

Supporting children, young people and their families in the ACT and regional NSW



From the CEO

As we enter December, just weeks away from Christmas, I find myself reflecting on the natural disaster events of the year and whilst I'm ready to farewell 2020, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of our staff and volunteers who continued to deliver essential services throughout COVID-19. Our team has demonstrated our adaptability and agility to meet the needs of the community and families and we have reconfirmed our purpose at the end of 2020 to empower children, young people and families to thrive!

This year we've grown many Marymead services including our partnership with Amaze to deliver the Autism Connect national information service in the ACT, the growth of NDIS Support Coordination for families on the NSW South Coast, the expansion of our family relationship counselling services in the ACT, the early intervention work with primary school children and their families in some regional

NSW schools, and delivery of our new over 55's retirement living complex, the Azure Village, in central Canberra!

Across the period of 2019–2020, Marymead achieved over 17,000 client contacts spanning the ACT and regional southern NSW. In any other industry, this figure would be celebrated. Sadly, for organisations such as Marymead, this figure only demonstrates the vulnerability of our families across the community and the need for trusted, reliable services. In particular we have noted the strong increase in demand for early intervention mental health services for children and young people (with waiting lists rising above 18 months), and the heightened need for family relationship counselling. We have been addressing this through expanding our fee for service offerings, conducting more telepractice sessions, as well as engaging in local projects. One of the key projects for the past twelve months has been our participation in preventing youth homelessness and working to keep families together through the intervention program, Safe & Connected Youth in partnership with the ACT Youth Coalition and a number of community partners.

Under the leadership of a new Board Chair, Greg Fraser, Marymead will continue to provide key services such as foster care, mental health and counselling support services, disability support, family and

relationship services and respite / emergency accommodation.

A huge thank you to our staff and volunteers across the ACT and NSW for your hard work and dedication. I also wish to acknowledge our supporters - your steadfast help throughout the year has allowed Marymead to continue to deliver our services!

As we plan for festive celebrations, I encourage you to support those local organisations who support us! The Vikings Group, Canberra Southern Cross Club, Canberra Milk and Wagga Wagga Marketplace to name a few. The hospitality and service industries have been one of the most impacted by COVID-19. It has been welcome news to see the continuation of lessening of restrictions.

Please also consider supporting our Christmas Appeal. We need your help to raise \$50,000 to fund 640 FREE additional counselling sessions to support children and young people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing mental illness.

I wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy holiday and hope to see you at our re-scheduled Official Opening in March in 2021!

Kind regards,



Camilla Rowland
Chief Executive Officer

News



AZURE TURNS ONE

Azure is Marymead’s independent living retirement village, located on the Narrabundah site.

It’s hard to believe it has been a year since we welcomed our first residents into the award-winning, Azure Village.

The residents have been quick to settle in with an active social committee, gardening group, book club and more. The recent addition of a Community Shed and seated BBQ area will also soon be put to good use.

Azure Village offers a new level of choice for Canberrans when they are considering how they want to live post-retirement.

Located in the city’s beautiful inner south, Azure Village is close to Woden, Kingston and Manuka, the walking trails of Red Hill and recreational facilities including gyms and golf courses.

If you have been considering an independent lifestyle, within a friendly community, please contact our sales team today enquiries@azurevillage.com.au.



FOSTER CARE ACROSS ACT AND NSW

Marymead is urgently seeking carers!

Marymead is in urgent need of people who are willing to provide a safe and nurturing home for children and young people aged zero to 18. We are looking for people who can care for children, young people and families by supporting restoration, adoption, guardianship or long-term foster care.

All kinds of people make great carers. Great carers are stable and consistent, persevere when things get tough, strongly support children and young people to maintain their connection with their birth family and remain focused on the best needs of the children and young people.

We are especially seeking people who are able to open their hearts and homes to Indigenous children and young people with high needs and sibling groups.

Marymead provides carers with all the support they need including initial and ongoing training, 24/7 on-call support, an experienced and dedicated caseworker, direct carer support and a tax-free carer allowance.

You can change a child’s life... and there is no better time than now!

For more information on Marymead’s Permanency (Foster Care) Program please call 1800 427 920 or email fcinfo@marymead.org.au.



NAIDOC WEEK 2020

Always Was, Always Will Be.

Always Was, Always Will Be recognises that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

Each year, Marymead actively contributes to the ‘Canberra Community NAIDOC Week Event’. Despite this year’s limitations to in-person events, the community sector managed to coordinate virtual celebrations allowing the opportunity to reflect and celebrate this year’s NAIDOC Week theme, Always Was, Always Will Be.

Hoping you were able to participate in some of the celebrations. For those wishing to view the footage, please head to facebook.com/canberraNAIDOC

MARYMEAD AUXILIARY

The Marymead Auxiliary are on their way to \$100K!

