

# CREATING BRIGHTER PATHWAYS

Lighthouse Foundation  
Annual Report 2021 – 2022



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
FOUNDATION *for youth*



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# WHY *we do* WHAT WE DO

At Lighthouse we're here to enable young people to find their place. Together, we create pathways to ensure those with experience of homelessness or trauma don't become defined by it.

We provide young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, with the care and support they need to heal, thrive and achieve a lifelong sense of belonging.

Through community collaboration and our evidence-based Lighthouse Model of Care, we create therapeutic homes and deliver tailored support programs.

For the past 31 years we have transformed the lives of over 1,100 young people using a range of evidence-based strategies, brought to life by passionate, supported, people.

To reach as many at-risk kids as possible, we now also educate and support foster carers and families in the same way, so that they too can take care of some of Australia's most vulnerable children.

Lighthouse Foundation acknowledges the First Peoples of Australia as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work.

Lighthouse Foundation celebrates diversity and affirms the right of access, equity and equality for every young person, staff member and volunteer in the community.

Cover image: Young mum Hailee and her son Otis

Photography throughout: Marie-Luise Skibbe

Graphic Design: Hulsbosch



# HOW WE'VE *made a difference* FROM 2021 TO 2022

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

This year we're proud to report that Lighthouse has taken care of a record number of young people and foster families. Your support has never been more important.

## CARE



**1100+ YOUNG PEOPLE**

are now part of our 'On for Life' program



**71 YOUNG PEOPLE, CHILDREN AND BABIES WERE CARED FOR THIS YEAR**

**32 WERE WELCOMED INTO LIGHHOUSE'S CARE**

**39 RECEIVED ON-GOING SUPPORT FROM PREVIOUS YEARS**

**100%** of young people referred to Lighthouse would likely have met diagnosis of at least one **MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER**

**89%** **YOUNG PEOPLE** entering Lighthouse were able to escape family violence

**21%**  **ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER**

**20%** **HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY**



**17 FOSTER CARERS/FAMILIES WERE SUPPORTED & TRAINED, WITH 5 NEWLY ACCREDITED**

**5%** **REFUGEE STATUS**



**77,000+ MEALS PROVIDED**

in Lighthouse homes and hubs

**42%** **MALE**

**58%** **FEMALE**



**6%** of young people reported **EXPLORING THEIR GENDER IDENTITY** or identified as being part of the **LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY**

**100%**

of young people had access to **COUNSELLING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS**



**39%** **CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)**

**78%**

of young people entering Lighthouse were previously involved with **CHILD PROTECTION**

**28 FOSTER CARE CHILDREN**

were supported by Lighthouse foster families and therapeutic case managers

**100%** **OF FOSTER CARE CHILDREN** engaged in education

**57 NIGHTS**

of respite provided at our Children's Hub

**3,285 NIGHTS** in safe beds for children in foster care

## COMMUNITY



**200+ VOLUNTEERS**

donated their time and talents

**4 MONTHS**

of regained access to our Youth Resource Hub post Covid

**6**

**COVID-SAFE COMMUNITY EVENTS**

were held at our Children's Hub

**25**

**TRAINING SESSIONS**

training sessions were delivered by Lighthouse Institute

**5**

**STUDENT PLACEMENTS**

student placements supported our work

**7 VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY COMMITTEES**

surrounding Lighthouse homes and hubs

**720+ PEOPLE**



like you, donated to support our work with 66 Lighthouse Keepers giving regular monthly donations





## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It has been a significant year of growth for Lighthouse Foundation, with the implementation of an ambitious strategic plan to extend our impact to improve the lives of double the number of children and young people than in the past year. We are focused on achieving this accelerated rate of growth for the next three years, while maintaining the integrity of the high-quality therapeutic care programs of Lighthouse.

The significant growth in organisational capacity has enabled an expansion of both our Youth and Children's Services, along with meaningful sector partner collaborations. Led ably by our CEO, Dr Eamonn McCarthy, the structure, and scale of the Lighthouse team has evolved rapidly, to enable the delivery of additional programs, more homes, and new partnerships. We aim to increase our impact to reach many more at-risk children and homeless young people in the years ahead.

We believe our country's youth deserve a fair go. This means those of us in a position to help must step up to assist the most vulnerable among us to get the best possible start to their lives. For a teenager who is carrying a heavy load of trauma, and who has been bounced around from place to place, being part of an engaged community can ignite self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Lighthouse Foundation is growing faster than ever before because there is an urgency to meet this need in our community.

On behalf of the Board, I thank Dr McCarthy and each one of the staff team for their dedication and gusto in taking on the increased challenges of our expansion. Above all, I thank the children and young people of Lighthouse for inspiring us with their journey on the pathway to belonging and thriving in independent life.

Faithfully,

**Len Warson**  
Chairman, Lighthouse Foundation



## OUR VISION

# TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

*together*

## OUR MISSION

To provide children and young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, with the care and support they need to heal and thrive.

Through community collaboration and our evidence-based Lighthouse Model of Care, we create therapeutic homes and deliver tailored support programs to transform the lives of young people.

We also educate and support foster carers and families in the same way, so they too can care for some of Australia's most vulnerable children.

## OUR PURPOSE

We're here to enable young people to find their place. Together, we create pathways to ensure those with experience of homelessness or trauma don't become defined by it. We recognise the urgency of this work, and we are committed to growing faster to support many more children who are in great need.





## CEO'S MESSAGE

We have many reasons to celebrate the past year, with a new three-year Strategic Plan already underway. Our enhanced organisational capacity is enabling us to reach more children and youth, and to extend our programs to help foster families, kinship care families, and young people in the community still at risk of homelessness.

