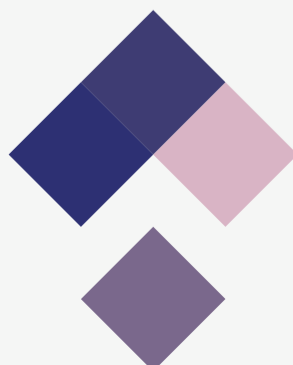


Rosie's Place Inc. Annual Report

2018 ♦ 2019

Rosie's Place is a support service for children, young people and their families who are responding to violence and abuse, including sexual assault and domestic and family violence.



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Acknowledgments

Service Acknowledgments

Rosie's Place receives its core funding from Department of Communities and Justice under the TEI (Targeted Early Intervention) funding stream.

Rosie's Place is able to extend the work of the service through additional grants and donations. We would especially like to acknowledge West Tradies Mt Druitt, Blacktown RSL (ClubGRANTS), UBS Asset Management Australia, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Stronger Communities Programme), Department of Infrastructure (Community Building Partnership), Westpac Foundation, & Prospect Hotel.

Our special thanks to the Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV), Sydney West Area Health Service.

Our thanks to the entire team for their ongoing, unwavering support of our service. Our partnership has continued this year with the Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM) team which includes two local refuges Pam's Place and Essie's Refuge.

We wish to acknowledge many of the local services who we continue to work closely with. They include: Parramatta Holroyd Family Support, WASH House, & CatholicCare.

Personal Acknowledgments

Rosie's Place wishes to thank our wonderful supporter Aneeta Menon. Aneeta has been fundraising for Rosie's Place for many years. Along with her mother Sarita and extended family they have raised more than \$44000 for the service. In March this year Aneeta and her family hosted a Harry Potter themed fundraiser for Rosie's Place. The night was an amazing success raising \$14000, so many hours went into the planning of this night, words never ever seem enough but once again thank you to this super woman and her family.

This year we were approached by Rebecca Brear who wanted to raise funds for Rosie's Place through her Kokoda Track campaign. Rebecca set up a GoFundMe page and to date has raised approx \$5000 for Rosie's. We send a heartfelt thanks to Rebecca and congratulate her on her amazing achievement.

Rosie's Place wishes to acknowledge the wonderful support of Sharon Peach and her children Brittany, Ebony and Dean. Each year the family have a Christmas light display at their home and people attending their light display donate money to Rosie's Place. Over the years they have raised more than \$10000 for the service.

Special thanks to Marnel LaGarde for her continued support of the service and supervision of staff. We thank her for her wisdom, respect, integrity and dedication to supporting our work with children, young people and families.

We wish to acknowledge the hard work of our bookkeeper Linda Marsonet. Our complex accounting system made up of many grants, donations and funding makes her job extremely difficult. Linda works over and above for Rosie's Place and we simply could not do the work we do without her support.



Acknowledgments of Country

Rosie's Place workers and collective members wish to acknowledge the Dharug people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our service stands.

We pay our respects to the Dharug elders past and present and emerging and recognise the continuing connection Aboriginal people have to the land in this region.



Thank You

Collective Management

The link between feminist principles and violence against women and children is historically bound, as is the principle of collective management structures. To this end Rosie's Place continues to be managed by a collective, comprising of women in the community who have devoted hours of support to the ongoing running of the service.

On behalf of all the staff at Rosie's Place we wish to thank the following collective members who have contributed so much to the organisation over the past year. Their wisdom in regards to the challenges of working both as a community based organisation but also in the child protection field has been greatly appreciated. Their ongoing advice and availability are truly valued and remain integral to the ongoing work of the service.

The Team

The strength of Rosie's Place has always been entwined in the highly skilled professional and dedicated staff.

It would not be an overstatement to say that in the past year the wealth of innovative, respectful and proudly held work practices of this organisation could not have occurred without our staff. We recognise their names below as a small but inspiring team that would be the envy of any organisation in this field.

The Students

This year we have had the pleasure of having hard working and dedicated students join our team. The students were all studying Social Work.

We are very grateful for the contributions of the students as much of our work would not be possible without them. We also wish to acknowledge Ben Thompson and My Gago who supervise the students. We know they are all very grateful for their ongoing commitment to their education.

Alison Becroft
Debra Coulson
Krystal Evans
Marnel LaGarde
Pauline McRae
Robyn Pearson
Frances Pegrem
Dilsat Seyis
Deborah Spence

Danielle Bragg
Maggie Escartin
My Gago
Linda Marsonet
Nicole Miller
Rebeca Nassif
Aidan Palacios
Josene Perri
Ben Thompson
Rachel Tozer
Sarah Tracy
Catherine Want

Stephen Hare
Jessica Pasco
Veronika Poljak



Year in Review

Referrals, intake and counselling pathways

The ongoing referrals to our service requires the team to work collectively in ensuring that we can deliver as prompt response as is possible to families relying on us to support them and work with them.

