

## BOOST PROGRAM REPORT

“I WANT TO THANK THE WHOLE BOOST SERVICE FOR HELPING ME MORE THAN I DESERVE, FOR INFORMATION, ASKING ME HOW MY DAY HAS BEEN, AND ALWAYS ASKING ME IF I WANT ANYTHING THAT THEY CAN DO FOR ME.”

BOOST is integrated into the specialist youth programs operating at Hope Street and once again the program achieved impressive outcomes for young people and their children this year.

Client support needs include referrals to specialist housing services, Centrelink, medical care, local area mental health services, drug and alcohol services, court support, advocacy to immigration department, refugee support services, financial supports, emotional supports, counselling and family support. The short-term one week refuge stay, includes intensive case management support from BOOST staff where a holistic needs assessment of their immediate needs, goals and aspirations is facilitated, and other assessments including K10, medical and dental, are conducted. The aim of the BOOST program is to seek housing for young people via assisting the young person to apply for the following housing options e.g. shared accommodation, private rental, Office of Housing or Community Housing options, student accommodation, or to return to their initial access point.

The BOOST program also offers support to young people in the community via two support options- six week crisis outreach support and six month long term outreach support.

The BOOST program receives all referrals via access points such as Haven Home Safe, Launch, Vincent Care, Front Yard. The BOOST program also links young people to financial brokerage to assist clients with their housing crisis including to sustain their existing housing, thereby preventing homelessness. External funding can be accessed from (HEF) Housing Establishment Fund, brokerage for supporting the young people with either hotel accommodation or white goods and furniture for setting up a house.

### Client Demographics

The BOOST program provided 156 support periods during 2017-2018 with 134 new assists during the 12-month period. Just over 21% of the 95 young people supported were under 18 years old. Of the 58 young people born in Australia, almost 13% identified as having Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage. The majority of overseas-born young people in the program originated from Ethiopia, Somalia and New Zealand (8%, 6% and 3% respectively).

During the 2017-2018 period, the program exceeded the Department of Health and Human Services' support period targets:

*New support responses provided in 2017-2018 by the BOOST program*

BOOST Support Stream	Support Periods Provided	DHHS Support Periods Target	Target Achieved
Outreach	38	48	79%
Crisis Response	54	36	150%
Short Stay Bed	42	48	88%
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>102%</b>

### BOOST Night Time Support

The BOOST program is very fortunate to be able to facilitate a night time support worker role as part of its intensive case management support to the BOOST Short Stay Bed in the refuge program at West Brunswick.

Our BOOST case manager and night time support worker has been in this role for over four years and during this time has developed a strong relationship with the refuge residential staff support team. Identifying a need for young people to be assisted and supported in self settling and relaxation techniques, staff developed an arts and crafts program. The program operates on a needs basis and as such is not confined to one particular day or time period.

Arts and crafts are offered to young people at times in which they have identified a need and the activities range from adult colouring and drawing, mandala work, knitting, jewellery making, creating dreamcatchers and constructing vision boards. Young people at times have also engaged in mindfulness and meditation techniques.

Young people residing in the refuge often experience issues associated with settling and relaxing during the evening and with ongoing staff support we are able to provide them with several options to engage in creativity, assisting them with the release of happy endorphins that promote a sense of calm, joy, peacefulness and achievement.

The program facilitators have developed extensive personal and professional knowledge in relation to working with young people from an arts-based platform and the results for the young people have been outstanding.

Throughout the years, young people accessing the BOOST Short Stay Bed in the refuge program have made presents and gifts for themselves, family members and loved ones. They have also at times created gifts of acknowledgement to members of the Hope Street Board and affiliated companies who have kindly donated items to and fundraised for Hope Street.



Christine Fagan  
Programs Manager  
(North East)



### Program Overview

BOOST offers vulnerable young people with medium to high needs an integrated approach with the aim of diverting them away from the homelessness service system. Young people and their children are provided short-term accommodation for up to seven nights (Short Stay Bed), short-term crisis support for up to six weeks (Crisis Response) or case management for three months (Outreach).

BOOST practitioners provide a weekly outpost for young people at the access point in Preston run by Haven; Home, Safe. Young people can be referred here by the access point staff and seen by our BOOST case managers for information and support, or referral into the BOOST program for ongoing support.

### DANA'S STORY

For over two months, Dana, referred from VincentCare, had stayed with her mother about one night a week and lived on TAFE grounds the rest of the week, using the bathrooms before the TAFE students arrived. Fortunately, she did not have a criminal record as she had been shoplifting meat and other food to cook on the free barbeques in the local parks.

Dana said that her homelessness was due to family conflict. She recounted that there was a time when the family – her father, mother and two siblings – had lived in Dallas. Her father had worked in his own furniture making business and her mother had done the upholstery for these items. The three children had a goat and a horse.

Everything changed in Dana's family when her father was attacked in the street, acquiring a brain injury. He then began drinking too much and became violent towards his wife and children. In time Dana's father had an Intervention Order against him, limiting his contact with family members. Dana's mother was unable to discipline the children and often defaulted to kicking them out of home. This had happened to Dana many times ever since she was 13 years old.

Despite all of these issues, Dana indicated that she was still very interested in a family reconciliation. She also said that she wanted to save money, get a part time job and to either teach English, become an interpreter or work as a police officer.

Dana was accepted into the BOOST program for a Short Stay Bed in the refuge. She was later offered a six-week bed. Since then, Dana says she would like a regular support person for the next two years who she can contact for information and decision making. Hope Street has the expertise and experience to provide this case management and help young people like Dana to move away from homelessness.

OVER **21%**

**OF THE 95 YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED WERE UNDER 18 YEARS OLD.**