

Stories from the GAB

AUTUMN 2026



In Times Like These, Choose Compassion

In a world that can often feel uncertain, shaped by complex global events and challenges, it's hard not to reflect on what truly matters.

Across communities everywhere, there is a growing need for peace, for understanding, and for a willingness to give where we can and support one another — especially when so many find themselves facing difficult or even devastating circumstances.

This is the very essence of The Girls & Boys Brigade. Every day, our work is grounded in the belief that a simple act of support can create something far greater — a ripple effect that extends beyond the individual to families, communities, and future generations.

We are not just responding to immediate needs; we are helping to build stronger, more connected communities, and a more hopeful future for everyone.

The stories in this newsletter — from teens learning to love studying through pizza, to children experiencing joy and discovery during our Summer Splash program — are reminders



of what's possible when care, creativity, and community come together.

I hope these stories offer a sense of light and optimism. Because even in challenging times, when we choose compassion, understanding, and action, we help shape a future that is brighter for everyone.

Stefan Lamour-Jansson
Executive Officer



Pizza, Playstation & Study Support

The Youth Program at the GBB continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of the young people in our community. But some things never change... teens still love pizza.

When our team noticed that young people needed extra support with schoolwork but weren't accessing it, they tried a different approach. Each Wednesday afternoon, they would draw teens in with food and recreation — pizza and PlayStation games.

Alongside the games and laughter, a tutor would be present to offer homework support in a relaxed, informal way. Conversations about school happen naturally. Confidence grows. And our team is better able to identify and

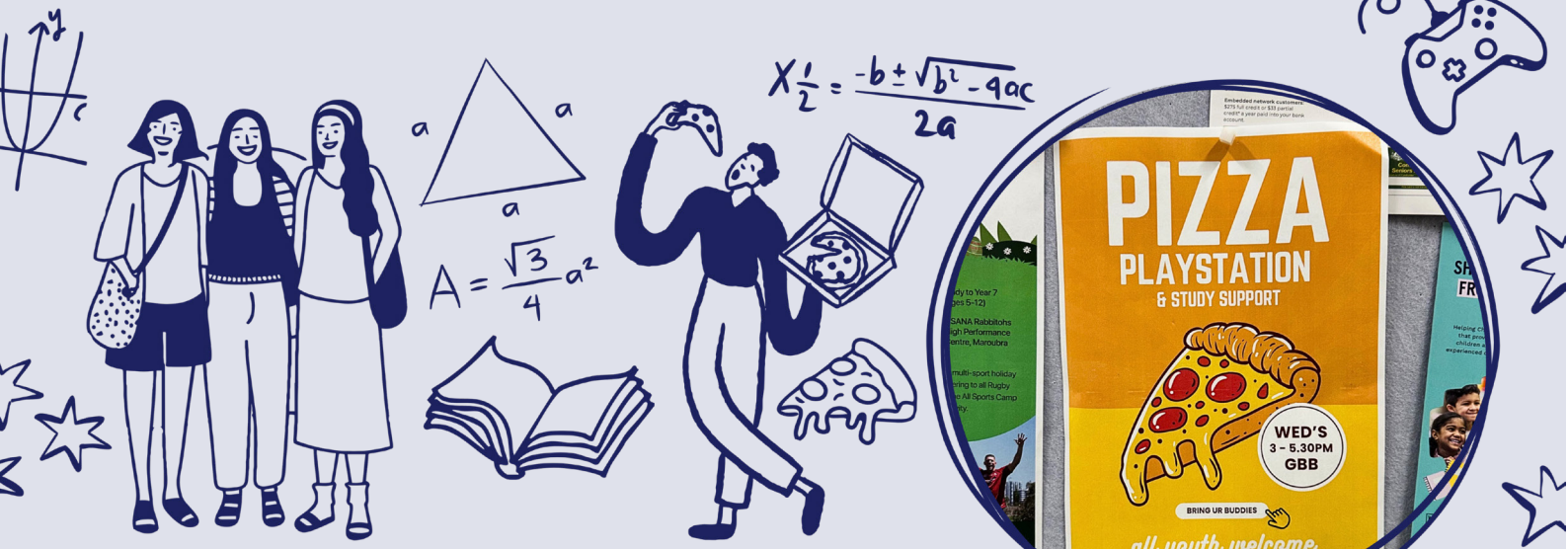
respond to broader needs, from food support and digital access to mentorship and guidance from trusted adults.

The popularity of these afternoons has even outgrown the program budget — a welcome challenge when it means young people are choosing to show up and engage. In response, our youth coordinators have found creative ways to keep the tradition going.

“One week we did taco pizzas, another week we used hot chips as a base. It kept things affordable and made it more fun, too.” — Curly Fernandez

“Pizza bases are really expensive,” said Curly. “So we started experimenting.” Through your support of The Girls & Boys

Brigade, you're helping to create spaces where young people feel supported, connected, and empowered to thrive. Thank you!



Finding Belonging at GBB Camp

For many children, camp is a chance to step away from everyday pressures and simply enjoy being a kid. This March, ten young people aged 9–12 experienced just that on our Coastal Crusaders camp, exploring the beaches and bushland of the Central Coast while learning about marine life and sustainability.

While the activities and environment made the weekend a lot of fun, it was the connections formed that made the experience truly special.

Three girls — Mia, Zoe, and Elliana — arrived at camp carrying more than just their bags. Each had recently joined The Girls & Boys Brigade, and each was navigating significant challenges at home, from unstable housing to major changes in family life. For them, camp was more than an outdoor adventure; it was a chance to feel safe, included, and supported.

While the children all come from different backgrounds, at GBB they feel the same sense of acceptance and community.

At first, Mia was quiet and unsure. But Zoe and Elliana welcomed her in without hesitation — inviting her into games and gently building her confidence. Over the course of the weekend, something shifted. Mia began to open up, laugh more freely, and feel a sense of belonging.

By the end of camp, she told her mum she'd had the “best weekend ever” and had made “best friends.”

Moments like these are powerful. They remind us that when young people are given the space to connect, to be themselves, and to feel supported, they begin

to see new possibilities for their future. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, experiences like camp don't just create memories — they help shape confidence, connection, and a stronger sense of what's possible.





One Last “Summer Splash”

Our Summer Vacation Care program is always one of the biggest — and hottest — times of the year. Coming straight after the holiday season, it can also be a challenging period for many families, with financial pressures high and work commitments returning.

That’s why The Girls & Boys Brigade created something special. With a “Summer Splash” theme, we gave children a school holiday experience filled with fun, exploration, and new opportunities — many of which they wouldn’t otherwise have access to.

From riding waves and waterslides at Gunyama Park Aquatic Centre, to splashing in the sunshine at Steel Park, each day brought a new adventure.

Children explored biodiversity through water netting at Centennial Park, caught the ferry across the harbour to Watsons Bay, and even put their creativity to the test with a STEM boat-building challenge — designing and testing their own floating creations.

Exploring local parks, waterways, and learning about Australia’s maritime history encouraged the children to connect and develop respect for the natural and local environments and learned how important water is not for the world in which they live.

Thanks to your support, experiences like these are possible — giving children the chance to learn, grow, and simply enjoy being kids, no matter their circumstances.

While the stories in this newsletter are true, names and other identifying details of children mentioned have been altered to protect their privacy. Thanks for your kind understanding!

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