All members of the team at our relatively small service continually juggle existing caseloads with trying to reach as many people as possible on our waiting list in the shortest possible time.

This has caused us to develop several different channels of initial and ongoing service delivery which includes:

An intake position which is held primarily by one worker and at times shared when demand is high. The worker/s in that position takes responsibility for all new referrals to the service, contacting the referrer to gain as much information as possible about the person and family being referred, the current concerns held, and the degree of urgency those concerns warrant. It is also important to establish current supports available to the child, young person and family and, if possible, if those existing supports can “hold” a family until they can attend our service. Following that initial intake assessment a decision is made as to the level of priority for a response by our service and the referral is then taken to a team meeting for allocation.

The time and amount of work undertaken in this intake role is high but the ongoing outcomes in terms of assessing immediate needs and risks, gaining valuable information and developing collaborative practice between services is indeed valuable to overall service delivery.

Initial meetings with children, young people and families by a counsellor who may not necessarily continue ongoing work with the client/s, continues this process of initial assessment and clarification of needs, stressors and strengths but at this stage, the engagement is directly with the family. It may be that after this initial meeting the ongoing work is quite short term and therefore the initial counsellor will continue. There may also be times when an initial meeting and discussion of the concerns held does not need follow-up counselling, the family and counsellor agreeing that at this stage ongoing work at this tertiary level is not necessary. Current supports, including other services and workers already involved with the family, may be consulted with and are able to continue the existing work. However it is always emphasised to the family that should further concerns arise they are able to have immediate contact with the counsellor at the service.

Group work is an ongoing part of service delivery and has many benefits, especially in enabling people struggling with similar concerns to meet together and share their experiences. For children, young people and families who have reached a stage in their work at the service where they are in a place of safety and wellbeing, participation in groups provides ongoing connection with the service but at a different level of interaction. This freeing up of counselling spaces enables new referrals to be responded to.

The team endeavours to facilitate at least one (usually 2-3 groups) per school term. The groups are usually co-facilitated by two counseling members of the team but groups have also been successfully

co-facilitated by one member of staff and a social work student who is on placement at the service. Our groups for children would not be possible without the dedication given by our contracted group worker, Maggie Escartin, who with endless energy, creativity, imagination, joy and enthusiasm, brings a depth of knowledge and skill into our group space.

Groups held this past year include:

- Group work for children including Mighty Me, Lego group, Master Chef.
- Group work for parents including The Lullaby group, Supported Playgroup and The Incredible Years.
- Young women’s group including a music therapy group.
- Young men’s consultation group regarding their experiences of living with domestic and family violence.

For this year Rosie’s Place worked in partnership with Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy who facilitated two successful Lullaby groups with mothers and an ongoing music therapy group for young women.

Group work is one of the strengths of our service delivery and has also been recognised in the literature as being an important intervention for people subjected to violence in tackling the legacies of isolation, secrecy, fear and self-blame. Offering group work in parallel with counselling for families is seen as good practice.



Professional development and consultation

Members of the team continue to provide training and professional supervision to workers in the field of interpersonal violence. In this work we are strongly supported by the Education Centre Against Violence, NSW Health. We continue to work in close partnership with them, not only providing training across the state but also developing resources and programs. Words cannot express our gratitude to this amazing organisation and Rosie's Place remains committed to ongoing work for them and with them.

The training provided by staff at Rosie's Place during this past year has included:

- Two forums for school counsellors in regard to responding to children under 10 displaying problematic or harmful sexual behavior.

- A further forum through School Link regarding children displaying problematic or harmful sexual behaviour.
- Two workshops for LEAD regarding children displaying problematic or harmful sexual behavior and group work with mothers and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence.
- Ben Thompson presented a paper at a South Coast conference regarding children who experience domestic and family violence.

The staff at Rosie's Place provide consultation on a daily basis to other workers and services in the field who seek advice or information regarding sexual abuse and/or domestic violence.

Workers have also attended inter-agency meetings, and provided in-house training to several organisations including family support services, school counsellors and domestic violence workers.



Ongoing partnership with Domestic Violence Service Management - ROAR

Our partnership with DVSM-ROAR continued this past year and the following is a summary of the work undertaken during this past financial year.

Counselling referrals and ongoing work:

- During this year, 47 families were referred to the service for counselling.
- The total number of clients seen within those families included: 33 mothers, 1 father and 45 children and young people.
- Counselling referrals received immediate priority and were not placed on our waiting list.
- Counselling sessions involved individual counselling with mothers and children separately, as well as joint counselling sessions.

Crisis responses:

- Workers at Rosie's Place responded to several crises that occurred, including mothers struggling with concerning behaviours from their children, including aggression, problematic or harmful sexual behaviour and unexpected contact by the perpetrator with the family which raised fears and safety concerns for both mothers and children.

