

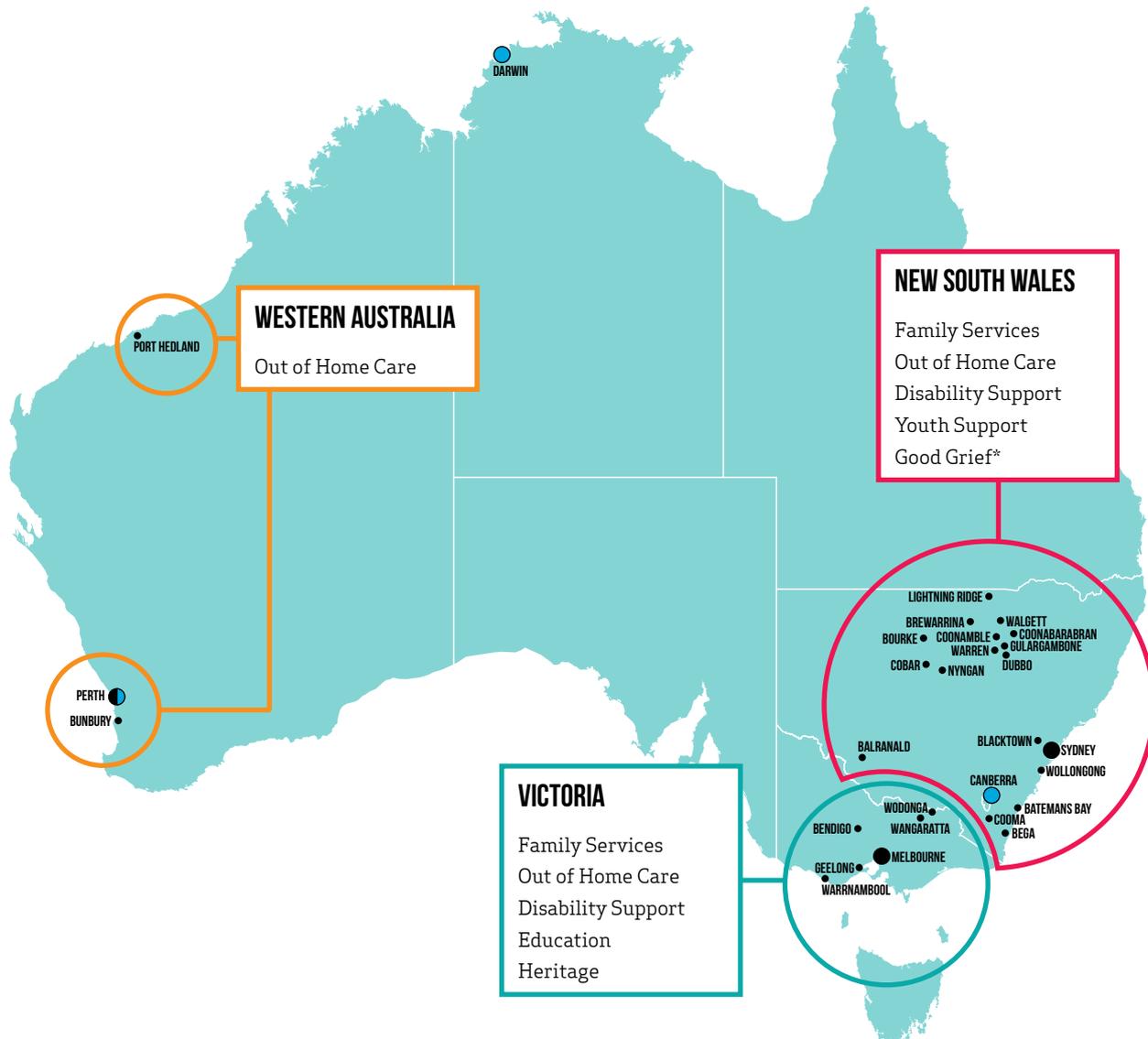


**MacKillop
Family Services**

ANNUAL REPORT 2016 – 17

**CELEBRATING
20 YEARS**

WHERE WE WORK



● The Sanctuary Institute Australia works in all states and territories

* *Good Grief is located in North Sydney. However, its grief and loss programs are delivered across Australia and internationally in New Zealand, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.*



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal people as Australia’s First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services. We embrace and commit to the spirit of self-determination and reconciliation.

In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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LEADERSHIP
EMPOWER NURTURE
OPPORTUNITY

WORKING WITH SANCTUARY

We bring our values to life with the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is an evidence-supported, whole-of-organisation framework that is trauma-informed, focused on safety and guides how we respond as an agency. It enables a healing community with shared knowledge, values, language and practice.

OUR SANCTUARY COMMITMENTS

The seven Sanctuary Commitments underpin MacKillop’s ability to create a safe environment that teaches people to cope effectively with stress and trauma, and to heal. These Commitments are:



NON VIOLENCE

Mean what you say and don’t be mean when you say it



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Look out for yours and other peoples’ feelings



SOCIAL LEARNING

We all learn from each other, and teach each other



DEMOCRACY

Everyone gets heard



OPEN COMMUNICATION

Be honest and share information



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We all help each other... it takes a village to raise a child



GROWTH AND CHANGE

We are open to new ideas and ways of thinking

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Over the last 20 years, MacKillop Family Services has expanded our footprint across Victoria, NSW and WA. This timeline highlights key milestones from our journey

1997

MacKillop Family Services launches with 200 staff under the leadership of CEO Paul Linossier

1998

Heritage and Information Service is established

The Substance Abuse Family Support Service commences

2001

MacKillop begins hosting reunions for past residents and staff of the seven founding agencies. These reunions continue today

2004

A history of MacKillop’s founding agencies *Holding onto Hope*, is published

2008

MacKillop opens a Family Relationship Centre in Melbourne’s West, in partnership with Relationships Australia and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre

OUR STORY

At MacKillop, we believe every child deserves the best. And the best place for any child is in a supportive and nurturing family, where they can heal from past trauma and develop to their potential.

Our strategic goals put families at the heart of our vision, and we are passionate about empowering communities and families to create safe and supportive home environments in which children can be loved, awaken hope in their minds and access the opportunities they need to thrive.

Our existence as MacKillop Family Services began 20 years ago, on 1 July 1997. But our history extends back more than 150 years, when the Sisters of Mercy, Christian Brothers and Sisters of St Joseph began their work in Australia, establishing homes for children who were orphaned, destitute or neglected, and for families in need of care and support.

Just like our founders, we are deeply committed to our work and we are driven by social justice. We continue to live the values of the courageous and visionary Mary MacKillop, Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice who inspire us today.

Our unwavering passion to improve the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families propels us to continually evolve and improve. We actively look for new ways to progress our programs and services based on the latest evidence, and we work with organisations, governments and communities to make change happen.

We believe in genuine collaboration built on equality and respect.

We believe it takes all of us to create meaningful change.

We believe healthy families are the backbone of healthy communities.

WE ARE MACKILLOP FAMILY SERVICES.

OUR VALUES

JUSTICE

We believe in the right of all people to be treated fairly and justly.

HOPE

We seek to foster a hope that assists people to find meaning.

COLLABORATION

We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination and partnership.

COMPASSION

We seek to foster compassion, an attitude of the heart and a response to suffering.

RESPECT

We seek to act with respect to each other, the earth and all creation.

2009

Micaela Cronin is appointed as CEO

Former Edmund Rice ministries join MacKillop, expanding our footprint to NSW

2011

St Augustine's and St Helen's specialist schools, located in Whittington, amalgamate to become MacKillop Specialist School

2012

Start of journey to implement the Sanctuary Model

Launch services in Warrnambool with three residential homes

2013

Begin delivering out of home care services in WA

Open refurbished site at Cecil Street (former St Vincent's Boys' Orphanage) including the Heritage Centre

2016

Dr Robyn Miller commences as CEO

Certified as an accredited Sanctuary organisation

Cara in the East of Melbourne transfers its services to MacKillop

2017

MacKillop reaches 1,000 staff

NSW services double in size

MacKillop Rural Community Services, Good Grief and St Joseph's Cowper transfer their services to MacKillop

CHAIRPERSON REPORT



ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WE ARE IMPLEMENTING CHALLENGING REFORM AGENDAS AIMED AT INTERVENING EARLIER TO ENHANCE OUTCOMES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES.

MacKillop Family Services was established 20 years ago on a foundation of courage, compassion and revolutionary innovation, when seven Catholic agencies set aside their individual needs to work towards a shared vision of delivering services for vulnerable children, young people and families and advocating for their needs. The congregational leaders at the time described the establishment as “a strong symbol of a collaborative church in action”. What a prophetic statement.

While much has changed since MacKillop first opened its doors, we remain committed to the spirit of our founders. We share their commitment to social justice; to fostering hope for the most marginalised in our communities; and to working with courage and determination where the need is greatest. Like our founders, we never stand still.

It is fitting that in our 20th year, the commitment of our founding agencies to mission has been reinvigorated, with significant growth across Australia through the transfer of three agencies to MacKillop – Cara, MacKillop Rural Community Services, and Good Grief – two of which are ministries of our founding congregations. We also reached agreement for St Joseph’s Cowper to be incorporated as of 1 October 2017.

The addition of these services demonstrates the trust we have earned from our founders, and their confidence that our organisation will honour their mission and ethos, and build on the legacy established over more than 150 years of service delivery.

Our growth is a necessary response to an increasing demand for our work. Across the country, we are implementing challenging reform agendas aimed at intervening earlier to enhance outcomes for vulnerable

children, young people and families. In some ways, this renewed focus on early intervention is a case of “back to the future”, as building the capacity of children, young people and families was at the heart of the work of our three visionary founders – Edmund Rice, Catherine McCauley and Mary MacKillop – and of our founding agencies.

