



Annual Report 2020 –2021





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Acknowledgment of Country



Rosie's Place acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land where we work and live, the Darug people of the Darug nation and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We celebrate the stories, culture and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders of all communities who also work and live on this land.

Rosie's Place Funding

Rosie's Place receives its core funding from NSW 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 Dharruk
- UBS Asset Management (Australia) Ltd
- Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Stronger Communities Programme)
- Department of Infrastructure (Community Building Partnership)
- Westpac Foundation
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (Safer Communities)

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.

We wish to acknowledge many of the local services and people who we continue to work closely with. They include: Parramatta Holroyd Family Support, Pam's and Essie's Refuge's, Ed Husic MP, WASH House, Department of Education, & Joint Child Protection Response Program.

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.

Thank You Collective Members of 2020/21

Alison Becroft
Rebecca Brear
Krystal Evans
Marnel Lagarde
Joesph Macleod
Robyn Pearson
Deborah Spence



Assumption - 'Disability' = 'Vulnerability'

'There is an assumption in society that people who have disability are presumed to be more vulnerable than their non-disabled peers. This assumption is based on the stigma that people with disability need daily help, are less able, and they have learning deficits, this thinking holds the person who has disability responsible for their own victimisation to vulnerability.'

(Fitzsimons, 2017)

Taken from Finding A Way - Working with people with intellectual disability impacted by sexual assault.
Rise 360 online training program - Rosie's Place 2020

Rosie's Place Team

The team at Rosie's Place continues to grow and change as new projects are funded and old projects finish up. We continue to be guided by the amazing Cathy Want, whose commitment to the service is always unwavering. Her guidance, wisdom and support of us as a team reminds us of the privilege it is to work together and ensure clients are always at the centre of our work.

The past couple of years we have had several students complete their Social Work placement with us, we thank them for their support of our work and commitment to social justice as a career.

Rosie's Place Team 2019–2021

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

Rosie's Place Students 2019–2021

Carla Berbary
Lauren Calvert
Brett Faggotter
Stephanie Grant
Katrina Williams



“Problematic or harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children or young people is not the totality of who they are, what they think and what they have experienced. They are accountable for what they have done but this is not the only part of them that must be considered when responding.”

**Taken from Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours
Factsheets - Rosie's Place 2020**

Therapy Dogs



Buffy and Ruby the Rosie's Place therapy dogs have still been present as much as they can over the past two years. They do not like lock down and long to be at work playing and interacting with everyone. Buffy turned 10 this year and is still considered everyone's favourite counsellor. Rosie's Place sometimes has clients who return after many years away from the service who might forget their counsellors name but always remember Buffy's name.



Personal Thanks

Rosie's Place is in the unique position of being supported by so many personal and professional connections. All these people have supported the service over the past several years through their fundraising efforts, professional supervision, professional support, advice, and donating their time to support the work of the service.

We thank the following people for their ongoing support of Rosies Place:

Rebecca Brear
Jo Campbell
Isabelle Khoury
Marnel Lagarde
Linda Marsonet
Aneeta Menon
Donna Roese



“As workers, it is important to acknowledge that connection between mothers and their children may be impacted but not destroyed by violence. Even while the violence is happening, bonds between mothers and children can buffer the full weight of the harm and distress and working with mothers and children to identify those bonds and how they can be strengthened is vital to purposeful work.”

Taken from *The Heart of the Matter - A Rosie's Place Publication 2019*

The last couple of years have been challenging for the service in terms of high referrals coming in, tight budget, loss of staff, complicated with the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lock downs. Like all other NGO's we followed the NSW Health advice during the lock downs and all staff worked remotely from home with support for clients being offered via phone calls, face time and Zoom. All our clients were amazing and were able to adjust to this new way of counselling. This way of working whilst challenging has shown us that there are many ways to connect with people who are isolated and support can be provided in a variety of ways. We have been able to run online art groups for children and this has proved successful with children and young people engaging well through Zoom sessions.

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. This year has been particularly hard with many more referrals coming in many with complex needs. 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 including an intake position which is held primarily by two workers (Nicole and My) and at times shared further when demand is high. The workers in that position take 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.

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 and supervision and policy development provided by staff at Rosie's Place during this past year has included:

- Child Protection Unit Westmead team supervision
- SPARKS Child Protection team Newcastle Team supervision
- Individual workers supervision across the sector
- LEAD run training 'The Right to Consent'
- Development of the NSW Health Joint Child Protection Response Program (JCPRP) Policy
- South Health District team supervision
- Consultation to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- Presentation at the ANZATSA Young People and Harmful Sexual Behaviour Symposium 'Context and realities of young children lives for those engaging in problematic or HSB'

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.