In the year to June 2022, 71 youth, children and babies were cared for in our programs. Young people's Individual Development Plans measured progress towards their goals, and the Family Journey system enhanced quality of care through better information processes. A Transitional program was integrated successfully into the residential programs.

The community, volunteers and home committees were integrated into the layers of support provided to the young people in our care. Two new Lighthouse homes were added, and two new community committees were established. The consolidation of Lighthouse's Foster Care Program involved relocating the Hub Home with the help of a volunteer workforce. Several households were successfully moved into new refurbished homes, with the help of a volunteer workforce. Home occupancy was maintained at over 85% of full capacity and Youth Services began a new pro-active outreach program, Community Connect, to help vulnerable young people, at risk of homelessness.

Collaborative sector partnerships are being nurtured to deliver future building projects and care services supports. We look forward to announcing several of these projects in the coming year. The Lighthouse Institute has also partnered with Monash University for ongoing program evaluations, which will inspire advocacy to improve the outcomes for vulnerable children across Australia.

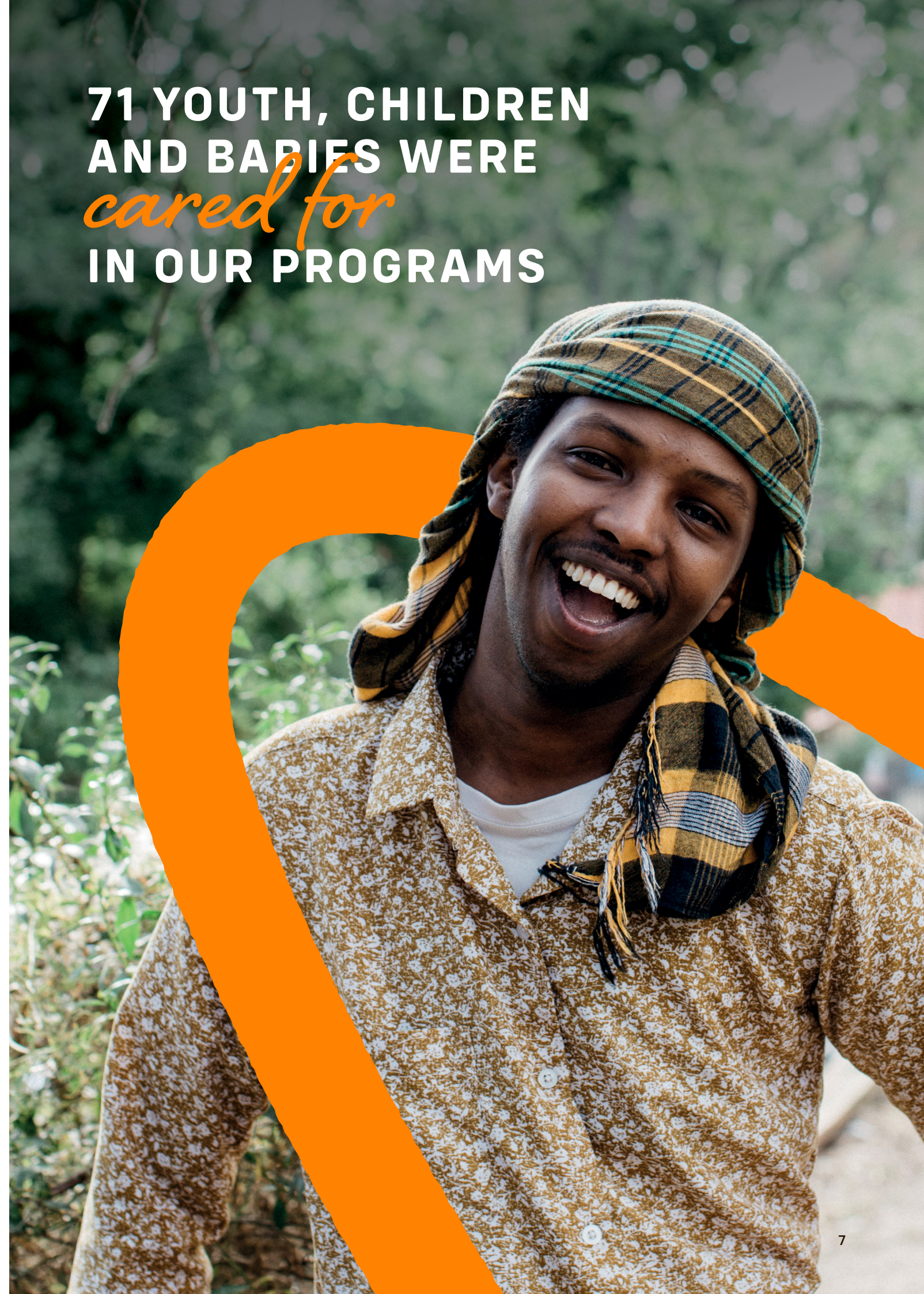
It has been a period of significant investment in additional staff and Human Resources development, which aligns with targets to grow the organisation's impact in the years ahead. Our financial capacity has also increased due to relationships with value-aligned trusts, foundations, organisations, individuals, and businesses. A professional brand refresh was contracted to Hulsbosch agency, and you may notice a strengthening of our core logo and other visual design elements of our Lighthouse brand, which reflect our commitment to significant growth in our impact. We are determined to make a considerable reduction in the currently growing population of homeless youth.

It has been a great privilege to see the re-awakening of our community after the pandemic, and to acknowledge how the devotion of our carers, wider staff team, volunteers, and donors allowed the organisation to thrive, not just survive, through these challenging years. Our children and young people have shown courage and resilience, and we make a point of celebrating every small achievement and letting them know we believe in their capacity to achieve great things in their lives.

