Creating New Destinies

INSIDE THIS EDITION:
• Couch Surfing event
• Funding for Mandurah
• Cool Runnings
• Art & Soul in the garden
And much more…
Passages Resource Centres in Northbridge and Mandurah introduced the role of Active Referral Officer (ARO) after identifying a gap in service provision. Staff noticed that many of the young people seeking their assistance would leave the centre and then not follow up on the referrals made by staff. This was hindering the level of progress they were making.

The new role increased capacity for staff to mentor and engage with young people and ensure they followed through with referrals to other agencies by transporting or accompanying them to these appointments.

Additionally staff can work more intensively with the young people, helping them to access housing, attend court hearings, address income support issues, receive legal, mental health and drug and alcohol support, access education and training and get parenting support.

It has also helped with breaking down barriers for people who need help but would not come to Passages because of issues such as a lack of transport, safety concerns, having young dependents, and mental health issues like anxiety. The ARO can visit these clients outside of the Passages service, helping achieve better outcomes for these young people.

In its first year the program engaged with 139 individual clients on over 367 occasions.

The ARO role has continued to develop and adapt in relation to the ever changing needs of clients and the growing demand for increased support. It has been recorded that 4 out of 5 successful referrals are now connected to the ARO role.

Client’s feedback showed that working with an ARO encouraged them to attend appointments, helped them overcome fears and anxiety, helped them identify their goals and create an action plan, enabled them to engage with a wider range of services, and helped them believe in themselves.

Further to the success with clients, Passages staff also noted a huge increase in available service networks, creating more effective and informed referral pathways, allowing for a more collaborative approach, and creating more positive results.

A long-time client of Passages Northbridge, 22 year old Jacob is an example of someone who has been left behind. With the help of Passages staff Jacob was able to secure accommodation and has been introduced to other relevant services.

Jacob was recently diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum, a diagnosis usually made much earlier in life. As a result of this Passages staff have worked more intensively with Jacob to advocate on his behalf and apply for the funding support he is able to access.

Jacob is now living in a single unit. Passages provided furniture and support with moving. It was identified that Jacob would need ongoing support and he has since been approved for funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Subsequently, a mentor from Autism Australia has been partnered with Jacob and he will receive six hours of one-on-one support each week in relation to education, employment and socialisation.

Passages remain a support in Jacob’s life, advocating on his behalf and ensuring he has the wrap around services he needs to help him live independently.

‘Cool Runnings’ is a monthly sports program run by Passages Northbridge in collaboration with Mission Australia and Street Connect. The aim of the program is to provide a space for young people to participate in non-competitive games and exercises. While there is a focus on participation, it is also a useful way for the three services to engage with young people and expand their support networks.

The first Cool Runnings event had a great turn out. The young people (and staff) enjoyed a sunny afternoon at Russell Square playing a game of soccer and also taking part in a mini fitness boot camp. With most clients living on the street, many have had quite negative interactions when in public. Cool Runnings is a good opportunity for young people to positively engage in the community in a safe and fun way. A few members of the public were interested in the program and some even joined in.
Matt’s story

Matt (23 years old) moved to Perth from Kalgoorlie and came to Passages after hearing about it from another client. Matt had been using cannabis for many years and had recently started using methamphetamine. Due to Matt’s drug use he lost contact with his parents, partner and lost access to his daughter.

Matt spoke openly to Passages staff about how substance use was negatively impacting his life and that he wanted to overcome his addiction. Passages Active Referral Officer (ARO) made an appointment for Matt at Cyrenian House, a rehabilitation centre, and accompanied him to this first appointment.

Matt committed to attending weekly counselling sessions whilst awaiting a bed and in the meantime came to Passages daily to access essential needs.

Support was provided to seek short term accommodation whilst waiting for rehab. Matt’s commitment to receiving treatment paid off and he was accepted into Cyrenian House and admitted to their drug detox program all within three weeks of presenting at Passages.

Art and Soul Gardening Project

The young people visiting Passages in Mandurah had expressed a desire to have a garden out the back of the service. It is known that working outdoors in the garden produces higher levels of serotonin which can increase cognitive ability, lower stress and create an overall happier disposition.

Staff wanted to see the young people engage in a project that was going to be beneficial to their well-being as well as have real productive benefits. Staff contacted the local Bunnings store and with their support, were able to make the idea of a garden come to fruition.