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:

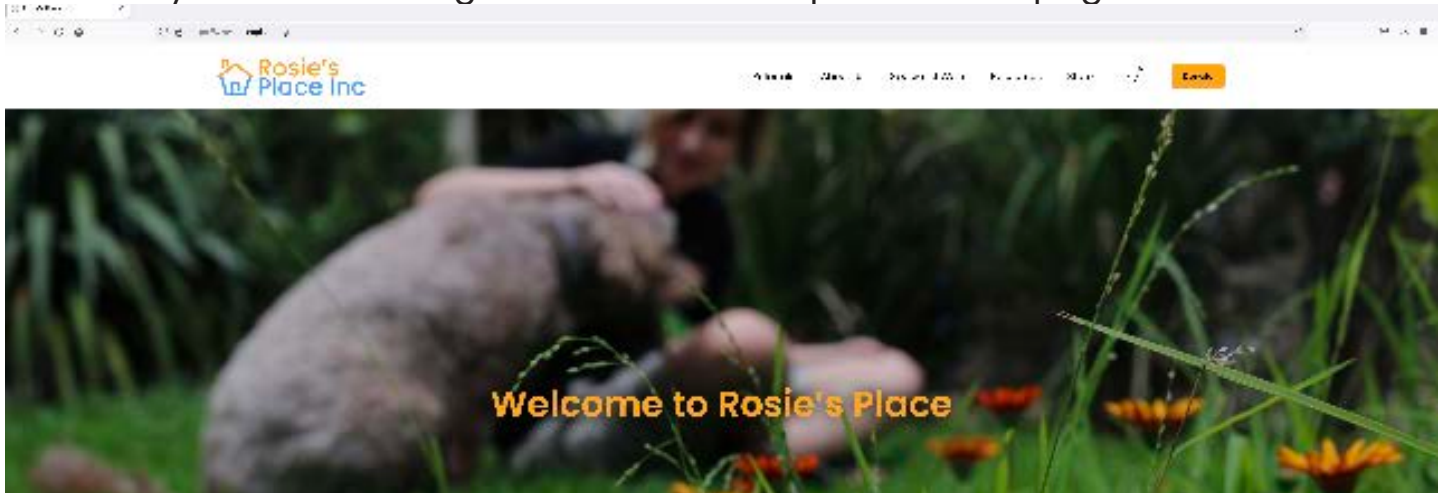
- The people we welcome into our service, and with whom we are privileged to listen to, as they share their stories of the violence they have been subjected to, and their responses to this harm which included so many acts of resistance.
- The workers who form our small team and represent everyday the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

Website and Logo

In 2020 Rosie's Place launched a new website and logo.

The website www.rosiesplace.org.au created using the Squarespace platform has a new easy to use interface and can easily be updated by all staff. The website has a new shop and donate now button and during the past year we have received many donations and many more publications have been purchased than with our previous website. We have a resources page that allows users to download for free some of our old publications that are no longer in print. The website also features the Quick Exit button that allows a user to quickly exit the page if they do not want others around to see what website they are looking at.

Google analytics shows we have on average 500 visitors to our site each week. With many users accessing the resources and publications pages.



The Home page of the Rosie's Place new website www.rosiesplace.org.au



The progression of the Rosie's logo over the past 30 years

The Rosie's Place logo was also refreshed in 2020. The new logo has maintained the house theme but is presented in a modern flat design which makes it easier to use on documents and can be printed on a variety of surfaces easily. The original logo drawn by a young man encapsulated Rosie's Place with its bright colours and welcoming house design.

In 2017 the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that sexual assault and counselling services currently lack the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of people with disability. They also found there are insufficient therapeutic services for children with problematic/harmful sexual behaviour with intellectual disability.

In 2019 the Education Centre Against Violence contracted Rosie's Place to develop and implement the Sexual Assault Service and New Street Access Strategy for People with Disability. This included training, and resource development. The project's training package shifted focus as COVID-19 impacted face to face work. It was ultimately decided that the training package would be created online using the Articulate Rise 360 program.

The aim of the workshop was to use co-design methods to connect workers across the service sector and equip them with strategies to work together to identify issues of sexual assault, provide supportive information that is appropriate, and establish effective referral pathways. Looking at best practice interagency responses that support immediate and ongoing safety of people with intellectual disability was explored. Addressing the unique support needs of children and adults with a cognitive impairment, including intellectual disability was also a focus. Collaboration, coordination and communication across the disability, sexual assault and interagency context can improve the necessary continuum of responses for people with intellectual disability across the life span who have experienced sexual harm. The end result is the Finding A Way training package to support workers across the disability and sexual assault fields created using the Articulate RISE 360 platform. This training package will be available on the Rosie's website soon.



