

## Barwon Region

MacKillop Family Services offers services in the Barwon region to children and young people in Geelong, Colac and on the Bellarine Peninsula. The diverse and innovative range of services include specialist education services, services for families of children with disabilities, foster care and residential care services for children and young people and outreach youth and family services.

As always the focus has been on the achievement of good outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The child and youth services continued to provide over 90 out-of-home placements for children and young people each day. Many of the placements were with our foster parents, and I am extremely appreciative of their ongoing commitment and support.

Several young people have successfully left care after many years with the organisation, and continue to receive our support. It has been a wonderful experience to share their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, and reflect on their achievements over many years. Our education services have developed a strong relationship with the Gordon TAFE demonstrated by their generosity in providing us with a classroom one day a week. This enables our students to experience learning in an adult environment, and ease their transition into further training or work. Again it has been inspiring to see young people move into pre-apprenticeship training, after many years of missed education.

Our disability services were acknowledged for their exemplary respite support services by a Department of Human Services consultant,

and this year ran their first camp for young people with disabilities at our Queenscliff Holiday House, renovated to enable disability access.

The development of the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan has enabled all staff, caregivers and volunteers to have some input into the future direction of MacKillop Family Services. The process was very consultative and has generated a great deal of discussion and interest. Involvement of young people in the consultation was much appreciated by the young people themselves who contributed to a focus group held at St. Augustine's Education and Training.

Both the Whittington and North Geelong sites have undergone some refurbishment in the last twelve months. The St. Augustine's administration area and Genevieve House (St Helen's School) were completed late in 2004 and this was celebrated with a very successful launch in April 2005. A parent of a student gave a very moving speech outlining what St. Augustine's had meant to her family. Further works will be commenced early in 2006. The North Geelong site was completed this year and offers an outstanding work environment. My thanks must be extended to all staff at North Geelong for their patience, resilience and continued professionalism in less than ideal and often cramped work conditions during the refurbishment.

The continued support of volunteers and our many community supporters is crucial to the continued success and diversity of our services. I would like to thank the MacKillop Angels and the volunteers at St Augustine's Clothing and Collectables



and at the Ocean Grove Opportunity Shop for their continued kindness and generosity in donating their time to support us.

United Way continues to support our organization in a significant way. We offer our sincere thanks.

We have solid and effective professional relationships with many agencies and Government Departments. We would particularly like to acknowledge the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Victorian Communities, the Catholic Education Office, the School Focused Youth Service, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and Australian Catholic University.

All of the above could not be achieved without the strong commitment, versatility and talents of our staff, and the Barwon management team. They have managed excessive workloads, redevelopments and program expansion with enormous goodwill and perseverance.

We look forward to the coming year continuing our work with Geelong families, providing developmental opportunities to children and young people, continuing quality service improvements and research to ensure service effectiveness.

Anne Condon  
Regional Director Barwon

## Bayview Disability Services

Bayview Disability Services provides a range of services to assist families caring for children with moderate to severe disabilities in Geelong and surrounding areas.

*Family Options* provides case management and long term home based care for seven children and young people who, for a range of reasons, can no longer live with their families on a full time basis.

*RAPT (Respite and Part Time Care)* provides respite and part time care for fourteen families of children with disabilities, in the homes of trained volunteer caregivers. This program recognizes that all families of children with a disability need a break and that another family in the community may be able to provide a skilled and caring option to complement the child's own family environment.

*Making a Difference Program* provides flexible support packages that "makes a difference" to 109 families in the community caring for children with disabilities. The support includes case management and brokerage funding for purchase of additional services and equipment needed by families. The support can be either short term in response to a particular need or crisis, or can provide ongoing intensive case management and support.

*Contracted Case Management* – Increasingly we are being contracted to provide case management for children with disabilities, complex medical conditions and injuries through Disability Services Individualised



Support Packages, Royal Children's Hospital's Family Choice Program, and the Transport Accident Commission.

*Continence Scheme* administers funding to 106 families for the cost of continence products for school aged children with disabilities.

