



St Anthony's Family Care

HEART matters



Easter 2022

An Update From Our CEO



Dear Friends,

As we ushered in the new year, we all hoped and prayed for better times ahead filled with new opportunities and a return to some sense of normalisation as we slowly worked through what was hopefully the worst of the pandemic.

At St Anthony's Family Care, the village is a brim with children and young adults who are accessing our array of services and happily playing, learning, and socialising with their peers.

It is fitting that we have had such a positive start to the year as 2022 marked St Anthony's Family Care's 70th Anniversary. From the start of 1952, the operations of the organisation were transferred from the Society of St Vincent de Paul to the Sisters of St Joseph, and it is fabulous to see new life injected into the site with the new buildings equipped to offer a broader range of services to a large number of clients.

In January we commenced the operations of the 'Forge Day Program' in the Jean & Thally's Activity Centre. The Forge Day program supports school leavers for whom further education or employment are not an option, to develop life skills, participate in the community and form social networks. The program specifically supports

participants aged between 18 to 25 years as we believe that these are the formative years of adulthood, and the needs of this age group are very specific.

When visiting Jean & Thally's centre during the day, it is common to see the young school leavers tending to the herbs and vegetables in the garden, preparing a meal or participating in a creative activity such as arts and crafts or music.

Most participants leave the program at 3pm and the centre quickly changes gears and prepares for the arrival of school children to participate in the 'After School program' for the next three hours. The range of activities offered by St Anthony's Disability Services enables children with disabilities to participate in programs designed to meet individual needs and develop vital skills.

St. Anthony's Home Passed to Nuns By Vincentian Men

FROM January 1 next year, control of St. Anthony's Home, Croydon, will pass from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, to the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

St. Anthony's, which cares for homeless children and girl-mothers, has hitherto been a Special Work of the Society.

The Sisters already control St. Joseph's Home for Children, also in Croydon.

In addition, they are noted for their work at St. Margaret's Maternity Hospital, and in parochial schools.

Announcement of the change in control of St. Anthony's was made last Sunday by the President of the Particular Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Bro. J. B. Maher).

Catholic Weekly,
(Sydney, NSW;
1942 - 1954)
Thursday 13
December 1951



With the children and young adults appropriately engaged, mum and dad can participate in the workforce or attend to other responsibilities. The opening of three residences for Short Term Accommodation, in addition to the one existing facility, has enabled St Anthony's to significantly increase the number of children and young adults which we can care for in overnight accommodation.

For the majority of children and young adults with disabilities, staying overnight away from home as well as mum and dad, is not an easy option. Many children and young adults have individual behaviour programs and medications which require specific training for administration and particular routines which need to be followed. The trained staff at St Anthony's are able to form positive connections with the participants and adhere to any specific requirements to ensure that transitions from home to the St Anthony's facility is as seamless as possible.

Having the opportunity to stay away from home, supports parents to have a break, prepare for the next step of when their child may need to move out of home and most importantly, provides the person with a disability with an experience which is very mainstream and encourages independence.

The operation of the St Anthony's Village is only possible as a result of the ongoing support of our donors. Although parents can purchase services or access government funding to assist with the cost, St Anthony's does not receive any financial assistance from the government for the maintenance and operational costs of running facilities.

The opportunity to access programs and facilities, which are purpose built, secure and appropriate to the special needs of children and young adults with a disability, makes a significant difference for many families.

I thank you for your continued support and commitment.

May your Easter basket be filled with joy, happiness and peace, this season and always.

Regards,



Joanna Najdzion
Chief Executive Officer



It Feels Like Coming Home

St Anthony's Family Care (SAFC) has been a vital part of the community for over 70 years and the childcare centre has been its longest running service. While programs may have changed to better meet community needs, SAFC's commitment to supporting children and families has been unwavering and remains core to our mission.

In 1974, St Anthony's began providing childcare services to families living in Croydon and the surrounding suburbs. Children of parents needing relief were welcomed, with first priority going to poorer families who needed the additional support offered by the Sisters of St Joseph.

By 1979, St Anthony's Home had obtained a licence to operate a childcare centre and services formally began.

After many years of service and following feedback from the community and parents, an inclusive early childhood service began in 2007

when the Special Preschool and the mainstream childcare centre were merged. Over the past 15 years, the Early Learning Centre has evolved and continues to work towards providing programs that acknowledge each child's strengths while also helping to support the development of new skills, particularly where children have a diagnosed disability or developmental delay. This support is provided through the 'Peers & Play' program.

The Peers & Play program helps to ensure that children receive the additional support they require so they can actively participate within the mainstream care environment and learn alongside their typically developing peers.

This year Figtree Early Learning Centre has been delighted to welcome back the Ahmed family. In 2017, SAFC first met Lana Ahmed who had been referred to St Anthony's after it became clear that she was not reaching her developmental milestone and required the additional supports provided at St Anthony's.



Lana had been diagnosed with a Global Developmental Delay (GDD), and in partnerships with her family and other allied health professions, work began to help strengthen Lana's motor skills, communication, and self-help skills.

During the 3 years that Lana was part of the Peers & Play program she was able to make significant progress as she developed the ability to feed herself independently, began walking and was able to communicate choices with support. St Anthony's was also key in helping to ensure Lana was able to experience a positive transition to school so that her education could continue as she moved to kindergarten.

When the Ahmed family recently discovered that their son, Mustafa, also needs additional support, they knew exactly where to go to find the help needed. Mustafa's mum contacted the Manager of Figtree Early Learning Centre and enrolled her son.

Now within our brand-new state of the art childcare centre, the Figtree team is working in partnership with Mustafa's family to support him to achieve his individual goals while at the same time having the opportunity to make those important connections with children his age.

For many parents, Figtree Early Learning Centre is the preferred service as families have confidence that programs offered can meet the needs of their child through dedicated educators working in partnership with families.

St Anthony's and Figtree are proud of both our achievements to date and our commitment to the ongoing support of children with disabilities as they participate in the Peers & Play program.

This program is only possible due to the support of our donors and benefactors as the cost of the additional staff required to meet the individual needs of children is met through your generous contributions.

Regards,

Teresa Petrone
Manager Early Learning Services



For more information and to provide your feedback:

Ph: (02) 9747 5782 Email: enquiries@safc.org.au Web: www.safc.org.au

Please return this form with
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St Anthony's Family Care
11 Monash Parade, Croydon
NSW 2132

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...Wishing
you a very
peaceful and
special Easter
Season



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