Sincerely,

**Dr Eamonn McCarthy**  
CEO, Lighthouse Foundation

# 71 YOUTH, CHILDREN AND BABIES WERE *cared for* IN OUR PROGRAMS





OUR YOUNG  
PEOPLE ARE  
OUR GREATEST  
*inspiration.*  
EVERY DAY  
THEY REMIND  
US TO BE  
THOUGHTFUL  
& KIND



## BRODIE'S STORY

Brodie describes life before Lighthouse as being incredibly challenging and unproductive. He never really had something to look forward to. "I would rarely leave the house because I didn't see the point of it... there wasn't anywhere for me to go". Over time, this routine spiralled into a toxic lifestyle which led Brodie to question his confidence in the outside world. Without any dreams or aspirations, he began 'switching off'. "It was like I was in a dark hole, getting deeper and deeper. I don't remember much about that time in my life other than the fact I felt so alone".

When Brodie eventually found his way to Lighthouse, it took several months of patience and understanding from his carers before he could even have a conversation with them. Sometimes just making eye contact was difficult and having people around the home all the time felt unusual. But although his reservations made it hard for him to communicate in one-to-one time with his carers, it certainly didn't make them any less meaningful. Even if they only spoke a few words to one another...they would still show up and be there for Brodie every day... and that mattered more.

**With Lighthouse Carers constantly by his side, Brodie eventually gained the confidence to turn his words into sentences and explore new opportunities that came his way.**

Now that he felt safe, he started to view the world through a different lens...a positive one. "I had a list of things I wanted to do and work towards, like starting a footy tipping competition and making new friends at Lighthouse. I'd go to sleep each night looking forward to the game and sharing the results with everyone".

Brodie's carers also helped him to register for a hospitality course which he not only completed but finished in record time. Recognising his bright mind and appetite for education, they've since supported him to enrol in yet another course...this time, accounting. "I love going to my accounting course on Fridays and telling the carers what I've learnt. Some people find numbers boring, but they excite me".

From the young boy who walked through our doors who wouldn't even look somebody in the eye, Brodie is now a treasured part of the Lighthouse community with the kindest nature and one of the biggest smiles.



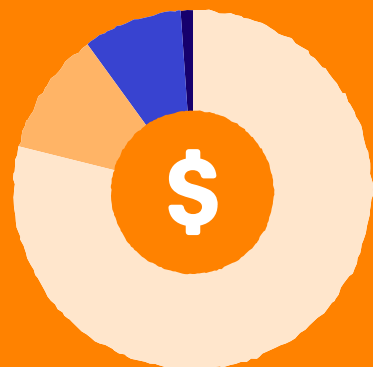


# A FOUNDATION YOU CAN *trust*

Thank you to the hundreds of kind individuals who have donated to Lighthouse Foundation in the last year. Whether helping us to provide safe and loving homes for vulnerable young people, or finding foster families for children in need - none of it would be possible without your support.



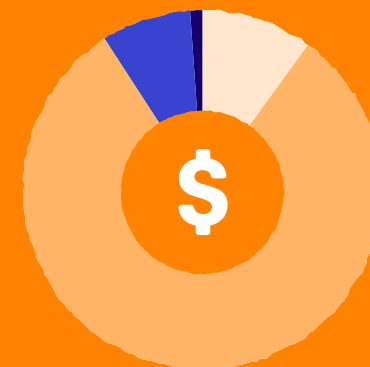
## WHERE OUR \$'S GO



79%	Programs
11%	Fundraising
9%	Administration
1%	Lighthouse Institute

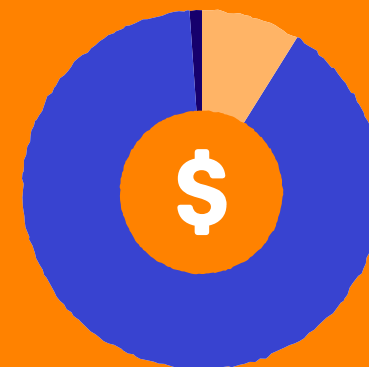
## WHERE OUR \$'S COME FROM

### CHILD-FOCUSED SERVICES



8%	Philanthropic & General Donations
81%	Government Program Grants
10%	Individualised Care Funding
1%	Lighthouse Institute

### YOUTH-FOCUSED SERVICES

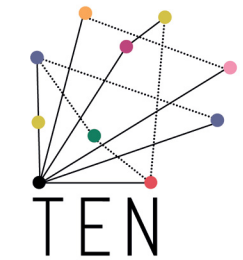


90%	Philanthropic & General Donations
9%	Government Program Grants
0%	Individualised Care Funding
1%	Lighthouse Institute



Thank you to Pitcher Partners who proudly audit our financials annually, pro bono.

# EMPOWERING GIRLS AND BUILDING HOPE



At their annual fundraising event earlier this year, 10 female leaders from the property and construction industry came together to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable young people. Lighthouse Foundation was so proud to be the beneficiary of this life-changing luncheon held by the TEN Women in May 2022.

TEN Women are a group of 10 senior women in the property and construction industry in Melbourne with a mandate to connect and empower women to create meaningful impact. Gathering with over 500 of their industry colleagues, this group of powerful philanthropists held a magnificent event at the Melbourne Town Hall with special guest, the Lord Mayor Sally Capp in attendance. Guests were treated to a three course lunch and were encouraged to reach deep into their pockets and hearts to connect with Lighthouse's cause.

The event raised a phenomenal \$646,828 for Lighthouse's Young Women's Freedom program.

The TEN group has been designed to facilitate empowerment of women and is strongly driven by tangible impact. This significant fundraising outcome will be used to renovate a house for supporting girls and young women who are escaping, or at risk of, modern slavery practices including forced marriage and domestic servitude, as well as other forms of gender-based violence.

