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82% reduction in high-risk family violence cases

In just over 12 months, the Alexis Family Violence Response Model (Project Alexis) has been able to drastically reduce the number of repeat, high-risk family violence offences across Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria.

“With over 3,000 police referrals a year, we had to find new ways of working that could reduce the incidence of violence between partners and between adult children and their parents,” said Christine,* Good Shepherd’s Project Alexis Worker.

This new family violence unit includes a youth resources officer, a firearms officer, crime prevention officers and Good Shepherd’s Project Alexis Worker. Together they take a more holistic approach to working with victims and perpetrators of family violence.

“We focus on priority households, those with three or more police call outs in 12 months or where the team believes there’s a significant likelihood of further violence at that address.

“We work with victims, however one of the key things for us is to work with perpetrators to take responsibility for their behaviour. If we don’t also work with perpetrators it’s very difficult to create change.” Christine said that by taking this approach they can see what is happening in people’s lives, look at different options for them and see how effective each intervention is. These include child protection, housing, mental health services, men’s referral services, counselling, and drug and alcohol services.

Over the past year there has been an 82 per cent reduction in high-risk family violence cases, which is a remarkable outcome for perpetrators and victims - who are still mainly women and children.

** For privacy reasons, this name has been changed.*

From the Chair

Welcome to the spring edition of Shepherd’s Voice. On behalf of Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, I would like to thank you, our donors, for your support. You are helping Good Shepherd provide services and research that support women, girls and their families to build their safety and resilience, increase their access to education opportunities and improve their financial security.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that Dimity Fifer, CEO of Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, will be leaving us toward the end of the year.

It was not an easy decision for Dimity; however, after much deliberation, she has decided to pursue work full time with the Pacific Women’s Network. This network connects Pacific women for personal empowerment, professional development and collaborative social change, and incorporates the transformational change work Dimity has done throughout her professional life. It resonates with the work we do, and we know that Dimity will carry Good Shepherd’s values and spirit with her. On behalf of the Board, I thank Dimity for her significant contribution to our organisation. While it’s always difficult to lose a valued CEO, Good Shepherd is a strong organisation that will continue to deliver on its mission and develop innovative services.

One example is a new program, the Alexis Family Violence Response Model, which takes a fresh approach to reducing repeat, high-risk family violence offences, resulting in significant improvements for individuals and families.

Our camps and programs such as Peek-a-Boo for mothers and children who have experienced family violence help ease the effects of trauma and increase the bonds between a mother and her child, which are so often impacted by violence.

Thank you for making programs such as these a viable option. You are truly helping create a better world for women, girls and their families. Your consideration and commitment to Good Shepherd are invaluable.

ALISON McCLELLAND
CHAIR
GOOD SHEPHERD
AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND





Good Shepherd camps are connecting mothers and children

Thank you for helping us give mothers and children precious time to strengthen the bonds that are all too often damaged through family violence.

Family violence profoundly affects children's wellbeing. When families are given shelter in our refuge you may think their ordeal is over. Yet, for so many, leaving home increases feelings of fear and instability. Coping with the loss of family, friends and community and starting afresh can be challenging for children whose emotional resources are already stretched.

Good Shepherd's Camps Connect provides a three-day holiday for families who have experienced family violence. Mothers and children who are beginning new lives have the opportunity to meet other people and join in physical activity, therapies and fun adventures over a long weekend. This safe "time out" is just what mothers and their children may need before they start a new chapter in their lives.

We would also like to thank the Southern Peninsula Community Fund for their generous donation helping to fund two camps for more than 80 women and children.



Peek-a-Boo

Good Shepherd's Peek-a-Boo program is a therapeutic group for women and infants (0-3 years) who have been exposed to family violence. It aims to increase the quality of the relationship between a mother and her infant, which is often seriously impacted by family violence. Peek-a-Boo also positively influences an infant's ability to develop and increases a mother's confidence.

As social isolation is common following family violence, this group is a special opportunity for women to meet and talk with others.

A weekly newsletter is sent to each of the families attending Peek-a-Boo, which summarises the activities and topics that were discussed and helps to reinforce the positive interactions within the group.

As we provide specialist family violence services, it is vitally important that we offer this unique program to families.

Thank you for helping us create a safe place for mothers and infants to learn and grow.

We are always extremely grateful

Good Shepherd is always extremely grateful for the consideration and wonderful support of our donors. Last May, some of our long-term donors and those leaving a gift in their Will to Good Shepherd were invited to a high tea at the Sofitel in Melbourne to acknowledge their very special contribution. The event, sponsored by Cornwall Stodart Lawyers, was an opportunity for Dimity Fifer, CEO Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand to share stories of inspirational change in people's lives. Dimity is pictured here with Sundae who shared her story of adversity and courage "Thank you to everyone donating to Good Shepherd programs and services. I have personally experienced how we can break the cycles of disadvantage from one generation to the next," said Sundae. We would like to thank all our donors for their support and highlight the difference their generous contributions have made.



