

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Chair Report

Another year has past and it's time to reflect on what has been over the last 12 months.

In the busyness of life, it's rare that we stop and think about what we are actually achieving at The Haven. When I do take the time to take a moment and look back, I am amazed at what we have done. Not just in the number of lives we have changed the path of, which in itself is astonishing, but in all of the "other" as well.

I have long known that there is more good than bad in the world. The Haven has been such an astonishing example of that and it gives us hope.

Every week we receive so many offers of donations of goods and offers to help. We have weekly fruit and vegetable donations, businesses and individuals who offer financial assistance, women who cook weekly meals for us, volunteers who help each week with coordinating donations, keeping our gardens looking pretty and who contribute to our weekly Wellness Wednesday program. Schools and community groups have provided care packs and blankets. Individuals have responded to our calls for pantry and other staple items that we need to keep our doors open.

Our Walk the Talk program has also been a huge success with Kingswood High School, Emmaus Catholic College and St Paul's Grammar School all doing wonderful things for us by "adopting" The Haven as part of this program aimed at educating high school children about respectful relationships. Teenagers have baked cakes, held hand ball competitions, assisted at events, all to raise both awareness and funds for The Haven.

Chair Report continued

Many have attended and volunteered at our fundraising and awareness events. Our golf day was a huge success. And our first birthday party was extra special.

Women's Community Shelters, our umbrella organisation has continued in its support of us both financially, and importantly with knowledge, wisdom and training.

The ability to do what we do also is also dependent upon the unwavering efforts of the board of The Haven who work tirelessly, in addition to their full time jobs and families, to keep our doors open.

Finally, the skills and dedication of our employees are second to none. Our shelter manager and her team go above and beyond to ensure the care for those who stay with us is of the highest standard. So while it is our hope that one day violence against women and children is eradicated, until then, The Haven will be here. Helping those affected in our community by homelessness and violence to stand on their feet and start on a new path free from fear.

In the 2018/19 financial year, we provided over 3,300 bed nights. That's 3,300 nights that women and children were safe. Their lives forever changed because of the amazing generosity of our community of supporters, and for that we say
thank you.

Sharon Levy,
Chair



a year in review

SHELTER MANAGER REPORT



As I reflect on the past year at The Haven – Nepean Women’s Shelter and all that has been achieved, it is profoundly recurrent that The Haven has established itself as a place of healing, recovery, connection and empowerment. After opening The Haven in April 2018, I have been privileged to witness the care, professional practice, empowerment and support women and children have received as we walk alongside them in their time at the shelter.

We are humbled to call The Haven a home for so many women and children who need a safe place to rest, restore and rebuild. Thank you to the traditional custodians of the land on which The Haven sits, we are tied to the land, the community and the beauty of our surrounds as a natural resource for healing trauma.

Inspiring a community of change, connection, empowerment and wellbeing cannot be achieved in isolation. I continue to swell with pride as the leader of a diverse, intelligent, resilient and talented team of Case Workers, Children’s Case Workers and volunteers. We are a diverse team that demonstrates exceptional standards in trauma informed practice, client centred approach and strengths based approach, modelling support, tolerance and a healthy community for women and children at the shelter and in outreach. In the last year we have provided service to a diverse range of women and children, including newborn babies, young children, primary school and teenage children, pregnant women and a diverse age of women from multiple nationalities and socio-economic backgrounds, with diverse talents, skills and life experience.

One of the most fulfilling experiences for me in the past year is to be part of and lead a learning organisation that prioritises clarity of purpose, a safe learning environment and learning practices. The fundamental pillars of being a learning organisation, intrinsically link with The Haven’s core philosophies of engagement, holistic experience, person centred and continuous improvement. This is how we find a shared practice model as staff and with clients.

The community within The Haven has formed into an extraordinary force of support, good will and friendship between the women and children staying at The Haven. This community has extended beyond the shelter itself, with women and children creating social groups and communities of support amongst themselves, staying in touch long after they leave the shelter.

Women have supported each other with education, social engagement, mothering, creativity and sharing their fears and strengths with each other. Children have supported each other by forming friendships across family, cultural and religious differences, that will last beyond these walls. This goes beyond the work of our team, this goes to the heart of women and children supporting each other and creating community, in the midst of fear, trauma and isolation. This is the radiance of empowerment. Together, they have created their own community and continue to share that once they leave The Haven.