Any period of significant change is challenging, and we are particularly fortunate that MacKillop is being capably led through this period by our CEO, Dr Robyn Miller. Robyn’s extensive clinical background focused on working with families who have experienced trauma and abuse, combined with her government and consulting experience, positions her perfectly to take advantage of this opportunity and lead us into a bold new future.

Looking ahead, it is a critically important time for us as a church agency. The imminent release of the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is a watershed moment and a significant opportunity to enhance our child safety. We look forward to this opportunity.

I would like to conclude by acknowledging our Members and my fellow board members – particularly Jarrod Coysh, who stood down this year after nine years of exemplary service – for their committed service over the past year. Their wisdom and counsel has been instrumental to the outcomes we have achieved as an organisation, and has MacKillop well positioned for its next 20 years.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Des Powell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Des Powell
Chairperson

CEO REPORT



“ THE EXTRAORDINARY GROWTH DURING THE YEAR COULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED WITHOUT OUR SHARED ENERGY AND PASSION TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Looking back on my first full year as CEO at MacKillop Family Services, I want to acknowledge the warm welcome I have received from our Board, Members and generous, talented staff. Our 20th year has provided an opportunity to look back and celebrate, and look forward with plans and strategy for the future. The extraordinary growth during the year could not have occurred without our shared energy and passion to make a difference to children and families. Our genuine commitment to the rights of children and families to be safe, to be loved, to have opportunities and to be treated respectfully is evident across all corners of MacKillop.

We are in the midst of a period of extraordinary reform in the family and community services sector. Across Australia, governments are taking action to support families where children are vulnerable, prevent children and young people entering care, and enable family reunification. Thankfully there is growing recognition in government policy nationally that connection to culture is critical to identity and healing for Aboriginal children and young people. We are actively working with Aboriginal communities to promote self-determination as they provide culturally safe support for vulnerable children and families. The following pages will detail some of the highlights of this work.

Over the past year, we have realigned our strategic goals and the way we deliver programs to ensure we are at the forefront of sector reform, and can improve our ability to impact positively on the lives of those we work with.

Firstly, we have invested in evaluating and developing the evidence-base for the programs we deliver that support and strengthen families. We are pleased to have introduced

three Cradle to Kinder programs in Victoria, and six new family preservation and restoration programs in different areas of New South Wales. We have also developed a family violence program in the south of Melbourne, while our Family Relationship Centre in Broadmeadows has introduced innovative responses to family violence.

The Sanctuary Institute Australia gives us a national role in influencing trauma-informed practice across the country. We are thrilled to be delivering Sanctuary consultation and training to organisations far and wide. The appointment of four principal practitioners also demonstrates our commitment to supporting frontline carers, practitioners and supervisors.

Child safety remains a critical focus. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has provided critical insight into the importance of listening to children and having the right people, culture and leadership.

As I reflect on the past year, I do so with a sense of energy and optimism for the year ahead. I would like to thank Des Powell, the Board of Directors, Sr Kath Tierney and the Members and my Executive team for their support and encouragement. Thank you also to our staff, foster carers and volunteers, whose dedication and commitment is extraordinary. Finally, I thank the government departments, individual donors and philanthropic partners who fund our work. Only together can we make a difference.


Dr Robyn Miller
CEO

2016 – 17 HIGHLIGHTS

1100+ STAFF

across Victoria, New South Wales
and Western Australia
(25% increase)

851 foster carers
(17.3% increase)



100% increase in the size
of our foster care program in
Western Australia

723 

former residents supported to
access their records

Almost
7000



children, young people and
families supported across
Victoria, NSW & WA

551 FAMILIES

with children with a disability
assisted with case management
and support

Our state services
in New South Wales



DOUBLED IN SIZE

OVER 1000 

children and young people
looked after in home based care
(foster care) and residential care

LAUNCHED A NEW



primary school at Maidstone in Melbourne's West

Our schools and education services supported

326 YOUNG PEOPLE

an increase on the last year of



Barwon



Metro Melbourne

EDUCATED 67



students across Geelong and Maidstone schools

1000

families accessed our Family Relationship Centre in Broadmeadows

22



children supported with a Targeted Care Package

7



new early intervention programs to support vulnerable families (See page 15)

OVER 140



children with a disability participated in our School Holiday Program

Increased our residential care homes from



40 TO 45



Francis with his foster child

BRINGING ABORIGINAL CHILDREN HOME TO A HEALING PLACE

Throughout its 35-year history, Roelands Village (formerly Roelands Mission), in Western Australia's Bunbury region, hosted some 600 Aboriginal children who were removed from their families. Today, one of its former residents has returned to the site as a respected Aboriginal elder who is changing the way Aboriginal children are being cared for when they cannot be with their parents.

Francis is part of an innovative program being run by Woolkabunning Kiaka Inc in partnership with MacKillop, which is placing children with Aboriginal foster carers to ensure they grow in an environment of cultural understanding and belonging.

"As one of the stolen generation, where my family and culture was taken away from me, I wanted to assist young Aboriginal kids - to

bring them back home, back to family and on to country," he says.

Francis currently cares for Harrison*, 9, whose short life has been spent in multiple foster and residential homes. "Harrison arrived hurt, untrusting and with a lot of anger. But he now has a sense of understanding about who he is and what his community and Noongar culture is."

From not being accepted in a school environment, Harrison is now settled at school five days a week. While Harrison sometimes finds it difficult to articulate what living at Roelands means to him, Francis says he often expresses his feelings by way of hugs and saying 'thank you'.

"And sometimes he will simply kiss me on the head and say, 'I'm glad you got me, pop!'"

** Identifying details have been changed*

LEADERSHIP

LEADING CHANGE NATIONALLY TO INFLUENCE POLICY AND PRACTICE QUALITY, AND BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS IN THE FUTURE

MacKillop is committed to leading the development of trauma-informed practice nationally and to contribute to better outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families. We are focused on building an evidence-base through research; drawing on our frontline experience to influence government policy; engaging with peer organisations to share best-practice approaches to service delivery; and enhancing practice quality and safety.

In the past year we demonstrated leadership by:

ESTABLISHING THE SANCTUARY INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA

- In 2016, MacKillop became the official training provider of the Sanctuary Model in Australia, with the establishment of the Sanctuary Institute Australia. The Sanctuary Model provides practical tools for working with people who have experienced trauma, and creating a culture that is safe, supportive and caring. In its first full year of operation, the Sanctuary Institute was engaged to support three not-for-profit organisations to achieve Sanctuary accreditation and provide tailored training sessions to other organisations across the sector.
- Within MacKillop, the Institute trains staff, clients and volunteers to deepen their understanding of trauma-informed practice. We also developed a Sanctuary in Schools model to strengthen practice in our schools and encourage mainstream schools to better support students who have experienced trauma.

BUILDING AN EVIDENCE BASE THROUGH RESEARCH

- We partnered with Deakin University to evaluate the impact of the Sanctuary Model within MacKillop. Engaging with staff across all MacKillop sites and programs, a literature and systematic review of Sanctuary and other trauma-informed models was completed. The evaluation will be completed in 2018-19.
- We partnered with Deakin University to evaluate the Cradle to Kinder program, which is being delivered by MacKillop in three regions across Victoria. Cradle to Kinder provides intensive and long-term family and early parenting support to vulnerable young mothers (aged less than 25 years). This evaluation report will inform the future of the Cradle to Kinder program in Victoria and other early intervention services.
- We partnered with the University of Melbourne to develop a safe and respectful relationships program. This project is working with experts and former care leavers to tailor interventions to reduce the incidence of harmful sexual behaviour and sexual exploitation of young people in out of home care. These interventions will be piloted in MacKillop residential homes in 2017-18.
- In NSW, we partnered with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) on its Rethinking Restoration project, which aims to pilot a shared parenting alternative to foster care. The pilot will help inform the design of a program that seeks to promote family restoration.

LEADERSHIP

ADVOCACY

- We signed the Family Matters Statement of Commitment, signifying our intent to work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and community controlled organisations to reduce the number of Aboriginal children and young people in out of home care.
- We contributed to the legislative review of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* in WA. Our submission advocated for a stronger focus on cultural safety to reduce the number of Aboriginal children and young people in care; improved practice and processes such as cultural plans, case management, carer registers and monitoring; a focus on trauma-informed care; and better support for young people leaving care.
- We submitted a report to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Protection, established to strengthen therapeutic, trauma-informed practice in child protection services and reduce the number of children in care through a focus on prevention. MacKillop CEO Dr Robyn Miller appeared at the inquiry's public hearing in November 2016.
- Our submission to the statutory review of the NSW *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*, called for national consistency and conformity for Working With Children Checks.
- Nationally, we sought to improve the experiences of vulnerable families requiring family law services by responding to the Future Focus of the Family Law Services consultation paper (Attorney General's Department). In our submission, we stressed the importance of collaborative practice between community service organisations, community legal centres and cultural organisations; support for culturally diverse communities and those experiencing family violence; and a focus on child-centred practice.
- MacKillop's Director of Research and Policy, Dr Nick Halfpenny, gave evidence in Case Study 50 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Dr Halfpenny's evidence highlighted the governance structures and procedures MacKillop has implemented to ensure we are a child-safe organisation.
- Our CEO, Dr Robyn Miller, publicly advocated for reforms to residential care, meeting with state and federal ministers to campaign for policies and funding to better support vulnerable children, including those transitioning to the NDIS.
- MacKillop is on the steering committee for the Home Stretch campaign, which calls for governments to give young people the option of remaining in care until the age of 21. We believe this option gives young people the support they need to establish their independence.

SECTOR LEADERSHIP

MacKillop staff are actively engaged in an extensive range of governance groups and advisory committees to inform and influence policy across the areas in which we operate. Significant appointments include:

- Our CEO to the:
 - Roadmap Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group (RIMAG), established to oversee the implementation of the Victorian Roadmap for Reform, a once-in-a generation change to the way children, youth and family support services are delivered. MacKillop is also represented on several RIMAG working groups.
 - Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPS) board. CPS is an independent company established by the Catholic Church to develop, audit and report on compliance with professional standards to protect children and vulnerable people.

