



McAuley Community  
Services for Women  
a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

# Stepping Stones



**Wendy's\* job has given her financial independence and a chance to establish a new life away from her violent husband.**

## Summer 2011

- 2 *Thank you for supporting the Mercy Care Party*
- 3 *Toby and his mum re-connect after domestic violence destroyed their bond*
- 4 *You help provide a better, safer and just society*
- 4 *From homelessness to volunteer: Anna supports others to overcome adversity*

## Finding work helped Wendy escape her violent past

Wendy suffered through more than 15 years of physical abuse at the hand of her husband. He also denied her access to money, which limited her ability to escape. Finally she found the courage to leave but the physical and emotional effects of the abuse made it difficult for her to hold down a job.

With intensive support from our McAuleyWorks employment workers, Wendy regained her confidence, re-learned interview skills and has found a great job in the hospitality sector.

"I needed to get a secure job to start my life again, but I was so incredibly nervous," explained Wendy.

"I didn't know where to begin. The McAuleyWorks team were so patient and understanding. They have given me the chance to start a new life."

### Your support helps women re-build their lives

"Employment is essential for women escaping family violence," said Tenar Dwyer, McAuleyWorks program co-ordinator. "It gives them the resources to gain and maintain independence, and to build a positive and safe future for themselves and their children."

After a very successful one-year trial of McAuleyWorks, we were overwhelmed

with community support to continue and expand this innovative program.

A generous supporter donated \$25,000 and we are also grateful to the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the RE Ross Trust for their significant grants.

Furthermore, on 30 August, The Hon. Kate Ellis, Minister for Employment Participation and Minister for the Status of Women, announced further funding at the program's official launch.

Our appreciation of your support for our McAuleyWorks women's employment program is immense. Thank you for being part of the astounding growth of this exciting new program.



## Thank you for supporting the Mercy Care Party



### Names changing to strengthen awareness

In 2008 two pre-existing Mercy Ministries, Mercy Care and Regina Coeli, were brought together to form McAuley Community Services for Women.

This was done in order to improve and expand the services available to women and their children.

To further strengthen the awareness of our programs and to avoid confusion, we are changing the program names. From 1 December 2011, Mercy Care will be known as McAuley Care and Regina Coeli will become McAuley House.

McAuley Community Services for Women deeply respects the history of both of these services and I wish to reassure our supporters that the only changes we are making are the names.

I sincerely appreciate your ongoing commitment to both of these vital programs. We will continue to expand our programs and strengthen our ability to assist women and their children in desperate situations.

Thanks again for your caring support, and for believing as passionately as I do in giving women and their children better futures.

*J. Bignold*

Jocelyn Bignold  
CEO



McAuley Community Services for Women  
a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

67 Cade Way,  
Parkville VIC 3052  
T: 03 9261 2050

[www.mcauleycsw.org.au](http://www.mcauleycsw.org.au)

350 people enjoyed the annual Mercy Care Party at the stunning Mural Hall at Myer Melbourne, on 21 October. The night was an outstanding success raising \$127,000 profit to support our crisis accommodation for women and children escaping family violence.

Thank you to everyone who supported this wonderful event and made it such a memorable night. We are immensely grateful to the Special Events Committee for their tireless efforts in organising this annual fundraiser.

#### Special thanks to the Major Sponsors:



THE BIG GROUP  
CREATIVE | CULINARY | CONCEPTS

E. L. & C. Baillieu  
Stockbroking Ltd  
Founded 1889



### Great Gift Idea

These elegant "I Care" bracelets come in sterling silver (\$65) or 18ct rose gold (\$95). The bracelet's opening allows it to fit wrists of all sizes. To purchase in time for Christmas please contact us on tel: 9261 2049, email: [fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au](mailto:fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au) or go to [www.mcauleycsw.org.au](http://www.mcauleycsw.org.au). All proceeds go to McAuley Care (formerly Mercy Care).

### St. Columba's students focus on family violence

Students at St. Columba's College in Essendon held a series of very successful fundraisers – a pizza lunch, sausage sizzle and a slurpee stall - for our crisis accommodation program, McAuley Care (formerly Mercy Care).

The students had the opportunity to learn about family violence and the ongoing effect it has on women and their children.

They donated \$750 and an enormous amount of baby supplies to McAuley Care. Our appreciative thanks for the fundraising efforts and enthusiasm of the students.



Painting in the safe environment of the playroom at McAuley Care helped seven year old Toby\* and his Mum re-connect.

## Toby and his mum re-connect after domestic violence destroyed their bond

**Toby's Mum took his hand and covered the palm with blue paint. "The astonished look on Toby's face was priceless as his mum pressed his hand onto the paper and made a blue handprint," said Kirsty Manning, our Specialist Children's Worker.**

The safe, supportive environment of our crisis accommodation was a far cry from the physical and verbal abuse that Toby witnessed at home.

Toby's Mum, Rebecca, was abused by her husband for 11 years. He threatened to kill her if she left. "I didn't know where I would go, or how I would survive, so I stayed," explained Rebecca.

Toby lived in fear of upsetting his father. Most seven year olds play with their toys without fear of making a mess. But Toby's dad hated mess.

"I lost sight of Toby's childhood," says Rebecca.