Group work with children and mothers:

- Children and young people who were initially referred by DVSM-ROAR were invited to participate in all groups held at Rosie's Place and 8 children and young people attended.
- Two groups for mothers (Supported Playgroups) were held at Pam's Place during this last year.
- A mother's group (Lullaby group) was held over two terms at Rosie's Place and was attended by four mothers who referred by DVSM-ROAR, two of the mothers are now living independently.
- A consultation group for boys and young men was held over 8 weeks at the service and two boys were referred by DVSM-ROAR who were now living with their families in the community.

Although initially tentative, mothers from migrant and refugee backgrounds who were concerned especially about the language barriers, did engage with the counsellors and most have maintained ongoing contact, even families who have since left the area. They also stated that they found that coming to the service enabled them to feel safe to not only to talk about their fears and worries, but to also be able to leave those conversations behind when they left the service after counselling.

The ebb and flow of counselling for families "leaving" domestic and family violence is mirrored in the rhythm of the counselling process with many families initially engaging, ceasing contact for several weeks or even months, and then re-engaging when new struggles and uncertainties arise.



Year in Review Cont.

Resources

Rosie's Place has always maintained a commitment to developing resources for both families and also workers in the field.

In this last year, the service has finalised two resources which include:

- True Colours: Group work with women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence.

This resource was developed within a contract from Parramatta-Holroyd Family Support Service. Co-facilitating two groups at Parramatta-Holroyd Family Support Service, the creation of a group work manual and training through LEAD was part of the contracted work.

- The Heart of the Matter
This resource is almost at printing stage at the time of writing this report. Funding for this work by DVSM enabled our service to produce a resource for workers when responding to women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence.

Rosie's Place extends our heartfelt thanks to both Parramatta-Holroyd Family Support service and DVSM for their belief in what we could do and their patience. Resource development is always in addition to our core business but we believe that it is a critical part of an ongoing contribution to workforce development.

Although our timeline for completion of our resources extends beyond the initial timeline, it would not be possible for anything to be completed without the collective contribution made by all members of the team. In particular, the quality of the final produce would not be at all possible without the genius, patience and "in kind" time given by our graphic designer, Josene Perri.

The resource, 'Finding A Way', which was completed and distributed last financial year, has been received within the sector with high praise. That resource is now a key part of ongoing training provided by the Education Centre Against Violence.

A year of learning for the team

Towards the end of 2018 our service, with several others, submitted an Expression of Interest to DVSM regarding the opportunity to receive consultation sessions with Alan Wade who is well known for his work in Response Based Practice. As a successful participant in this project all members of the team have gained so much from the monthly two hour consultation sessions which were skyped in by the miracle of technology and the skills of Geoff Hazell from DVSM.

Prior to this the team also attended a two day workshop presented by Alan Wade and Linda Coates, again sponsored by DVSM. This experience gave us as a small NGO an opportunity to reflect on our practice and further capture the knowledge so generously given by Alan Wade and Linda Coates.

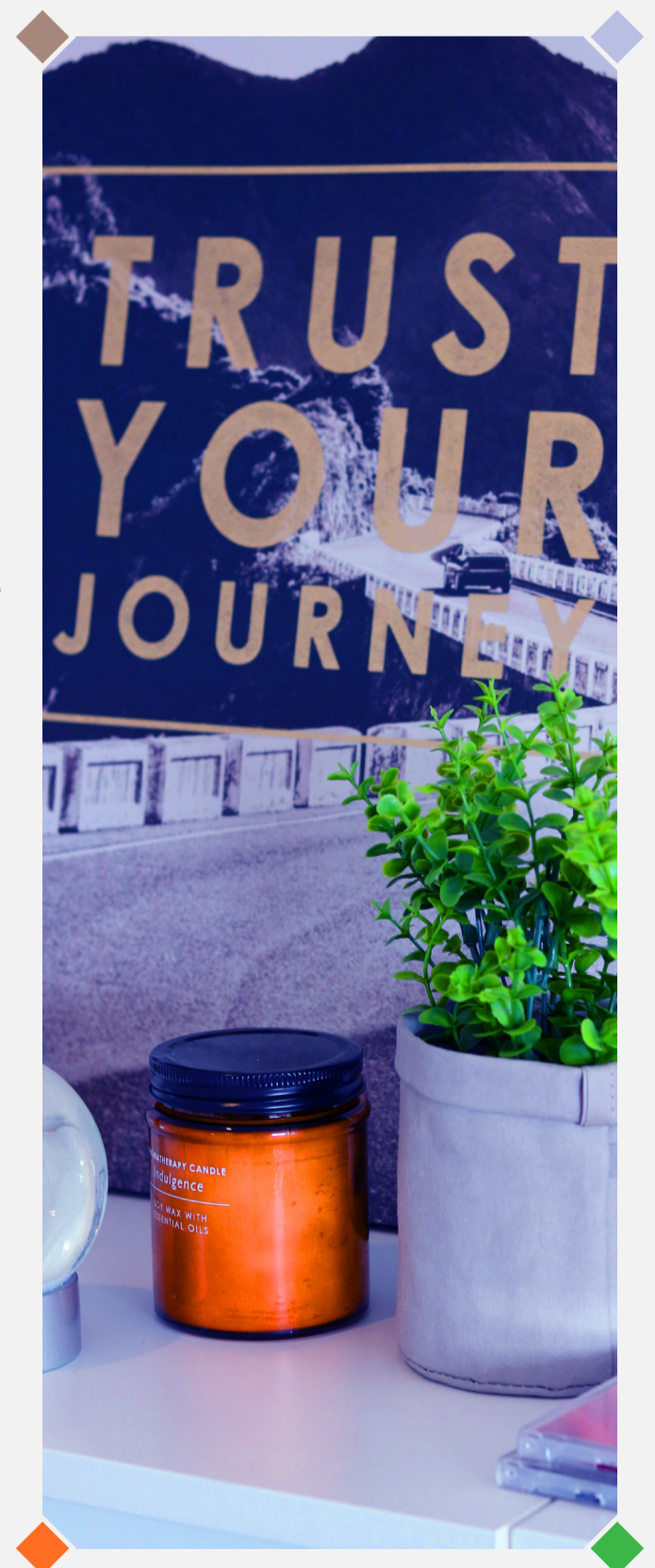
I also wish to state our heartfelt thanks to Sal Dennis for enabling us to have such a learning experience that has made a huge mark on our current practice and future

