

Independence

Spring 2018



MISSION
AUSTRALIA

A place to belong

Because of your generosity, young families like Emma and her son Jacob feel supported and prepared to take on life's challenges.

When Emma* was first referred to Mission Australia's Parents Staying Connected (PSC) service she felt incredibly alone. She didn't have many friends in the area and her son Jacob was experiencing developmental delays that she didn't quite know how to address. All she wanted was a listening ear and people to walk beside her in her parenting journey.

When it came time for her first meeting, Emma felt a bit anxious about walking into a room where she didn't know anyone. So a program manager arranged to have her picked up and brought to the group. Emma felt so much relief to have other people to talk to about parenthood.

Over time, Emma got involved in the monthly preparation and serving of food to others receiving assistance from Mission Australia. Through her involvement with the community, Emma discovered a newfound confidence and was asked to become a group mentor.

Both Emma and her son Jacob have found great acceptance within the group. Jacob has already shown so much improvement in his speech as well as socially and emotionally.

Emma is now seen as a role model and is a peer coach. Fostered by the respect other group members and the PSC coordinators have shown her, Emma is now contemplating pursuing study and ultimately employment within the community services sector.

Emma has since been accepted as a parent representative to the local Child and Family Centre Advisory Board. She loves that she can give back through her volunteer efforts and help others who have been through experiences like hers.

We are so happy to see both Emma and Jacob doing so well now - and it's all thanks to you!

Giving a voice, making a change

As the mother of two teenage daughters, our Head of Research and Evaluation Jo Fildes sees many of the issues young people face firsthand.

I spend a lot of time cheering on my daughters from the sideline when they are playing netball and supporting them late at night as they study.

This gives me a chance to see how real the pressures of school are and how important it is for them to spend time with their friends.

For over fifteen years, Mission Australia has produced the Youth Survey, which gives young people aged 15 to 19 a chance to speak up about the issues that concern them. I've seen the reality of many of these concerns in the lives of my daughters and their peers.

In our latest Youth Homelessness Report, we took a further look at the findings from the Youth Survey to see how having an experience of homelessness affects young people.



Dr Joann Fildes
Head of Research
& Evaluation

We found that 1 in 6 young people surveyed in last year's Youth Survey had experienced homelessness. The mum in me has a hard time coming to terms with this staggering statistic.

This report helps us to see who these young people are and what they've been through. I love the way the youth survey helps us give young people a voice – but what is most important is what we do in response. With these insights, we know how to better help young people.

It's hard to believe that there are young people the same age as my own children who have been through circumstances far worse than I have ever known.

As you read through this newsletter, I hope many of the stories inspire you because of the difference we have already made together.



Trading places

Daniel Strickland, Area Manager South East NSW and ACT recently covered the role of an area manager in WA. Here's what he had to say about the experience:

"While in WA, I was amazed at the passion and commitment of staff to our clients across the region. Whether it is in the main city or in the outback in Meekatharra with a population of 600, they eagerly represent Mission Australia wherever they go.

When you drive through the towns in a Mission Australia branded vehicle, or walk down the street in a magenta shirt, the locals give you a wave or a smile. The respect that the organisation has from smaller Aboriginal communities is very evident. The visit has truly reenergised my passion for the work we do, particularly with Aboriginal communities. Without your generosity, this simply wouldn't be possible. Thank you so much for your commitment to help Australians in need."

Dan Strickland

Connect with us:



supporter@missionaustralia.com.au



facebook.com/MissionAust

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



"I thank God for Mission Australia." Selvia

New beginnings

Just a few months ago Selvia was homeless, sleeping on a friend's couch. She had no contact with her two teenage sons, no job, no dreams, and no idea how to change her circumstances.

When Selvia's marriage ended due to domestic violence more than a decade ago, she felt incredibly alone.

Her youngest was four months old and she had no family in Australia to help her. Unable to provide a safe home, she lost custody of her two boys.

Having made little progress, Selvia was recently referred to Mission Australia. With the help of case manager Tania, she finally felt a sense of hope.

Tania helped Selvia identify her struggles and mapped out how they could move past them.

"It made a lot of difference for me that someone noticed me on that very rough journey."

She is now mending relationships and has peace, security and shelter – but most importantly, she has been reunited with her boys.

"We're closer than ever. I'm able to listen to them more and contribute to their lives."

The transformation in her life since that time is testament to what is possible with determination, the right support, and, in Selvia's case, faith that things can turn around.