With the completion of their most recent Monster Christmas Garage and Plant Sale, the funds raised this year by our gorgeous Auxiliary are well on their way to \$100,000. Such a mammoth effort considering the setbacks they’ve faced this year with in-person fundraising.

This incredible fundraising effort could not have been achieved without the familiar faces that we see at each of our events. Our community always gives so generously. Thank you for your ongoing support.

For more on our Auxiliary, please see the ‘Events and Volunteering’ section of this issue.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERSHIP

Marymead acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and the elders both past and present.

News

Photo: Michael Weaver / RiotACT



THE SAFE AND CONNECTED YOUTH PROJECT

Marymead, in partnership with the Youth Coalition, Conflict Resolution Service, and others is in the process of re-structuring accommodation for homeless youth. This will eventually replace the temporary accommodation at Marymead, to provide 24-hour support and supervision to those under 16 years.

The service centre will provide early intervention to youth in the ACT and surrounds through a home-like setting that will encourage relationship repairing between the young person and their family. This is dissimilar to other approaches, in which support is offered as a result of a crisis, and the goal is to foster independence rather than repairing connections.

While Marymead has been successful in offering short-term accommodation and support to vulnerable youth, this approach will work to reintegrate youth back into their family homes before conflict or crisis leads to homelessness.

Based off a model which has proven successful in South Australia, the centre should see a success rate of reintegration with family homes of around 70% (Dr Justin Barker). This will allow the children and young people to succeed in the long term.

AUTISM CONNECT

Autism Connect is Australia's first national autism helpline.

Marymead Autism Centre is proud to partner with Amaze to deliver Autism Connect to the ACT region, providing information, advice and referral.

Autism Connect's helpline launched in the ACT during November. The helpline provides information, advice and referrals to help autistic people, their supporters and professionals. The service not only provides them with the ability to seek assistance through calls and webchat, but also allows access to a national database of information. Autism Connect has been receiving a steady rate of interest already, with 10–15 enquiries each day. Each of which is uniquely catered to the needs of that individual, offering them the best support that Marymead can provide. This is done by one of our experienced local autism advisors, who understands the priorities of autistic Canberrans (such as diagnosis and social groups).

Autism Connect will be fully rolled out Australia-wide by mid next year. Autism Connect aim to build the most comprehensive, resource bank of evidence based information and resources in Australia. This information and resources will be developed by Amaze but also sourced from Australia and around the world, to provide the community with all its information needs.

ACT residents can call Autism Connect on 1300 308 699.

Monday–Friday between 8.00am–7.00pm. Webchat is also available via Amaze.org.au



mulch

mulch is a social enterprise enabling young adults with disability to develop skills and build community connections through work in the horticultural enterprise.

This year we focused on building a COVID-compliant, large, warm, external work space for mulch participants and staff, as well as extending our shade areas for summer.

Thanks to some ACT Government grant funding in June, as well as funds donated by our wonderful supporters, the Rotary Club of Hall, we were able to install both bistro blinds and heaters for cooler months. Additional shade structures are underway for summer.

Thank you to those of you who were able to attend our Annual Seedling & Plant Sale & Open Garden in October. We raised \$6,000 through sales on the day and had nearly 400 people attend. These funds will be used to extend our garden onto additional land we have been able to lease.

Christmas Giving Tree

Spread joy and assist families this Christmas.

If you've been thinking of donating to Marymead this Christmas, here are a few simple ways in which you can do so:

- *Organise a giving tree*
- *Purchase a gift-card or gift-voucher*
- *Purchase a gift for under the tree*
- *Donate online*

Our team are here to support you with your donation. Please send them an email for more information: marketing@marymead.org.au.



Program News

Mental Health and Counselling Unit

SILVER LININGS TO COVID-19 AND BEYOND

Carley Thomas

Family Counselling Team Leader

As a Team Leader for Marymead’s Mental Health and Counselling unit, the COVID journey started after returning from an overseas trip in March and being placed into compulsory quarantine from my home. I was greeted with my laptop and work mobile on my front doorstep as well as some necessities (chocolate).

I was now managing my teams virtually and assessing how we would continue to serve our clients remotely. It just had never been done. How should we best transition well established counselling sessions to an online setting? What was needed for the best outcome?

We learnt some great things. In fact, both video conferencing and telephone counselling can be a very effective way of connecting with clients. Children (especially older children and young people) are particularly receptive in utilising video calls for therapy. These methods have allowed us to make better progress with those unable or resistant to meeting in-person.

Our primary goal was to remain consistent and dedicated to meeting the needs of those previously attending our in-person sessions. We were beyond proud of what we were able to achieve and will continue to look at ways in which we can complement traditional methods with virtual ones.