A Final Say

Rosie's Place is a relatively small organisation in comparison to the depth and breadth of practice that is being delivered across the service sector.

Our ongoing reputation as a service of high regard is due to two clear reasons:

- The people we welcome into our service, and with whom we are privileged to listen to, as they share their stories of the violence they have been subjected to, and their responses to this harm which included so many acts of resistance.
- The workers who form our small team and represent everyday the commitment, ethics and standards of practice that Rosie's Place expects so, as to uphold the dignity of the people who we meet with.



New Publications

The Heart of the Matter

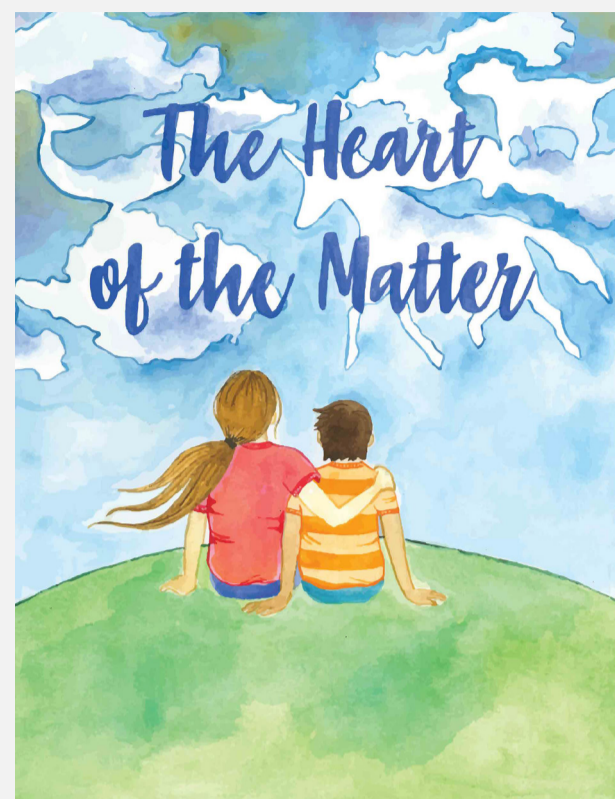
In 2018, Rosie's Place approached Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM) with an idea for developing a resource for workers who are working with women and children who are responding to violence and abuse.

With little more than a one-page blurb of what the resource entailed, DVSM took a leap of faith and funded the initiation of this project. The result after many hours of writing, illustrating and designing is the beautiful new resource, The Heart of the Matter.

The purpose of this book is to join the wisdom that is evidenced from both

literature and practice, regarding ways of working with women and children who are responding to violence and abuse.

The book is seen as complementing what services and workers are already doing but is situated within a socio-political understanding, not only of interpersonal violence, but also the varying responses to that violence by women and children which can add to (or indeed release them) from their existing struggles of isolation, fear, responsibility and powerlessness.



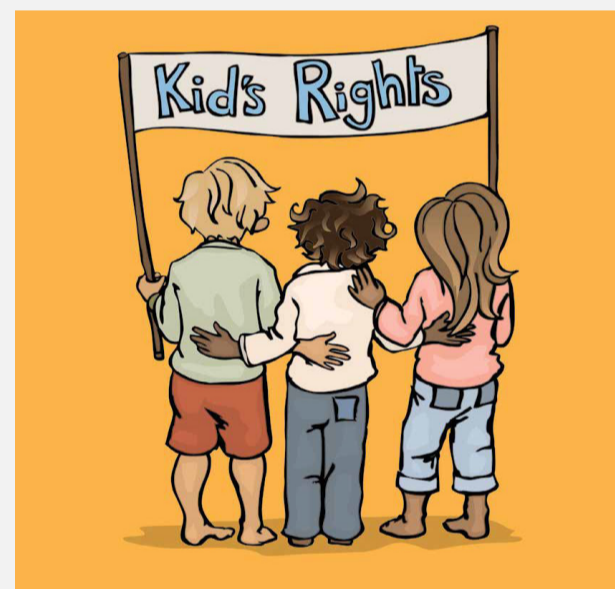
It Matters

Many years ago, Rosie's Place contracted an illustrator, Elizabeth Botte, to create some illustrations for us based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child. Recently we printed, It Matters – Children's rights to safety, care and dignity, with those gorgeous illustrations.

