



St Anthony's Family Care

# HEART matters



Christmas 2018

## An Update From Our CEO



Dear Friends,

2018 has been a very big year for the service users and staff at St Anthony's.

Between the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), lodgement of the Development Application

and changes to our Inclusive Early Learning centre, there has been barely a spare moment.

Many of our families are presently negotiating their second plan for the NDIS and although it has been more than twelve months for most, both the staff and families are still grappling with the magnitude of changes that this new system has brought. Overall the funding received by service users is appropriate to their individual needs, enabling most children and young people to engage in more programs which assist in developing their skills and attaining personal goals.

The demand for services has increased vastly and we have needed to implement a waitlist for most of our services to maintain the high quality of care in which we pride ourselves.

The Early Learning Centre has maintained its commitment to children with disabilities whilst aligning itself more appropriately with best practice guidelines for early intervention. We no longer deliver our segregated program for children with disabilities but rather, all children with disabilities now have the opportunity to learn and play alongside their peers through the duration of the day. This change has been very well received by parents and our children who have participated in the program this year have excelled in their new learning environment.

Although we have not had a formal decision from Burwood Council on our Development Application, We have been advised of a number of areas which require revision. We are attending to these as quickly as possible and remain hopeful

that we will be able to commence construction in the new year and see stage 1: Early Learning Centre completed around mid-2019.

Many of you often ask me about Sr Carmel and I am happy to report that Sr Carmel still spends time at the centre. More often than not however, her time is spent visiting the children in the Early Learning Centre rather than visiting the office. The children adore spending time with Sr Carmel and take turns patiently queuing to take a ride on her walker. Whilst riding on the walker, they provide her with lots of updates about the program, the staff and all the latest developments. It is a beautiful sight to see Sister laughing and playing with the children – her passion and commitment to caring for the children has not wavered at all, even after all these years.

Thank you for your continued support, may the miracle of Christmas fill your heart with joy.

**Joanna Najdzion**  
Chief Executive Officer



We have recently built a website and will be providing a building update once we commence. Please follow our progress at [www.safc.org.au](http://www.safc.org.au). For those of you on Facebook, we often post our latest news to our page so you can read about our regular news here.



# Developing Skills to Live an Independent Life



Marty is a thoughtful, caring, and polite 14 year old boy who loves reading, drawing, listening to music and watching you tube videos. He has an Intellectual Disability, Attention Deficit Disorder, and Severe Anxiety. He worries about being left on his own, and panics around loud noises, quiet places and darkness. When upset he will cry, shout, and scream. His anxiety grows around people and places that he doesn't know, and he will withdraw from asking for help in times of need. Marty requires support, prompting and modelling with daily living tasks. Although keen to try new things, he worries about failing and being teased by his peers.

Marty's Grandparents are in their late 60's. They have been his fulltime carers since he was a toddler, when his biological parents made the decision that they were unable to continue caring for him. They have their own health concerns, so it's only natural that the one question on the forefront of their mind is: who will look after Marty when they are no longer able to do it themselves?

Marty started to access St Anthony's a few years ago. Funding allowed him to have support in his home and in the community. Marty was cautious at first, and chose to engage his support workers in the familiarity of the family home where they would play games and prepare afternoon tea.

As Marty developed confidence and trust with his workers, he began accessing the community by catching public transport with them to the local shops.

When Marty transitioned to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in 2017, his Grandparents sought further assistance from St Anthony's. After discussing their goals with the Coordinators, a plan was developed for Marty to become familiar with sleeping away from home, to

build positive relationships with other children that accessed the centre, and develop his independent living skills specifically in money handling and personal care.

Under the supervision of a dedicated team of support workers, Marty has made a number of significant achievements. He participated in his first sleepover at St Anthony's this year and it was a huge success. He is continuing to manage his anxiety and actively engaging with children during group community access activities. He is also furthering his independent living skills and decision-making abilities.

Marty's Grandparents are extremely proud of all his achievements and are comforted knowing St Anthony's has the staff and resources to support Marty into the future.

Supporting children and young adults reach their full potential is something we are passionate about at St Anthony's Family Care. Your donation will ensure our Centres are maintained and equipped, with the resources that children and young adults like Marty require, to achieve their goals and grow their skills for life.

**Yvette Coral**

*Manager, Disability Coordinator*

**For more information and to provide your feedback:**

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