



**Caroline
Chisholm
Society**

Newsletter

Winter Edition - Jul 2016



This year, we invited all our clients to lunch on the Friday before Mother's Day.

We had great fun and got to hear their stories about parenting and our service.

Proudly supported by
The Club at Caroline Springs.

What's this about a baby box?

In Shepparton, we have been thinking about ways to support new and expectant mothers and their families in collaboration.

We considered options: parenting groups, perinatal groups, therapeutic playgroup, helping with coordination of services, volunteer mentoring, breastfeeding support and other ideas.

Our community thinks the best option is to give a baby bassinet box to all mums. It allow baby to have safe place to sleep, mum to access a support appointment when receiving it and is really simple.

We also want to help our community advocate for a mother baby unit. Shepparton could really do with a residential service like that offered by Karinya House in Canberra.

Want to help? Let us know at:
gv@caroline.org.au



From the CEO

For more than 75 years, Finland's expectant mothers have been given a Baby Box by the state that serves as a starter kit for their new baby. It contains clothes, blankets, and other newborn necessities, and the Baby Box itself, which is lined with a mattress, is used as the child's first bed.

It is believed that these Baby Boxes have helped Finland achieve one of the world's lowest infant mortality rates. The Baby Box is credited with helping to decrease Finland's infant mortality rate from 65 deaths for each 1,000 children born in 1938 to 3 deaths per 1,000 births in 2013.

We love its simplicity; it's a box that's recyclable and can become a toy box. We love its safety; it's a great way to encourage safe sleeping practices, especially with vulnerable families. We love its model of support; it's a way to engage with families to prevent social isolation, family violence, the impacts of homelessness and engagement with child protection.

With the support of the Helen McPherson Smith Trust, we have agreed with colleagues and the community that this is the right answer in Shepparton. If you like this idea, please get in touch. We will need help to make it happen.

We are very excited about our progress towards a new building in Moonee Valley, but we're also a bit nervous. It looks likely that we will formally 'open' in November or December, but we need to move out of Shuter Street at the end of July. We'll do what we can to keep you in the loop about our movements, but you can always find us at Caroline Springs or wait just a few months and visit our new office when it opens. Do keep in touch through our website and on facebook and be sure to call before dropping in.

At Caroline Springs, we have two exciting new projects to support vulnerable children of kindergarten age. More on this overleaf.

One of the most enjoyable things I've done as CEO happened recently. Thank you to The Club at Caroline Springs for helping us help our clients celebrate mothers day. They loved it!

In the spirit of Caroline Chisholm,

Helen

Helen Cooney

Farewell Glenda Rumble Volunteer Coordinator



We'd like to wish you well, Glenda.

Thank you for being there for us so we can be there for families.

We're looking forward to working with Karan Grieve, who is our new coordinator.

More pics from Mother's Day



Spotlight on...

Vulnerable children need to go to kinder too!

We are proudly supported by The Club at Caroline Springs to help vulnerable children in kindergartens. We will be available to help all kindergarten teachers in Melton use a vulnerability guide so that services like us that help families who are vulnerable, hear about families concerns earlier and can prevent issues later in life.

The vulnerability guide is a two sided reference sheet setting out the intent and use of the guide on side 1 and vulnerability descriptors on side 2. It was developed 'by practitioners, with practitioners, for practitioners' in Shepparton to facilitate a shared understanding of child and family vulnerability by Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Kindergarten teachers. It is now, five years on, not only helping identify families but also helping us plan services such as playgroups.

Together with the Melton City Council and others, CCS identified the tool as suited to our community. We envisage a focus on Melton's 20 Kindergartens, while Council will work with MCH nurses.

One of the great challenges for CCS is balancing the demand for high volume early intervention services (such as parenting groups) in the face of increasing demand from complex families (who we help with home-visiting integrated casework). We have always done both, but the balance is shifting in the wrong direction. We believe this project will assist kinder teachers with options for help and will assist our team in getting referrals earlier so we can

prevent issues with, for example, child protection. This will help us help families to achieve safe and nurturing environments for their children.

Under the leadership of Audrey, a senior practitioner, we are also working on a new project with ECMS, BPA and TRY (who are child care and kindergarten providers). Audrey and Nida will be assisting vulnerable children to access pre-purchased Kindergarten places funded by the Department of Education and Training (DET). They will also help those children remain at kindergarten. A big part of their role will be to support preparation for referral in future years. We hope they will be able to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children known to Child Protection and ChildFIRST, children in Out of Home Care and Refugee children.

Get in touch with Audrey or Nida on 03 9361 7000 if you'd like to know more about these projects.

Interested in volunteering?

To express interest in volunteering in Melbourne, please contact:

03 9361 7000
secretary@caroline.org.au

To express interest in volunteering in Shepparton, please contact:

03 5821 0826
gv@caroline.org.au

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