The purpose of this book is to uphold the rights of children and especially their rights to safety, care and dignity. Our hope is that this book encourages

conversations between children and adults, as well as between children themselves, that who they are and how they are treated matters.

This book is just the start of a Children's Rights kit that Rosie's Place will develop in the future and will further expand on the rights of children and be more interactive for kids.



True Colours

In 2018 we had a partnership with Parramatta Holroyd Family Support to create a group work resource for workers, who are working with mothers and children who have experienced domestic and family violence. The result was the True Colours publication.

In responding to women subjected to domestic and family violence, group work has been held as an effective mode of practice amidst the myriad of interventions that include crisis support, safety and protection, counselling, advocacy, and linkages to practical support offered by housing, legal, and financial agencies.

In bringing together women forced into the secrecy and isolation surrounding domestic and family violence, group work immediately challenges those legacies. Effective group work seeks to provide a safe space where participants can come together, share their stories, be listened to, validated and supported.

This resource focuses on group work with mothers who have lived with domestic and family violence.

TRUE COLOURS

Group work with mothers and children who have experienced domestic and family violence



Rosie's Library Launch

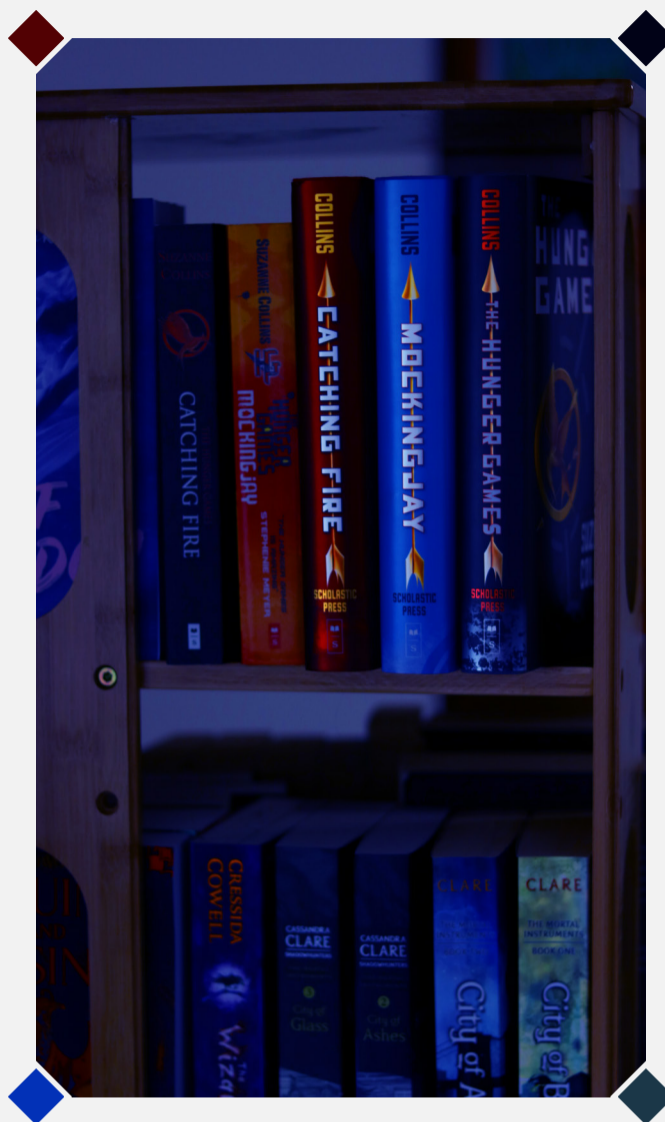
From ACU students; Nicole, Lauren and Kaylah

Rosie's Place recently celebrated the opening of their fantastic new library as a result of receiving a large donation of books from Dymocks. Rebeca led a team which consisted of staff from Rosie's Place and students from UNSW and ACU, to produce a special event to celebrate the launch of Rosie's Library.

Children and carers who attend Rosie's Place were invited to participate in the library launch and join in on the fun. The library launch had many creative stations for the children to explore, such as; decorating library bags, superhero masks, bookmarks, cupcakes and making their own badges. But of course, the cupcake decorating and surprisingly the badge-making were the most popular activities. The carers were able to join in on the excitement and assist the little artists or choose to create a memento book for each of their children.