- Aboriginal Children's Forum, which supports self-determination and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) caring for Indigenous children. MacKillop is actively preparing to transition its Aboriginal children in care to ACCOs.
- Members of our Senior Management team are represented on the boards of peak child welfare organisations in Victoria (Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare; Catholic Social Services Victoria) and NSW (Association of Children's Welfare Agencies).

MacKillop has also devoted considerable effort to sharing our expertise by presenting at a wide range of conferences, including:

- Eusarf 2016 Conference (Spain)
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Research Symposium (VIC)
- Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) conference (NSW)
- Australian Childhood Foundation Conference (VIC and WA)
- Child Aware Conference (WA)
- Improving Outcomes in Out of Home Care Conference (NSW)
- Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference (WA)
- National Therapeutic Residential Care Alliance (NSW)
- Doing School Differently Conference (VIC)
- Australian Youth AOD Conference (VIC)
- ANZATSA Symposium 2017 - Collaboration in Practice, Sexual Safety in OOH (NSW)
- World Social Work Day Conference 2017 (VIC)
- Department of Family & Community Services Practice Conference (NSW)

ENHANCING PRACTICE QUALITY AND SAFETY

The Practice Quality team was strengthened at the end of 2016 to support management and frontline staff to maintain the highest standards of practice quality, and embed the systems and processes necessary to ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements.

Highlights from the past year include:

- Embedding the Child Safe Standards, introduced by the Victorian government to organisations that have direct and regular contact with children. We adopted all seven standards, which aim to drive cultural change, so that protecting children from abuse is part of everyday thinking and practice.
- Being selected as one of three agencies in NSW to trial the new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) developed by the Department of Families and Community Services. The QAF pilot seeks to provide out of home care caseworkers with access to reliable and comprehensive information about the safety, permanency and the wellbeing of children in care.
- Supporting quality improvements and service developments across the organisation, including internal quality audits of client files and residential care homes.
- Restructuring MacKillop's client and stakeholder complaints process, and appointing a dedicated Complaints Officer, to ensure we have systems in place to gather and respond to feedback.
- Preparing for the introduction of a new Reportable Conduct Scheme by the Commission for Children and Young People in Victoria and a new Client Incident Management System for the Victorian government, which will enhance incidents reporting across all three states in which we operate.
- Appointing a NSW Quality Coordinator to manage registration, accreditation and re-accreditation requirements and service standards.



Mia Baysa, *MacKillop Family Services*

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

Mia Baysa's passion for her work stems from her own experience as a young person in care. Mia entered out of home care shortly after arriving in Australia from the Philippines, aged 11.

Her experiences in care, including time spent at a home managed by our Cara Program, fuelled a passion for supporting young people to make the tough transition from out of home care to independent living.

"Leaving care can be a really hard time for young people. It's so important that they feel empowered and confident to be a part of any decisions that affect their life," Mia says.

As a mentor, lead tenant and residential worker, Mia works with two Aboriginal siblings to ensure they recognise and honour their heritage, and uses her own experience of moving to a new country to gently gain the trust of young people in care from other countries.

As she plans for a career in the police force, Mia continues to advocate for young people in out of home care through her involvement in a state government initiative exploring how to improve the transition process from care to independent living.

By directly supporting young people, advocating on their behalf and sharing her own story, Mia is inspiring young people to achieve their best as they transition to independent living.

EMPOWER

WE EMPOWER CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES TO TRANSFORM THEIR OWN LIVES, AND WE STRIVE TO CREATE HEALTHY FAMILIES, SUPPORTED BY HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

EMPOWERING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Every parent wants the best for their child. But some families require additional support with the challenging task of being a parent. Issues such as family violence, substance abuse, mental illness and low educational attainment can all have a negative impact on parenting skills.

Our Family Support Services assist some of community's most vulnerable families. Across NSW and Victoria, we offer 42 family and disability support services, working closely with parents and their children to resolve problems, build on strengths and help maintain safe and loving homes. These programs reached close to 7000 families.

In the past year, we strategically focused on preventing children entering care and building our capacity to support vulnerable families, with a particular commitment to earlier intervention to prevent the breakdown of the family unit, and promote reunification once children had entered the child protection system.

Highlights of the year include:

- Launching a new family preservation and restoration service in NSW, funded by the NSW government. Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare is an evidence-based, intensive intervention program aimed at keeping families together, and preventing engagement with child protection. We work with families with children aged 0-17 years who have experienced issues such as family violence, and provide parenting education, family counselling and home management skills. Six highly-trained family therapy teams will deliver the program in Blacktown (Western Sydney), and we have partnered with Waminda – a women's health and welfare Aboriginal corporation – to deliver the program in Shellharbour and Nowra.

- Launching an early intervention parenting program – Cradle to Kinder – in three Victorian regions. The program targets vulnerable young mothers and their children with support that starts before birth and continues until the child is aged four, providing resources that build parenting skills to break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage. Where possible, fathers and extended families are included. MacKillop is partnering with Bendigo Community Health Services and CatholicCare Sandhurst in the Loddon region, and with Gateway Health in Ovens Murray. The program will also be provided in partnership with the Mercy Health O'Connell Family Centre to families living in Melbourne's inner east.

Over

1000 FAMILIES



supported through our Family Relationship Centre

- Commencing the pilot of a Safe Early Years program that provides therapeutic interventions for young families recovering from family violence. A multidisciplinary team, including maternal and child health nurses, supports families to access the services they need. MacKillop is funded by the Victorian government to pilot the program in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and Queen Elizabeth Centre throughout the Bayside, Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia regions.

EMPOWER

- Connecting 196 vulnerable families to supported playgroups. Our playgroups offer a culturally diverse and non-stigmatising environment for families, where they are introduced to support services, including maternal and child health and family violence services. Our work in Melbourne's western region was recognised in the 2016 Victorian Early Years Awards, where our Central West Shopping Centre Playgroup was a finalist.
- Developing a dispute resolution service model for our Family Relationship Centre in Broadmeadows to support separating or separated Indigenous or CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) families experiencing family violence. The federally-funded pilot aims to empower families to resolve family law disputes without going to court. In 2016-17 our Family Relationship Centre supported 1088 families in Melbourne's north west.

MACKILLOP LAUNCHES



early intervention services in regional Victoria

- Expanding our After Hours Service to respond to the growth of the organisation. This service ensures 24-hour support is provided to our family and out of home care clients, including call-out support to foster carers. They also provide after-hours phone advice, counselling and assistance with crisis events to McAuley Community Services for Women and have begun discussions with other external agencies to expand the service.
- Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the launch of St Anthony's Family Services. St Anthony's was one of the first programs in Victoria to provide outreach into the homes of vulnerable families, to help them to remain together. The innovative models piloted by the Sisters of St Joseph continue to influence approaches to social work and government policy to this day.

DEEPENING OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Across Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are over-represented in the out of home care system. At MacKillop, we know these children are more likely to have positive outcomes if they are supported to have strong connections to their culture. We are committed to providing culturally safe services and have actively engaged with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to ensure our programs facilitate cultural connection.

Highlights of our commitment to improved Aboriginal outcomes in the past year include:

- Partnering with ACCOs to deliver Cultural Awareness training across MacKillop. In WA, a Noongar Elder trained staff, while in Southern NSW, we engaged a Yuin Elder. Across NSW's Illawarra region and Western Sydney, we worked with local Elders, project partners and our own Aboriginal staff members, while in Victoria, training was delivered in partnership with VACCA.
- In our Victorian western metropolitan residential homes, we engaged Aboriginal artist, Nathan Patterson, to work with young Aboriginal people to create artwork to make their home environment more welcoming.
- Establishing new partnerships with WA-based ACCOs – Ebenezer Home (Perth) and Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation (Broome) – to support early intervention services for Aboriginal families.
- Working in partnership with Port Hedland's Wirrika Maya Aboriginal Health Service to provide appropriate and responsive foster care to Aboriginal children, ensuring they remain connected to country and culture. Thanks to a three-year partnership with Wirrika Maya, these children, who would have previously been placed in Perth and isolated from kin, can now be cared for by local Aboriginal carers in culturally-safe placements.

- Partnering with the Njernda Aboriginal Corporation in Echuca to better support at-risk Aboriginal families living in Victoria's north, particularly to provide more culturally-sensitive support through our early intervention parenting program, Cradle to Kinder.
- Launching an innovative pilot program with Woolkabunning Kiaka Inc at Roelands Village to strengthen the link Aboriginal foster children have with their country (see case study on p10).
- Working with the Department of Health and Human Services (Vic) to begin transitioning all Aboriginal children in out of home care to case management by ACCOs. The move reflects a key recommendation from Taskforce 1000 – a report into the rising number of Indigenous children in Victoria's child protection system – which advocates for giving Aboriginal agencies greater control over the way in which at-risk Indigenous children are cared for.
- Hosting Jim Morrison to share his experiences as a senior Noongar man and traditional custodian from WA's south west (where Roelands Village is based).
- Visiting significant Aboriginal sites along the Yarra River to learn the history of the Kulin nation in a tour hosted by the Koorie Heritage Trust.
- Having local Aboriginal artist, Nathan Patterson, run student workshops including an abridged recital of the Sorry speech at our MacKillop Schools.
- Hosting and attending National Sorry Day events across the country, including: a launch of the Roelands Village initiative at South Melbourne at which a panel of Community Leaders spoke about the impact of growing up as part of the stolen generations; a lunch at Blacktown, NSW, that saw over 20 staff reflect on the importance and meaning of the day; a flag-raising ceremony and smoking session with Melton City Council and the Hope Street Foundation; and attending a special screening of Mabo at the WA Makuru Film Festival.

