

Stories from the GBB

WINTER EDITION 2025

Breaking the Ice New Journeys for Young Hearts

As the winter chill settles in, I find myself thinking of how we come together, time and again, to foster growth and create warmth in the lives of our children and youth.

The success of our youth program has been particularly inspiring. Our initiative to take the kids “into the blue” with swimming lessons not only encouraged physical activity but also provided a joyful escape from the digital world. Similarly, our new culinary course has captured the imagination of our young chefs-in-training, and we look forward to sharing more updates soon.

We are thrilled to celebrate the remarkable achievement of one of our teens, who has been accepted into a prestigious selective school in Sydney. This is a testament to their hard work and determination, supported by our well-visited homework room, where daily successes are nurtured.

This sort of perseverance is something we see not only in those who currently access our services, but also in those who move beyond them. As we say goodbye to one of our beloved families, we remember the alumni who have carried our organisations mission into their future.

This season, we celebrate new beginnings. Whether it’s the excitement of starting at a new school, moving to a new place, or seizing opportunities on a global stage, our children, youth, and alumni continue to inspire us.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are creating a brighter future for everyone we serve.

Stefan Lamour-Jansson
Executive Officer





Amala's Last Adventure

The trip to the Koala Park Sanctuary was a joyful occasion for the children of The Girls & Boys Brigade. For Amala, a radiant little girl from Tibet, the day was both a celebration and a heartfelt farewell.



Amala and her family have faced many challenges since migrating to Australia. Since moving here, they have shared their home with two other Tibetan families in the inner city to save money. But despite the cramped quarters Amala's parents still struggled with constant worry about how they would pay for bills and other necessities. However, through the unwavering support of The Girls & Boys Brigade, they found a community that embraced them wholeheartedly.

Here Amala and her family received a lifeline. They found friends, accessed essential resources like the food pantry and family dinners, and received crucial support, such as Amala's ADHD diagnosis. The staff even helped her parents with resumé building and job searching, leading to a promising employment opportunity in another state.



For little Amala this exciting new adventure was also very sad, as it meant saying goodbye to all of her new friends. She clung to the hands of her two best friends as we wandered around the koala park, not ready to let go. The sanctuary visit, filled with wonder and excitement, was a beautiful way to spend her last day with The Girls & Boys Brigade. The children eagerly asked to use our camera throughout the day, capturing smiles and hugs, and preserving memories that would last a lifetime.

In the afternoon, the group gathered to present Amala with a card overflowing with messages of love and well-wishes. Tears mingled with smiles as they celebrated the friendships and adventures shared. Although saying

goodbye was difficult, Amala walked away with community, strength, and memories she can treasure forever.



Turning the Table

Kieran's Path to Success

When Kieran first walked through the doors of The Girls & Boys Brigade, he carried the weight of the world on his young shoulders. His father was in prison, and his mother was trying to support he and his two sisters alone.

Life had been challenging for them, having experienced domestic violence and now living in a city refuge. Kieran, thrust into the role of caretaker, was trying to be the man of the house.

At home, Kieran was responsible for everything. With his mother's credit card in hand, he bought food for his siblings and himself, often resorting to fast food due to his limited experience in cooking. Their small apartment lacked basic furniture, such as a table or chairs, making meals and studying a challenging ordeal.

Despite these hardships, Kieran's determination never wavered. He dreamed of a better future, one where he could provide for his family.

The Girls & Boys Brigade became a haven for him—a place where he could study quietly at a private desk, receive help with homework, and enjoy the simple pleasure of sitting at a table for a meal. We offered Kieran healthy groceries from our pantry and cooked meals whenever possible.

Kieran's dreams didn't go unnoticed. When he shared his aspirations with us, we rallied around him, offering guidance and support. With each passing day, Kieran grew more confident and determined.

His hard work and perseverance paid off, and today, we are incredibly proud to celebrate his acceptance into a selective school.

Kieran's journey is a testament to his courage and resilience. We cannot count the hours he dedicated nor the relentless hope he maintained in the face of adversity. At The Girls & Boys Brigade, we are honoured to have been part of Kieran's story, and we are excited to see the bright future that awaits him.



Heith: From Humble Beginnings to the Sumo World Stage



Heith is a 21-year-old Dhanggati athlete and alumnus of The Girls & Boys Brigade. Since leaving, Heith has devoted himself to the art of sumo wrestling. His journey has been both inspiring and transformative, marked by significant achievements in the Oceania Sumo Tournament in Sydney, where he earned silver medals in the heavyweight, open weight, and team categories.

Like many who come through our doors, Heith carries the spirit of dedication and perseverance. For him, that's easy when there

is something worth fighting for.

"This opportunity means more than just competing; it's about breaking barriers, representing my culture, and showing other young Australians—especially Indigenous youth—that there's space for them on the world stage."

The young people at the Brigade remember Heith as a gentle giant, always ready to lend a hand or share a laugh. His journey from the Brigade to the sumo ring has become a source of inspiration for many. Heith's achievements have not only brought him personal success but have also shone a light on the possibilities that exist for young people who dare to dream and work hard.

This coming September, Heith has been accepted to represent Australia at the World Sumo Championships in Thailand—his very first international tournament.

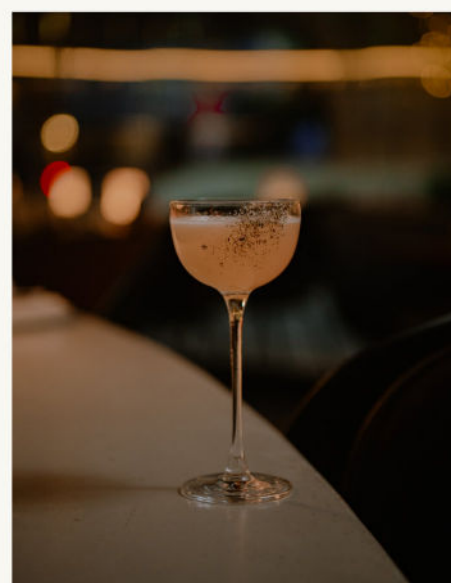
Heith is currently seeking sponsors to make this dream a reality. If you can help support him, please reach out to us.



AC
APPETITE FOR CHANGE



SUNDAY, 3RD OF AUGUST, 2025
6PM ARRIVAL FOR 6:30PM START
25 MARTIN PLACE, SYDNEY, NSW, 2000



Find us on Facebook @TheGirlsBoysBrigadeSyd and Instagram @GirlsAndBoysBrigadeSyd

The Girls & Boys Brigade | 402-404 Riley St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010 | ABN 40 409 258 077
(02) 9319 4509 | info@girlsandboysbrigade.com.au | www.girlsandboysbrigade.org.au

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