We are truly grateful for the meaningful impact the TEN Women have been able to make in Lighthouse's program, and we're honoured to thank these influential women for including us in such an inspiring event.

# TEN WOMEN RAISE OVER \$640,000 *for Lighthouse*





# T.HOUSE *transforms* OUR CHILDREN'S HUB

T.House

Tina Nettlefold, talented interior stylist and owner of philanthropic brand, T.House, sprinkled some of her creative and generous magic over Lighthouse's Children's Hub and turned the entire space into a true 'home'.

Encompassing Lighthouse's values of making sure every house is welcoming and safe for our young people, Tina and her team missed no thoughtful detail in the Hub makeover. Over just two days, each room was transformed beyond anything we ever imagined. From new couches, TV's, children's toys, soft furnishings and absolutely everything in between, T.Houses' redo turned the property into a warm and inviting Hub for our foster families to come to for support, connection and respite for our therapeutic care team.

T.House is a philanthropic endeavour, directed by Tina herself, which creates limited-edition homewares and décor and donates 100% of profits made to charity. Tina has a mission to turn everyday shopping into meaningful giving and we're inspired by her passion for making the experience of a nurturing home possible for everyone.

To view the entire T.House range and make a purchase that gives back, head to the website: [thouse.com.au](https://thouse.com.au)



## welcome TO THE LIGHTHOUSE FAMILY, GJK FACILITY SERVICES



Earlier this year GJK launched its new social impact program, GJK Giving Back, of which Lighthouse Foundation is the proud beneficiary. Built around four pillars; Philanthropic, Volunteering, Workplace Giving and Employment, the program has been designed so GJK employees can get involved.

"Working with charities, not-for-profits and organisations we already support, like Lighthouse Foundation, the GJK Giving Back program will build on these relationships to create shared value partnerships," said CEO Elias Stamas. "Giving back and doing good has always been part of GJK's DNA thanks to our Founder and Managing Director, George Stamas and this program just takes this to the next level enabling our employees to participate and give back to."

We proudly welcome GJK into our community. Their generosity and efforts across these areas will help Lighthouse continue to support the young people who need a home so that they can continue to heal and thrive.



# 31 years OF IMPACT



Susan Barton AM is appointed a member of the general division of Order of Australia for services to youth in Australia.

**2002**

**2003**

Gala dinner fundraiser "Latino at Crown" raises over \$100,000.

Lighthouse CEO Kane Bowden runs 1000km from Melbourne to Adelaide in 18 days raising awareness for Lighthouse.

**2004**

The Inaugural Art Auction launches and runs for eight years.

Over 200 young lives have been impacted by our care.

**2005**

The 'Shall We Dance' fundraiser based on the TV show 'Dancing With the Stars' raises in excess of \$90,000 in support of the Cabrini Richmond Lighthouse.

**2006**

Four more Lighthouse Homes open.

**2007**

Youth Resource and Administration Centre in Richmond opens, the building is a generous gift from our Life Member, Vicki Vidor OAM and the Loti & Victor Smorgan Family Foundation and we have a place to call home.

**2008**

Operation Manuals are completed, and we confirm the key elements of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care™

**2009**

Susan is awarded Melbourne of the Year and the Lighthouse Transition Program begins at the Cheltenham LH home.

400 young people have now transitioned to independent living from our programs.

Royal Commission Support Services contract sees 2000 professionals receive our therapeutic training support nationally.

**2015**

**2014**

The PIF Bonbeach LH Home opens and Channel 9's 'The Block' designs the bedrooms.

"Journey To Recovery" Lighthouse Institute's first international conference at the MCG is sold-out. Lighthouse partners with a South Australia organisation to train their staff in therapeutic care.

**2013**

21st Anniversary Celebration at Government House. Vice-regal Patronage continues with spouses of Victorian Governors.

600 young 'graduates' are now in our Outreach community.

**2012**

Launch of the Lighthouse Institute and the RMIT University Diploma in Youth Work (Therapeutic care) is created.

Chairman, Peter Edwards appointed.

**2011**

Lighthouse is accredited by DHS as a Homelessness Service Provider.

The 10th Lighthouse Home is opened - The Sandra Bardas City Lighthouse.

Second LH book is published "Therapeutic Residential Care for Children and Young People".

Independent assessment by Social Ventures Australia found Lighthouse to be one of the most-cost effective therapeutic programs in Australia. 8/10 young people who complete the program never returning to homelessness.

**2010**

First TV advertisement and Seminar Series is launched, and the first external training is delivered.

First LH Vicki Vidor OAM Young Parents and Babies program opens in Heathmont.



**2016**

The PIF Coburg North LH Home opens and the Vicki Vidor OAM Young Parents and Babies program expands.

**2017**

Lighthouse Secure Base Program (for children) expands to multiple homes.

**2018**

Launch of 'Young Women's Freedom Program' - the first Australian home refuge for young women (including those under 18yrs) who have escaped (or are at risk of entering) enforced marriage and modern-day slavery.

Lighthouse wins multiple Fundraising Institute of Australia national awards including 'Most Innovative Campaign' for their 4UP Day fundraising concept.

**2019**

Lighthouse begins a pilot model with a unique, therapeutic and community-based Foster Care program.

The first Lighthouse Children's Hub is opened thanks to the generous support of a private funding coalition & DFFH.

E&Y independent report confirms continuing outstanding outcomes from Lighthouse programs.

**2020**

COVID-19 forces several lockdowns and temporary closures of the Youth Resource Hub, but all Lighthouse Homes continue operations successfully due to outstanding staff commitment.

Lighthouse launches our #BREAKTHEPATTERN digital fundraising campaign with support from artists Ken Done and Cassie Byrnes.