Work begins on the **MACKILLOP RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN**

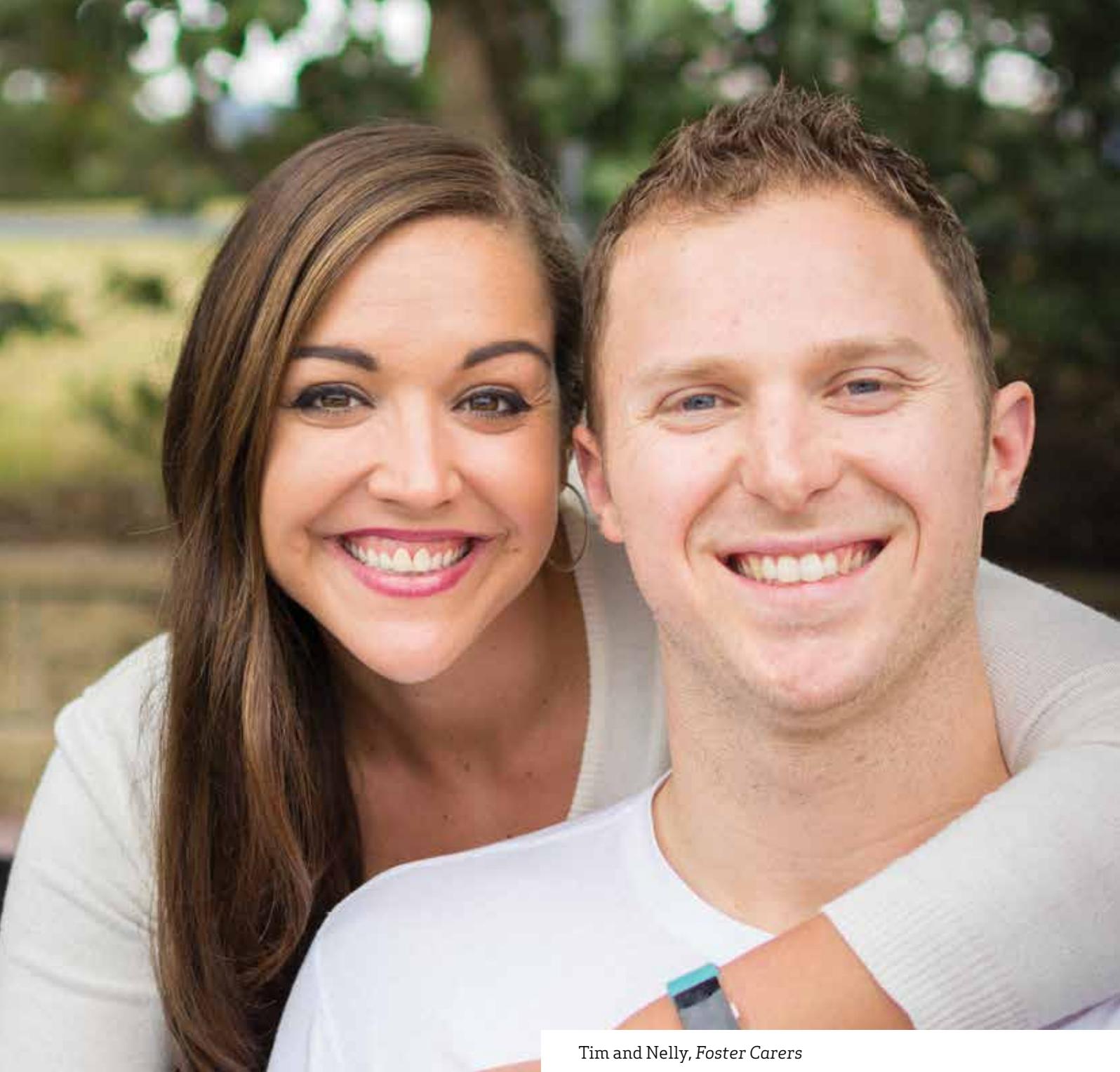
TRUTH IS AT THE HEART OF HEALING

The concept of truth-telling is central to reconciliation, so this year we began work on a formal Reconciliation Action Plan by undertaking a deep reflection on the past. MacKillop staff have embraced our commitment to reconciliation and engagement with Aboriginal communities. Some of the activities undertaken in the past year include:

- Hosting Andrew Jackomos, Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People in Victoria, to share his insights from his seminal Taskforce 1000 report.

IN MEMORIAM

We were saddened by the loss of Helen Mary Boots who passed away on 4 January 2017. Helen began her work empowering children and families at St Augustine's Youth and Family Service in Geelong prior to MacKillop's formation. She continued as part of Family Services based at Commercial Road, Footscray for 18 years. Helen's commitment to practice quality, supporting the development of staff, and always listening and responding to the needs of families has made a lasting impression on the life and work of MacKillop Family Services.



Tim and Nelly, *Foster Carers*

WHEN FATE STEPS IN

If it had not been for difficulty in having their own children, Tim and Nelly may never have considered foster care. But after several years of unsuccessful IVF treatments, the couple decided to take the plunge, prompted by Nelly's experience as a social worker.

In January 2017, they began caring for two sisters, aged 4 and 6, and shortly after the girls' brother joined the family.

"So many children don't get to live in a safe and stable environment," said Tim. "Becoming foster carers is probably the best thing we have ever done. The kids are beautiful, kind and smart, and while their behaviour can be challenging due to their

trauma history, we know that by showing them they are safe and loved, we can help them to achieve their potential."

With little traditions being established – a local dinner out on Friday nights and movie at home on a Saturday – the family is slowly settling into the comfortable routine of life.

"We would like all three children to become the best they can be. We try to do this by providing an environment where they are supported at home and at school. It's important to us that the kids feel safe and loved," said Tim.

"The children have made such huge strides and we have learned so much as foster parents. We feel like a real family together."

NURTURE

WE PROVIDE SAFE AND NURTURING HOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE UNABLE TO LIVE WITH THEIR OWN FAMILY

A secure, nurturing and caring home environment is essential for children and young people to thrive. In all three states in which we operate direct services, MacKillop provides foster, kinship (or relative) and residential care, and lead tenant support for children and young people who are unable – either temporarily or long-term – to live with their family. In NSW, we also offer early intervention and specialist homelessness support for young people and their families in crisis.

In the past year, MacKillop has supported close to 7000 children, young people and families across Victoria, NSW and WA.

PROVIDING CARE IN SAFE AND NURTURING HOMES

MacKillop's foster care program is supported by a dedicated team of 861 committed carers. Each carer is assessed, trained and accredited to provide a safe and loving home for children and young people. Ideally, these children will rejoin their birth family as soon as it is safe for them to do so.

Highlights of our foster care program in the past year include:

- A growth of 100 per cent in our WA foster care program and 23 per cent in NSW.
- Expanding the capacity of our Psychology Clinic, which provides free counselling for foster carers in Victoria. In the past year, we delivered 140 hours of counselling and support to foster carers and children in care. We also employed a clinical psychologist in WA to assist our care team – including foster carers and case managers – to support children and young people with complex needs; and a therapeutic practitioner – who is also a clinical psychologist – in NSW to work with foster carers and children in care.
- MacKillop's customised carer management system (CRM) – EDDI – was selected as the CRM platform of choice for the Victorian government's Fostering Connections project, which aims to recruit an additional 300 foster carers in Victoria to address a pressing shortfall. EDDI is now helping all 26 agencies across the state to manage their data more effectively.
- Opening a new foster care office in Hamilton, in Victoria's south-west, to provide additional face-to-face support for local carers.

23% NSW | **100% WA**
growth in foster care programs

- Collaborating with Connections UnitingCare to manage concurrent care placements to minimise delays in securing permanent families for children most in need. Such care allows for the necessary case planning and court processes to take place without impacting on the child's placement and is designed to improve permanent outcomes where reunification is unlikely to occur.
- Celebrating MacKillop carers Charlie and Silvana Young, who were finalists in Victoria's prestigious Protecting Children Awards. The nomination recognised their outstanding efforts in supporting a young Aboriginal infant in their care to remain connected to her culture, whilst also supporting her through extensive surgical treatments for a congenital heart condition.

NURTURE

- Acknowledging K, a child in our foster care program who received an Achievement Award at the 2016 Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) Conference, in recognition of his outstanding advocacy as a voice for children living in out of home care.
- Launching Transforming Lives, a targeted campaign to increase awareness and understanding about foster care, and increase enquiries across Victoria, NSW and WA. The integrated campaign saw enquiries increase by 28 per cent in the fourth quarter of the financial year.
- Introducing a centralised foster care enquiry line to provide a more responsive and welcoming first contact point for prospective carers. The enquiry line has had a demonstrable impact in making carers feel more comfortable and increased our conversion rate of new enquiries.
- Hosting 260 training sessions for potential foster carers to inform them about fostering with MacKillop and how we support them in their role.

22 

children supported with a Targeted Care Package

- Introducing training in trauma-informed care and the Sanctuary Model to our carers, providing them with the critical skills required to manage the behaviours of young people affected by trauma.
- Establishing a Foster Care Ambassador program, enlisting a small team of our most experienced carers to speak on MacKillop's behalf to their local communities about the benefits of being a foster carer and the rewards it brings.

- Partnering with the Arts Centre Melbourne on the First Call Fund, which provides carers and children with tickets for up to six shows each year. Thirty carers and children enjoyed seeing the musical, Air Play, early in 2017.

HELPING CHILDREN TO HEAL

Our residential care program provides homes in Victoria and NSW for children and young people up to the age of 18. Homes are staffed by MacKillop workers who have the skills to manage complex behaviours linked to trauma.

The past year has been particularly busy, with considerable growth in our residential care program in Victoria through merger activity and success in government tenders. In NSW, we collaborated with the Department of Family and Community Services as it reviewed its residential care model, to provide an increased focus on safety, permanency and wellbeing for young people living in out of home care.

