

Southern Region and Specialist

Regional Director's Report

The Southern Region and Specialist Services is an unusual blend of State wide and regional out-of-home care services, as well as a unique educational service. The out-of-home care services range from the low end supported Lead Tenant Services at McAuley Child and Family Services to the highly intensive services at TIERS, which caters for some of the most challenging young people in the State.

The year has been marked by the extremely successful transition of the St Vincent's School from the old St Vincent's Boys Home, South Melbourne site to its current site in Maidstone, which is fully equipped with 'state of the art' educational technology. The new school was blessed by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Most Reverend Dennis Hart on 22nd March, 2002.

The process of transition was remarkably smooth and credit goes to the program manager, Marwin Austerberry, and her staff for their tireless dedication and commitment in orchestrating this move.

The students especially, have benefited enormously from the new school, not only in terms of the quality of the resources, but also by now attending a facility which looks and feels like a proper, albeit small scale school. The other important feature of looking like a 'real' school is that it will make it easier for those students returning to mainstream schooling to make the psychological jump from our specialised setting.

McAuley continues to develop as a niche service for children requiring out-of-home care in a family group home setting. The recruitment of good quality staff continues to progress well and the case management team have had excellent feedback from the legal profession, therapists, Department of Human Services and schools, regarding the quality of care, case reports and progress of children. It is particularly noteworthy that the

service has a high number of siblings in its care – in one case a sibling group of four. The majority of the children are over 12 years of age. A new home will provide a first class environment for four young people in our care. We acknowledge the support and financial commitment of Kids Under Cover and Brighton Rotary for this project.

A challenge for the region will be to further enhance McAuley and broaden its service mix. The Southern Region in which McAuley operates is to undergo a major departmental review of out-of-home care services. The challenge for McAuley will be to look at how it may configure and locate itself in any potential service re-design.

Staff:

52 Full time, 13 Part time and 11 Casual

Expenditure:

\$4,693,999



Brian Mitchell
*Regional Director
Southern and
Specialist
Services*



Michael Girolami
*Acting Regional
Director Southern
and Specialist
Services from
May 2002*



*Archbishop Hart
blessing St Vincent's
School.*