous impact that small gestures can make in the lives of Australians in need.



Beyond the call of duty

Do you remember why you first donated to Mission Australia? For Ruth, it's a moment she'll never forget...

Our Missionbeat staff are renowned for going the extra mile to help people in need. But around 30 years ago, our team had a rather unique encounter.

Ruth remembers receiving a call from the nursing home where her mother was living while at work one day. Aged 87 and suffering severe dementia, Hilda had wandered off and was missing.

Deeply concerned for her wellbeing, Ruth was relieved to receive another call several hours later letting her know that our Missionbeat team had found Hilda on the street and stopped to help her.

"Missionbeat gave her a cup of tea then took her back to the nursing home," Ruth recalls.

Thankful for the care shown by the team, Ruth has been supporting Mission Australia ever since.

While today Ruth finds it difficult to donate regularly due to her own declining health, she has included a gift to Mission Australia in her Will to ensure that Missionbeat can continue to help many more vulnerable people long after she's gone.



Ruth with her mum Hilda



Hilda

Have you considered leaving a gift to Mission Australia in your Will?

Like Ruth, many of us have the desire to leave this world better than how we found it.

Throughout our lives, we give our time, energy and finances to the people and things we love and want to see prosper. Your Will is the best way of ensuring that these things continue to be cared for long after you're gone.

For more than 155 years Mission Australia has been creating lasting change by reducing homelessness

and strengthening communities. For all that time, Australians like Ruth have trusted us to be responsible stewards of their gifts, allowing us to support millions of vulnerable people.

Leaving a bequest to Mission Australia will ensure your last gift is one that makes lasting change.



For more information about leaving a gift in your Will, please call Christine Thomas or Sarah Lendich on



02 9219 2000 or visit



missionaustralia.com.au/mywill