“People with a disability should not be assumed to lack decision making capacity because they require assistance from other people to make decisions.”










Department of Human Services Victoria (2012)

We should always start by assuming capacity when working with people with intellectual disabilities. This assumption is a good starting point when discussing capacity and address any factors that may influence decisions being made.

Taken from Finding A Way - Working with people with intellectual disability impacted by sexual assault. Rise 360 online training program - Rosie's Place 2020

The second part of the contract was to develop Easy English fact sheets for children, young people and adults with intellectual disability who have been impacted by sexual assault. To do this work we reviewed existing resources and their suitability for clients, we were able to identify gaps in existing resources and consultations with relevant stakeholders and people with disability around the development of fact sheets and resources were held.

Some feedback we received from people with disability (PWD) regarding their experiences

-  Workers did not listen to them/ understand them when they made disclosures of sexual assault, including not being believed.
-  They have had some bad experiences with police and workers regarding their disclosures of sexual assault. Including not being believed.
-  They were told no information about what would happen next after a disclosure was given.
-  When given information they could not understand. None of the information any PWD received was in a easy to read format.
-  When they had a good worker they felt supported. A good worker was the very important to them. But often the worker moved on and they then had to retell their story.
-  Some clients felt very upset when her workers moved. One client thought the worker was her friend. Feedback was there should always be clear boundaries and information sharing between workers and clients.
-  They stated they did not feel all the people around them helped them.
-  Some clients had to tell multiple workers about an assault before they were understood or believed.
-  Clients want easy information that helps them and also helps their worker understand them.

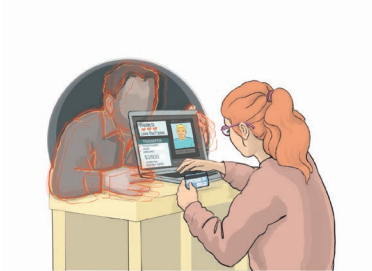
The end result of this resource development contract was the creation of eight easy to read and understand information sheets. These resources can be used by workers to support both young people and adults with intellectual disability who have been impacted by sexual assault. The information sheets will be available on the Rosie's Place website soon. The following page shows an example of one page of an easy English information sheet.

Being Safe Online Information Sheet (page 2 of 6)



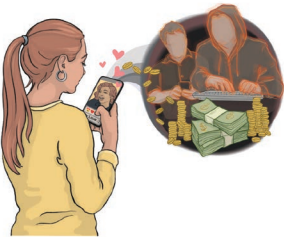
Dating

You can meet new people on a dating site
This can be good



BUT

Sometimes they say things that are not true
Like they do not use their real name
They send you a photo that is not real



They may ask you for money
They may say things that make you feel bad
They may ask you to send them a photo of yourself



They may show your photo with no clothes on to other people



If you do not feel safe what can you do

STOP close your computer
Tell someone you know and trust

In 2019 we worked in partnership with the Education Centre Against Violence for a contract offered by the NSW Ministry of Health regarding responding to children and young people who display problematic or harmful sexual behaviours (PHSB). The aim of the project was derived from the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The core work was to build the capacity and confidence of children and young people, parents, carers and professionals in preventing, identifying and responding (including help-seeking) to children and young people with PHSB.

Similar to the disability project the project involved activities that were undertaken to meet the key objectives of the project:

- Consultations with stakeholders
- Family focused consultations
- Evidence review of resources: A literature review of both international and national research and practice in responding to children and young people displaying problematic or harmful sexual behaviour was undertaken in the form of a Rapid Evidence Assessment.
- Development of information sheets for workers and parents responding to concerning sexual behaviours of children and young people.

Over the course of the consultations with workers one of the most consistent themes raised was the caution held by workers when responding to children and young people, due to a sense of lacking knowledge, skills and confidence. This was evident for both early responders and workers sitting in tertiary level services. Further to this was a lack of clarity for some workers as to their role and therefore responsibility when inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour is initially discovered.

Parents stated in consultations that they need a resource (not too detailed or too many words) that increases their knowledge and therefore gives them confidence to have conversations with their children so they can guide their child without “making things worse”.

The literature and resources search undertaken as part of this project identified a monumental amount of information. The ongoing difficulty was what to choose as the most relevant and also most “consumer friendly” material to support workers and parents. It was decided information sheets would be delivered. Specialist workers wanted information sheets that were congruent and sit clearly within their practice framework. The information sheets needed to be balanced to provide both parents/cares and workers relevant information.

The result was 8 information sheets developed by the Rosie’s Place team. These information sheets are yet to be approved by NSW Health and will be available on our website once that process is complete. The following page shows an example of one of the fact sheets.

