



How you can support our work

See over for details

Good News Story

Babes on wheels

The Babes and Buggies Expeditions (BABE) Program aims to help connect Cranbourne families into the community so they can benefit from the events and services available to them.

Our supported playgroup for families with babies is a little different to most playgroup models. For a start, we venture outdoors to give our children the experience of belonging to and making sense of the world around them.

We have documented our wonderful travels as well as many of our babies' important milestones.

BABE goes wild at the zoo

We were fortunate enough to obtain free travel and tickets to Melbourne Zoo for a BABE family outing. This was a new experience for some mums and children, as they had never travelled by train or tram -- let alone visited the zoo.

Our enthusiastic troop consisted of 23 in total and making our way to and from the Zoo was an adventure in itself. Traversing the CBD and tackling the train and tram system was sometimes hectic, and often amusing for onlookers.

On reaching the Zoo, it was thrilling to see the pure joy on everyone's faces and hear the squeals of excitement as many experienced all kinds of new sights and sounds.

Back on the train and exhausted at the end of a wonderful day, we congregated at the end of a carriage with mums, dad, bubs and prams galore. The chatter never stopped until we all waved goodbye.

Our Zoo adventure mums reported back how well their bubs had slept that night. Our quest for new adventures continues!

Our Zoo trip in perspective

Some of the BABE families who attended our Zoo trip used to be anxious about catching trains. One family had no previous social channels at all. Two young mums were new to Melbourne and Australia. Our BABE community pulled together all day, watching over each other and developing a great connection.

Volunteer Spotlight

About Marie

Marie was born one of twelve children in Birmingham, England. She came to Australia in the 1960s, when she was 14 ½ years old and went straight to work as a nanny. She has worked in a bakery, at Kaisers in Richmond and was also an overlocker and 'sock splicer' for Holproof in Mitcham. She now lives in Hampton Park and was recently inundated with floodwater after the big storm. Marie has three children and six grandchildren. Her siblings live all over Australia.

How did you learn about Windermere?

It was about 25 years ago, and I was a young single mum, living in Dandenong. I was working two jobs and Windermere helped with looking after my children.

What do you get out of volunteering and how long have been volunteering?

I first started volunteering in the mid 1990s after discovering I had Multiple Sclerosis (MS). "Nobody would employ me. I was a liability. I wanted to work with small children and wasn't able to get a job due to my disability. I started volunteering with the Salvos at their Food Bank, minding the children while the mums spoke with social workers, and eventually came to Windermere to volunteer in the Biala Early Childhood program."

What made you choose Windermere?

"I think it was because of the help they gave me when my kids were small," Marie says. "I love kids. It's so rewarding to see the smiles on the children's faces. And I get on well with the workers. They are a great bunch."

Marie says she knows that she is making a difference in the lives of the children she supports, and that this has been an



extremely rewarding role for her.

Until recently, Marie has assisted in supporting the Biala program, (an early childhood developmental service for children with additional needs and developmental delays) by interacting with families and assist-

ing staff in setting up resources for the groups.

Tell us about yourself. For instance how long have you lived in Hampton Park?

"I've lived here 17 years. During the recent floods, my house was completely inundated." Marie has had all her carpet replaced, but lost most of her electrical equipment, including a TV and computer. Volunteering has been a very important part of Marie's life, getting her out of the house and interacting with people from all walks of life.

What are your interests?

"I love sports, especially basketball and volleyball. I like walking and would love to ride a bike." Before Marie had MS she loved to walk and run, but her balance is affected now. However, this gives her an insight into the difficulties faced by some of the children she supports at Windermere through her volunteering. "I can put myself in their shoes."

If you had \$3 million what would you do with it?

"I'd buy a computer, a bike and an electric wheelchair."

What's your pet hate?

"When the Council doesn't clean the drains!"

Diversity Corner

Reaching out to migrant and refugee families

In partnership with Centrelink and Consumer Affairs Victoria, Windermere has initiated the Consumer Credit Project for Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALD) families and communities. Through the project, diverse communities will gain access to important information about credit, contracts, budgeting, warrants for unpaid debt or fines, and Centrelink payments.

