



**Lighthouse
Foundation**

A place where
homeless kids belong

30

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS
of making a difference
in young lives
one story at a time

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2020
2021**



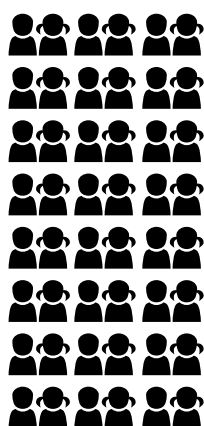
2020 - 2021

How we've made a difference this year

Despite recent global challenges, we were still able to achieve valuable, life-changing outcomes for homeless and at-risk youth.

1000+

young people were offered support and knew we were 'there' for them as part of our On For Life promise

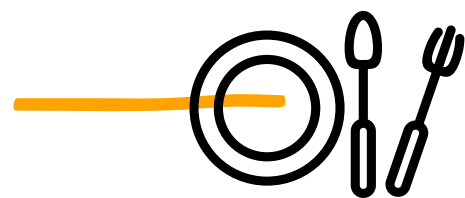
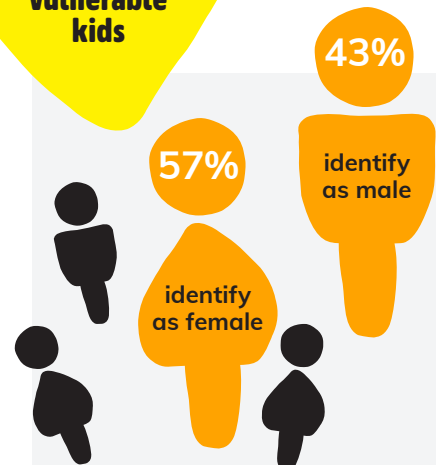


54

children and young people were supported in our safe homes and therapeutic care programs



Opening our hearts and homes to all vulnerable kids



60,000+

meals made for the young people in our care



foster families were accredited and homes found for vulnerable children



4200+

psychology sessions occurred, helping our kids to unpack their trauma and begin to heal

6.3M

was raised by our community of loyal partners, donors, and trustees. Without their help, much of this wouldn't have been possible



volunteers supported Lighthouse's vital work



of our young people regularly engaged in day programs including education, employment or training

A message from our Chairman, Len

It has been a privilege to lead Lighthouse Foundation's Board through its 30th Anniversary year. Inspired by Susan Barton AM's original vision, through those years, we have worked together with the community to ensure over a thousand children and young people have had the home and care they needed to thrive.



We are delighted to welcome our new CEO, Dr Eamonn McCarthy, who has formerly been Victoria's Principal Practitioner for Child Protection. He will commence his role at Lighthouse in August 2021. We feel confident that this next period of growth for Lighthouse will see an acceleration of our efforts to ensure every child who cannot be with his or her parents, has the highest quality therapeutic care that can be

Starting in 1991 with Susan's own home, and her first circle of private supporters, gathered around her kitchen table, we have now grown to now having 11 homes providing live-in therapeutic care, a growing hub of foster care families, 200+ volunteers, thousands of donors and supporters, and a key alliance group of philanthropists who are committed to social change.

In this past year, the courage and resilience of our young people has been only matched by that of their carers. Facing the continuing challenges of restricted movement, isolation, remote learning, and anxiety, the young people have faced many setbacks in their journey to recovery, particularly in transitioning to independent living, when part-time jobs and in-person training courses have been put on hold. The carers have soldiered on, wearing face masks all day in the homes and taking on additional responsibilities in home tutoring. In these times, it hasn't been easy to keep a household running smoothly with a mix of four teenagers, or multiple young mums and babies, when outside exercise time is limited and frustrations inevitably rise. The team at the Youth Resource Centre have faced long months of working from home and young people in our 'On For Life' program have missed being able to drop in to grab some lunch, have a chat, and take home some donated supplies. Managing the organisation through the pandemic has also stretched our people to their limit, and I thank them deeply for their commitment.

The Board joins me in also thanking our hardworking CEO, Simon Benjamin, who moved on from Lighthouse in June after five years at the helm. He leaves with our respect and acknowledgement, in particular for his achievements in beginning two new Lighthouse programs – the Young Women's Freedom Program and the Foster Care Hub Pilot Program. Both of these programs have a strong base for growth, thanks to his efforts.

provided. Too many children are languishing in less than ideal situations and we need to respond with urgency to meet that need. We anticipate a broadening of our areas of support to include an extension of our Foster Care Hub Program, providing Kinship Care Support Services to vulnerable households, two new Lighthouse homes, revitalisation of our Youth Resource Centre and 'On For Life' Program, and further corporate partnerships which engage the business community meaningfully in our work.

Together, this remarkable and diverse community that makes up Lighthouse, is ready to reach further and faster in the year ahead. Together with Dr McCarthy, I look forward to outlining our plans for growth.

The future is brighter than ever, and Lighthouse is still lighting the way for homeless young people.

Sincerely

Len Warson
Chairman, Lighthouse Foundation



**30 years of life-changing stories,
made possible by you**

In the years since Susan Barton AM first opened her own home to children who had nowhere else to stay, the Foundation has now helped over 1000 young people to stabilise their lives, regain their health and well-being, return to education, find employment, and transition to independent living. Josh is one of those young people. We hope that his story inspires you the way it inspires us, every single day.



