

Social Justice News

On a very cold and windy Thursday morning last week, Victoria Vassallo, Anna Cicalese, Ms. Belinda Brown and myself attended a breakfast function at Tabcorp Park. The event was in support of Hope Street Youth and Family Services to build a youth homelessness centre in Melton. We all attended with curiosity and enthusiasm. Curious as to who they are and enthusiasm with regard to how Catholic Regional College can help support our Melton community.

The presenters were CEO Donna Bennett of Hope Street, Inspector Rudken from Victoria Police and two young adults who have previously accessed Hope Street support services. The common thread running through all of their presentations was that Melton needs more support services for our youth. Over the past year, at least 300 youths in Melton have experienced homelessness. Both the CEO and Inspector suggested that these young people more likely than not, have found themselves in this situation as a result of family violence. Being unable to return to their home and feeling disconnected from family and friends, often leads to further issues of unemployment, alcohol abuse, drug use and possibly crime. These factors can then lead onto mental health issues.

They all agreed that to best support these adults, we need to help them stay connected to what is familiar; keeping them near friends, helping them stay in school, near their places of employment and mostly help them stay in Melton.

The Hope Street foundation aim to set up a crisis centre that can be accessed 24 hours a day 7 days a week and provide one on one support to young people. They were calling on organisations and businesses in the local area to help with financial support and to help spread the word that this is something that Melton needs and needs quickly.

As Social Justice coordinator at the school, I will be investigating practical ways for us to support Hope Street and in turn help provide a better future for many young people in Melton.

Amongst the other organisations represented at the breakfast was the assistant Marketing Manager of Woodgrove Shopping Centre – Katherine Shaw. She explained that the centre had organised “The Hope St Tree”. Shoppers are able to support Hope Street by purchasing a butterfly (a symbol of hope) from the service desk and have it attached to the tree.

Margaret Rowe-Watts
Social Justice Coordinator

Year 9 Community Service

Combined Churches Caring Melton. Emergency Relief Food Bank.

The combined church food bank is a place where the needy and homeless can go to get food and seek financial help.

The food bank provides food, toiletries, beverages and some food items to assist others. Much of the stock is either donated by people or donated by local supermarket companies. The workers at the combined church volunteer their time to help those in need. They are not paid for their time. The workers at the combined church show people that helping those in need really does a lot for a community. Denise, the manager, explained that it is about helping people “get back on their feet” and secure a brighter future.

Billy Rogers, Aleisha King, Ruby Carr, Michael Dudley, Jack Willaims and Ryan Bishop



Packing rice into 1Kg bags.



Dividing bulk noodle packs



Still smiling at the end