A Community Education Project, also targeting CALD families, has been funded by the Legal Services Board. This project aims to contribute to the prevention and reduction of family violence in CALD communities by providing information about the Family Violence Protection ACT 2008, peer mentorship and enhanced access to legal and support services.

Building harmony in the Growth Corridor

Windermere's Growth Corridor Project aims to build the capacity of children and young people of diverse backgrounds – encouraging them to live harmoniously and productively together. Funded by the Melbourne Community Foundation (MCF), the project brings together government and faith-based schools in Officer to develop strategies to foster cross-cultural awareness and understanding. Our project partners include the Cardinia Shire Council and Monash University.

Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation funds At Risk of Homelessness Project

This key aim of this project is to prevent homelessness across the Cardinia Growth Corridor by strengthening social connectedness and building strong, responsive working partnerships. The process is intended to build the capacity of both the community sector and the local community through the establishment of a new 'early prevention of homelessness' Local Network Group (LNG).

The LNG will be composed of people from local businesses, the not-for-profit sector and the local community and aims to develop and strengthen relationships, provide clear referral pathways for families at risk of homelessness, and coordinated responsive support to the local community.

The findings from this project will be evaluated and if successful, disseminated and implemented elsewhere as an early prevention of homelessness community capacity building model.

Community News *Issue 6*

the newsletter of windermere child & family services



Welcome

*From the CEO
With Cheryl De Zilwa*

Happy New Year everyone!

It's hard to believe we're already well into 2011 with so many exciting activities up and running.

Our new 'Kids on Track' program has recently started, thanks to the support of a number of philanthropic organisations. This is an exciting direction for us, as we are working closely with Police to support young people aged 10-17 years who have received a caution as a result of risky behaviour or a first offence.

Often these young people are experiencing very difficult circumstances at home or in the community. With extra support we may be able to divert them away from long-term criminal behaviour. The program includes a range of positive activities such as mentoring, involvement in sports, leadership and personal development. Case management is also provided where needed. A team from Monash University will be evaluating the effectiveness of the Kids on Track program over the next 12 months.

Another new area of focus for Windermere is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This is a counselling service that is available to employers in order to help support staff who are experiencing difficult times.

Commencing in March this year, Windermere is also expanding its work to include the inner metropolitan regions of Melbourne, starting with the Bayside area. We already deliver the Victims of Crime program right across the Southern region of Melbourne, as well as an Autism Support service.

Our new office is located in Hampton Street and the work we'll be carrying out here will primarily fall under our 'On Track' banner. This is a different style of operation, where we will be charging a fee for both our counselling and early childhood services. In most instances, the majority of this fee will be offset by either a Medicare rebate or Federal government support. Any surplus funds generated through On Track will be used to support local disadvantaged families.

And finally, in our last newsletter, I mentioned that we were recruiting for new Board members and/or anyone with an interest and skill in assisting on one of our committees. We have now filled most of the positions available, but we're always looking for good people to join us. Our new Board members are Max Warwick, Pam Usher and Nicola Mendleson. We have an outstanding Board, and from the next newsletter we'll include a section on getting to know each member.



Cheryl De Zilwa
CEO, Windermere Child & Family Services

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- A wheel of an Adventure Challenge
- Operation Santa



Operation Santa Brings a Merry Christmas

The 2010 Windermere Christmas Appeal was once again supported by many generous community members. The aim was to ensure that every child Client of our organisation received a quality Christmas gift — and this was achieved.

Food hampers were generously donated again by the staff of David Nutter Ford, with members of the Historic Vintage Car Club also donating hamper items.

Named 'Operation Santa' the appeal generated gifts from all over the southern region — from local areas such as Berwick, Pakenham, Cranbourne, Scoresby and Narre Warren to as far away as Mornington, Melbourne City, Koo Wee Rup, Mt Martha and Sherbrook.