The five children who attended Rosie's Library Launch loved the day and said that the library would help them learn new words, read books they have never read before and sit in comfort whilst they explore new worlds that the books offer. Due to the success and appreciation expressed by the children and their carers for Rosie's Library Launch, Rosie's Place now hopes to hold another library launch event to include all children who were unable to attend the day.

ACU students Nicole, Kaylah and Lauren feel privileged to be part of the planning for such a special event, and even more fortunate to participate in the Launch, itself. It is clear that Rosie's Library will be incredibly beneficial for children who attend Rosie's Place as it is a new and safe sanctuary that offers the opportunity for the children and young people to learn, grow and relax.

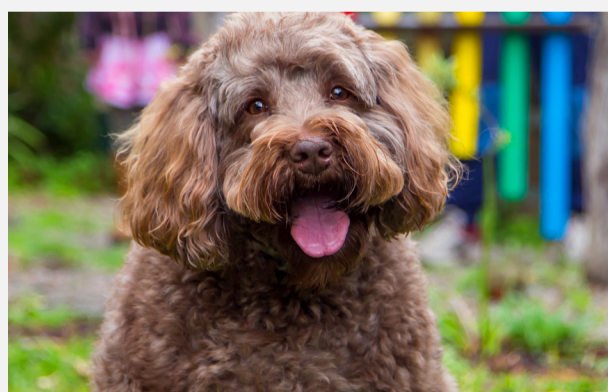


Therapy Dogs

Our beautiful Buffy turned 8 this year and continues to be the best worker we have ever had. Over the past eight years she has provided children, young people, parents and workers with so much unconditional love, hugs as well as many, many licks. Buffy has an amazing ability to know who needs her and will stay next to them during their visit. She loves welcoming every single visitor to Rosie's Place and especially loves it when children come and play with her. She is an amazing, special dog and has won hearts all over Western Sydney.

This year she had to have major surgery on her knee, luckily, she has bounced back well and is getting her strength back. However, we have also recognised her age and know she has her limits, so it was decided Buffy will slowly retire and only come into Rosie's on special occasions.

Her friend and stablemate Ruby often comes in with Buffy for the day, Ruby is also very popular with the kids. She too will retire alongside Buffy and only visit occasionally.



DVSM Partnership

Partnering with other NGO's and community-based organisations is highly valued by Rosie's Place. We see strength in collaborating skills and resources to provide respectful and quality service to the clients of our community.

Rosie's Place has a partnership with a Women and Children's refuge, DVSM ROAR, in our local government area. We appreciate and value our partnership and provide counselling to the women and their children, as well as groups to mums and/or their children. Rosie's Place strives to practice respectfully, and to continually uphold women and children's dignity and their acts of resistance in their response to violence. We look forward to the wonderful work this partnership can promote in the year to come.

South Coast Conference



Rosie's Place was asked to present a workshop at the annual South Coast Child Wellbeing Network (SCCWN) Conference at Kiama. The conference was titled See Me, Hear Me, Walk with Me; Considering the rights of a Child in Our Work. My Gago and Ben Thompson co-presented the workshop with the assistance of Jess Pasco. The title of the workshop was I Wish for a Rainbow after our publication by the same title.

The workshop focused on why Rosie's Place sees children, how we listen to children, how we respond to what children share with us, how we walk alongside them and how we advocate for their rights. We presented on the frameworks and principles of practice that guide our work with children, as well as practical methods we use (including group work, consultation groups and utilising our publications) to listen and respond to children.

The aim of the presentation was two-fold. Firstly, to highlight the importance of professional practice being centred on the rights of children and the responsibility of adults, services and governments to uphold the rights of children. Secondly, to share the ideas and knowledge Rosie's Place (including children and families) have to not only uphold the rights of children but to advocate for their rights and dignity when required.