Specific highlights of this program in the past year include:

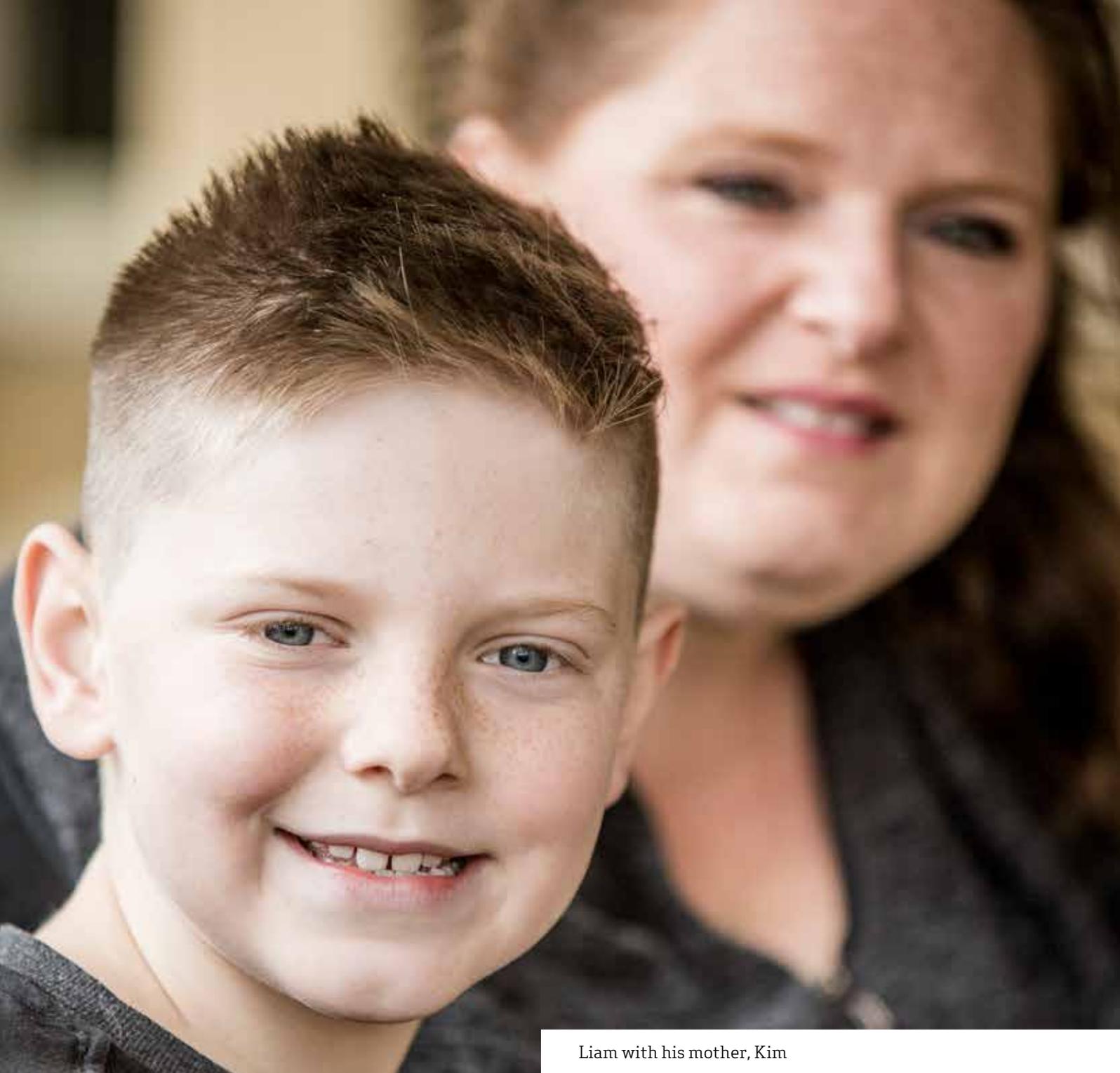
- Continuing to focus on listening to the voice of young people in care, to learn from them about what we can do to enhance their experience of living with MacKillop. We engage with young people through interactive feedback surveys and conduct regular Youth Advisory Groups, where ideas are shared on how to provide a better home environment.
- Introducing an innovative tool to measure daily outcomes for young people in care. The Verso platform provides real-time monitoring of a range of indicators such as sleep patterns, exercise and school engagement. The data is analysed to guide and enhance our practice.

- Enhancing our ability to support vulnerable young mothers thanks to a merger with Cara. Cara is one of the only services in Australia to provide pre-and postnatal care to pregnant young women and young mothers in out of home care. Through therapeutic programs, we assist these women to develop parenting and life skills while living in a specialist residential home, purpose-built to meet their specific needs, and those of their child.
- Successfully transitioning young people out of residential care with targeted care package funding (TCPs). TCPs are a Victorian government initiative to support young people move to home-based care by funding the services required to support them to live with either a foster or kinship carer, or with their birth family.

168 children and young people in NSW supported with crisis accommodation

- Developing a pilot mentoring program in the Barwon region to increase community connections and engagement for vulnerable young people to address and reduce their engagement with the justice system. It is complemented by a proactive policing initiative, which sees local police regularly visit residential care homes to foster relationships in a non-threatening environment.
- Increasing our capacity to care for vulnerable young people in the region by acquiring two new residential homes from another service provider in Geelong,

- Launching a new Equine Therapy program in the Barwon South West region, with the support of local philanthropic organisations. The program helps children and young people in residential care to heal. The benefits derive from the young people building trust, setting boundaries and establishing authentic relationships – skills they can bring into their everyday life.
- Launching a new Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) in Western Sydney, in partnership with Marist 180 and funded by the NSW government. The model provides therapeutic, trauma-informed case management, outreach support and accommodation to young people aged 12-15, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The HYAP accommodation service uses an innovative live-in carer model which focuses on strengthening the young person's relationship with their family and restoring them to their parents' care as long as it is safe to do so. The program started in February 2017 and to 30 June, supported 28 young people.
- Participating in a government-funded pilot in the northern metropolitan region of Victoria that uses art therapy as a non-threatening way for health professionals to engage with young people. Working with an artist, mental health clinician and an Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) worker, young people received education about mental health services in the community and participated in creating artwork that focused on breaking the myths and stigma surrounding mental health issues.
- Supporting 168 children and young people in crisis to access accommodation via our Youth Support Services in NSW.



Liam with his mother, Kim

A NEW WAY OF LEARNING

Kim can't believe the change in her son, Liam's, attitude to school. It was only ten months ago that the nine-year-old rarely attended, his disruptive behaviour often seeing him walk out of the classroom, refusing to learn.

Today, Liam is engaged in school and loves talking to his mother each day about what he has learned.

"For a long time, Liam struggled socially and had trouble making friends," says Kim. She hoped a new school and medication to manage the anxiety might help, but unfortunately things only got worse. It was then that Liam's teachers suggested she consider the new MacKillop School in Maidstone for children who struggle to engage in mainstream education.

With the school's support, Liam and his family see a family psychologist to help develop his social and emotional skills, while teachers have created an individual plan that provides him with strategies to manage his behaviour and ability to learn.

"He comes home each day talking about school and we can tell he is really engaged with what he's doing. I would say to any family in the predicament we were, don't hesitate like we did. The results have been phenomenal," says Kim. Liam will eventually transition back to mainstream education.

OPPORTUNITY

WE PROVIDE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STAFF WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE THEIR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, AND PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE COMMUNITY

OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION AND LEARNING

We believe children learn when they feel safe and supported within a nurturing and caring environment that caters to their individual needs. Our education services work to ensure all young people, regardless of their circumstances, receive the best chance in life through early access to tailored learning opportunities.

Our programs focus on young people who have disengaged, or are at risk of disengaging from mainstream education. Our schools, based in Geelong and Maidstone, target students with identified social or mental health issues, and offer an alternative approach to education that is culturally safe and where emotional and physical wellbeing is as important as academic success.

By adopting a more personalised, flexible approach to learning, we aim to help young people transition back to mainstream, vocational or further education.

Highlights of the past year include:

- Becoming a systemic Catholic school under the Catholic Education Commission Victoria, which allows our schools in Geelong and Maidstone to promote the ethos of Catholic Education and have access to their resources and support.
- Opening a new school at Maidstone, in Melbourne's west. The school offers classes from years three to six, with students referred from local primary schools.
- Teaching 57 students enrolled in the Foundation to Year 10 program at our Geelong campus, and reaching our first-year capacity of 10 students at the Maidstone campus.
- Providing education support and tutoring to 130 children living in residential and home-based care, through outreach support.

- Supporting six students to undertake Vocational Education and Training in Hospitality and Kitchen Operations.
- Supporting 11 Geelong students to undertake their Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). VCAL is a 'hands-on' option for students that offers practical work-related experience, literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to build important personal skills for life and work.

130 YOUNG PEOPLE

living in residential care received outreach tutoring

- Presenting the annual school play in Geelong. The unique production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* – adapted to be set in Whittington, a suburb of Geelong – involved almost every student from the school in some capacity, from scriptwriting, to set and costume design, to performance. The play was a huge success and has set the bar high for future performances.
- Completing work on a purpose-built playground at our Geelong Primary School to provide students with the opportunity to engage in brain gym and 'theraplay' activities. Through 'theraplay', children participate in fun, playful games and developmentally challenging activities that helps with behavioural and communication skills. This playground was funded by a grant from the Percy Baxter Foundation, managed by Perpetual.

OPPORTUNITY

- Offering students one-on-one counselling sessions and assessment support through MacKillop's Psychology Clinic. Provisional psychologists work at Geelong and Maidstone with young people affected by childhood trauma – generally a result of issues like violence, bullying, mental illness or addictions – to learn resilience and build positive relationships based on safety and trust.
- Continuing to work with the Lookout Centre's Experts Insight Group to address the educational challenges faced by children in out of home care. This important work has resulted in reduced student suspensions.
- Strengthening partnerships with our host schools to work together on lessening the barriers many disadvantaged students face in accessing education and determining appropriate supports for young people, schools, families and carers to overcome these.
- Introducing a Peer-to-Peer Program enabling our teachers to coach each other and support mainstream teachers to manage difficult behaviours, particularly for students transitioning back to mainstream school.

