

THE GIRLS & BOYS BRIGADE

Stories from the GBB

SPRING 2026

Helping however we can

In a city as vibrant and connected as Sydney, it can be difficult to imagine that so many people still face life's challenges alone. Yet for families experiencing hardship, finding the right support at the right time isn't always easy.

No single organisation can meet every need, nor should it have to. Every charity, community group and service brings its own strengths and resources. And when we work together, we can achieve far more than any of us could alone.

At The Girls & Boys Brigade, we're fortunate to have a special place in this community. Our 144-year history, our building, and the relationships we've built with generations of families allow us to truly know the people we support, understand their circumstances, and walk alongside them through life's ups and downs.

But we certainly couldn't do it alone.

Without government funding, we rely entirely on the generosity of our community. From local charities and services who work alongside us, to businesses who share their expertise and resources, volunteers who give their time, and, of course, generous supporters like you.

In this newsletter, you'll see some wonderful examples of what we can achieve together. From Southern Cross Vets providing essential care for beloved family pets, to Thread Together helping young people find their dream formal outfits, these stories are about so much more than the services provided. They're about dignity, belonging, opportunity, and the difference it makes when people come together.

And beyond these special moments are the countless everyday experiences and opportunities that your generosity makes possible.

I hope these stories leave you feeling as encouraged as I do. They're a reminder that while we can't solve every challenge on our own, together, we can make an extraordinary difference.

Thank you for being such an important part of our community.

Stefan Lamour-Jansson
Chief Executive Officer





Advice for young people, from young people!

Whether it's 1882 or 2026, many of the needs of young people remain the same. A safe place. An education. Fun and recreation. A sense of belonging.

But 144 years on, how we meet those needs looks very different. As we continue to evolve our programs for today's teens, there's one important voice we need to hear: their own.

That's why we've created our Youth Advisory Council, bringing together five young people who have graduated from our Youth Program in the past five years. With firsthand experience of the program and a strong connection to The Girls & Boys Brigade, they're uniquely placed to help shape its future.

"They're the experts. They've been through the program themselves, and they're all at a similar age to the youth." -Bill

"They were really easy to convince. I think they all still want to stay connected to the place," said Youth Coordinator Mr Bill.

The council's first meeting was an opportunity to get to know each other, hear about plans for the Youth Program and share ideas and feedback.

At their latest meeting, we asked the young advisors a simple question: What made you want to be part of the council?

Their answers remind us just how much this place means to the young people who grow up here, and the difference they now hope to make for those following in their footsteps.



Helping teens formal dreams come true

The words “High School Formal” spark vivid memories for many of us. Tuxedos with colourful cummerbunds, towering bouffant hairstyles, and nervous smiles as young couples posed for photos before dancing the night away to the top hits of the decade.

Perhaps you still have one of those pictures tucked away somewhere. Maybe your loved ones have seen it and questioned your fashion choices! While the styles may have changed, the significance of this special milestone hasn’t.

For young people today, the excitement of getting dressed up, taking photos with friends, and dancing the night away is just as real. But for those experiencing adversity, the cost of attending a formal can put this experience out of reach.

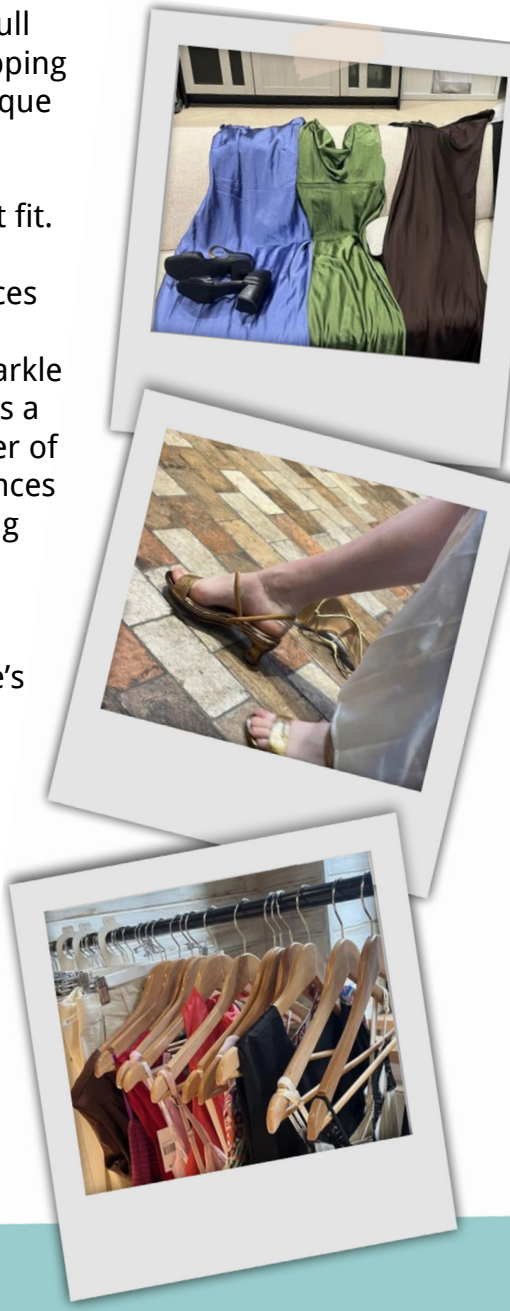
That’s why it was so special to help nine young people from The Girls & Boys Brigade find their dream formal outfits, thanks to the generosity of Thread Together.

From beautiful gowns to matching shoes and accessories, the young people had the opportunity to choose outfits that reflected their own unique style and personality. And it wasn’t just about the clothes.

They enjoyed the full experience of shopping together in a boutique setting, trying on different looks and finding that perfect fit.

The joy on their faces as they discovered their own style, sparkle and confidence was a wonderful reminder of why these experiences matter. Every young person deserves the chance to feel special, celebrated and included in life’s milestones.

A heartfelt thank you to Thread Together for playing “Fairy Godmother” and helping make these formal dreams come true!



Helping families...and their furry friends!

Community is at the heart of everything we do at The Girls & Boys Brigade. We support it, we create it, and we rely on it for financial and in-kind generosity so that we can help others.

For several years, Southern Cross Vets has been a wonderful example of this community spirit, generously providing free veterinary care to the pets of families we support. Over that time, they’ve cared for countless furry friends. And even one hairless cat, if memory serves!

For families doing it tough, unexpected vet bills can be a significant financial burden.

But we also know that pets are so much more than animals. They’re beloved members of the family, bringing companionship, comfort and joy, often when it’s needed most.

We’re incredibly grateful to Southern Cross Vets for their ongoing generosity and care. And thank you for helping build a community that looks out for one another — including our four-legged (and feathered!) friends.



Vacation care by the numbers

Every child looks forward to school holidays. But for parents experiencing adversity, it can be a time that feels more stressful than celebratory. Thanks to you and our generous supporters,we make fun activities accessible to families who have difficulty affording childcare or excursions during school breaks. Here's a glimpse into the October school holidays.

60 sausages

disappeared at our Vacation Care BBQ.



40 dumplings

were expertly crafted by our budding chefs.



3 birthdays

were celebrated with friends and smiles.

6 excursions

took children on exciting adventures beyond the service.

60+ trips

down the slide proving that playground fun never gets old!

1 new sport

tested and trialed, resulting in a huge amount of fun: Kung Fu



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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