Guests included Robyn Takahashi (top) and Yvonne De Sousa (left), with Sr Monica Walsh, who have been supporting our Education Pathways programs through the Lionel De Sousa Fund. This fund was set up in memory of Lionel, Yvonne's late husband and Robyn's father, and continues to be very special to Good Shepherd.



Dimity Fifer, CEO Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand is pictured here with Sundae who shared her story of adversity and courage.



The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP; Sr Monica Walsh, Province Leader, Sisters of the Good Shepherd; and Sr Anne Dalton, Good Shepherd Sister at the official ceremony for Abbotsford Convent, now added to Australia's National Heritage List.

Abbotsford Convent receives highest honour

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd were thrilled to have Abbotsford Convent added to Australia's National Heritage List on 31 August 2017. It honours their immense achievements nationally and protects the precinct for generations to come. The listing gives it national significance alongside iconic places such as Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef.

Abbotsford Convent was started by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in 1863. It became home to thousands of girls and women, often not of their choosing, and resonates with memories, good and bad, for all who were part of life at the Convent. The experiences of the Sisters, women, children and families who have a connection with Abbotsford Convent are respected. The dedication of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to build such a thriving precinct that could serve the community has been acknowledged. Tours of the Convent can be arranged by contacting Darlene on 03 9270 9700.

Anti-Poverty Week 15-21 October 2017

Anti-Poverty Week aims to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship, and encourages discussion and action to address these problems.

Poverty and hardship affect more than a million Australians every day. While men and women experience poverty, women generally have fewer resources and child poverty is on the rise. This Anti-Poverty Week, Victorians will focus on "Back to Basics" highlighting the hard choices that people are making between shelter, food and utilities to survive.

During Anti-Poverty Week we will be asking policy makers and the community and private sectors to consider food and shelter as a lifelong human right, not as short-term emergency relief.

Huge smiles and very shiny medals – we couldn't be prouder!

A big thank you to Good Shepherd's Run Melbourne team Good Running! We had twenty seven runners participating in the half marathon, the 10km and the 6km walk/run. Some, like Emily, Conny and Eva-Maria were doing their first half-marathons. Others like Will and Alex scored themselves a new personal best, some were just out there running Melbourne and enjoying the vibe with a few thousand other running buddies. And a few chose to enjoy the scenery opting to walk the 6km. This amazing team didn't just run remarkable distances and impress us with their athletic prowess, they also helped us raise nearly \$7,000!



Back at the marquee the fundraising team, Jen, Ruby and Nicole were making sure the team were well fed and watered. Coach Chris was there to help with stretching and recovery advice and South Melbourne Physio helped massage those weary legs.

If you, your family or friends would you like to be part of team Good Running, you don't have to wait a year for Run Melbourne to come back around, we have City2Sea coming up on 12 November. Entries are now open! Packed with entertainment and music from start to finish City2Sea really is a FUN run. Choose from the 5km or 15km race, or get a friend and enter in the relay! Run from the heart of Melbourne to finish in the beautiful Cantini Gardens at St Kilda Harbour. To register visit www.city2sea.com.au.

There are all kinds of events happening throughout the year. For a full list of events visit our website www.goodshep.org/goodrunning or contact Ruby on 1800 791 731.



Reading for good

David and the staff at South East Water are now enjoying some great reads thanks to their new Reading for Good bookshelf. South East Water wanted to enable their staff to participate in Reading for Good and purchased the full catalogue of books on the reading list.

"Throughout 2017 we're supporting Good Shepherd and their program Reading for Good, celebrating some amazing female authors and their stories of strength, striving for equality, family violence and even just fighting for their place in the world. And everything raised goes towards creating a better world for women, girls and their families."

We thank South East Water their support. You too can start Reading for Good and help raise funds for Good Shepherd programs. Contact Community Fundraising on 1800 971 731 for more information.

Thank you for helping Good Shepherd, together we are creating an emotionally, economically and physically safe world especially for women and girls. Invite your friends, family or work colleagues to get together and help create positive change. You can organise a community, corporate or individual fundraising event such as a morning tea.

Call 1800 791 731 or email events@goodshep.org.au for more information and resources.

Creating and emotionally, economically and physically safe world especially for women and girls.

Do you have a Will? A legal Will to protect and provide for your loved ones is essential. Without one, someone you don't know may make decisions about exactly what happens to your hard earned assets.

When making your Will you might consider a bequest to Good Shepherd. For a free booklet about making a Will please call 03 8412 7375.



Good Shepherd

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