Leading up to the gift distribution day on 16 December, Windermere volunteers worked tirelessly for many hours to make Operation Santa a success: driving far and wide to collect gifts, attending functions and helping with the coordination of our Corporate Volunteer program. Our sincere thanks to Barbara Simpson, Barbara Cameron and Leon Grzsiak for their help.

Our Corporate Partners, the Commonwealth Bank, came on board again in 2010, with



members from the Greater City of Dandenong branch lending a hand to make the day a fun time for all.

On gift distribution day, the shed at our Pakenham office was transformed into Santa's cave with balloons, decorations and Christmas music. Windermere staff came in waves throughout the afternoon to choose gifts for their Clients. Santa even came along to make sure everything went to plan!

Many thanks to Fahmy, Janet, Onsi, Michael and Malcolm (Pictured above) from the Commonwealth Bank for helping with driving, unwrapping and sorting through gifts, decorating the shed, helping staff members to find gifts and getting them to their cars — and with the big clean up at the end.

Our 2010 donors included:

Berwick Wood Workers

City Edge

Dandenong Valley Historic Car Club members

David Nutter Ford and Staff

Koo Wee Rup Uniting Church

Michelle Pitman

Mt Martha Ladies Probus Club

Paint and Hardware Legends members

Robyn McCreery

Tirhatuan Ladies Golf Club

Tania Davis

Tania Hallisey

Target Mornington customers and staff

Westfield Centre Management staff members

Featured Fundraisers



2010 Winners pictured above with Windermere Ambassador, Matthew Richardson

Time to tee off

The annual Windermere Golf Day will once again be held at the prestigious Kingston Heath Golf Club on Tuesday 5th April 2011.

Zagame Automotive are our Naming Rights sponsor for the sixth consecutive year, and exclusivity of the course ensures it will be another great day for all.

Michael Roberts, sports commentator and former St Kilda player, and Richmond former great, Matthew Richardson, will be among the attendees on the day.

Numbers are strictly limited so book now to avoid disappointment! There are generally four players per team but we do have two vacancies for single players wishing to participate. For more information, please contact Kathryn King, Marketing and Events Coordinator on 9705 3233 or kathryn.king@windermere.org.au.



A wheel Adventure Challenge

The team for Windermere's first Adventure Challenge is now confirmed with Star News Group the sole sponsor for the event!

We had a fantastic response from the local community, thanks largely to advertisements in Star Newspapers. We were inundated with expressions of interest from people wanting to participate in the 330km Cambodian cycling challenge, and places filled quickly.

Each of our 23 participants has been challenged to meet a fundraising target of \$5,000. Many of the team are now busy coordinating their own fundraising events, including running raffles, sausage sizzles and securing sponsorship to meet their targets.

Since launching the Adventure Challenge many articles, including personal interviews with our team, have been published in the Star Newspaper and Windermere has received enormous coverage and exposure.

Bounce of the Ball luncheon



Bounce of the Ball Luncheon a huge success!

Two of Windermere's most well known supporters - Carl Strachan (Windermere Chairman) and Ian Forsyth (Windermere Board Member) raised an incredible \$50,000 at the recent 'Bounce of the Ball' Luncheon held on 23rd March at Etihad Stadium.

With a guest list of some 300 people, including VIP's such as David Parkin, Ron Barassi and Matthew Richardson just to name a few, Carl & Ian hope to be able to make this an annual event.

All proceeds raised from the event will go directly to assisting Windermere with some new and existing projects such as the 'Mums & Bubs' program.

On behalf of the children, individuals and families Windermere assist, we would like to sincerely thank Carl & Ian for their time and effort in putting together this event.

