

HOPE STREET IN MELTON PROGRAM REPORT

The Hope Street in Melton program provides intensive case management to assist young people to develop their educational and employment goals, while improving their independent living skills, in medium-term interdependent accommodation. Young people are seen as part of the developing community who take an active part in the local development and social outcomes for the Melton region.

Client Demographics

During 2017-2018, the program provided 25 new support periods with another 14 support periods continuing from last year. Of the 35 young people supported, 11 were under 17 years old. Most young people were born in Australia (83%) with 6% identifying themselves as being of Aboriginal heritage. The five most common countries from which overseas-born young people originated were Iran, Philippines, Somalia, Sudan and Vietnam (all 3%).

The main reason young people engaged with the Melton program were relationship/family breakdown and/or violence (41%). A third of young people had experienced housing issues (housing crises, affordability stress, inadequate/inappropriate dwelling conditions or their previous accommodation had ended).

Achievements and Highlights

The Melton program provided over 6,600 days of program support including over 4,400 days of accommodation this year. Young people accessing supported accommodation included 13 adults and seven children.

Over the past 12 months the staff at Hope Street in Melton have been offering life skills education including *Living Skills* workshops, *L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program*, support for tenancy needs, material aid, and links to financial counsellors, psychologists and medical professionals. By providing social and community supports to young people in the program, we offer life skills that will assist the young person to be a productive member of society.

READ MORE: Operation Manager's Report

Networks and Partnerships

Hope Street in Melton believes that strong community engagement is a positive reflection of the agencies commitment to the local community, but also a positive way to support young people in taking pride in their community. The program aims to support young people in challenging their own personal beliefs and developing a deepened sense of identity. We see that this has the potential to lead to increased opportunities in education, employment and training, which can all positively impact the young person's social standing for many years into the future.

To achieve these goals, Hope Street in Melton has developed strong links with numerous community services and local agencies and businesses that assist with providing support to the young people within the program. These have included Woodgrove Shopping Centre, SAF Holland, Kirrip House, Western Emergency Relief Network, Copperfield College, Melton Housing, JPS Meats, as well as other local community service providers.

Program Overview

The Hope Street in Melton program is based on the Youth Foyer-like model of supported transitional housing for young people and young families who are provided with safe, secure and affordable accommodation for 12 months to 2 years. Young people are active participants in creating opportunities to strengthen their housing, employment, education, training and personal and social development. Support is provided within a model of eight self-contained units and two family units.

Case management helps young people identify their goals and how they can transition out of the homelessness service system. Hope Street is responsible for the holistic programs and activities that are designed to achieve development in four core areas:

- Employment, education and training – including living skills development;
- Maintaining successful tenancies;
- Social and recreational development;
- Citizen participation.

The Hope Street in Melton program works to develop and maintain a safe and healthy environment for young people including supporting them with their Wellbeing and Safety Plans. Young people who exit the program are provided with up to 12 months of outreach support.



Norman Vella
Programs Manager
(North West)

“HOMEWORK CLUB MAKES IT EASY TO GET YOUR HOMEWORK DONE BECAUSE IT'S NICE AND QUIET... WHEN I GO TO THE OFFICE I HAVE MY OWN SPACE TO STUDY AND I CAN ASK QUESTIONS WHENEVER I NEED HELP!”



JANE'S STORY

Jane, a 23-year-old single parent with an 11-month-old child, contacted our First Response Mobile Outreach Team after being advised by a Bacchus Marsh agency that they could no longer assist her as she had relocated to a Melton address, making her ineligible for their services.

Jane was referred by a team member to the Hope Street in Melton program where she was assessed by a program worker for housing and support. The worker identified a number of challenges impacting Jane's ability to secure long-term housing including drug and alcohol problems, physical and mental health issues, a cycle of experiencing homelessness, lack of rental history, limited Centrelink income, extensive debts and limited family support.

Several housing and support options were explored with Jane. With her existing vulnerabilities, Jane took on board a discussion the Hope Street worker had regarding whether she would consider sharing a rental property with a friend of hers that would assist her financially. She subsequently contacted the worker to let her know that she had secured a private rental property in Melton South and would be moving in with her friend. She needed assistance, however, with the bond, the first month's rent in advance and to obtain furniture as she did not own anything. The worker helped Jane submit an Office of Housing application for the bond loan, advocated for the rent in advance and provided Jane with contact details for furniture suppliers.