Josh's story

5 years ago, Josh's life looked very different to today. When he first walked through Lighthouse's doors, he was shy, disengaged, and had difficulty forming relationships. Now, he's a confident and well-spoken young man with a big heart and bright future ahead. For Josh, "Lighthouse gave me a second chance and showed me that I could do things with my life and let people in after all".

Growing up in an unstable home environment, Josh was forced into independence at a young age and became emotionally withdrawn. After years of not having his needs met or feelings properly acknowledged, he'd learnt that it was easier to stop feeling anything at all. "I was numb and disconnected from everyone around me. I found myself drinking every day and going down a pretty dark path". By the age of 19, most of Josh's relationships had broken down. Couch surfing, sleeping on the streets and caught up in a dangerous crowd, he'd often go days or weeks without speaking to anyone. In his mind, he was

lost and invisible. "My parents and school were so worried that they even filed a missing person's report".

Several months later when Josh hit rock bottom, he finally had the breakthrough he needed when a social worker at an emergency refuge referred him to Lighthouse's live-in care program. Unbeknownst to him, this would be his 'sliding door' moment and change the course of his life forever.

The first few weeks living at Lighthouse was a big adjustment for Josh. Initially, he refused to leave his room and interact with any of the other young people. It felt strange to be given attention, shown kindness, and included in everyday decisions around the home. **"I was so confused as I'd never been anywhere long enough for someone to ask what I thought... like what I wanted for dinner. It was too much so I tried to push everyone away"**. But, Josh's resistance never stopped the carers from supporting and reminding him that they'd "be there for the long



Our Community

Our Board

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Bridget Crowe
William (Bill) Mountford
Sylvia Pichel
Anne Jeffs
Dean Firth
Amit Holckner

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Richard Lloyd

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Havana Brown
Kara and Kyal Demmrich
Stevie Nicholson
Sharni Layton

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OAM- Founding Patron & Patron
of the Young Parents Program
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Vicki Standish AM
Alicia Loxley
Beverley Brock OAM
Deborra-Lee Furness AM
Jo Stanley
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Sir Clive Lloyd CBE AO

Staff, Community Committees and Volunteers

Thank you for making a difference

Lighthouse Foundation is deeply appreciative of the following individuals, trusts, foundations, and organisations who make our life-changing work possible.

ANZ
Australian Toy Association
Berkowitz Furniture
Bunnings
Cabrini Health
Carsales
Charterfalls
Circus Oz
CNP Brands
CompNow
Cotton On
DBXB
Deakin University Entrepreneurial Hub
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Chelsea Farmers Market Rotary
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City of Kingston
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Coca-Cola Australia Foundation
Colliers Charitable Fund





haul, no matter what”, which he certainly tested. Although with continued reassurance, reliable and predicable care, Josh finally came to the realisation that his ‘house’ would really become his home after all.

Over time, Josh was able to make strong connections with his carers, particularly Dave. “I was able to talk about my feelings to him which I’d never been able to do before”. Whether he was sad, ashamed, confused or lost... Dave would always listen and together they’d work out why Josh was feeling that way. Even if it was 2am in the morning.

Dave also helped Josh to enrol in TAFE to finish his VCE and pursue hobbies such as drawing and painting. Now that he was safe, his creative mind could finally be let free and explore opportunities that excited him, like entering art competitions and challenges. He even sold a few of his artworks along the way too... one of them even making \$5,000 at a Lighthouse charity auction. With Dave by his side, Josh could dream big... because even if he failed



along the way, there’d always be a ‘safe haven’ and person for him to return to. “Dave and I just ‘clicked’. We both liked drawing which helped, but it was so much more than that. He made me feel like I was part of his family...the Lighthouse family”

After 5 years in our care, Josh was finally ready to ‘leave the nest’ and in June 2021 transitioned into independent living. Thankfully only moving a few suburbs away, he visits regularly and stay connected to our community as part of our ‘On For Life’ promise. To this day, we’re so incredibly grateful to the social worker who first referred him to Lighthouse all those years ago. How lucky are we to have been able to watch Josh grow into the honest, resilient and loving young man he’s become. **“Thanks to Dave, I’m full of ‘feelings’ now and I’m okay with every single one of them. In fact, I’m proud”.**



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Australia North Fitzroy Branch
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Dandenong Magistrates’
Court of Victoria
David and Leonie
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Wanless Family Fund
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Foundation
Women in Super
Yardi Foundation
Yeast Foundation

**Together we
are one step
closer to
achieving our
mission**

Making an Impact

Thanks to our loyal donors and continued JobKeeper support, partnered with tight spending controls, we were able to weather these uncertain times, and finish our year with a surplus.

Where our \$ come from



Where our \$ go

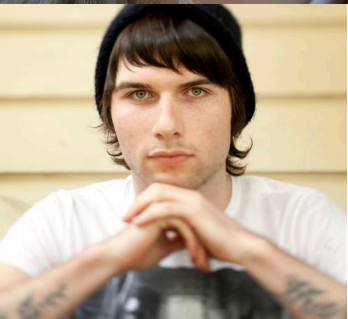


Our organisation is proudly audited by





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Quality
Innovation
Performance



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MEMBER
CODE COMPLIANT