**Program Manager:**  
Karyn Hobday

**Staff:**

One team leader, 3 full time and 5 part time case managers with multi-disciplinary backgrounds of social work, welfare studies, counselling, nursing, occupational therapy. PT administrative support.

**Highlights:**

- In depth consultation with families involved with the Making a Difference Program by an independent Project Officer highlighted the program's flexibility and responsiveness to families' needs.
- Presentation at CIDA conference May 2005 of findings of the Making a Difference consultation.
- Recognition of innovative service provision and

documentation of this in the "Review and Redevelopment of Support for Children with a Disability and their Families" conducted by Margaret Wagstaff for the Department of Human Services

- Achievement of recurrent funding from Department of Human Services for After School Youth Group and relocation of this program to St Augustines.
- Provision of additional group programs for children with disabilities and family members – sibling support, parent support group, pampering days for mums, rock climbing day for dads, holiday outings for children with disabilities, an overnight camp for high-needs adolescents.
- Consolidation of long term and respite placements of children with disabilities with volunteer caregivers. The children with disabilities in both Family Options and RAPT placements continue to thrive.
- Program Manager awarded DHS Ethel Temby Study Tour Award to study Person Centred Planning as applied to children with disabilities and their families in England.

## **Mercy Children's Services**

Mercy Children's Services provides foster care and specialised home based care for children and young people in the Barwon region. The services extend to Colac in the Western District of Victoria.

*Geelong and Colac Foster Care* provides foster care services for children and young people in Geelong, Surfcoast, Bellarine Peninsula, parts of Golden Plains Shire & the Colac Area.

On any night in the last twelve months MacKillop Family Services has cared for more than 70 children and young people in the Barwon area. Foster Care is provided to families who require emergency, temporary or respite care or where there is Child Protection involvement.

Foster parents provide care for children and young people in the foster parents' own homes and receive support, training and financial reimbursement from MacKillop Family Services. Currently Mercy has 75 caregivers. Not all caregivers have a current placement.

*Specialised Home Based Care.* This service provides foster care for children with challenging behaviours and special needs. MacKillop Family Services provides intensive support, training and financial reimbursement to caregivers. On any day there is an average of 15 children in specialised home based care placements.

*Share the Care* aims to support and maintain long term placements, by providing day activities

and respite for children and young people, while providing long term caregivers with a break. This is achieved through

- Respite care – the child or young person spends time with a family or individual in order to provide respite to the long term caregivers.
- Mentor program for children and young people in long term care. A child or young person is matched with a volunteer and spends time with them in the community on a day activity.

*Mercy Respite Centre, Point Lonsdale* provides a respite centre for mothers and young children to enable them to enjoy a peaceful time away from the day to day stresses. The Mercy Respite Centre at Pt Lonsdale has provided 36 families over the past year with short term care when they need time out from stressful situations.

*Planned Respite Care (PRC)* is a voluntary monthly weekend respite care service. The target is to provide care for over 30 children a month.

**Program Manager:** Christine Cuff (until 5<sup>th</sup> August 2005)

**Acting Program Manager:** Lyn Burton (5<sup>th</sup> August - October 31<sup>st</sup> 2005)

**New Program Manager:** Grant Hamilton (commences 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005)

**Staff:** 8 full time staff and 4 part time staff. Over 75 volunteer caregivers provide crisis, short term and long term care.

### **Highlights**

During 2004/2005 Mercy Children's Services

- Had approximately 75 children and young people in foster care and specialised home based care on any given night during this period
- Consistently out-performed its daily target for the placement of children and young people in care
- Worked effectively and successfully with DHS on a number of cases to ensure the best possible outcome for children
- Accredited and trained new caregivers in both the Geelong and Colac Regions
- The Planned Respite Care Program (PRC) supported 13 families each month as a preventative care measure for families experiencing crisis
- The Share the Care (STC) program has consistently offered respite placements for carers who need a well deserved break
- Dr. Daniel Hughes, an attachment specialist from USA, undertook a comprehensive seminar series for workers and carers on Attachment Disorders and behavioural management specifically for children in care.