As a team, we have been dedicated to establishing shelter programs that provide support, education and wellbeing. These programs include developing our own Wildflower Women's Group with education, wellbeing and empowerment content, Wellness Wednesday Program to build connection and wellbeing for residents and interactive school holiday programs. Our Outreach Support Program continues to grow as we have families in transitional housing, outreach case work support and group programs.

The Haven supports families experiencing domestic or family violence who are on no income due to their visa. This is a core area where The Haven differs from other accommodation models. It is through the generosity of the community, expertise of staff and developed models for working with clients on visa's that we are able to offer a safe place for women and children who would otherwise not be able to access safe, supported accommodation. We go beyond just offering safe supported accommodation, providing empowering opportunities for connection, education and employment through our community partners. As the story of The Haven continues to unfold, we continue to develop new programs, new community partnerships and an increased awareness of homelessness, domestic violence and family violence.

We hope you continue to support us in our next chapter.





THE SUPPORT OF A COMMUNITY

The support of the Nepean community and beyond has not only inspired me, it has inspired women and children to feel part of a community again.

This year has seen a shift in local youth engaging in awareness campaigns, education and fundraisers through the Walk The Talk Program and School Engagement Program. Students and teachers at three local high schools have excelled in transforming their learning in the Walk The Talk program, to Calls To Action that support The Haven. These students have demonstrated a dedication to understanding the impacts of domestic violence, family violence and homelessness in their community and creating education and awareness pieces that speak to the heart of humanity and dignity for fellow community members.

Thank you to Emmaus Catholic College, Kingswood High School and St Paul's Grammar School for your continued involvement in our Schools Engagement Program.

Transitional Housing has been a first experience for us in this year, providing a transitional property, paid traineeship and financial support for a family of 3 with the coordinated approach and support of The Haven, Women's Community Shelters, Payce, Bridge Housing and Payce Foundation.

Working in partnership with other organisations and community groups allows us to extend education and employment opportunities for women. This year we have worked with multiple local traineeship and education providers to enable women to enter education and employment including computer courses, Business Administration, Hospitality and School Administration.



Creative Connection

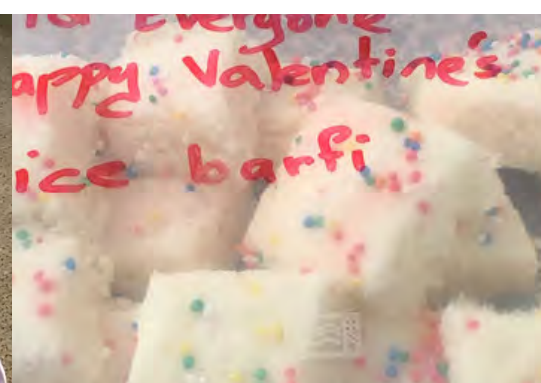
Fostering creative connection with the self and others through the Safe Haven Art Project, Messy Art Boot Camp, "No Place Like Home" Link Housing Art Exhibition, family fun cooking and sensory gardening workshops.