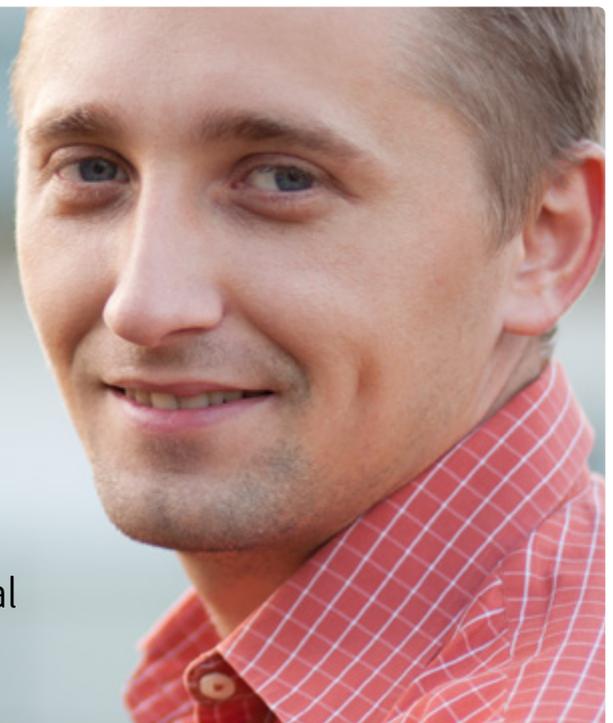
"Synergy has given me the tools I need to get an apprenticeship in the auto industry."

Help young people like Ryan build skills for a positive future.

Please donate today.

 missionaustralia.com.au/springappeal

 1800 88 88 68





Megan's story

15-year-old Megan* was born with a hereditary condition making her legally blind. Her stepfather often told her 'she couldn't do anything properly' and that she was 'hopeless'. Unable to take his verbal abuse any more, she moved away from home and got in touch with Mission Australia's Canterbury Bankstown Youth Service (CBYS). CBYS provided crisis accommodation and counselling to overcome the impact that her stepfather had on her self-confidence. She has since been moved into transitional accommodation and CBYS staff helped her to get additional help from Vision Australia and other disability support services. Megan is now thriving as a talented musician and has won awards during Youth Week. She plans to pursue a career in music and is determined to be financially independent.

Young people's experiences of homelessness

Findings from the Youth Survey 2017

* Client names and images have been changed to protect their privacy

Key findings

21,812 
respondents
aged 15-19 years

1 in 6 
reported spending time with no fixed address, living in a refuge, and/or couch surfing

1 in 5 
of those who had couch surfed reported they had first done so when they were less than 12 years old

Compared with those who haven't experienced homelessness, young people who have experienced homelessness were:

6 times more likely 
to rate their family's ability to get along as poor

5 times more likely 
to feel they had no control over their life

2.5 times more likely 
to meet criteria for probable serious mental illness

2.5 times more likely 
to feel negative/very negative about the future

"My biggest concern has been to have a house to stay in that's safe." Georgia*, 15

To download the report:

 missionaustralia.com.au/youthhomelessness18

Together we Trek

LARAPINTA 2019

60 kilometres, 5 days,
millions of stars

Have a sense of adventure? Join us on the Larapinta Trek! By participating in the 2019 Larapinta Trek you will raise funds for the launch of a new Missionbeat service in the Northern Territory.

The Larapinta Trail is regarded as one of Australia's premier walking tracks and stretches along the backbone of the West MacDonnell Ranges. Over 5 days, you will trek 60kms of this magnificent trail, swim in pristine water holes, and sleep under a canopy of stars.

The inaugural trek earlier this year raised an amazing \$70,000 towards our \$150,000 target. If you're keen to have the adventure of a lifetime while supporting a fantastic cause, sign up now and help us hit \$150,000!

"It was a far greater experience than a physical achievement. It was a spiritual experience of acceptance and love for human kind." - Diane

"An authentic and challenging experience in the centre of my country." - Graham

"One of the most rewarding experiences of my life."
- James, CEO, Mission Australia

TOGETHER WE TREK: 13-19 MAY, 2019

Find out more about how you can join us for the adventure of a lifetime at:



1300 905 188



missionaustralia.com.au/trek

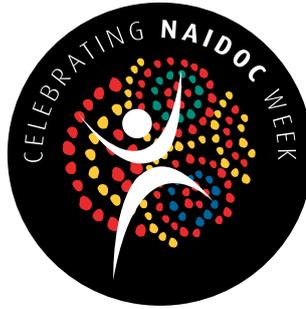


Get \$280 off

*your registration
fee when you
register before
31 October 2018*



CELEBRATING NAIDOC WEEK



BECAUSE OF HER,
We Can!

8-15 JULY 2018



Painting stories

When Stringybark Centre resident Brian Forrester was asked to brighten up the facility with a mural, he gladly accepted the challenge.

"This artwork represents the MacDonnell Ranges in Alice Springs," Brian explained. "It is a dreamtime story of many caterpillars joined in a line which change colours just like Uluru. It also features a turtle and three countrymen. The three countrymen are myself and two friends I've made during my time at Stringybark."

Brian now lives with these two friends in Mission Australia supported accommodation. They plan to help each other to stay healthy and on the right track.

Brian came to the Stringybark Centre with an aim to "get his life back together". He says that the support he's received from the whole Stringybark team during the 13-week program has enabled him to do this.

The Stringybark Centre is a treatment facility in the NT for people affected by alcohol and other drugs. In partnership with Top End Health, the facility has 90 beds for men and women in the greater Darwin region.