## MacKillop Youth Services (Barwon)

MacKillop Youth Services (Barwon) provides a continuum of care model which allows high needs adolescents to be cared for in an adaptive and supportive environment. Young people are provided with a variety of care models to suit their needs and to be able to remain within the Youth Services Program for as long as they need the support.

All of the young people have case management support to assist and enhance their social and emotional well being whilst maintaining connections to their family and community.

*The Reconnect Early Intervention Program* provides case management support to young people and their families who are experiencing difficulties with relationships, peers or education.

MacKillop has established a partnership with White Lion Mentoring Program to assist/support young people leaving care.

MacKillop Youth Services provides:

*Residential Care:* three Residential Facilities caring for three high needs adolescents who require medium to long term out of home care. One Reception/ Transition Facility caring for up to four young people who require short term care whilst their longer term needs are worked through.

*Stepped Care Program Specialised Home Based Care:* Provides home based care for adolescents who require short term, medium

or long term care within a family environment.

*Lead Tenant:* two Lead Tenant Facilities with Volunteer Carers providing supported accommodation for young people transitioning from care.

*Supported Community Placements:* Providing case work support for young people who have moved into independent living.

*Case Management Service:* Intensive Case Management for all of our young people in care and throughout their transition through our care services.

*Re-Connect Program:* Commonwealth funded early intervention case management service for up to 16 young people who are homeless or at risk of leaving home.

*CIRC Education Support Worker:* Providing intensive educational support for all young people in residential care to access education services.

*After Hours Support Worker* who supports all the staff and volunteers providing direct care to all of our young people.

**Program Manager:**  
Ruth Dorman

### Staffing

Program Manager,  
2 Co-ordinators,  
4 Case Managers, Education Support Worker, after hours Support Worker, 4 Residential Supervisors, 24 permanent part-time residential staff, 15 casual residential staff, 15 Specialised Home Based Carers, 4 volunteer Lead Tenant's.

### Highlights

MacKillop Youth Services staff and volunteers aim to provide a high quality of care for all of our adolescents, whilst at the same time maintaining family and community connections.

- This year, we provided emergency, short term, long term and transitional care for over 150 adolescents all of who were provided with a continuum of care model to suit their individual needs.
- Many young people successfully transitioned from care and moved to independent living options with the continued support of the case management team.
- Successfully applied for funding to commence a Learn Right Drive Right Program for young people in care to gain their Drivers License.
- Continued to be a leader in the field with the successful implementation of LAC (Looking After Children) across the Youth Services Program.

## St Augustine's Education and Training

St Augustine's provides a range of specialist education services for children and young people under the age of 16 years who are at risk of leaving mainstream school or who are already disconnected from mainstream education.

The following services are provided in Geelong.

*St Helen's Special School* is a full time withdrawal education service for eight primary students exhibiting severe difficulty in mainstream schools due learning, social, behavioral and emotional issues.

*St. Augustine's Special School* provides a full time withdrawal education service for 12 secondary students aged 12-14.5 years experiencing severe difficulty in mainstream schools.

*St Augustine's – New Street* offers a transition to work or training program for 16 secondary students aged 14 -16 years.

*Education Mobile Unit* offers a full day or half day withdrawal education service for primary and secondary students who are considered to be at risk of disconnecting from mainstream education. The service is funded by the three DE&T networks in Geelong and referrals come from the schools.

*Youth Ed-venture Program (YEP)* is an outreach education service incorporating adventure therapy for eight young people disconnected from



education. Priority is given to young people in out-of-care and experiencing mental health issues.

### Program Manager

Ms Jan Smith

### Staff

8 full time teachers, 4 full time youth workers, 2 part time teachers, 1 part time youth worker, 1 part time instructor and 1 full time activity worker

### Highlights

- Provided a creative and flexible education service to over 100 children and young people
- Opened the refurbished administration area and St Helen's School with a very successful official opening
- Gained funding for a further three years for EMU from the three Department of Education & Training Geelong networks.
- Implemented a new learning program in St Helen's School – Program Achieve
- Facilitated an adventure learning challenge in a secondary school.