It was decided that creating a veggie patch would be ideal, not only bringing the space to life, but providing produce for the healthy cooking workshops.

The young people got involved in the painting of planter boxes, digging up the area for the garden, designing the area and planting the vegetables and herbs. Bunnings also donated a worm farm which a number of young people tend to when at the service, along with watering the garden and picking some of the herbs and vegetables to utilise in the meals they are cooking.

The veggie garden has been an incredibly successful venture and Passages is grateful to Bunnings for their support.
Over the past 18 months Passages staff have been supporting a young couple to improve their situation and provide a stable life for themselves.

Melanie was 16 years old when she started accessing Passages to meet her basic daily needs such as showering and getting food and clothing. She started to build a good relationship with the youth workers and in developing trust she started seeking assistance with the issues that had led to her homelessness; trouble at school, relationships with parents and substance abuse.

At 17 years of age, Melanie became pregnant and moved in with her partner and his family. However it wasn’t long until the household became overcrowded, causing relationships to breakdown and social services to become involved.

Melanie sought assistance from Passages determined to find stable accommodation for the sake of her new baby. One of the challenges in obtaining long term accommodation was a lack of tenancy documentation. Passages were able to provide Melanie, her partner Paul and their baby with a two bedroom unit until something more permanent was organised.

It was initially a struggle for Melanie having never lived independently and now being a first time mum. The accommodation was provided on an agreement that she would continue to work with Passages staff to get the support and outreach assistance she needed.

Melanie worked closely with youth workers to ensure their baby’s medical checks and appointments were being met. Both young parents have overcome many obstacles while applying for long term housing but continued to persist despite many rejections.

Melanie, with the help of Passages staff, worked hard to ensure they would not be leaving Passages transitional housing without finding other housing.

Passages staff advocated strongly for them to secure long term accommodation through the Housing Authority’s “50 lives 50 homes” program. The couple were helped to complete housing authority forms, obtain identification and ensure they obtained priority listing.

After 18 months of hard work, the young family are excited to have moved into their own independent unit - more importantly somewhere they can call home.

Melanie has now turned 18, their baby has had her 1st birthday, and Paul is looking for employment. They now feel positive about their future.

This year for Homelessness Prevention Week Passages Resource Centre in Northbridge held a special ‘Sports and Snags’ event for its young people.

Thanks to a grant from Shelter WA, they held a sausage sizzle, enjoyed some live music and played soccer at Birdwood Square.

Shelter WA is supported by Lotterywest and the Department for Communities, with funds supplied by their grant programs.

During the event they had a visit by wrestler and former rugby league player Soa “The Hulk” Palelei, who had lunch with the youth, talked with them and kicked the ball around.

Also as part of Homelessness Prevention Week Passages Northbridge attended Homelessness Australia’s event held at the YMCA headquarters in Leederville. The main event provided an opportunity for the young people to showcase their musical talents with a music competition. There were many other free activities available such as an art installation, community stalls, hairdressers and barbers and healthy food.

Passages held a food and hygiene stall providing toiletry packs and food hampers. The event brought services together providing a fun afternoon out creating a real sense of community.
Passages Northbridge on the move

After much community consultation the City of Vincent approved Passages to go ahead with its plan to move into the new site at Edward Street, Highgate.

After 15 years in Northbridge the current premises is no longer able to accommodate the requirements for the service and this new site will have space to provide a wider range of opportunities for the young people, and has the room to be able to host other visiting agencies which will create more pathways out of homelessness.

This is an exciting, new chapter for Passages and much work has been undertaken to make it come to fruition. Passages thanks all those involved for their efforts to create a welcome space for young people doing it tough.

Thanks a bunch

Uniting Care West’s Food Rescue program has been providing food to Passages Northbridge for many years. Food Rescue donates fresh fruit and vegetables, bread and other frozen goods on a weekly basis. From these generous donations Passages staff can prepare fresh meals on a daily basis for the young people. It is also used for the weekly cooking program “Tuesday Tucker Time”.

Passages Resource Centre Northbridge would like to thank the Food Rescue team, particularly Cameron & Glenn, for their continued support.

