



# imagine

**FAMILY • LOVE • HOPE**

CHRISTMAS | 2019

## Words from the CEO, Paul McDonald

Welcome to the Christmas edition of Imagine.

We round up the year by presenting several stories related to the mental well-being of young people in our care.

We discuss the work that we are doing as an organisation to bring forward new ideas and more appropriate care for young people in and leaving care. You'll also read about the KEYS program and the positive impacts that highly attentive care can bring to our most vulnerable young people.

This year's Christmas fundraiser shares a story of four siblings from a very tough upbringing who were supported by AV's therapeutic residential carers. With dedicated care the children were able to be placed with two loving foster parents.

We also have some important updates to share: our recent Rainbow Tick Accreditation, our Foster Carers Gala Dinner, and the amazing work of AV's Partnership Groups.

We hope you enjoy reading and I wish you all a happy and safe Christmas season.

P.S. If you can support our Christmas Appeal, please do – if we can raise \$230,000 we can offer more programs for children and families recovering from trauma.



## special report



## Improving mental health outcomes in Out of Home Care

**Young people living in the Out of Home Care (OoHC) system are over-represented in mental health statistics and are some of the most at-risk people in our community.**

AV is working to bring forward more tailored care and responsive systems to these under-served young people.

Children in OoHC can have a complex range of behaviours related to past trauma. 35% of children in OoHC will suffer from poor mental health, and the prevalence of suicidal ideation is much higher than in the general population.

## this month's issues

- P2** • Improving mental health outcomes in Out of Home Care  
• Rainbow Tick  
• A generous partnership

- P3** • Grounding herself  
• Thank you to our Foster Carers

- P4** • Anglicare Victoria Partnership Groups (AVPG)

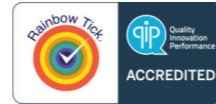


## Rainbow Tick

**AV is delighted to announce our Rainbow Tick Accreditation. Recognised nationally, Rainbow Tick accredited organisations are committed to safe and inclusive practice and service delivery for all people.**

Diversity offers an increased breadth of perspectives and depth of understanding, further enabling the provision of high-quality inclusive services to our communities. We support the right of equality, fairness and decency for all Victorians

This achievement has been a team effort across the whole of AV, led by the members of our AV PRIDE working group. A big thank you goes out to all the people who committed their time and energy to make this for the organisation to achieve.



## A generous partnership!

**We would like to thank Bendigo Hyundai for their generous support during this year's Giving Tuesday campaign on December 3!**

Giving Tuesday is an annual day of giving where people give to organisations that are making a difference in people's lives.

This is the first year AV is participating in the initiative and we would like to acknowledge Bendigo Hyundai for helping to transform the lives of children, young people and families!



## Grounding herself

**The KEYS program (Keep Embracing Your Success) is one of AV's most innovative programs offering more attentive and long-term residential support (12 months or longer) to the most vulnerable in our care.**

Young people, aged 12-16, typically enter into the program with a complex background of trauma, mental health challenges, substance use, or dealings with youth justice. The program is delivered in partnership with Monash Health, MIND Australia and DHHS. The team that support them, draw on a range of tools and techniques to promote emotional healing including sometimes, the use of a veggie patch as a form of refuge and healing.

*Jessie\*, a 15-year-old living in one of the KEYS homes, has autism and is affected by significant trauma from her past. Both of these factors, make it difficult to express and manage emotions. Recently, after a tough day, she became verbally abusive to the staff and other housemates around her. She was struggling to cope; nothing seemed to be working.*

One of AV's specialist carers Andrew\*, invited her out to the veggie patch for a change of scenery, and the two of them spent some time collecting crops and doing some weeding.

In the quiet and non-confrontational space of the garden, Jessie's mood began to settle.



They were then able to talk about the difficult emotions that Jessie was experiencing.

The use of the outdoors as a therapeutic setting is well-supported in research. The effects of the natural world offer sensory relief, lowering blood pressure and heart rate. The KEYS house has implemented a dedicated gardening session every week, and since then, Jessie now voluntarily goes outside when she needs a moment to herself.

\*Name and details have been changed to protect client and staff privacy.

## Thank you to our Foster carers!

**In September this year, AV regional offices hosted a Foster Carer Gala Dinner to recognise and thank our dedicated foster carers.**

Events like this celebrate the incredible contribution of our foster carers with awards, touching stories and laughter. The Gala Dinner, held at the Royal Melbourne Zoo, also provides a forum for foster carers to share stories with others and connect with AV staff.

Guests were fortunate enough to have guest speaker David\*, a care leaver who had been with his foster parents since age four.

David shared his inspiring and heartfelt story, thanking his foster parents for their life-changing support.

