



**Caroline
Chisholm
Society**

Newsletter

Spring Edition - Oct 2018



Join the Generation West Campaign!

Pledge your support to give every child in Melbourne's West a chance to thrive. The population in Melbourne's West is booming. Over 40 babies are born here every day. That's nearly 281 a week, and 14,610 babies a year! Families in the West are currently raising the biggest generation of children Melbourne has ever seen.

<https://www.generationwest.org.au/join>



Want to read our annual report?

It's now available online at

www.caroline.org.au

"We're official!"

These were the words of a local Shepparton volunteer when they were presented with their accreditation certificates and stickers, delivered on a day that the whole Caroline Chisholm Society team were invited to visit.



From the CEO

It's a great honor to report each year after our AGM. This year, I was reminded of the remarkable work all of you are participating in—raising our next generation. Some \$200,000 worth of time from volunteers was contributed. We couldn't do it without you.

Since opening Essendon, we provided 100 more appointments than the previous year. Our Shepparton team have seen more families with the help of a lot more volunteers, also up by 100. And we are now also offering appointments at Caroline Springs which we expect will challenge us to find the goods for 250 more. But we know it's needed, so we hope you'll help us.

Last financial year, we provided approximately 1,200 appointments and provided home visiting services to 230 families. In those moments, when our community of mothers reach out for us, they also tell us some of the most challenging things they're facing as they raise their babies and toddlers. They include family violence, mental health, homelessness, issues with migration, and social isolation.

If you put the mental health figures with the social isolation (the prevention end) and add them up, you find that the number one issue facing expectant and new mothers and their families is perinatal mental health. I'm pleased to say our service provision team is doing a great job of responding to this need.

We can only help with issues like these if we work on them together as a community. So, thank you.

In the spirit of Caroline Chisholm,

Helen

Helen Cooney



We needed wipes!?!

We called for help on Facebook recently and were overwhelmed by the response.

Thanks so much!

We are grateful and now that we know you're there, we will do more call outs when we're low.

Next call out?

Likely to be grow suits and baby singlets!



Appointments now available in Caroline Springs!

Last year, we offered support at an additional 100 appointments in Essendon and 100 in Shepparton. This year, we've taken on the challenge of offering the appointments at Caroline Springs.



Call us on 03 9361 7000 for a time to meet with us at 1 Darebin Place, Caroline Springs

Do you or someone you know want to volunteer?

We are in need of help with sourcing goods for families at all our offices, and processing goods in Essendon, Caroline Springs and Shepparton.

We are also in need of help with organising events!

Contact Nina Conquest (Melbourne) and Maree Chin (Shepparton)

Email: secretary@caroline.org.au
Tel: 03 9361 7000

The 2018 State Election

On Saturday 24 November 2018, Victorians will decide who forms the next State Government.

When deciding who gets your vote, please consider pregnant and new mums, babies and toddlers. Caroline Chisholm Society has heard the voice of over 1,200 families who came to see us last year. At our Mother's Day and Children's Week Parties, in private discussions with our staff, and through the data, we have been told so much about the opportunities and challenges faced by families in raising their babies and toddlers.

Please ask your local candidate to hear the voice of pregnant and new mums, babies and toddlers too.

⇒ **Will you fund local First 1000 Days Supporters in our neighbourhoods for mums, dads, babies and toddlers?**

After parenting and poverty, the top issues raised with us relate to mental health, homelessness, family violence and isolation. Putting mental health and social isolation together, the most pressing issue for those who come to us is perinatal mental health. A Perinatal Mental Health Plan was recommended by a Parliamentary Committee, we need a plan but we also need action.

The solution: For every local government area, there should be a First 1000 Days Supporter (social worker or other health professional) who coordinates volunteers to run parenting play and education groups, so that pregnant and new mothers support each other locally during the first 1,000 days of their baby's life, from conception until the child is two years old.

⇒ **Will you fund more transitional housing for mums, babies and toddlers living in homelessness?**

Last financial year, more than 60% of Victorians needing homeless help were female. A mother on single parenting payments looking for a two-bedroom rental in Melbourne has just 3-in-100 properties which she could afford. The solution is more housing. In our experience, mothers – from the time they learn of their pregnancy until their child is less than 2 years old, require an immediate response that can last until they have settled into life as a parent.

The solution: There should be more transitional housing that comes with a support worker specifically dedicated to families in their First 1000 days.

⇒ **Will you redress the divide between rural and metropolitan mums, babies and toddlers?**

The metropolitan centric government systems do not respond to the needs of pregnant and new families in rural towns on the fringe of Melbourne or in regional cities. A Parliamentary Committee recommended evaluating demand for Early Parenting Centres across the state. We look forward to that data. We need one in Shepparton. And, so that those services are the best they can be, we also need a centre for excellence in Melbourne's west to lead the State. In Melton, we have a city the size of Canberra moving in. We need hospitals planned now and they need to be planned for midwifery services and adjunct perinatal support services.

The solution: Fund services to match existing and growth of demand for perinatal and early years services.

Contact us ...

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