Lighthouse Friends of Lighthouse Networking series commences with local partners around our Youth Resource Hub in Cremorne.

Chairman, Len Warson appointed.

**2021**

Lighthouse celebrates 30 years of service.

COVID-19 lockdowns continue to impact operations and events, but the Lighthouse community remains resilient.

CEO, Dr Eamonn McCarthy appointed.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is begun.

Over 1000 young people have benefited from Lighthouse programs.

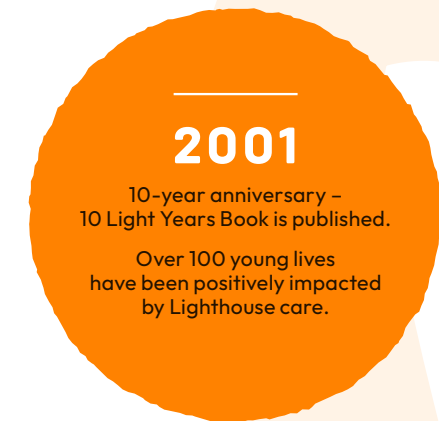
**2022**

The newly rebuilt Clayton Lighthouse Home officially opens thanks to Property Industry Foundation and Frasers Property.

10 Women groups raises over \$640,000 in one day proudly supporting a major renovation for our Young Women's Freedom home.

We were beneficiaries of the Corcous Club's annual May Day event raising over \$170,000.

Lighthouse wins Most Innovative Fundraising Campaign by the Fundraising Institute of Australia for #BREAKTHEPATTERN



**2001**

10-year anniversary - 10 Light Years Book is published.

Over 100 young lives have been positively impacted by Lighthouse care.

**2000**

Lighthouse Op Shops open.

**1999**

First grant received.

**1998**

First community committee formed, and first corporate partner is Cabrini Health, opening the Richmond Cabrini LH Home.

**1997**

First psychologist volunteers, Sophie Russell.

**1996**

Lighthouse logo is designed by artist, the late David Band and launched at Art For Heart Fundraiser.

**1995**

Susan co-authors and publishes "Build your Teenager's Self Esteem and Enjoy Being a Parent Again".

**1994**

Large 'White Tower' Lighthouse Home opens in Hawksburn.

'The Power of One' luncheon raises \$140,000 for LH at Malthouse Theatre.

**1993**

Terrie Barton is the first official employee, and is still working at Lighthouse today.

**1992**

Rented Lighthouse home and office opens in Prahran. First four young people are in the home.

**1991**

Lighthouse is incorporated and the first board is formed around a kitchen table.





## FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Over the past 31 years, we have shown that the Lighthouse model is highly effective in permanently ending homelessness for those who find a place in our homes. This evidence has attracted talented key staff and significant private philanthropy to our cause, as well as partnerships with government services providing additional care through Child Protection.

In recent years, we have been able to expand our services to provide early interventions that prevent homelessness. We have developed more supportive foster care systems, and therapeutic care for children, who due to their circumstances and trauma history, are not yet able to be fostered.

We are now beginning to reach beyond those living in Lighthouse homes, to support kinship carers as well as foster carers, and adolescents on the cusp of homelessness who are couch-surfing and beginning to be alienated from school and family. With the passionate leadership of our CEO, Dr Eamonn McCarthy, we can scale our reach and our impact significantly.

It is gratifying to see how Lighthouse Foundation now has the capacity to provide a variety of pathways, from infancy to adulthood, to meet the individual needs of the vulnerable children and young people in our care. This means we can offer a unique range of specially tailored support – for young women and girls escaping early and forced marriage and family violence, as well as young children who have experienced heavy trauma and the loss of their family for a range of different reasons.

It takes a whole community to protect and care for its youth. It is our responsibility and also our privilege. The growing Lighthouse community is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders, alumni of our programs, volunteers, businesses committed to social justice and their employees' well-being, donors, supporters and their networks. School-children run smoothie stands at lunchtime to help raise funds. People run for us in fun runs, and trek on the Larapinta Trail. The construction industry members of the Property Industry Foundation who contribute generously of their time, resources and money, and work together to build new Lighthouse homes (including a six bedroom one in Clayton this past year). Comp Now and TEBA who donate computers and vital IT services. Provincial Home Living and T-House who have dressed our homes in the style and comfort we would want for our own children. There are numerous others who have put their financial resources into sustaining our work with children and youth. We could not exist without them. This generous and devoted community rallies around our young people and helps them to nurture their feeling of belonging.

We thank each one of you for being a part of this community, and for the important role you play in supporting the children and youth of Lighthouse Foundation.

With heart,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Barton".

**Susan Barton AM,**  
Founder, Lighthouse Foundation

## highly effective IN PERMANENTLY ENDING HOMELESSNESS







# achieving MORE TOGETHER

Lighthouse's work wouldn't be possible without the dedication and support from our community. Coming out of several years of COVID restrictions, we relished the opportunity to fundraise and celebrate with our supporters.

## AWARD-WINNING CAMPAIGN, #BREAKTHEPATTERN RETURNS FOR ITS SECOND YEAR

Collaborating with iconic Australian artists, Ken Done, Rachel Castle & David Booth, Lighthouse launched the #BREAKTHEPATTERN campaign for its second year.

By turning meaningful pieces of artworks into digital screensavers, we encouraged the public to donate, download and display their screensavers with pride. The campaign raised a phenomenal \$204,000 from the public.

We're also proud to announce that #BREAKTHEPATTERN earned Lighthouse the title of National Award Winners for 'Most Innovative Campaign' for 2022 by the Fundraising Institute of Australia.

## A NEW HOME FOR OUR YOUNG PARENTS AND BABIES

After a year of COVID delays and rescheduling, Lighthouse was able to cut the ribbon and open our brand new, 6-bedroom house generously built for our young people by Property Industry Foundation and Fraser's Property.