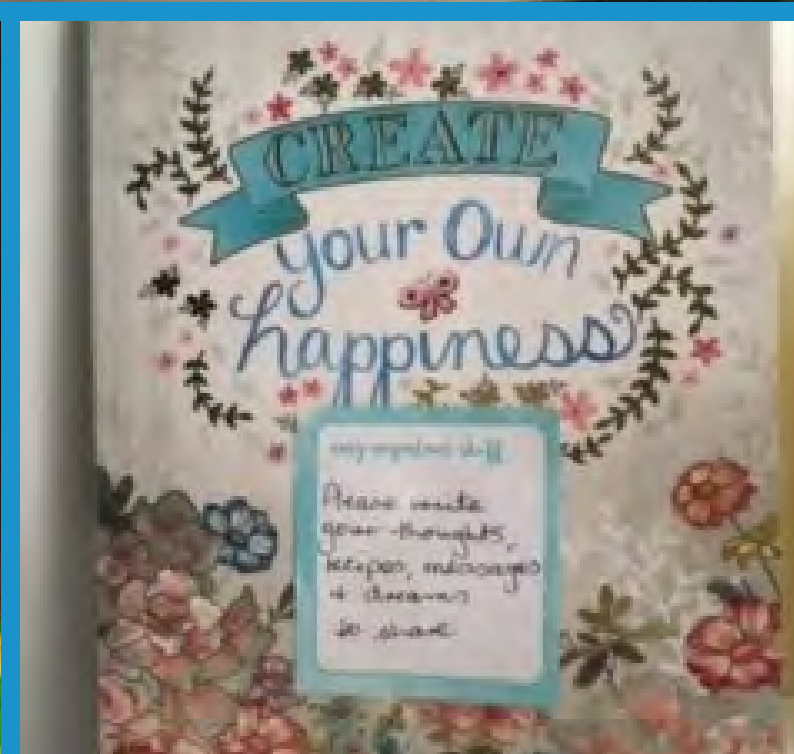
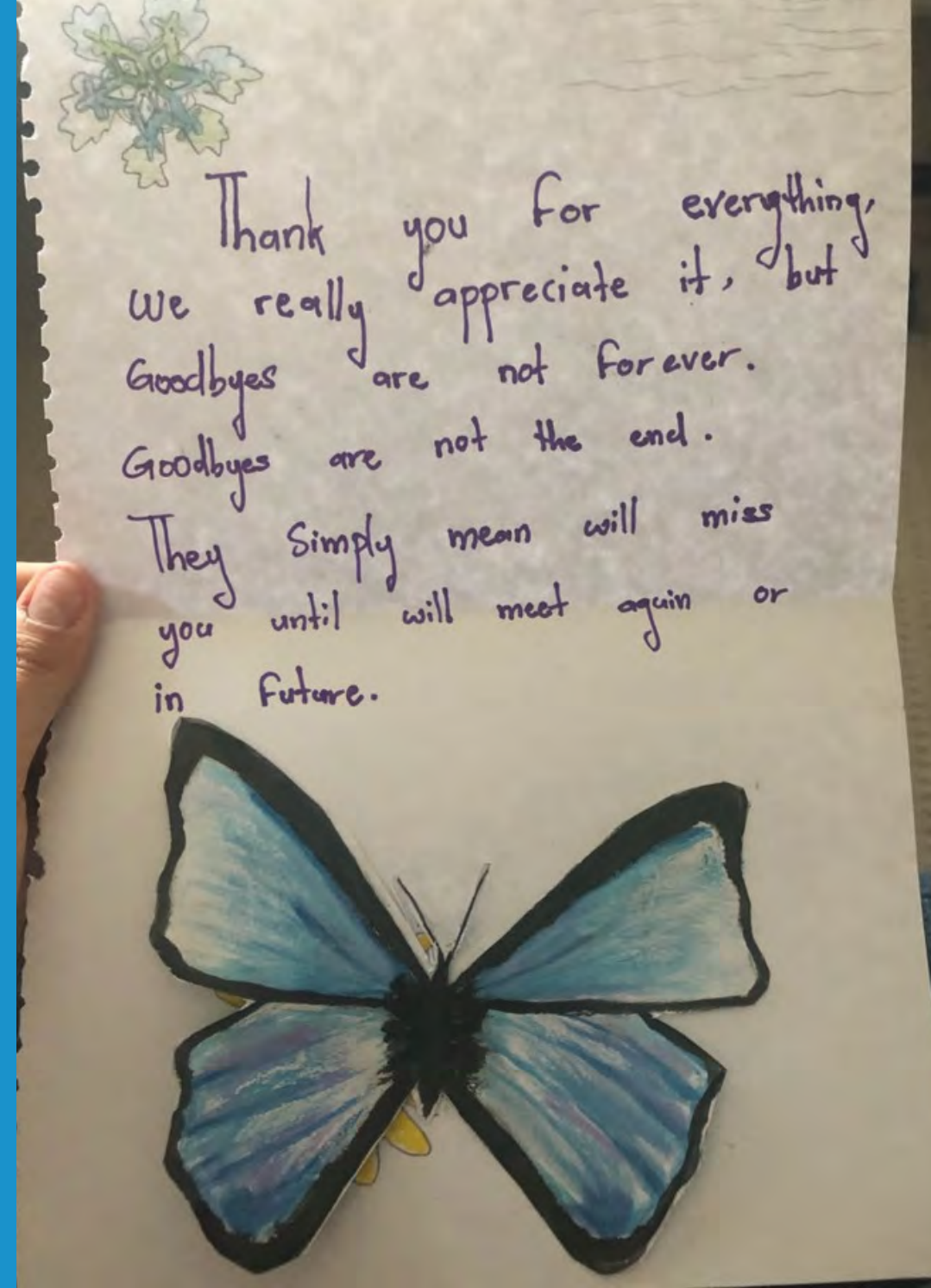
Creating family moments and connection to culture through karaoke, multicultural dancing nights, understanding diversity through difference, attachment and bonding through art, sewing, story writing, music, guitar playing and mindfulness colouring.



