



THE GIRLS & BOYS  
BRIGADE

FEBRUARY 2021

# NEWSLETTER

## We are ready for 2021, thanks to you!

For all that 2020 threw at us, some of the best memories I have from the last year are of the remarkable spirit of our community.

*Thank you!*

The togetherness and resilience shown by our families was a shining light through a dark chapter. A lot of them endured significant stress throughout the haze of restrictions and lockdowns, but there were also a lot of smiles, laughter, and a sense of community and willingness to help each other.

**This is something that I take a lot of inspiration from moving into this new year.**

The success of our altered programming last year, gives our families and community confidence that we can overcome whatever lies ahead.

As we continue to navigate this ever-changing world, we remain committed to our core programming and our values. Our summer vacation care program operated fairly normally, with the exception of our new mantra for the kids; "have you got your mask and have you sanitised?".

It was wonderful to be able to offer a full program with my highlight sitting down with the youth before Christmas for a delicious feast of turkey, ham and prawns. It was great to see the youth getting into the Christmas spirit, wearing crowns and telling lame jokes from the bonbons. Afterwards, we played Christmas themed bingo, while listening to carols.

We look forward to being able to have our kids and youth here more often than we did over the last year. The building just isn't the same without the noise of kids laughing, yelling, and running up and down the stairs.

**Thanks to you, we're ready and excited for 2021. Thank you for being there to support us.**



THE GIRLS & BOYS BRIGADE BUILDING  
402 – 404 Riley Street, Surry Hills  
Ph 02 9319 4509  
LEVEL 2  
City of Sydney Ph 02  
Surry Hills Children's Program  
CITY OF SYDNEY



**“We were saved here,  
now I’m giving back”.**

**Chiho knows her investment changes lives,  
because The Girls & Boys Brigade helped her.**

As a single parent, Chiho was studying nursing full-time as well as caring for her five-year-old daughter Faith. She was finding the demands difficult and couldn't keep relying on friends to take care of her child.

Faith attended the Brigade until she was 18 and has so many great childhood memories.

***“I feel Faith and I were so privileged that she was able to have so many incredible experiences at The Girls & Boys Brigade. They were able to take her to places that I just wasn't able to. She got to grow up like other kids and have the same experiences and I am so grateful for that,”*** Chiho said.

Chiho now chooses to support The Girls & Boys Brigade with a regular, monthly gift and has included us in her Will.

She believes her and Faith would not be where they are today if it wasn't for The Girls & Boys Brigade and their supporters, so she wants to give back.

***“It's really important to look after our younger generation so when they become adults they can support our society. Kids should have the chance to be 'just kids' and if I can support that then I will do what I can,”*** she said.

## A successful tee off... Thank you!

There was much excitement as 140 golfers took to the tee at St Michael's Golf Course for The Girls & Boys Brigade 7th Annual Golf Day in October.

Players were excited to catch up with friends and play friendly but competitive golf with the chance to win a Mercedes Benz and importantly raise money for The Girls & Boys Brigade.

After months of planning and ensuring we adhered to COVID safe guidelines we were welcomed by a beautiful day and happy golfers.

**Thanks to our incredibly supportive sponsors, prize donors and players who helped raise over \$129,000. What an amazing achievement!**



**We are already planning our 2021 golf day event to be held on Thursday, 5th August at The Lakes Golf Course. We hope you can be part of it.**

# Faith's exciting future ahead

Faith attended The Girls & Boys Brigade from the age of five, until she finished high school. Faith's mum Chiho was studying full-time and trying to make ends meet with the demands of being a single mum.

The one thing that stands out to Faith from her time at the Brigade is the sense of family she felt with the other kids and teachers.

Faith remembers fondly the encouragement she received from the teachers to develop her passion and skills for painting and drawing. She has continued her love for art and has decided to pursue a career as a tattoo artist after recently returning from Japan where she was living for two years.

Faith recalls that The Girls & Boys Brigade was a refuge for her. She had a safe place to go after school and on the holidays, along with somewhere she could complete her homework projects.

***"There was always something to do at the Brigade. The excursions were always so fun, and I felt so grateful to have such memorable experiences and spend time with my friends as well,"*** Faith said.

Faith believes the Brigade is where she also learnt to communicate confidently with people.

***"There were so many kids with different backgrounds and we learnt to play, talk and all get along with each other,"*** she shared.



Art by Faith

## Christmas cards are big 'business'



Our Vacation Care kids not only got into the Christmas spirit leading up to the holidays, they decided to turn it into a fun 'business'.

Some of the kids started making Christmas cards with funny messages like "We woof you a Merry Christmas" and decided they should set up a shop and sell their cards to the other kids.

Zoe was the manager and her friends were tasked with making the cards.

As soon as they opened, there was a long queue of excited customers wanting to purchase their handmade wares with play money. The cards ranged in 'price' from \$1 to \$1000!

The girls quickly sold out of their cards as so many of the kids purchased them for their mums and their other friends at Vacation Care.

**Thanks to your support, the kids are learning and having fun through play, along with making incredible connections and friendships.**

# Making a way to help HSC students through 2020



Jess has been tutoring HSC students for nearly 2 years now. So, when she heard about an opportunity to tutor HSC students at The Girls & Boys Brigade, she was so excited to be part of the team.

COVID-19 presented some challenges with an inability to offer in-person tutoring, so Jess spent time doing online meet-ups with the students who were so eager to learn.

*"I usually find many HSC students do tasks just to get them 'over with' and only to complete their final year of schooling. However, The Girls & Boys Brigade students tended to genuinely enjoy learning the content they had been given and were keen to be present in each and every session.*

*Our students handled everything that 2020 threw at them with so much grace. Every student gained belief in their own abilities which allowed them to move past any mistakes quicker and proceed onto greater things.*

*I enjoyed seeing the improvement within the students and watching them enjoy learning,"* Jess said.

**Thank you Jess for sharing your time and skills to ensure our year 12 students flourished!**

## Over Christmas:



**150** presents were gifted to our children and youth

**50** grocery hampers went to our families

**75** schoolbags with back to school materials, plus games and toys were donated

These special deliveries helped make Christmas a little easier for our children and families this year.

*Thank you!*



**Save a table at our Trivia Night.**

**6.30pm, 25th March 2021,  
Dockside Cockle Bay Wharf**

By coming along and enjoying dinner, drinks and trivia, you are supporting the kids and their families.



**Have you found us on Social media?** Like and follow us on Facebook @TheGirlsBoysBrigadeSyd and Instagram @girlsandboysbrigadesyd