We would like to introduce our team members (in alphabetical order):

Brad Alden-Brown - Rankins Nursery, Trent Blacket - Roar, Michelle Caldwell - Steamtech Engineering, Tim Cooper - Cardinia Shire, Travis Delarue - Delarue Landscapes, Stephen Gilbert - Berwick Fields Primary school, Linda Grellman - Disability Services, Windermere, Mandi Herauville - Aloha Wellness Centre, Joey Herrech - Dandenong Police, Gaylene Howe - Star News Group, Garry Howe - Star News Group, Adam Khan - Khan Hospitality Services, Randal Leacock - William Adams Caterpillar, Tracey Lousada - Cranbourne Harness Racing Club, Helen Matthews - Doveton Resident, Bella McAlpine - Cranbourne Resident, Narelle McKenzie - Zadoo Hairdressing Salon, Lilly O'Gorman - Star News Group, Bronwyn Owen - Communities for Children, Windermere, Brian Paynter - Cardinia Shire, Ann Selby - Cardinia Shire, Paul Thomas - Star News Group & Simone Walker - Cranbourne Harness Racing Club

The group will be lead by Windermere Adventure Challenge Team Leaders - Kathryn King and Carina Venturi.

A long and winding road

Jan (not her real name) has endured more hard knocks in her lifetime than most of us could ever imagine.

Abandoned by her mother at age three, and sexually abused by a family member at eight, Jan returned to live with her mum when she was 14. Three months later she was made a ward of the state after being bashed by her mum's partner. Becoming a runaway, Jan fell pregnant at 17.

Trying to care for her new baby alone, Jan turned to drugs like speed and marijuana. After two years of misery she made her mind up to get clean (and has stayed that way for over 20 years). She then had another baby and soon fell pregnant again, this time ending up in a psychiatric unit after suffering a nervous breakdown.

When her third child was born, Jan knew there was something wrong with her. She blamed herself and her mental state, and her then-partner's violence for her daughter's problems.

GP after GP told Jan there was nothing actually wrong with her baby. Frustrated by a lack of answers, and with her partner in and out of gaol, Jan was finally referred to Windermere.

Through meetings with her Case Manager, Jan's tragic life and the terrible ordeals she has faced have finally come to light, and her most challenging needs addressed.

Her youngest daughter, now three, was non-verbal and couldn't show affection or make eye contact. She also screamed and kicked continually. Jan's Case Manager arranged for her referral to a paediatrician who diagnosed her with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Jan's daughter is now in childcare four days a week and has improved her social skills dramatically, even beginning to talk. Jan uses this time off for respite and to help out at a local voluntary group. Recently, she had her first night off from 'care' since her daughter was born.

Previously an unlicensed driver, limiting her outings to school runs and grocery shopping only, Jan has passed her driving test with the help of Windermere – giving her new-found freedom and confidence.

Jan is also in a new relationship with a man she says is kind and supportive, and has children too.

It hasn't all been easy though. Continued violence from her previous partner, including stalking and death threats, has seen him once back to gaol.

Her eldest son's partner lost her baby when she was 26 weeks pregnant. This sent Jan into a terrible tailspin that she's had to work hard to conquer.

Jan's Windermere Case Manager says that Jan has gone from a 'three' (concerning) to a 'ten' (outstanding) in her time with Windermere, and has accomplished nearly all the goals she set. They are very proud of their Client saying "...it was a privilege to work with her and be able to make such an input into someone's life. My Client is an amazing woman and mother, and pro-active in wanting the best for her family."

Our best wishes for a bright future for you and your family, Jan.



Please help

Your donation, no matter how large or small, can make a big difference to local kids in serious need. For example:

- **\$52** can provide a counselling session for a troubled child
- **\$104** can provide a week of groceries for a hungry local child
- **\$76** can support a child on the disability waiting list

To make a donation, please complete this coupon and mail to us at:

Reply Paid 84615
Windermere donations
Windermere Child & Family Services
48 Webb Street
Narre Warren Vic 3805

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

YES! I want to help local children in serious need

Please accept my gift via:

Cheque/money order payable to Windermere Child and Family Services

OR

Debit my: Mastercard Visa Card

No.: / / /

Expiry: /

Name on card:

Signature:

Details for receipt:

Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr

First name:

Surname:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone:

Email:

- Please send me information about the Bequest Program
- Please tick here if you do NOT want to receive further communications from Windermere.

Thank you for your support!