Community Engagement

At The Haven we support families in building connection with community through community events we attended this year including International Women's Day Celebrations, NAIDOC Community Event, posters for the Women's March, visit to NSW Government House by invitation of the Governor and Haven Family Outreach Picnic's.





KEEPING THEM SAFE

In 2018/19 we have provided 3343 Bed nights.
That is 3343 bed nights that women and children
were safe, not sleeping rough or in unsafe places.
We have provided safe supported accommodation
for **21 women and 27 children** within this time.

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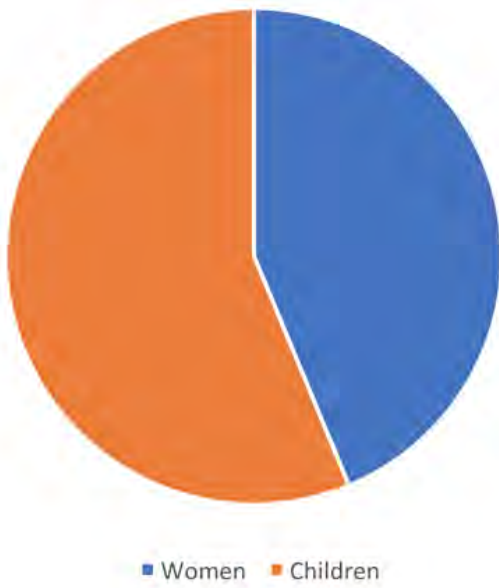
BED NIGHTS