What We Know

Worker

With so many different thoughts and reactions to the discovery of problematic or harmful sexual behaviour, it is important that workers have some information that can resolve the differing opinions and ensure that everyone knows what are the right and wrong ideas to hold onto. The information below reflects accurate information about children and young people with problematic or sexual behaviours.



Groupwork

Group work has long been recognised and utilised by Rosie's Place as a means of working with children and young people who have been impacted by violence and abuse. Group work by its collective nature, brings immediate understanding to participants that not only have they experienced something horrific by their subjection to violence, but their experience is not unique and they are not alone in the devastating impacts.

Group work moves people from isolation to connection, from secrecy to having a voice, and from shame to grief. Group work supports an emphasis on the importance of solidarity, the sharing of stories, the holding of children and young people's impacts and the gathering of strength.

In the last couple of years with COVID-19 and lockdowns group work at the service has been difficult to start and keep going. We have attempted to run children's, young people's and a grandmother's group without much success. However moving to online group work has proved much more successful. Last year Rosie's was funded by West Tradies club to create a 'Home But not Alone' group for children and parents to work together on activities at home. This year we have successfully managed to support both children and young people in many art-based groups online. This manner of connecting with children and young people has proved most valuable and we will no doubt continue to use this method in the future.



Some samples of the art work completed during the online group work

In 2020 Rosies Place received funding from Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources under the Safer Communities 4 funding stream. This project called 'A Right to Belong' will look at creating an online training package to address racial violence by promoting respect and inclusion for children from migrant and refugee backgrounds living in Greater Western Sydney.

With a community education approach and a childrens rights perspective the program will educate workers and services to increase their skills, knowledge and capacity to respond effectively and in partnership for the needs and rights of children and young people subjected to racial violence and other forms of discrimination and marginalisation.

Parents and carers who require the information, support and guidance in responding to the needs of their children and their ongoing protection and/ accountability in regard to racial violence and discrimination, will also be able to access parts of the training package. The training package will include resources for children and young people who have both experienced and display racial intolerance and/or racial violence.

The program is due for completion in 2022 and will be avialble on our website.

A Right to Belong



“Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudice attitudes, discriminatory behaviours, structural arrangements, and institutional practises that leads to inequalities in groups because of their skin colour, their race, their descent, their national origin, or their ethnic origin.”

Rebecca Wahhorn 2021

488

Number of clients referred to the service in 2020/2021

309

Number of new referrals accepted for counselling

63

Number of clients received specialist support

187

Number of clients received family capacity building supports

44

Number of clients referred to other services



“It Matters that children never feel alone and that there will always be someone there for them.”

Taken from It Matters - A Rosie's Place publication 2019

Me and My Shadow

It follows me everywhere
It sometimes sits on the back of my neck
Sometimes it is in my stomach or my throat
It can give me a big headache
It can make me feel sick

It's like someone sticking pins in my heart
It's like my tongue has gone all the way down to my
stomach and I can't swallow
It sits most of the time as a tiny dot close to my heart
I know it's there...sometimes more than other times

When I'm with my friends or listening to music or
watching a good movie
Or playing with my dog in the backyard
It seems to be gone
But other times when it is quiet or
I am alone in my bed
Or wake up early in the morning
Or hear the doorbell ring or hear the phone
The shadow gets bigger
It's there to remind me that
I still can't get away from the fact

I was sexually abused....
...But shadows can't run in the park
Can't ride a bike down that big hill in our street
Can't eat ice cream
Or drink chocolate milkshakes

Can't enjoy the sun
Or feel a hot water bottle on a cold night
Can't invite friends over
Or be asked to a party
Can't get a prize on assembly
Or read a book
Can't play a game of netball or soccer
Or dance or sing in the school choir

**Shadows are both very real because they feel so real
But then they're not real at all
Shadows are just that
Shadows of what is real
Just like him**

Just a shadow of what a real person should be like.

A Hand to Hold - A Rosie's Place Publication 2003



Rosie's Place Publications

I Have a Counsellor 1998
Adventures in Group Work 1999
I Have a Place 2000
Writing on the Wall 2002
A Hand to Hold 2003
Catch a Falling Star 2003
More Than Words Can Say 2003
Dinosaurs Do Dance 2006
Two Trees 2006
A Child's Guide to Counselling 2006
Seasons of Change 2006
Inside Out 2007
Lovelifa Board Game 2007
SNAPS 2002 and 2009
Swimming Against the Tide 2010
My Place My Story 2011
The Mothering Tree 2011
Navigating the Storm 2011
Their Place Our Story 2012
I Wish for a Rainbow 2012
Balancing the SeeSaw 2014
My Tree and Me 2015
Jelly Beans and Popcorn 2017
Finding A Way Kit 2017
It Just Makes Sense 2018
It Matters 2019
The Heart of the Matter 2019