Adding to our growing portfolio of homes around Melbourne, we're so grateful that a beautiful new space can be used for our Vicki Vidor OAM Young Parents and Babies program. The program ensures that young parents develop healthy attachments with their children, positive parenting skills and get the necessary support they need to nurture.

## MAYDAY WITH THE CORCOUS CLUB

In May, Lighthouse was invited to the Regent Theatre as the fortunate beneficiaries of the annual MayDay event put on by the Corcous Club, a non-for-profit association started by a group of friends who continue to foster relationships and support each other professionally.

With special guests such as Lighthouse ambassador, Mick Molloy, and legends from the Richmond Football Club, the fundraising luncheon was hugely successful. Together with silent auction items, lots of generous pledges and a commitment to helping Lighthouse's cause, MayDay raised an incredible \$174,155.

## OUR VILLAGE OF VOLUNTEERS

Lighthouse's volunteer Community Committees are a unique and vital aspect of our Model of Care and provide a circle of local wrap-around support for the young people in our homes.

We had seven committees this year who donated an enormous 1000+ hours of time to working bees in the gardens of the homes, organising events to fundraise critical funds and most importantly, raising awareness through their passion and dedication.



# CARE *environments*

At Lighthouse, we're creating pathways to end youth homelessness, together. We provide young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, with the care and support they need to heal, thrive and achieve a lifelong sense of belonging.

Through community collaboration and our evidence-based Lighthouse Model of Care, we create therapeutic homes and deliver tailored support programs to transform the lives of young people.

We look after our children and young people across three care environments:



In these three environments, we wrap children and youth in a community of nurturing support, ensuring it reaches the children and youth who need it, where they need it, for as long as they need it.







## LIGHTHOUSE HOMES

Our first Lighthouse homes were established more than 30 years ago and are carefully designed to be safe, welcoming, and nurturing spaces.

The well-being of the young people in our care remains at the heart of what we do, and we continue to support them in all areas of development from practical help in writing a resume for the first time to providing them with clinical support to deal with their trauma.

### SECURE BASE

Lighthouse's Secure Base tailored care program provides an intensive level of care to children and young people aged 0 to 17 with complex needs. These children and young people come from backgrounds of significant complex trauma, and the aim of the Secure Base is to develop the capacity to be in relationship with trusting adults, from which they can then continue to grow and thrive.

By providing intensive support through early intervention, Lighthouse helps to prevent homelessness and future trauma in the lives of these children.

It's not uncommon in these homes for the smallest celebrations to mean the most to the young people in our care. We take any opportunity to celebrate birthdays and milestones, with one little person from our Secure Base Home asking for a 'superman' theme for their seventh birthday party.

### THERAPEUTIC

Lighthouse's Therapeutic program, which supports young people aged 16-25, was established more than 30 years ago. Its proven success in preventing youth homelessness has paved the way for expansion, as well as specialisation, in order to support particularly vulnerable groups.

The program provides highly vulnerable young people with a warm, safe, Lighthouse home, 24/7 live-in care, and a dedicated Therapeutic Case Manager to help them to heal from trauma and develop essential life skills. It focuses on the development of practical, emotional, and interpersonal living skills to enable young people to heal and thrive when they move into independent living.

Through guidance and encouragement, Lighthouse young people are provided with the opportunity to participate in education. We were proud to see 7 young people from our Therapeutic program enrol in education courses, including hospitality, IT and Business Management.

We've also seen incredible outcomes in young people's schooling. A notable mention goes to one of our young people, scoring above average grades in all but one area. This was a remarkable outcome given 18 months earlier he was only able to tolerate 45 minutes of class-time at school.

### TRANSITIONAL

Lighthouse's Transitional Program supports young people up to the age of 25 experiencing homelessness to develop the skills and capacity to live independently. Through Therapeutic Case management, the program bridges the gap between intensive therapeutic support and fully independent living, for those who may not have the capacity, structures or supports around them to sustain independent living themselves.

The support from Lighthouse doesn't stop once a young person leaves a home. We appreciate whole-heartedly how important having a community of support around you is, while moving into a new chapter of life. That's why we were just as excited as one of our young people when they were able to purchase their first ever set of pots and pans to help them move into their own apartment. It's the little things that can mean so much.

The young people in our Transitional Homes are encouraged to engage in the day-to-day running's of the home. During the year, a young person initiated hosting Sunday night roast dinners, and it remains one of the most anticipated nights of the week.

### SPECIAL FOCUS PROGRAMS

Across both the Therapeutic and Transitional tailored care program are two special focus programs. These programs ensure that vulnerable young people with different needs are provided with the suitable level of care and nurturing needed to heal from their trauma.

#### YOUNG PARENTS AND BABIES

The Vicki Vidor OAM Young Parents and Babies Program supported nine young parents this year, who were able to learn about their own needs and develop healthy attachments with their children. Lighthouse was fortunate to celebrate alongside these young families. A highlight was seeing three little ones taking their first ever steps in the world.

We know that a safe, nurturing, consistent home environment for children provides them with the best chance at a healthy and fulfilling life, which is why our highly successful Young Parents and Babies Program provides targeted support for two generations at once.

Therapeutic Carers and Case Managers in the program support young parents by role modelling parenting techniques, teaching essential life skills and helping them to develop strong attachments with their babies, leading to more young families being successfully transitioned into independent living.

#### YOUNG WOMEN'S FREEDOM

The Young Women's Freedom Program began in 2018 in response to an urgent need to provide safe homes and therapeutic care to young women escaping, or at risk of, modern slavery practices including forced marriage and domestic servitude, as well as other forms of gender-based violence.