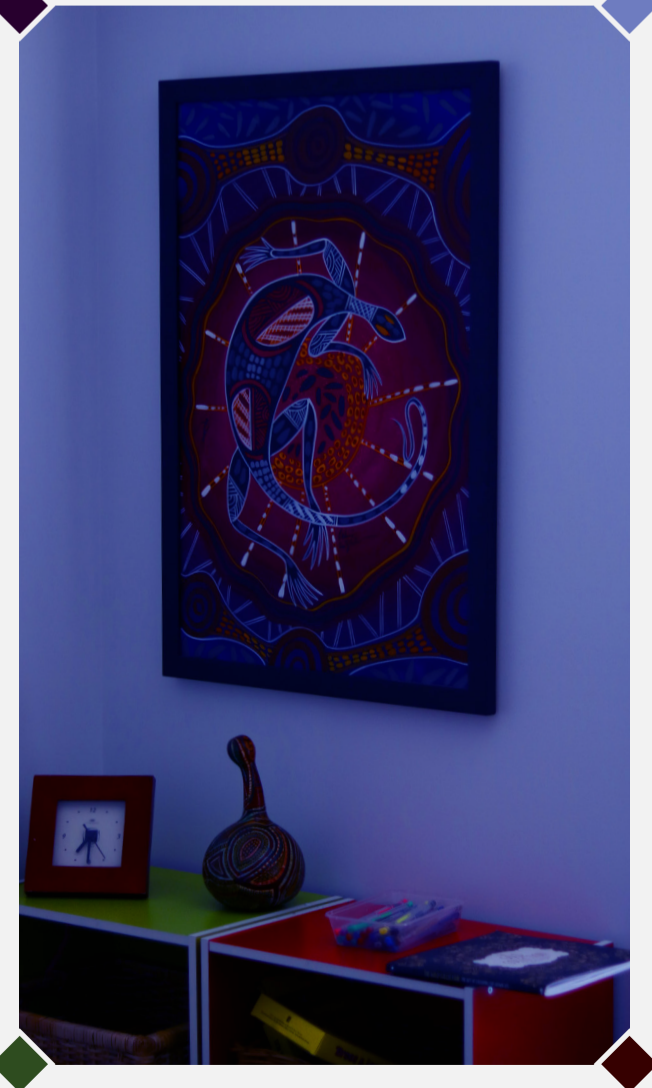
Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The work Rosie's Place has been doing in the area of PHSB has continually evolved over the past decade. In the past financial year, Rosie's Place has seen an increase in the number of referrals and phone consultations for children under 10 with PHSB. The reasons for this are that the broader community is responding differently to these behaviours and Rosie's Place, by the hard work from Cathy Want, has been at the forefront of workforce capability development in our local area and across NSW. Cathy/Rosie's Place has been delivering training to school counsellors and other service providers in Western Sydney and Cathy has been training on this topic with ECAV across the state of NSW.

The referrals, enquiries and requests for consultation have come from schools (Counsellors and Principals), FaCS, parents, carers and OOHC providers with the majority of children and their families being located in Western Sydney

(Blacktown, Penrith and Hawkesbury LGAs) with some phone consultations coming from as far as Newcastle and Wagga Wagga. In order to ensure the child and family are responded to appropriately, timely and respectfully we have refined our intake and practice models. At intake we assess whether or not the child or family requires a referral to Rosie's Place and if not who is best placed to respond to the behaviour. We are currently in the process of developing a practice model that is centred on the principles of Response Based Practice.

The essence of this new practice model is to ensure that our work is dignifying to the children and families that we work for. In the coming financial year, we plan to consult with Allan Wade and Shelley Bonnah from the Centre of RBP to help us develop our practice framework. We also plan to develop resources to support the community to assess and respond to the behaviours.



Groups

Lullaby Group



Music is a wonderful medium for mothers to connect and attune to their children and their cues. We had the pleasure of partnering again with music therapist Chanelle Henderson from Nordoff Robbins and were able to give 5 mums the opportunity to participate in the Lullaby Group.

The mums connected with each other as individuals and as mothers, and created safety for one another within the group. They shared stories about their children, and of their own childhoods, and how music appeared in their own narratives, and shared the music and melodies they were familiar with which held a special place in their hearts.

Chanelle supported the mums to express themselves through writing and to write a message to their children, which Chanelle then created into lyrics and attached a melody to the song. The mums participated in this music writing process the entire time.

It was such an honour and pleasure to have the opportunity to support the facilitation of this group, and to be privy to the connections the mums made with one another and to hear the stories they so generously shared. The lullabies they created for their children were so special and we hope we can have the opportunity to run this group at Rosie's Place again.

Mums and children connecting through play

Research has informed that children learn and gain a sense of themselves and how they fit into the world around them through play. Rosie's Place was invited to run a group on-site at DVSM ROAR for women and children residing at the refuge.

Safety for the women and children who attended the group was paramount and a big focus when creating the plan for the group. We wanted to provide mums the space and time to connect with their children through play. We consulted with the participants around theirs and their children's interests to identify common themes which we were then able to deliver throughout the weekly group sessions.

The group consisted of mums and children of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We noticed the play-based activities broke through the language barrier. Week by week, we observed more smiles, laughter and conversations occurring. We were witness to the children learning how to be together in the same space and to interact and engage in play, with their mums guidance, and the increased interactions between mums and their children as they worked together to complete the activities.

The mums expressed they enjoyed attending the group and commented that

it gave them different ideas of activities to do with their children outside of the group. The group allowed a space for the mums and the children to connect and bond.



Young Women's Music Group

Several young women were given an opportunity to attend a unique group which was hosted at Rosie's Place and delivered by Chanelle from Nordoff Robbins. The group focused on the importance of music within young people's lives, gave them an opportunity to explore different genres of music and discuss the significance of lyrics in songs that were meaningful for them. The young women also wrote their own lyrics as part of the group and, with the help of Chanelle's musical talents, were given a chance to put those lyrics to music and record the finished product.

For one young woman, this group sparked a love for music that she had not connected with in some time. She went out and bought herself a guitar and is now teaching herself how to play. For others, this group gave them a space to relate to music with their peers and explore how music has supported and helped them over the years.

A big thank you to Nordoff Robbins for partnering with Rosie's Place to deliver such a worthwhile group.