EVALUATION OF TRADITIONAL OUTREACH WORK

Carley Thomas

Family Counselling Team Leader

In the New Horizons team we work in an outreach capacity with highly vulnerable families suffering with complex mental health. A common discussion point within the teams is how going into a family home at the beginning of a relationship can negatively impact relationship building. Clients might have concerns about their living conditions and assume a level of judgement. Thereby having the opportunity to build initial connections via remote sessions, has impacted positively on relationships when compared to traditional methods. Remote sessions have allowed clients to develop a sense of safety and control in the process. Clients are able to direct the trajectory of therapy from commencement; no longer fearing termination if they avoid in-home support from a clinician or are intimidated about coming to the centre.

Similarly for young people it is often their preference to not work with a clinician at school, due to fear of peer judgement. When a young person is given a choice for remote sessions during COVID-19 it has been overwhelmingly preferable. Young person are very familiar and comfortable with technology and it helps maintain their privacy. During COVID-19 clinicians have reported being virtually invited into bedrooms where the young person feels most comfortable. Less reluctance in discussing difficult topics has also been seen due to the sense of safety created in a virtual space. Remote sessions for young person has repeatedly resulted in greater emotional gains, personal insights, increased self-reports of confidence, autonomy and optimism.

As experience and confidence with remote sessions increased, clinicians began to show enormous depths in creativity to engage with young people.

Our services are in such high demand, that some waiting lists have reached an astonishing 18 months. Highlighting a need for increased capabilities.

This Christmas, you can assist Marymead by donating to our appeal.

We’re aiming for \$50,000 which will fund 640 FREE counselling sessions for individuals in the ACT and surrounding regions including the South Coast.

DONATE NOW

marymead
org.au



Foster Care Program

THERAPEUTIC LIFE STORY WORK

Kerri Cronan-Dixon

Permanency Program Operations Manager

For children who have been removed from the care of their family and suffered many placement breakdowns, their life history can be extremely fragmented, leaving the child feeling lost and with no sense of belonging. This can impact hugely on their well-being and make the child very vulnerable in their present and future. Therapeutic Life Story Work is a four-stage program offering children opportunity to explore, question and understand past events of their life. Within this it gives them a voice and safe space to feel and express their emotions when making sense of past experiences and the relation it has to their current thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

We are very excited to this year, have been able to provide 15 children and young people at Marymead, Therapeutic Life Story Work.

'It introduces the past as markers for the present'

RICHARD ROSE - Creator of Therapeutic Life Story Work, UK

It supports them with emotional literacy so that they can put words to their emotions, hence reducing their problematic behaviours which have been learnt as a form of communication. It also enhances the relationship and bond between child/young person and their carer. Most of the children are about half way through their Therapeutic Life Story Work journey. So far the feedback has been exciting and positive.

FROM THE CARER OF A 12 YEAR OLD GIRL

Who is in the process of being adopted by her carers.

"I would like to express how much I enjoyed the experience of (Therapeutic) Life Story Work. It was a fun way to learn about our child's start in life and her journey till now. We both learnt so much in a fun stress-free way. I enjoyed having (the facilitator) there to be the brains and knowledge behind the info. She had all the right words to use to make everything age appropriate and understandable to us both. I am grateful for the opportunity to have the facilitator put together a Life Story for my daughter."

ABOUT AN 11 YEAR OLD GIRL

Who has had multiple placements due to her challenging behaviour since entering care in 2019.

"(Child's mother) was very accepting of her placement compared to the beginning of the Therapeutic Life Story Work process. She was also accepting that (the child) couldn't live with her and that she would encourage (the child) to work with the carers as they are her main support.

I believe (the mother) has come a long way with processing losing her children to care and wants to encourage (the child) to settle and do what's best to allow her a clear future."

ABOUT AN 8 YEAR OLD BOY

The practitioner shared,

"When I first met him he wouldn't talk or want to know about being in care."

Now at the end of our journey he has told me,

"I am in care because I was not safe, had no food, and I was not cared for properly. Now I am with (carers) I am safe and loved."

This is so empowering for him and for the carers and myself to read and hear him say. He was so proud to tell me this.



FEEDBACK FROM CHILD AND CARER

The carer shared,

"Very helpful, it has given the child some more perspective of where she came from and why she is living with us. It has brought us closer."

The child shared,

"It's been very helpful, it's made me closer to mum (carer). It's helped me figure out my life story from what I didn't know. It's changed how I feel about myself."

The facilitator also notes an improved relationship between carer and child. Initially they would hardly speak to each other, and sit a distance apart. Now they sit together, have lots of open conversations, the child asks questions and I have even witnessed cuddles! It has been beautiful to watch.