This program focuses on providing a safe and secure home for vulnerable young women where they can regain agency over their lives. Lighthouse supports young women in the program with connection to culture and self through tailored therapeutic intervention, implementing a holistic care team of support in collaboration with innovative external services, as well as supporting the young women to have sustainable connections to family and community.

We were delighted to support one young woman in the Young Women's Freedom Program transition to independent living. Close bonds formed in the home ensured that she was welcomed back for a family dinner each month, so she could continue to connect with her new-found community.



# CHRISTINE'S STORY



Living with violence at home was terrifying and unbearable. She was too ashamed to confide in classmates or teachers. One night when things became very scary, she rushed out to the streets with no idea where she could go. She ended up going to the local police station for help, with only a few belongings in her school bag. With limited options available at the time, the officers were forced to refer her to an adults-only women's refuge. Afraid and alone, Christine spent the next few months fending for herself at the shelter. Astonishingly, she found the strength each morning to put on her uniform and go to school. "School was the only thing in my life that made me feel like a 'normal' kid again."

Thankfully, as time passed, a social worker at the refuge heard about Lighthouse Foundation and recommended that Christine could join our live-in therapeutic care program. Christine felt a wave of relief come over her and began dreaming of a brighter future. This was her chance to have stable long-term accommodation and support.

"The night before I came to Lighthouse, I dreamt of a big white house with a bell on the top, filled with young people and friendly faces. So, when I stepped out of the car to see that my new home was everything that I'd imagined... I knew that I was exactly where I needed to be."

Over time, Christine settled in to her Lighthouse home and like many of our other young people, grew to love the program's regular routines and family style environment. Things like family meetings, dinners around the kitchen table and thoughtful gestures from her carers helped her to develop trust, and to experience the world as being safe and predictable. Every interaction and conversation presented an opportunity for healing and positive change.

For the first time in years, Christine felt comforted and reassured. She was acknowledged and validated. She began to realise she was worthy of being loved.

"I could tell my carers and psychologist anything about my past and know that their response would always be supportive and caring. They even helped me to reconnect with my family and understand that what happened to me wasn't my fault."

With Lighthouse's care and a community of support around her, Christine started to achieve just about anything she put her mind to. As soon as she believed that she could, she did. A volunteer mentor from the Lighthouse community committee helped her to complete her studies, and to make new friendships outside of Lighthouse too. In 2002, she transitioned into independent living after completing a Cert IV TAFE course in business administration.

With the help of our Founder, Susan, she secured a full-time position as a trainee medical receptionist. Ever since, she's worked her way up the corporate ladder, completing further study and finding enormous success in the healthcare industry. Proudly, she is also now the wonderful mother of two beautiful children who've been raised to respect others, love purely, and are deeply proud of Christine's past. "My children know everything that I've been through, and are better for it. Sometimes they host little fundraisers for Lighthouse, like lemonade stands, to help the next generation of kids turn out to be 'just like mummy'."

Our entire Lighthouse community, in particular Susan, feel incredibly grateful to have walked alongside Christine in her healing journey. No matter what happens, we'll always stay connected to Christine and consider her family as part of our 'On For Life' promise.

Most 15-year-olds' lives revolve around Saturday sport, weekend sleepovers and worrying about their next school exam or assignment. But when Christine was 15, she was focused on surviving.

**"THE NIGHT BEFORE I CAME TO LIGHTHOUSE, I DREAMT OF A BIG WHITE HOUSE WITH A BELL ON THE TOP, FILLED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND FRIENDLY FACES.**

**SO, WHEN I STEPPED OUT OF THE CAR TO SEE THAT MY NEW HOME WAS EVERYTHING THAT I'D IMAGINED... I KNEW THAT I WAS EXACTLY WHERE I NEEDED TO BE."**





## LIGHTHOUSE FOSTER CARE & FAMILY SUPPORT

**57**  
**NIGHTS RESPITE**

at the Northern Lighthouse Children,  
Youth and Families Hub supported  
foster carers and young people

**18** FOSTER CARER  
HOUSEHOLDS  
ACCREDITED IN TOTAL

Much has been achieved in our third year of foster care. Lighthouse supported 17 foster families who each offer varying types of foster care placements, including emergency, respite, short-term and long-term care.

In April, our Northern Lighthouse Children, Youth and Families Hub made the move to a beautiful new and spacious home. This new space continues to be a core element of the Foster Care Program, providing a central spot for foster carers, children, and the Lighthouse care team to connect. This wouldn't have been possible without the support from our coalition of major funders, including Leonie Van Raay, the Make a Difference group, The Loti and Victor Smorgon Foundation, Equity Trustees and in an active hands-on role, Quintessential Equity, who committed to a one-year lease of the home and continue their dedication to our Foster Care Program.

We were proud to provide 57 nights of respite at the Northern Lighthouse Children, Youth and Families Hub to our foster carers and young people. We were able to facilitate a number of training programs during the accreditation process for carers and held community events. We saw 18 foster carer households accredited in total during this year.

**17** FOSTER CARERS/  
FAMILIES WERE  
SUPPORTED

**33**  
**CHILDREN**

were assisted in our  
Foster Care program

Foster Care Week was celebrated virtually due to COVID restrictions, but we made sure our Lighthouse Foster Carers knew just how special their contributions are. An online yoga session and interactive trivia was held for our foster carers and the wider Lighthouse community, and a personal letter was sent to each foster carer.

Lighthouse's Foster Care Program provides therapeutic support to children and young people aged 0 – 21 and their foster carers. Foster care enables all types of families to provide care and security to vulnerable children and young people who cannot live with their biological parent(s) or kinship family, providing them with safety, stability, and opportunities to build positive relationships, which are important for them to heal from their earlier experiences.