Consultation and social group with boys who have lived in DV

The consultation was made possible by a grant from Westpac. The purpose of the consultation was to learn from boys, aged between 8-14yrs, about their experiences, ideas, responses and resistance to the domestic violence they were subjected to. The information shared by the boys will be used to improve service delivery from Rosie's Place and other service providers. The consultation phase of the project started in term 4 2018 and concluded in term 1 2019. The group consisted of 6 boys and a number of facilitators from Rosie's Place. The facilitators included Aidan Palacios, Stephen Hare and Ben Thompson.

Each group meeting consisted of a consultation component and a social component. The social component often involved food, chatting, playing Uno and a serious but fun game of handball. The information the boys shared was invaluable and it can be separated into two streams with several themes. The two streams are how the boys responded to the violence and how others, who knew or didn't know about the violence, responded to the boys when they were

living in the violence. The themes within the first stream were that the violence was deliberate and intentional, the boys responded to the violence by protecting themselves, their mothers, siblings and pets and that they hold a position that the violence was never ok. The themes within the second stream were that the boys were comfortable with people knowing about the violence and asking them about the violence, they didn't want to be forced to talk about the violence, they wanted to be treated with respect and dignity. They wanted to be listened to and they wanted others to know that the violence created challenges for them and their family, many services were helpful and some were not helpful and they liked being able to meet with other boys who have been through a similar thing as they don't judge each other. The 6 boys were extremely generous in providing clear and detailed information and they were gracious and patient teachers who were always respectful of each other. Rosie's Place is very thankful to the boys for their contributions and respectful involvement in the consultation phase of the project.

During the consultation phase, the boys articulated they would like an ongoing social group with the boys from the group. This came to fruition in the form of a bowling outing and the Rosie's Place Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Musical event. The boys have also expressed that they want to continue the social group. A social activity is being planned for later this year. The next stage of the project involves collating the information and designing a way to share the information with the broader community.



Worries Group

“Blowing the fears away. The tree with brave ideas.”

A group for young girls was held during school term 3 and ran for four weeks. The aim of the group was to support the young girls to identify their safe places and safe people and to use creative tools to hold their worries. Each week the group started off with afternoon tea where the girls were able to share what has happened for them during the week, building on their social skills. Over the four weeks the girls played games, created their own trees, decorated pillows, made dream catchers and worry dolls.

The group received great feedback from the girls and their families. At the end of each session they would talk about what they enjoyed most and what they look forward to creating the next week. The girls were respectful of each other and were willing to lend a helping hand. On the last week the group had a pizza party. When asked about the good things about the group, the girls said, 'arts and crafts' and 'food'. The girls were disappointed when the group had to be rescheduled a couple of times as they were excited to catch up

with their friends. At the end of the group the girls expressed that they wanted the group to continue and wanted to come back during the school holidays.

“I like being creative, the dreamcatcher was my favourite part.”
– 7 year old client

“I always hug the pillow I decorated. It's so soft.”
– 11 year old client

“It was fun teaching the other girls some games I like to play at school.”

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Musical

Rosie's Place received many donations in 2018/2019 towards this excursion, to take many of our clients to a day out in Sydney to see Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. It was a magical day and every single attendee went home with some wonderful memories. The day would not have been possible without the generosity of many organisations and individual donors. Below is an extract from the letter sent to thank those who donated.

On Wednesday 12th June 2019, 90 kids, young people and Rosie's workers rolled out of Mt Druitt on two Murrays coaches (generously donated by UBS) bound for the Capitol Theatre Sydney. A brief stop for early lunch in Ashfield Park the buses then headed to the theatre where we were all excitedly waiting to watch Charlie and the Chocolate Factory the musical.

As many of the children had not been to see a live performance before they were waiting for the screen to come down and the movie to begin. The orchestra starting to tune up in the pit was the first sign that this was no ordinary film. The theatre went black for about 5 seconds and then the magic started.

It is always difficult to know beforehand what the musical will be like and if it will suit our waiting audience. We were not to be disappointed. The entire show wrapped each and every one of us in imagination and wonderment.

Except for some small moments of sitting restlessness the children were captivated throughout the show, the songs vibrant, the scenes magical and the actors giving everything they could to ensure a breathtaking memory of for all of us to leave with.

As we returned to our meeting place for parents to collect their children we, as the staff, breathed out a sigh of relief that we had not lost one child. As our fellow travelers alighted from the bus and were given their own golden ticket many kept saying it was "The best day ever".

As a small organisation where we work every day hearing the stories of violence and harm that children are subjected to we sometimes forget about the many ways that goodness still exists in this world. We also need to be reminded that the children we see just really want to be children. This special day served to remind us of that and I thank you once again that your spirit of generosity and kindness gave that to us and, most importantly, to them.



"Can we go and see it again?"

"I had the best day ever"

"Charlie was amazing"

"Can I have my own golden ticket?"

"Do you think the candy in the show was real candy?"

"That is the first time I have ever been to a show like that."