324 calls to Disability Intake Service.



- Finalising an agreement with Good Grief to transfer its services to MacKillop. Good Grief provides evidence-based education programs and training in Australia and overseas to assist children, young people and adults process the effects of grief, loss and change. Founded by the Sisters of St Joseph, Good Grief's broad experience and reach will enable us to further enhance our services with programs to support children and young people dealing with loss or change, to strengthen their social and emotional wellbeing.

OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR FAMILIES LIVING WITH A DISABILITY

MacKillop supports children and young people living with a disability to access services and programs that encourage independence, promote choice and facilitate community inclusion. Our disability services across the Melton, Wyndham and Barwon regions in Victoria supported 890 children, young people and their families through case management, respite, recreation and supported accommodation.

Highlights of the past year include:

- Supporting families who have transitioned, or are about to transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Moving to a fee-for-service model requires significant program changes to align with NDIS pricing. We are working hard to identify new approaches to meet the needs of our current clients, in a competitive environment.
- Enabling 33 siblings of young people with disabilities to participate in school holiday and evening activities through our Sibz program. Sibz provides emotional support and recreational opportunities for the siblings of clients with a disability. We gratefully received a \$5,000 donation from The Good Guys, Maribynong to support our work.
- Hosting Great Break weekend camps, where we supported 31 young people to have a camping holiday in Bendigo, Ballarat and Phillip Island. These popular camps provide valuable respite for families and a great opportunity for those attending to connect to their local community. Our Saturday program provided the opportunity for 37 children and young people with a disability to participate in fun activities within a group setting. In metropolitan Melbourne, over 140 children participated in our school holiday programs.



Alicia with Emma Leunig from MacKillop

LIVING FOR SPRINGTIME

As a teenager with four younger siblings, living at home isn't always easy for Alicia. She has one brother living with autism, another with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) while a third brother and sister are currently being assessed for behavioural disorders.

To find balance in her life and connect with others who experience similar challenges, Alicia engages in MacKillop's Sibz program, which supports the siblings of those with high support needs by providing respite through social and recreational activities.

Through the Sibz Art program, participants are given the opportunity to network with other young siblings of children

with a disability, and articulate their feelings, using paint, words and imagery to express how they feel.

Alicia did just that when she produced a four-panelled artwork, with each panel illustrating the four seasons. In each panel, Alicia has written the different emotions she experiences as a sibling within a challenging family dynamic.*

"My painting expresses the highs and lows of having siblings with disabilities and how, despite all the bad experiences in life, there will always be another springtime and growth is possible," explains Alicia.

"I am eternally grateful for the Sibz program, as it has made it easier for me to achieve my springtime."

** See the artwork on the back cover of this report*

OPPORTUNITY

- Supporting 16 children with complex disabilities to access mainstream activities such as holidays and before and after-school care, through our Alternate Recreation Choices (ARC) program.
- Our Disability Intake Service received 324 calls from people with disability-related inquiries. The service offers a contact for general community support and referral to other providers. It also consults with schools, parents and professionals to provide disability advice.
- Appointing an NDIS support coordinator in Barwon to help families navigate the complexities of the NDIS.
- Assisting 551 families with disability case management support. This service works with families to develop an integrated plan of programs and services that focus on supporting their child to achieve their physical and mental wellbeing goals.

33 SIBLINGS



of young people with disabilities participated in the Sibz program

- The transfer of MacKillop Rural Community Services (MRCS) to MacKillop Family Services. MRCS is a mission of the Sisters of St Joseph which delivers services for young people and adults with a disability living across 13 locations over a vast geographic region in the west of NSW. With a head office in Dubbo, MRCS will greatly enhance our capacity to provide access, opportunity and inclusion for people in isolated rural communities who are living with disability.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STAFF

MacKillop is committed to supporting our staff with education, training and wellbeing opportunities that will enable them to be their professional and personal best. Our commitment to the Sanctuary Model, particularly in supporting frontline staff working with people who have experienced trauma, underpins all our education and training programs. With an increase in services across all three states in which we operate, last year MacKillop grew its employee base by 25 per cent.

Over the past year, our commitment to staff learning and development included:

- Building the capacity of all frontline staff to engage effectively with the families of young people in our care, by partnering with the Bouverie Centre on a professional development program focused on family engagement, consultation and single session therapy skills.
- Supporting our Residential Care Workers to achieve a minimum education level of Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (residential and out of home care). MacKillop supports the Victorian government's introduction of mandatory minimum qualifications for all residential care workers.
- Partnering with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to deliver mandatory cultural awareness training across MacKillop. The training underpins our Reconciliation Action Plan and guides our understanding, knowledge and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Working to develop future Aboriginal leaders through our Koori Youth Traineeships (KYT) program. KYT is a partnership between MacKillop and VACCA to provide employment opportunities and beneficial career pathways for Victorian Indigenous people aged 17-25. In the past year, four people were engaged with through the program, with trainees working at both VACCA and MacKillop.

Our commitment to staff health and wellbeing included:

- Providing Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) training for all residential staff. The TCI model teaches skills to effectively prevent, de-escalate and/or manage a crisis. We further strengthened this support with the appointment of four new principal practitioners to provide clinical supervision and support practice development.

Providing Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training to **ALL RESIDENTIAL STAFF**

- Working with Monash University to offer staff online mindfulness training to support stress reduction and provide tools to improve mental and emotional health. Almost 10 per cent of staff participated in the four-week course.
- Appointing a new EAP (Employee Assistance Program) provider to enhance and improve our ability to support staff in all aspects of their work and personal life. Our program supports staff with work, financial, health and wellbeing counselling and advice.

Celebrating success

- We were thrilled when Jenny Glare, General Manager, Heritage and Information Service, received the prestigious Robin Clark Award for 2016. The award acknowledged her significant contribution to preserving and protecting the records of former residents and working to make these available to either the residents themselves or their family members.

- CEO Robyn Miller was selected as one of the Harvard Club of Victoria Non-Profit Fellows for 2017. The scholarship saw Dr Miller undertake the 'Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management' program at the Harvard Business School in Boston.
- One of our Victorian residential care coordinators – Rhiannon Walker – was a finalist in the prestigious Robin Clark Awards, in recognition of her outstanding work in establishing a residential care home in which all staff have learned Auslan and undertaken Deaf Cultural Awareness training, to provide a safe and supportive environment for deaf young people.
- MacKillop was recognised with four stories featured in the annual Department of Health and Human Services Good Practice Guide. The guide highlights inspiring stories of children, young people and families and the committed and dedicated people who work with them. The guide also included four pieces of artwork developed by children and young people we support.



Brothers Leon (left) and Herbert (right)

BROTHERS AT LAST

Watching brothers Leon and Herbert swap jokes and chat about their mutual love of sport, you would think they had known each other for a lifetime.

Yet 20 years ago, neither knew the other existed. Separated as babies, the brothers didn't meet again for 59 years.

Leon was born in 1938 and entered St Joseph's babies' home in Broadmeadows as an infant. Herbert was born two years earlier and was also placed in an orphanage. Records reveal the brothers both lived at St Joseph's for a short time in 1939.

At 18, Leon tried to find out about his birth parents, but was told his records had been destroyed in a fire. However, when his wife,

Cathy, later sought Leon's birth certificate for a passport, she discovered the names of his mother and father.

Leon and Cathy contacted MacKillop hoping to piece the family puzzle together. After months of investigating, MacKillop happily informed Leon he had a brother. Herbert recalls the moment he was told: "I needed to sit down when I got that telephone call," he says, "it was such a shock."

When the brothers met, there was an immediate affinity. They discovered they were husbands, fathers, grandfathers, uncles and great uncles. But best of all, they were brothers.

HERITAGE

WE SUPPORT FORMER RESIDENTS OF OUR FOUNDING AGENCIES' ORPHANAGES TO FIND THEIR FAMILIES AND CONNECT WITH CHILDHOOD FRIENDS AND MEMORIES

MacKillop's Heritage and Information Service is entrusted with the responsibility of preserving and protecting the records of former residents, and facilitating access to these by either the residents themselves or their family members. The service also assists individuals and families to:

- search for separated family members and enable family reunions;
- construct their life story, by unlocking the secrets of their past;
- reconnect with other former residents; and
- attend the many social events MacKillop provides.

The service offers a sensitive insight into how life was lived by the many thousands of children who grew up in orphanages run by the Sisters of Mercy, Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St Joseph.

Highlights of the past year include:

- Receiving 723 requests from former residents seeking to access their records, and facilitating five family reunions.
- Hosting 110 guests, including former residents and their families, at our annual heritage Christmas party.
- Distributing 1650 copies of Connect newsletter to former residents, to help them to stay connected and engaged with fellow residents.
- Presenting at the Catholic Social Services Australia annual Director's Conference, where we delivered a presentation: 'Improving Access to Care-Leaver Records held by Catholic Organisations'.
- Hosting a workshop on records management for the Sisters of St Joseph from Australia and New Zealand. 'Putting Yourself in Their Shoes' discussed ways in which organisations could improve practice in the supported release of the records of those who had lived in care.

- Hosting 41 school and general tour groups, to educate and engage them in our work.
- Continuing to support the Loud Fence Movement, which recognises and supports victims and survivors of historic child abuse. Visitors are encouraged to tie brightly-coloured ribbons to the front fence of our South Melbourne building, lending a visible show of support to the campaign.
- Continuing work to digitise old photographs and audio files, some of which were used to create promotional and history-based videos.

723 

requests from former residents seeking to access their records

This year, we received a generous bequest from a former resident, Peter Philpheran, who passed away at the Mary MacKillop Aged Care Centre in 2015. Peter entered St Joseph's Foundling Home in the first few weeks of his life, and spent his childhood and adolescence in the care of our founding congregations. In his later years, we assisted Peter to search for and meet his nieces, and he was an active and much-loved participant in our social activities, especially the annual Christmas party. We look forward to honouring his wish that this legacy be used to support young people to access education and other critical supports.

