



THE GIRLS & BOYS
BRIGADE

Stories from the GBB

AUTUMN EDITION 2025

Balancing Acts: Brainy Battles for Working Mums

The Girls & Boys Brigade has spent over 143 years dedicated to providing a safe and nurturing environment for inner city children and teenagers. In doing so, we also empower our mothers to work, rebuild their lives, and create a brighter future for their families.

With the housing and cost-of-living crises tightening around us all, our annual trivia night fundraiser raised much-needed funds for our programs and other support services. Thank you to all those who attended.

Our supporters are not the only ones with a love for trivia. The children in our programs recently enjoyed a special Easter-themed trivia egg hunt during a camp on the Central Coast, creating joyful memories and strengthening their social networks.

Meanwhile, our youth have enjoyed more time than ever by the water, strengthening bonds and building new foundations on excursions and camps.

Inside this newsletter you will find stories from the children and youth of some of our amazing single mothers, as well as how we continue to find new ways to celebrate them and our other female carers.

Thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we are making a profound difference in the lives of our children and their families.

Stefan Lamour-Jansson
Executive Officer





Miss Mel and the Missing Wellies

How gumboots and gratitude made a magical camp.

This Autumn the programs team worked hard preparing an exciting camp full of adventure for a group of enthusiastic boys.

Miss Mel had fired up our bus ready to drive off to the Central Coast for a weekend filled with outdoor escapades. However, the weather had its own plans, and the forecast predicted pouring rain.

Fortunately, Miss Mel, with her contagious optimism, saved the day. She dashed to the nearest store, returning with new pairs of shiny gumboots. The boys were delighted, thrilled at the prospect of splashing through puddles and playing in the mud without a care.

The rain did nothing to dampen their spirits as they headed to the nearby reptile park. The boys gazed in awe at the menacing crocodiles and giggled nervously as a female ranger introduced them to Fluffy, a surprisingly friendly giant snake. "I thought the snake was going to eat her," a boy named Kai said.

As the rain eased, the boys gathered around a campfire, toasting marshmallows, and sharing stories. Kai, a shy boy who lives with his mum in an inner-city shelter, grinned the widest. It was his first time in such a wide-open space, and being surrounded by nature seemed to settle something inside of him.

Kai said he had never had access to a great big house before. He loved the big windows and all the beds, and the big table downstairs where they could eat together. Even though he missed his mum, he said it helps her so she can go to work, and she likes to see him surrounded by friends and having fun.

The weekend's camp, despite the rain, was a testament to the incredible impact that supporters like you can have on a child's life.

Kai will always have the memory of his first big camping trip, Fluffy the snake, and that great big house that he got to share with his friends and his new family at The Girls & Boys Brigade.



Bullies, Beach Days, & Building New Bonds

One recent morning at The Girls & Boys Brigade, Mr. Bill gathered a group of eager teenagers onto our bus. Their destination was Maroubra Beach. The teens, along with Mr. Bill, shared a delicious barbecue, working as a team to set up and cook the meal. The air was filled with the sound of sizzling sausages and cheerful chatter as they swam in the ocean, strolled along the shoreline, and competed to see who could skip rocks the furthest.

For Lachlan, one of the teenagers on this excursion, the day was especially significant. Having recently moved to Surry Hills from Adelaide to be with his mum, Lachlan had faced numerous challenges. A victim of bullying and isolation in his previous environment, he struggled to find his place.

However, thanks to the unwavering support of Mr. Bill and our Youth Program, Lachlan began to flourish. His newfound confidence was evident as he walked and talked with friends by the water that day.

Living in the heart of Sydney, Lachlan has thrived with the welcoming and accepting culture cultivated by our dedicated staff. His mother, busy with work, found solace knowing Lachlan had a safe space to grow and learn. Lachlan's transformation, bolstered by basketball sessions with Mr. Bill, has been nothing short of remarkable.

Despite being a new addition, Lachlan now attends The Girls & Boys Brigade regularly. He loves to show off the basketball moves he practices with Mr. Bill to his new school friends.

The sight of Lachlan walking by the shoreline with the support and acceptance of a newfound community was a beautiful reminder of the difference your support makes. Thank you for helping us change lives, one rock skip at a time.



International Women's Day: Celebrating Our Unsung Heroes

Last month, The Girls & Boys Brigade set out to celebrate the resilience and strength of our mothers and female carers for International Women's Day. The event aimed to honour the tireless efforts of these unsung heroes who often put themselves last.

The day was more than just a series of beauty treatments. It was a transformative experience that allowed these women to step away from their daily challenges and the demands of child-rearing, and see themselves how we see them: beautiful, strong and deserving of the love and care they show to others.

Throughout the event, the room buzzed with laughter, tears, and shared stories, as bonds of camaraderie and support were strengthened. Many participants expressed heartfelt gratitude, acknowledging the critical role our team and programs play in their journeys from fear and shame to hope and resilience.

This celebration was a testament to the profound difference that our supporters' make. Thanks to their generosity, women who have faced unimaginable hardships are now embracing brighter futures with courage and gratitude. Together, we are proud to join you in empowering these inspiring women, reminding them that they are never alone.



IMPACT IN NUMBERS



64%

Felt more independent at camp

64%

Felt happier after attending camp

93%

Felt they made new friends

100%

Felt they exercised resilience at camp

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While the stories in this newsletter are true, names and identifying details have been altered to protect privacy.