**If you are interested in becoming a foster carer, please call 1800 809 722 or visit: [www.anglicarevic.org.au/what-we-do/providing-homes/foster-caring/](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au/what-we-do/providing-homes/foster-caring/)**

\*Name has been changed to protect privacy



## Yes, I will help to create healing homes this Christmas

### Donation Option

#### Please accept my single gift of:

- \$25** can help cover the cost of tools like a 'calm kit' that ease the anxiety of a child who has been separated from his or her family
- \$50** could go towards vet care for the therapy dog Zeus, so he can continue to provide children with healing companionship
- \$100** will help pay for therapeutic tools such as weighted vests and blankets which help traumatised children calm themselves when they are distressed
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a donation of my choice

*Donations greater than \$2 are tax deductible.*

### Payment Details

**Cheque/Money Order enclosed**  
(made payable to: ANGLICARE VICTORIA)

#### My details are

Title:

Name:

Address:

Phone:  DOB:

Email:

My Parish:

#### Please debit my credit card

VISA  MASTERCARD  AMEX  DINERS

Card Number ---- / ---- / ---- / ----

Expiry -- / --

Card Holder's Name

Card Holder's Signature

- Please send me information about becoming a regular monthly giver
- Please send me information about leaving a Gift in my Will to Anglicare Victoria
- I have already left a Gift in my Will to Anglicare Victoria

**Please post to:**  
Paul McDonald, CEO of Anglicare Victoria  
PO Box 45 Abbotsford VIC 3067

**Alternatively you can:**  
Donate online at [www.anglicarevic.org.au](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au)  
Phone 1800 809 722 to donate

**THANK YOU**

We value your privacy. Please contact us on 03 9412 6136 to find out how we manage your personal information.



## Healing homes this Christmas

**Indi\* and her younger siblings, had a very rough start in life.**

Their mum wasn't around and they often went hungry. When their dad suddenly died, it began a long journey in-and-out of six foster homes.

They then moved into one of AV's Out of Home Care residences, which provides a stable, caring home environment for traumatised children. When they arrived, there were a lot of behavioural challenges. It took four years of tailored therapy and care to ensure the siblings were ready for a foster home.

**AV's goal was always to keep the children together, with a family who was equipped to support their high emotional needs. This took dedication, but we found the perfect couple. Jenny and Tony who never had children of their own, and within a matter of months, they had four.**

A year on, the children are thriving in their new environment. Indi told us, "Without Anglicare [Victoria], we'd still be a mess. I've always been like the mother hen. But now I can just be a kid and I'm taking all the time I can."

Every child deserves to grow up safe and loved, but this is a far reality for thousands of Victorian children. AV urgently needs \$230,000 to fund next year's therapeutic programs for children and families recovering from trauma. Please help these vulnerable children and donate before December 24.

\*Indi is a real person and her story is true. Details have been changed to protect client privacy.

## Anglicare Victoria Partnership Groups (AVPGs)

**The important work that AV does across the state each day would not be as effective without the generous communities that support our purpose. We are particularly proud of our AV Partnership Groups (AVPG).**

AVPG's are a network of small, local groups based from Anglican parishes and generally these are the Auxiliaries of the Parishes. These Victorians understand the importance of playing an active role in the wellbeing of their local community.

"We don't do it for the recognition, we do it because we were raised and taught to give back – it's in our blood" says Rosie Freeman, the Treasurer and active member at our AVPG in Vermont. Working together, AVPGs enhance the work of AV to support vulnerable families, young people, children and individuals in our community.

Our AVPG's assist with fundraising, toy and food collections, and amplifying our awareness campaigns. Previous support has included collecting clothing for the homeless, toiletry packs for our young people in Out of Home Care,



provided stationery kits for refugee children in a homework club and food donations to our emergency relief sites to help those in urgent need. This is done by raising funds through sausage sizzles or through baking and cooking for events and other functions they hold locally throughout the year.

At a recent AVPG event, a guest speaker for our Peaceful Warriors program, presented on an AV program and mentioned that bikes were always in demand – within 24 hours, 5 bikes had been donated to the program through the AVPG network!

Members of AVPG require no formal admission, and there is no joining fee or annual subscription. For further information, or if you wish to start an AVPG at your local parish or community organisation, please email [partnershipgroup@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:partnershipgroup@anglicarevic.org.au) or call 03 9412 6107.



## A Gift in your Will can make a real difference

Through Anglicare Victoria you can help change the lives of so many vulnerable children, youth and families living across Victoria.

If you would like to confidentially talk to us about how a Gift in your Will could make a real difference, please contact our Relationship Manager - Gifts in Wills.

Phone: (03) 9412 6197 Email: [peter.burt@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:peter.burt@anglicarevic.org.au)



**BETTER TOMORROWS**