EXCELLENCE AWARDS

THE MACKILLOP EXCELLENCE AWARDS RECOGNISE EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE, AND AN OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT TO MACKILLOP'S VALUES. THE AWARDS ARE NAMED IN RECOGNITION OF THE FOUNDERS OF OUR THREE CONGREGATIONS, EDMUND RICE, CATHERINE MCAULEY AND MARY MACKILLOP

THE CATHERINE MCAULEY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE BY A CARER

Winner: Lynn and Mark Brierty, Foster Carers Western Metro

For close to 12 months, Lynn and Mark cared for two young siblings, aged just three years and six weeks when they came into care. The couple committed to consistently involving the children's mother in their lives, writing her letters and inviting her to attend their appointments. In time, Lynn became a supportive and positive role model to the mother. Because of the couple's ongoing focus on family reunification and ensuring the mother maintain an emotional connection to her children, she gradually felt supported and empowered to seek help for her health conditions so she could care for her children. Today, the children live with their mother and Lynn continues to remain involved in their lives. As the mother has no extended family, she now sees Lynn as a mother figure, and the couple as grandparents to her children. Lynn and Mark provide the family with emotional and practical support and regular respite.

THE EDMUND RICE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE BY ANY PERMANENT MEMBER OF STAFF

Winner: Deirdre Farrar, Family Options Support Coordinator, Disability Services Barwon

For over seven years, Dierdre has worked at MacKillop supporting people with a disability, their carers and families. Her dedication has enabled people with a disability to establish and maintain meaningful relationships and achieve their goals. Dierdre's professionalism and collaborative approach has enabled long-standing and secure foster care placements for children with a disability. Her focus on community connection has seen people with a disability establish sustainable links to local support and increase their independence. Dierdre has been invaluable in mentoring colleagues about the NDIS and supporting disability clients, their carers and families as they transition to the scheme, consistently focusing on achieving positive outcomes.

Deirdre ensures care givers are provided with regular respite and have the tools and strategies to manage skilled behaviour interventions. This has allowed for young people to continue to live in a family home environment, as opposed to entering residential or facility-based support services.

THE EDMUND RICE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE BY A TEAM

Winner: MacKillop School Geelong (MacKillop Education), Teachers and Education Support Staff

Stuart Jamieson, Lindy Mathers, Julie Luscombe, Sharyn Sadler, Brad Clough, Richard Bullock, Neal Arthurson, Mark Phillips, Michael Allatt, Andy Basterfield, Annemarie Jones, Troy McKenzie, Sanja Novakovic, Caitlin Burman and Justin Roberts

In their journey to develop a new trauma-informed education approach, the staff at MacKillop School Geelong have demonstrated a strong commitment to MacKillop's values and the Sanctuary Model. The staff have established new policies and procedures, a new curriculum and developed wellbeing approaches and teaching practices – all while maintaining a focus on supporting the children. Their efforts have resulted in an increase in academic achievement and attendance; a decrease in incident reports and student exclusion; and growth in the wellbeing of students in the areas of safety, social wellbeing, emotional wellbeing and learner confidence. In just four years, the team has expanded programs to now include years 11 and 12 (VCAL) with maximum students across all classrooms.

THE MARY MACKILLOP AWARD FOR 'COURAGE IN LIFE', ACKNOWLEDGING THE GREAT ENDEAVOUR EXERCISED BY A FAMILY

Winner: Maureen Visser

Maureen is the epitome of a loving mother. Her 15 year-old son Nathan, was born with CHARGE syndrome, which has resulted in regular hospital visits throughout his life to undergo surgery and other treatments. The challenges this presented for Maureen were exacerbated when her husband Albert died suddenly when Nathan was an infant. Despite these challenges, Maureen has worked tirelessly to enhance Nathan's quality of life. She is kind in her care for him, realistic in her goals, generous in devoting her life to his care, and a strong advocate for not only Nathan, but all children with complex needs. She even finds time to participate in fundraising activities for Nathan's school when she has spare time. As a mother and son team, Maureen and Nathan are an inspiration because they have demonstrated extraordinary courage despite continuous setbacks, and unwavering hope, because Maureen has never stopped believing in her son and striving to get the best for him.

THE MARY MACKILLOP AWARD FOR 'COURAGE IN LIFE', ACKNOWLEDGING THE GREAT ENDEAVOUR EXERCISED BY A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

Winner: Christopher, Eddy's Place Wollongong NSW

Christopher came into the care of MacKillop five years ago, at just 12-years-old. Living in residential care, Christopher has always been a thoughtful house member, befriending and showing kindness to each young person who comes into the house. He has always actively participated in all activities and programs available to him. Over the past year, Christopher has focused on his goal of becoming a mechanic. Despite facing many challenges, including health concerns, hardship at home and school, and coping with his trauma history, he has remained committed to his goal. As soon as he was able, Christopher enrolled in a VET mechanics course and attended every day. His enthusiasm and work ethic was so strong, he was invited to continue his work experience beyond the course requirements. Christopher has shown courage and resilience and is well on the way to realising his dream.

GOVERNANCE

GOOD GOVERNANCE IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE CULTURE AT MACKILLOP FAMILY SERVICES AND UNDERPINS THE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS WE PROVIDE TO VULNERABLE CLIENTS, THEIR FAMILIES, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

MacKillop is governed by a Board of Directors comprising one representative from each of our three founding congregations, and nine independent non-executive Directors.

Our Directors perform their roles on a voluntary basis and are committed to:

- independent judgement
- acting in the organisation's best interests
- accepting full responsibility for the governance of MacKillop, in accordance with legislative requirements
- best practice standards in corporate governance and community expectations
- refraining from any decision-making where there is a conflict of interest.

Our Board sets the organisation's strategic direction and oversees all performance and risk assessment. It is comprised of a series of committees to advise on key governance issues. These committees are:

- Audit and Risk
- Ethics
- Ethos and Culture
- Executive
- Finance and Investment
- Quality and Research

The Board delegates executive and operational responsibilities, including strategy implementation through formal delegated authorities to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Board's composition and performance is regularly reviewed to ensure it has an appropriate mix of skills and experience and is operating in an effective manner.

New Directors participate in an organisational induction program, and all Directors are supported to be involved in ongoing formation and development activities.

MacKillop thanks Mr Jarrod Coysh, who retired from the Board during the year, and welcomes new Board member, Mr Matt den Elzen.

Members

The Members of MacKillop are the owners of the company. There are six Members – two from each founding Congregation. The Members set the rules for the company's constitution and purpose. They also appoint the company Directors and the CEO.

MACKILLOP BOARD

CHAIR PERSON



Mr Des Powell

Convenor, Executive Committee Member, Finance and Investment Committee

CONGREGATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES



Sr Patrice Orchard rsm

Convenor, Ethos and Culture Committee



Br Terence Burke cfc

Member, Ethos and Culture Committee



Sr Colleen O'Dwyer rsj

Member, Ethics Committee

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



Dr Garry Nolan

Convenor, Audit and Risk Committee Member, Executive Committee



Ms Kerry Brettell

Convenor, Quality and Research Committee



Mr Alan Curtain

Member, Quality and Research Committee



Mr Matthew den Elzen

Convenor, Finance and Investment Committee Member, Executive Committee



Ms Robyn Fry

Member, Ethics Committee



Mr Brian Keane

Member, Audit and Risk Committee



Dr Patricia McNamara

Member, Quality and Research Committee



Professor Peter Steane msc

Convenor, Ethics Committee

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

THE FINANCIAL INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT HAS BEEN DERIVED FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT OF MACKILLOP FAMILY SERVICES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

ABOUT MACKILLOP

MacKillop Family Services strives to ensure children, young people and families are safe, thrive and are connected to culture and community. We provide home-based and residential care services, disability services, youth support and outreach services, educational services, family support and preservation services, and heritage and information services for former residents. We also conduct research to inform evidence-based practice, and advocate on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and their families, utilising self-generated funding, federal and state government funding, and financial support from individual donors and philanthropic organisations.

Our 1100 staff work with over 850 volunteers and foster carers from sites located across Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia.

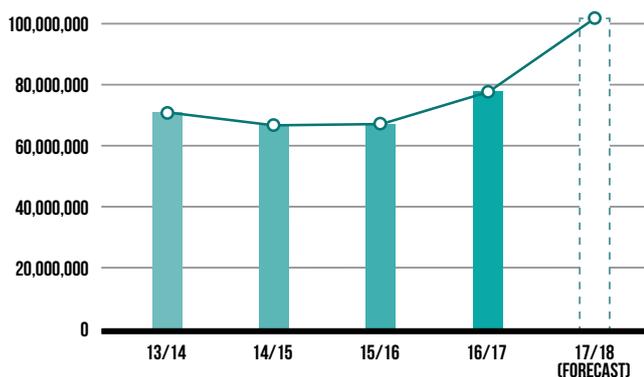
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In 2016-17, MacKillop recorded a loss from ordinary operating activities of \$2,005,198 (2016: \$417,301). Other income from non-ordinary activities, such as bequests, totals \$1,369,826 (2016: \$323,919), resulting in a net loss for the year of \$635,372 (2016: \$93,382).

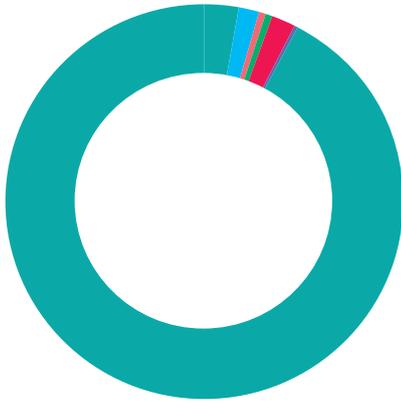
The reported 'other comprehensive income' in the Statement of Comprehensive Income (see published financial report) is the recorded gain or loss in MacKillop's equity holdings within its financial assets, which is yet to be realised. Taking into account the gain in revaluation of financial assets for the year of \$1,209,405, the resulting total comprehensive income (gain) for the year is \$574,033 (2016: loss \$788,346).