Coming together to provide support

Passages and Vinnies Tom Fisher House recently took part in Homeless Connect Perth. Held on the second Wednesday in November, it is a one day event based on a one-stop-shop model of immediate service provision to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

It is a partnership between Volunteering WA and the City of Perth, bringing together volunteers, government organisations, community groups and local businesses to provide a diverse range of free essential services to people most vulnerable.

Passages and Tom Fisher House staff shared a booth providing information on what assistance they can provide.
Taking a putt for charity

The Cottesloe Golf Club hosted a special Charity Golf Day in October with around 100 golf enthusiasts taking to the fairway to raise money for the Esther Foundation, Uni Camp for Kids, Wheelchairs for Kids and Passages Resource Centres.

With the support of the event’s Platinum sponsor Neometals, teams played 18 holes of golf, followed by an evening of food and entertainment in the club house. MC was Fred Botica and the evening featured a Q&A session with professional golfer Curtis Luck, there were also live and silent auctions, raffles, prizes and awards for the winning golfers.

Passages is pleased to be one of the recipients of the money raised at the fourth annual golf day. The money raised will allow Passages to continue to provide support going forward.

Just over $100,000 was raised on the day which will be divided between the four charity recipients.

Funding boost for Passages Mandurah

The State Government has provided a much needed funding boost for the Passages Resource Centre in Mandurah.

Child Protection and Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence Minister Simone McGurk made the announcement saying these funding announcements highlight the McGowan Government’s commitment to breaking the cycle of disadvantage for people in need.

"Services such as these are critical in making sure our young people don’t fall through the cracks," Ms McGurk said.

The Hon Simone McGurk MLA also recently toured the Passages Resource Centre in Northbridge and was impressed with the support being offered to the young people accessing the service.
Couch Surfing Race creates awareness

As part of this year’s Homelessness Prevention Week WestAus Crisis in Mandurah hosted its 10th awareness event on the Mandurah Foreshore.

It is the biggest event of its kind outside Perth and this year more than 35 local services and businesses were involved, including Passages Mandurah.

Braving the rain and wind, people turned up to show their support for people experiencing homelessness in the local community and to provide much needed assistance to individuals who presented on the day.

On the day Passages undertook a couch surfing time trial event providing fun for the participants all while creating awareness of a serious issue.

The purpose of the Couch Surfing race was to show that homelessness doesn’t just mean “sleeping rough” but also takes other forms.

In organising the race, staff and young people sourced couches and gained the support and involvement of other services and local businesses within the Peel region. The young people got their creative side flowing and came up with designs and slogans for the couches that represented their feelings, hopes and dreams.

With the help of the local community and their generous donations, Passages Mandurah was able to hand out warm winter clothing, toiletry packs, beanies and food parcels. There were also prizes, give aways and trophies for those participating in the race.

Congratulations to Peel Youth Services who took out 1st place! However, win or lose, a great day was had by all!

Torre Butcher are a cut above

Since Passages Northbridge first opened back in 1999, it has been fortunate to have had the support of Torre Butchers. This local family business has been providing Passages with a box full of quality meat every Friday for the past 18 years. This donation has been used for their Friday feast cook up, ensuring the young people leave feeling full. Passages is incredibly grateful that this local family business has been so supportive of the service for so many years, and on behalf of all the young people helped, thank you!
Statistics

Northbridge Overview (2016/17 Financial Year)
- A total of 1,154 young people visited the service 3,962 times
- 204 visited for the first time
- Successfully referred 683 young people to other support services

Mandurah Overview (2016/17 Financial Year)
- A total of 824 young people visited the service 2,643 times
- 204 visited for the first time
- Successfully referred 683 young people to other support services

Since the services opened:

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<thead>
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  - Access Visits: 12,933
  - Referrals made: 4,734
  - Passages Services used (phone, mail, showers, etc): 35,868

BUY A TABLE OR SPONSOR THE EVENT
INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF YOUNG WESTERN AUSTRALIANS
WHO DON’T HAVE A PLACE TO CALL HOME.

Save the Date!
Passages Race Day
12 May 2018

If you want to enjoy a great day out with friends all while helping improve the lives of street present young people, this is the event for you.

Through the generous support of corporate and community sponsors and Race Day attendees, Passages would not be able to continue running its important services, such as its kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities, referrals, counselling and advocacy to young people in crisis.

For more information, bookings or sponsorship contact events@svdpwa.org.au or 6323 7543.