While Rebecca was focussing on getting through each day, distance grew between her and Toby.

"I forgot to take him to soccer one day and he didn't understand why his

friends couldn't come and play," says Rebecca.

Toby is just one of 280 children that you support each year through our Children's Program.

The Children's Program provides a safe place for children to talk about their feelings. It helps restore the bond between mothers and their children through play and, most importantly, it teaches mothers about the emotional impacts family violence has had on their children.

"After children leave McAuley Care, we continue to look after their educational, social and therapeutic needs through our outreach program," explains Kirsty.

One in four children in Australia will witness family violence in their lifetime. Your support helps to ensure children have a safer, bright future.

## Our Christmas wish list

We urgently need the following items. All donations of new (or new condition) items would be greatly appreciated.

#### For women

- pjs and underwear (all sizes)
- thongs and slippers
- toiletries
- christmas gifts (magazines, books, pampering products)

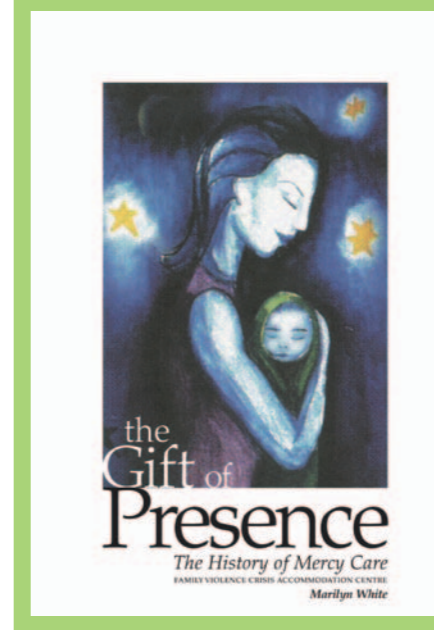
#### For children

- toys, board games and books
- arts and crafts
- dvds (ratings PG and below please)
- clothing and pjs (including babies)
- thongs and slippers

Please send or drop-off items to McAuley Community Services for Women at 67 Cade Way, Parkville, or call 9261 2050.

## History of Mercy Care

*The Gift of Presence: The History of Mercy Care* written by Marilyn White, was recently launched at Parliament House by the Honourable Mary Wooldridge MP. For a free copy please contact us on tel: 9261 2049 or email: [fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au](mailto:fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au)



## Yes, I want to help women and children have better lives.

### My details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Sister/Dr: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: home /work/mobile (please circle one) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Monthly Gift

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (min. \$15) charged to credit card on 1st day of each month.

### One-off gift

\$45  \$125  \$550  \$8,000 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque (Made payable to McAuley Community Services for women)

MasterCard  Visa

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Or donate online at: [www.mcauleycsw.org.au](http://www.mcauleycsw.org.au)

Please send me information on:

Remembering McAuley in my Will

Becoming a volunteer

Please send to:

McAuley Community Services for Women  
67 Cade Way  
Parkville  
T: 03 9261 2049



McAuley Community Services for Women  
a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

# 1 in 4 children will witness family violence

Your support will help children like Toby have brighter futures



Volunteering at an Op Shop is just one of the many ways Anna continues to 'give back' to the community in gratitude for the assistance she received when she was homeless over 20 years ago.

## From homelessness to volunteer: Anna supports others to overcome adversity

Anna moved into McAuley House (formerly Regina Coeli) when she was homeless and struggling with a drug addiction.

For five years she was supported and cared for and slowly her health, strength and self esteem returned. She stopped using drugs and went back to school to study social services.

Anna had a new life. But there is one thing that has never changed - her strong friendships with the women who shared her challenging journey.

"I still catch up with the women who lived with me at Regina Coeli all those years ago," says Anna, now in her 60s. "I made some great friends. We loved one another and looked after each other."

Through your generous support of our McAuley House you are enabling women who are homeless to get their lives back on track.

Anna has done some extensive voluntary community work for the past 17 years, mainly working with women who face alcohol and drug addictions.

She has also maintained a strong connection to McAuley House. Even after 17 years, she still pops in for a cuppa every week and offers support and encouragement to the current residents.

The strong sense of community at McAuley House gives residents a sense of belonging and friendships that can last a lifetime.

## Car from Honda Foundation

The Honda Foundation has generously lent a car to McAuley Community Services for Women as part of their Honda Hero program. This is the second time we have been given the loan of a car from this foundation and we are very grateful for their ongoing support. The car is being used by the recreation program at McAuley House.



Robyn Davies from McAuley House.

## You help provide a better, safer and just society

Thanks to your generous support, we were able to assist 630 women and children during the 2010/11 year.

Some highlights of the year include:

- our crisis accommodation McAuley Care (formerly Mercy Care) housed 527 traumatised women and their children who were escaping family violence
- 70 women who were homeless received accommodation and caring support at McAuley House (formerly Regina Coeli) to help get their lives back on track
- our women's employment program McAuleyWorks helped 60 women on their journeys toward financial independence

For a copy of the 2010/11 Annual Report, please contact us on tel: 9261 2049 or email: fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au



\* To protect the privacy of the people in these stories we have changed their names and used models for photography.

This newsletter cost McAuley Community Services for Women \$0 to produce thanks to the generous support of Ckaos (design) and Printseen (print).