A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report is available at www.mackillop.org.au

OUR FINANCIAL GROWTH

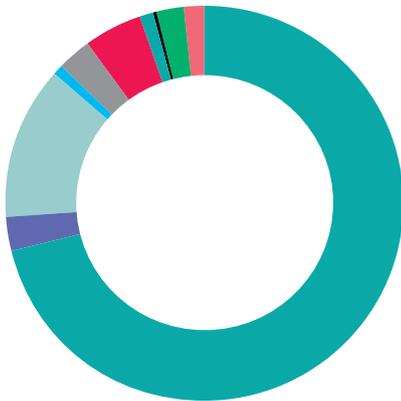


YEAR	FINANCIAL GROWTH
2013 - 14	\$70,872,766
2014 - 15	\$66,867,340
2015 - 16	\$67,030,284
2016 - 17	\$77,677,428
2017 - 18 (forecast)	\$101,300,556



REVENUE

	2017	2016
● Government grants	92.3%	93.1%
● Enterprise income	0.4%	1.2%
● Bequests	1.8%	0.5%
● Trust funds	0.5%	0.3%
● Donations/fundraising	0.8%	0.9%
● Investment income	1.5%	1.7%
● Other income - includes WorkCover recoveries, profit on sale of property and vehicles, business transfers and other minor income	2.7%	2.3%
Total	\$77,677,428	\$67,030,284



EXPENSES

	2017	2016
● Employee benefits expense	71.4%	71.0%
● Depreciation and amortisation expense	2.7%	2.9%
● Client expense	12.5%	12.3%
● Fundraising and volunteer expense	0.9%	0.1%
● Occupancy expense	2.6%	2.5%
● Property maintenance and equipment expense	4.8%	5.5%
● Motor vehicle running expense	1.3%	1.4%
● Audit and legal expense	0.2%	0.1%
● Administration expense	2.3%	2.3%
● Other expenses	1.3%	1.9%
Total	\$78,312,800	\$67,123,666

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IS DEPENDENT ON THE GENEROSITY OF OUR INDIVIDUAL, BUSINESS AND PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS

MacKillop is grateful for our dedicated team of supporters who share our values, believing every child and young person deserves to live in a safe, stable and loving home. Your support is vital to ensuring our programs and services continue to help those in need, particularly those impacted by hardship, violence, abuse and neglect.

To each we say thank you.

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Fund
Bell Charitable Foundation
Beswick Family Fund
The Freemasons Public Charitable Foundation
The Gall Family Foundation
The Good Guys Foundation
Archie and Hilda Graham Foundation
The Ern Hartley Foundation
Harvard Club of Victoria Nonprofit Fellowship, sub-fund of the Good2Give Community Fund
Gwen & Edna Jones Foundation
The A L Lane Foundation
Sidney Myer Fund
The Thomas O'Toole Foundation
The Ian Potter Foundation
Australian Communities Foundation - The Robison Fund
The R E Ross Trust
The Otto C & Elizabeth Schumacher Trust, managed by Equity Trustees
State Trustees Australia Foundation - John Michael Toohey
Ray & Joyce Uebergang Foundation
Joe White Bequest

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

4 Dimensions Building Contractors
Adopt a Family
All Souls' Opportunity Shop
Aquaclear
ACU - Midwifery Society
Bob Stewart of Kew
Catholic Church Insurances Limited
Craig & Rhodes Pty Ltd
Greater Box Hill Parish
Kmart Australia Limited
Lowther Hall
Loyola College
Mulnot Foundation Ltd
RHR Group
Simon Preece Memorial Golf Day
Sisters of Mercy
Sisters of St Joseph
Subaru
State Trustees Limited - 2017
Wholehearted Giving
Sunshine Magistrates Court
The Good Guys (Maribyrnong)
Youth Education Support Inc

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

Arts Centre Melbourne - First Call Fund
Austin Hospital
Brighton Grammar School
Bunnings Notting Hill
Cumberlain View Retirement Village, Mulgrave
Dulux
Linfox
Lions Club Glen Waverley
MacKillop College Werribee
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Glen Waverley
Mrs Tanya Robinson
Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria
Share the Dignity
Target Australia
The Salvation Army
Toorak Ecumenical Movement and Food for Friends
Waverley Patchworkers

BEQUESTS

Beswick Family Fund
Estate Maurice James Patrick Barnett
Estate Margaret Conway
Estate Marie Dorothea Fahy
Estate WE & ME Flanagan
Estate Patrick A Foley
Estate Father Leo Hartnett
The John Henry Charitable Trust
Estate William Theobald Hogan
Estate Lilian Grace Kelly
Estate James McConnell Kerr
The Martin Michael Healy Charitable Trust
Estate Patrick Peter Lacey
Estate Patrick J McMahan
Estate James Moloney
Estate Edward O'Connell
Estate Therese M O'Connor
Estate Peter Philferan
Estate George Timothy Ryan
Estate John E Taylor
Estate Eileen Tuohy
Estate Charles Tutty

MAJOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

Anonymous (12)
Anonymous, in memory of Philomena
Mrs Rita Andre
Mr & Mrs John Barnes
Mrs Phyllis Breen
Father Thomas Brophy

Ms Naomi Brown
Ms Diane Carmody
Mr Leo Connolly
Ms Sheila Dawson
Mr Luke Duane
Dr John Dwyer QC and Mrs Joan Dwyer OAM
Mr Keith Fagg
Dr Mary & Dr Peter Fama
Ms Fiona Fisher
Mr William Frilay
Mr Walter J Giugni
Ms Jennifer Glare
Mrs Michelle Hall
Mr Leslie Hardiman
Mrs Jo Harrison
Mrs Carole Hart
Mrs Lucy & Mr Oliver Hodson
Dr Peter Howe
Mrs Ailsa Hulbert
Mr Paul Lightfoot
Mr Kevin Luscombe AM
Mr Stewart & Mrs Brygda Maiden
Mr Jim & Mrs Noreen McCarthy
Mr Peter McGuigan
Mr T Morrow
Mr Paul Mullaly
Mr Chris Niall
Mr John Nolan
Mr Greg Noonan
Mrs Genevieve Nunan
Mr John O'Brien
Mrs Margaret A O'Connor
Mr John Olle

Miss Mary M O'Sullivan
Mr John T Ralph AC & Mrs Barbara Ralph
Dr Angela Rutherford
His Hon Judge Frank Shelton & Mrs Ann Shelton
Mr Peter Sotir
Mr Bernard Sweeney
Mrs Alice Vaughan
Mr Gerard Vaughan
Dr John Webb
Mrs Barbara Wouters

GOVERNMENT

Commonwealth Funding

Department of Social Services

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

Department of Health – Primary Health Networks (PHNs)

Western Australia Government

Department of Child Protection and Family Support

New South Wales Government

Department of Health – Kids and Families

Department of Family and Community Services

Victorian Government

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Department of Education and Training (DET)



Christine Sellar

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR SUPPORT

Christine Sellar fondly remembers her mother's great devotion to St Anthony, patron saint of the poor. So when her local church advertised for donors to assist St Anthony's Family Services in Footscray, she didn't hesitate to answer the call.

Christine firmly believed in the work of St Anthony's and its focus on supporting vulnerable families to stay together. The organisation was one of the first in Victoria to provide family-centred services – a model that continues to influence the way family services are provided today.

"I supported St Anthony's – and now MacKillop – because I think it does such valuable work, particularly in areas where it is most needed," says Christine, who, with husband

Michael, lives in Mooroolbark in Melbourne's outer east. The couple have three adult sons.

"We are not wealthy, but we have always had enough to get by and had a very happy family life," says Christine. "Our home has been a secure place and our children have always been loved. We are blessed and I want to give something back to those who haven't been as lucky as us."

Along with her busy volunteering roles – Christine spends much of her week working with community organisations – she is also a MacKillop Childhood Partner, giving a monthly donation towards children in need of support, and has generously extended her support by including a gift to MacKillop in her Will.

SUPPORT US

BY SUPPORTING MACKILLOP YOU CAN EMPOWER SOME OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IMPACTED BY POVERTY, INSECURE HOUSING, DISABILITY, FAMILY VIOLENCE, ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUG MISUSE

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you share our vision for ensuring every child in our care is given the opportunity to live and grow in a safe, nurturing environment, please support us. You can:

- Donate online at mackillop.org.au or call **1300 218 935**
- Become a Childhood Partner with a monthly gift and give children the ongoing support they need.
- Leave a gift in your Will that will help families into the future. For a confidential discussion or more information, call our Planned Giving Specialist on **(03) 8687 7449**
- Give through your salary by setting aside an amount of your choice from each pay cycle
- Become a foster carer and make a positive impact on the life of a child. Call **1300 791 677** or visit mackillop.org.au/fostercare.

STAY CONNECTED

We'd love to share with you our latest news, initiatives, community events and some of the great differences our teams are making to those in need.

To hear more about us:

 Sign up for our e-newsletter at mackillop.org.au

 [Facebook.com/mackillopfamilys](https://www.facebook.com/mackillopfamilys)

 Twitter @mackillopfs

MacKillop Family Services Limited is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) as a company limited by guarantee (ABN 79 078 299 288, ACN 078 299 288). We trade under the name MacKillop Family Services and are subject to the MacKillop Family Services Act 1998 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Act 2012.





Alicia's artwork (see story p25) features a four-panelled painted canvas. A large tree spreads out across the canvas and each panel represents a season – spring, summer, autumn and winter. Scattered throughout the painting are words used to express the emotions she sometimes feels as the sibling of a child with a disability.

MACKILLOP FAMILY SERVICES

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