48

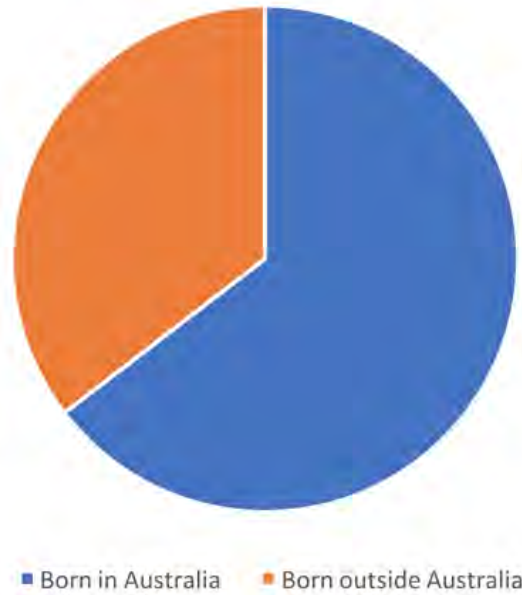
WOMEN & CHILDREN

STATISTICS

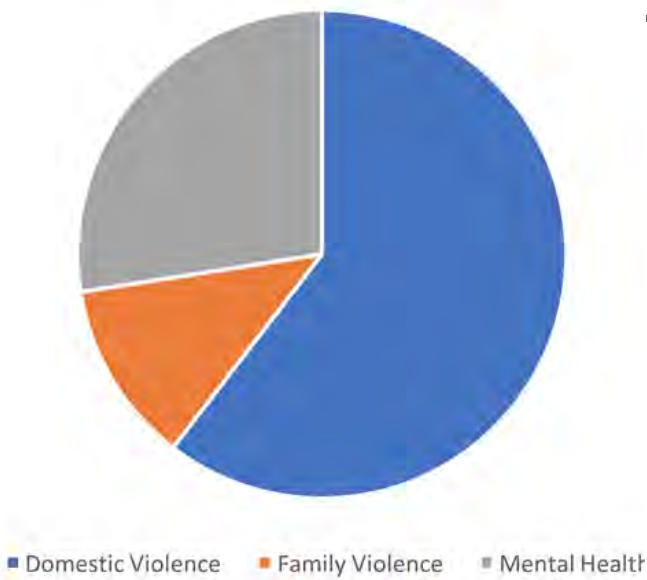
Client Type



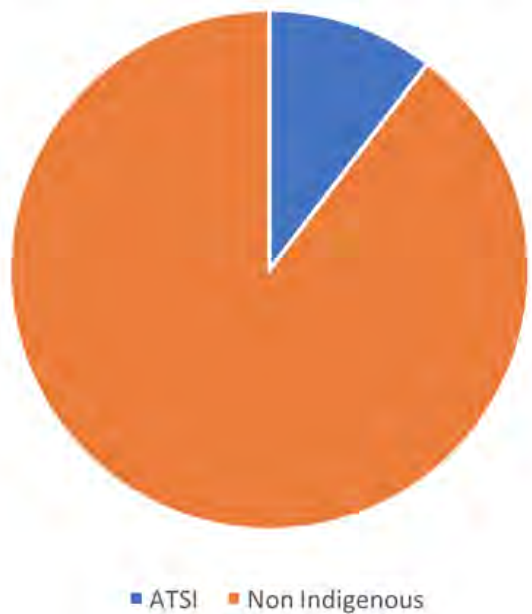
Country of Origin



Primary Presenting Reason



Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander







WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE FROM OUR SHELTER MANAGER

Thank you to Women's Community Shelter's for the guidance and support you have offered and for taking a chance on the Nepean Community.

Thank you to the Board of The Haven - Nepean Women's Shelter, your tireless support and passion has seen the shelter and team grow from humble beginnings to a strong professional and supported organisation.

Thank you to the dedicated Case Workers and Children's Case Workers for your dedication and advocacy for supporting women and children in need. I am inspired everyday by working in a team of intelligent, professional, humorous and genuinely passionate women. The amazing team holds the dignity and light of women's empowerment in the face of systemic gendered oppression, I am truly honoured to lead you all.

Thank you to the volunteers who give up their time generously and with devotion to women and children that they may never meet. Thank you Kelly for your thoughtfulness and tireless efforts as the Donations Coordinator. Thank you Fi for volunteering to keep our finances in good health. Thank you to Karen and Petra for cooking delicious meals that keep families nourished and cared for. Thank you Mike for maintaining the property with lush lawns and fixing leaky taps, Thank you Joanna for providing hair treatments with a safe and respectful kindness for women who have experienced trauma. Thank you Sandy and Eloise for safe pet experiences filled with dress ups, story time, puzzles and games. Thank you Sandy for supporting us to develop a Haven Housing Continuum, Thank you Sue for creating a sensory garden experience with a healthy herb and vegetable garden, fairy garden, succulent gardening workshop and a calming garden space.

Thank you to the local students Ari, Beau, Cooper, Owen, Lola, Anna, Georgia who have dedicated their service hours to volunteering at The Haven.

Thank you Lauren for providing supportive legal advice for clients at the shelter.

Thank you Sophia and the team at AVLI for delicious weekly meals and sweet Greek treats.

Thank you Justine from Enliven Yoga and Michelle from Encompass Yoga for providing volunteer yoga classes at the shelter. Thank you Adam from Mountain Mechanics for servicing our vehicle.

Thank you to the Nepean community and wider community for all that you have done to support The Haven.

Your thoughtfulness and generosity has filled the house with care.

THANK YOU

we can't do what we do without our generous supporters.



PANTHERS PENRITH
YOUR WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT

**WOMEN'S
COMMUNITY
SHELTERS**



Sydney
WATER

 Transurban

THANK YOU

To everyone who has donated much needed funds. Whether it has been done anonymously, through our champions program, a grant, a one-off donation, buying tickets to our events or raffles, or another way it means so much to us. You keep our doors open.

To the local farms and producers who donate food to help keep the women and children fed.

To the people who have knitted blankets to keep the families warm.

To everyone who has donated their time, goods or services.

To everyone who has helped us raise awareness.

To every single supporter.

We thank you.

You are helping us change lives.



48



**LIVES
CHANGED**



'THE LOST DOG'

written by a 7 year old staying at
The Haven

the lost dog

once a long time there was a dog
named ella. she had a owner named
lily. but one day ella decided she would go
for a walk. why her owner was asleep.
than she came to a forest. it was really
dark with no leaves. she went
in ^{the forest} because ^{she} he saw
sam had a log on her leg. a horse named
you ^{of her leg} the horse pushed
a cat named jade then they met
in her paw. so jade got a thorn
they became friends but pulled it out
saw a birds wing stuck in a branch they
then the cat pushed it ^{stuck} head on
the bird foot then it got out
they all became friends then
they all walked home.

the end