Events Calendar

DATE TO BE CONFIRMED

March 2021

Marymead
Official Opening



Call for Volunteers

Our volunteer groups are always looking for new and enthusiastic faces to join in the effort to help raise funds for Marymead. Marymead has two volunteer groups, both of which are committed to contributing to the community and to Marymead. We have the NEXGEN who are made up of eager young people, and the Auxiliary for passionate individuals who have left the workforce.

If you'd like to join to make your contribution to Marymead, reach out to volunteering@marymead.org.au for more information.

Events and Volunteering



Auxiliary

Our amazing Auxiliary volunteers have not let the circumstances of the year slow down their fundraising efforts. Many of the in-person fundraising events in the first half of the year were unfortunately postponed with COVID-19. However, the Auxiliary was still able to raise funds through many different online raffles, and with their own collection of incredible prizes.

With restrictions easing through the middle of the year, the Garage & Plant Sales and (crowd favourite) Government House Morning Tea were re-instated. It has been so wonderful to again hold these events, all while ensuring COVIDSafe protocols are in place.

If you donated-to or attended our Monster Christmas Garage & Plant Sale in November, you helped us raise over \$21,000 on the day!! This truly was an unbelievable result and we thank everyone involved in setting up, packing away and for efforts on the day.

NEXGEN Spring Fling Charity High Tea

One of our in-person fundraising events to be held this year was the 'Spring Fling Charity High Tea', organised by our NEXGEN. The event was held at Pialligo Estate on the 25th of October in the luxurious Glasshouse. The day proved to be a huge success, achieving a total of \$4,408. The afternoon was filled with fashion, food, bubbly, and some really great raffle prizes.



Did you know...

You can purchase from the Marymead Auxiliary's Nursery ALL YEAR ROUND! That's right! Our Narrabundah nursery is open every Monday morning* from 10.00am until Noon.

*Except Public Holidays

TOMATOES | GROUND COVERS | HERBS | PERENNIALS | SHRUBS | TREES

From our Supporters

Viking's Group

\$100K PARTNERSHIP



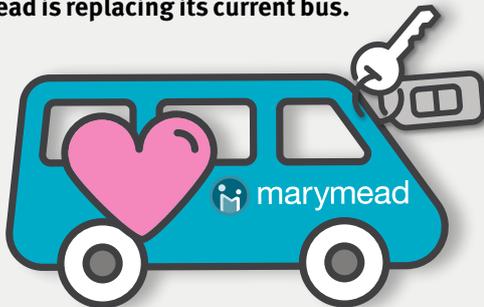
Our wonderful supporters at the Viking's Group generously donated \$100k in June, which will be used to build the second care cottage on the Narrabundah site. Our 'Coral's Cottage' provides short-term accommodation (respite) for teenagers and young adults. The facility aims to nurture young people outside of their home environment so that they can develop skills and independence. With the help of the Viking's Group, Marymead will have the opportunity to create the second cottage called 'Peter's Place', which will allow for more young people to receive the support they need. We are incredibly grateful for their continued support.



We're getting a bus!

Thanks to your support across our Race Day and Tax Appeal, Marymead is replacing its current bus.

We are in the final stages of purchasing and will provide you with an update once complete.



Donations of 2020

We have been so fortunate this year in receiving a range of donations from some generous partners. This included a donation from Bunnings Warehouse Fyshwick of footballs, beanies, scarves, and pyjamas. These items were received by our Permanency team, for our clients in need. We also received a donation in June from Good 360 and Big W, which included a significant amount of clothes and books. We have also been included in Wagga Wagga Meccanico Espresso and Wine's 'Pay it Forward' campaign, in which all coffee's paid forward in October are donated to Marymead. Reflecting on these donations reinforces how lucky we are to have such incredible partners, and it is important we support those who support us.

This Christmas, we need your help to raise \$50,000 to fund 640 FREE additional counselling sessions

DONATE NOW



These sessions will support children and young people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, mental illness. We currently have over an **18 month** waitlist and we urgently need your help to reduce it.

You can make a difference this Christmas!

Support those who support us!



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CANBERRA OUTLET

Canberra Weekly MAGAZINE

Canberra Toyota



KING & WOOD MALLESONS

The Canberra Times



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GOULBURN
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GOULBURN NSW
PHONE 02 4827 1600

WAGGA WAGGA
85-87 FITZMAURICE ST
WAGGA WAGGA NSW
PHONE 0429 510 034

MORUYA
CNR CAMPBELL &
PAGE STS MORUYA
PHONE 0406 375 247



1800 427 920 / enquiries@marymead.org.au
JOIN US ON marymead.org.au

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or removed, please contact us on 1800 427 920 or via email at info@marymead.org.au or write to us at PO BOX 4260 Kingston ACT 2604.

MARYMEAD IS A CATHOLIC AGENCY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN. ABN 90 677 510 841