Family Support is focused on providing Lighthouse's Model of Care to families, just as within foster care, but to biological relatives of the child (kinship) or members of their social network. As with Lighthouse's Foster Care Program, Family Support is centred around a Hub and supported by a Community Committee.

Thanks to generous philanthropists and organisations, our Foster Care program has assisted 33 children and accredited 18 foster care households since its beginning. With them, this pilot program has been made possible.



# A STORY FROM LIGHTHOUSE FOSTER CARER, PRUE



“Our family is just an ordinary, crazy busy one, so I never imagined we’d have what it takes to become a foster family.

My husband is a paramedic who works in shifts, and I do part-time work for an insurance broker. Our daughter Lucy is 8, and loves animals, school, soccer, ballet and tap.

We got talking to Emma from Lighthouse Foundation at a school event, and she explained they were looking for a family like ours to take in a 5-year-old boy who had been shifted many times between foster homes. She told us that he was now very untrusting of adults, and that he was becoming more traumatised each time he was shifted. We talked about it later that night at home and decided that it was OK for me to phone Lighthouse and get more information.

We completed the paperwork and began a process involving interviews and background checks. Everything went well, and soon we were able to meet little David, who was ready to start school in the months ahead. It was important to get him settled so that he could have a secure home base for his all-important first year in Prep. He was from the very start a burst of high energy and action into our home.

Lucy was a bit wary of how he would want her attention all the time and always want to play. He is a total sweetie though and loved the routines of bedtime with a bath and story-time. After about a month, we knew that this was going to be ongoing, and that David was one of us. We were now a family of 4, and he and Lucy are great together.

**“We would never have taken the plunge and got involved if we hadn’t had the extra support from Lighthouse.”**

We knew from the start that we could get advice straight away and that there would be respite breaks when David could stay back at the Lighthouse Hub Home with people he knew, and that would give us a breather. There are also other foster families in the Lighthouse circle that we can chat with, and we can get together socially while the kids all play. Lighthouse foster care is great support and we always have help at hand if we aren’t sure how to handle something.

It has been a year now since David joined our family. He is doing well as he finishes up the Prep year. He is a happy little boy, and he has us now. And we are so lucky to have him.”





## LIGHTHOUSE IN COMMUNITY



### COMMUNITY CONNECT

Lighthouse's Community Connect Program stems from our commitment to creating circles of safety around a young person, so that they are never without care or support. Community Connect was established in 2022 and adopts an innovative program design allowing Lighthouse to assist young people aged 16-25 located across Melbourne who are experiencing housing instability (from at-risk to rough sleeping) to access therapeutic case management including outreach support and referrals, as well as items like clothing, food, toiletries, and furniture.

One of the key goals of Community Connect is to increase housing stability for young people. Young people in the program have access to Lighthouse's Youth Resource Hub (LYRH), which includes a kitchen, laundry, bathroom, private spaces for clinical consultation, and is the central point for many youth events and activities. Outside of LYRH, young people are able to access support directly through their Therapeutic Case Manager in their local community.

Lighthouse recognises that community is essential to the wellbeing of young people, and that connecting a young person to community creates spaces to develop their social skills and a sense of belonging.

### ON FOR LIFE

At Lighthouse we know that life is full of ups and downs, particularly for those at risk of homelessness, and sometimes support is still needed once a young person leaves their Lighthouse home. On for Life is available to all young people exiting a Lighthouse program, supporting them to continue living safely and meaningfully once they transition to independent living. Lighthouse is proud to say that we now support 1,100+ young people through our On for Life program.

Such programs are uncommon in the Australian out-of-home care sector, even though they address a well-known need for young people recovering from trauma – safe, healthy, reliable, and ongoing social connections.





# thank you FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Lighthouse is deeply appreciative of the commitment of our philanthropic trusts and foundations, supporters, and long-standing donors.

## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS

ACME Foundation	Dion & Sandra Abrahams Endowment	Lottery Office
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**Future  
Generation  
Australia**  
INVESTMENT & SOCIAL RETURNS

Thank you, Future Generation Investment Company (FGX)

As leaders in philanthropic partnerships, FGX have risen to be a major benefactor to Australian children and youth at risk. Lighthouse Foundation is proud to be the major recipient of this significant annual support, as selected by individual FGX investors.

FGX is growing its contributions to homeless young people year by year and is an outstanding example of corporate social responsibility from the investment community. We're incredibly proud to be aligned with an organisation that cares so deeply, and who works hard to ensure Lighthouse's sustainability and future for many years to come.



## PARTNERS

At Lighthouse, our partners make our important work possible and provide financial and pro bono support that ensures we can do what we do every day.

All Aboard Club Williamstown Group	Elsternwick Park Women's Golf Club	King & Wood Mallesons	Procal Dairies
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# OUR *community*

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Lighthouse has developed a new 3-year strategic plan which will spearhead our efforts to end youth homelessness. By empowering communities and expanding our care services, we will increase our impact and access larger numbers of homeless and at-risk youth to compete with the growth of the problem.

## OUR GOAL

**100% GROWTH  
EVERY YEAR,  
OVER THE NEXT  
THREE YEARS TO**  
*increase  
our impact*

## OUR PROMISE

To grow within an evidence-based, scalable framework and maintain Lighthouse's best-practice, quality care services to help more young people.

Over the next three years, we will focus on four priorities.

1. Deliver quality, best practice care
2. Expand youth services and meaningfully collaborate
3. Lead through research and advocacy
4. Enhance organisational capacity and empower communities.





**TOGETHER,**  
*we create*  
*pathways*  
**TO ENSURE**  
**THOSE WITH**  
**EXPERIENCE OF**  
**HOMELESSNESS**  
**OR TRAUMA**  
**DON'T BECOME**  
**DEFINED BY IT**



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