



Words from the CEO, Paul McDonald

As this issue of Imagine goes to print, the 'Home Stretch' program has finally launched in Victoria. This has been a breakthrough of state significance from the culmination of efforts from Anglicare Victoria and our incredible supporters, but we have more work to do to get this universal. This will ensure hundreds of young people are supported throughout these crucial formative years as young adults – between 18 and 21.

Also in this issue of Imagine, we'll be highlighting the transformative success of the Compass program which will improve the lives of dozens of vulnerable young Australians as well as exploring some of the massive challenges that are often faced by families who are renting in Victoria – in addition to how we're helping these families get through the tough times and thrive.

Thanks for all you do in helping to make this change possible and I hope you enjoy this latest issue of Imagine.



special report



Most significant child welfare reform in a generation

The following is an excerpt from an announcement that Anglicare Victoria sent out in early May. The launch of the 'Home Stretch' program in Victoria was announced after a successful campaign by Anglicare Victoria, our supporters and our partner organisations.

The Victorian Government Minister for Child Protection, Luke Donnellan, has officially launched the 'Home Stretch' program, which will extend support for 250 young people in foster and residential care to the age of 21.

The Victorian Government pledged \$11.6 million to roll out extended care over the next five years, it was pleasing to hear the Minister express interest in universal implementation of the initiative.

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Paul McDonald, CEO of Anglicare Victoria and Chair of the Home Stretch campaign said:

“This could well be the most significant reform in the recent history of child welfare. I commend Minister Donnellan’s commitment to breaking the mould and giving our most vulnerable young people the best start to their adult lives.

“At 18, the State withdraws all formal support to a child; including case workers, counselling services and benefits for foster and kinship carers. It is little wonder 18 to 21-year-olds from out-of-home care have shockingly high rates of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, drug abuse, pregnancies and run-ins with the law.

“Governments in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand have recognised that in the 21st century, age 18 is far too early to “evict” young people into the world of expensive housing, high rents, high unemployment and the need to continue education. I’m pleased the Victorian Government has today followed suit. I urge the other Australian States and Territories to make the same commitment.”

To date, the Tasmanian and South Australian Governments have committed in principle to Home Stretch, with Western Australia promising a variation of the program. The New South Wales and Queensland Governments are yet to commit to the reform.

For further information about how your support has allowed transformative change through the Home Stretch campaign, please visit thehomestretch.org.au

Interview with Kylie, an inspiring Compass program participant

Compass is a new model of support for 200 care leavers in Melbourne’s west, inner north and Bendigo over the next five years. It is providing safe, secure housing along with ongoing support from case workers to help link them with education, training and job opportunities and boost their health and wellbeing. The innovative ‘social-bonds’ funding approach of this program allows Anglicare Victoria to raise much needed funds from values-aligned private or institutional investors. We wanted to share an interview with one inspiring Compass Program participant who has had their life changed for the better.

Tell us about yourself

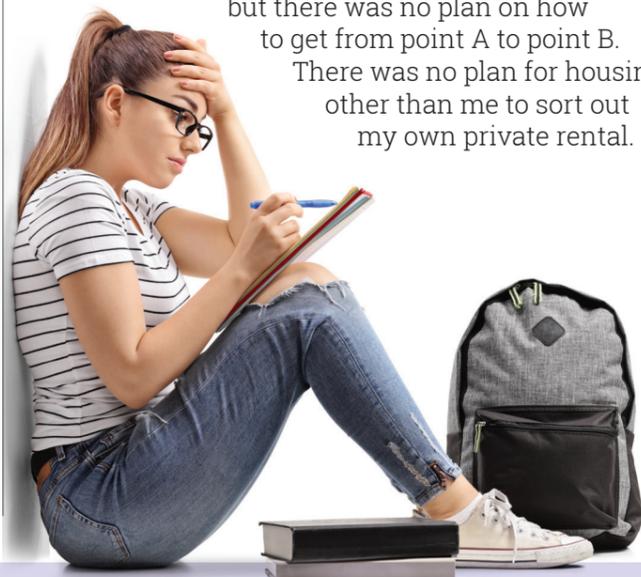
I am in Year 12 and work at McDonalds. I’m going to finish school with a good ATAR and go to university next year. I would like to study law at Monash University.

How long were you in care?

I have been in care since 2011-12 - Foster Care, Kinship Care and a lead tenant placement.

Before getting a place at Compass, how did you feel about leaving the system and what were your plans once you turned 18?

It was so bad, I felt so anxious and scared because there was no plan, nothing there. There was a piece of paper that said what things money could be put towards when I left care, but there was no plan on how to get from point A to point B. There was no plan for housing other than me to sort out my own private rental.



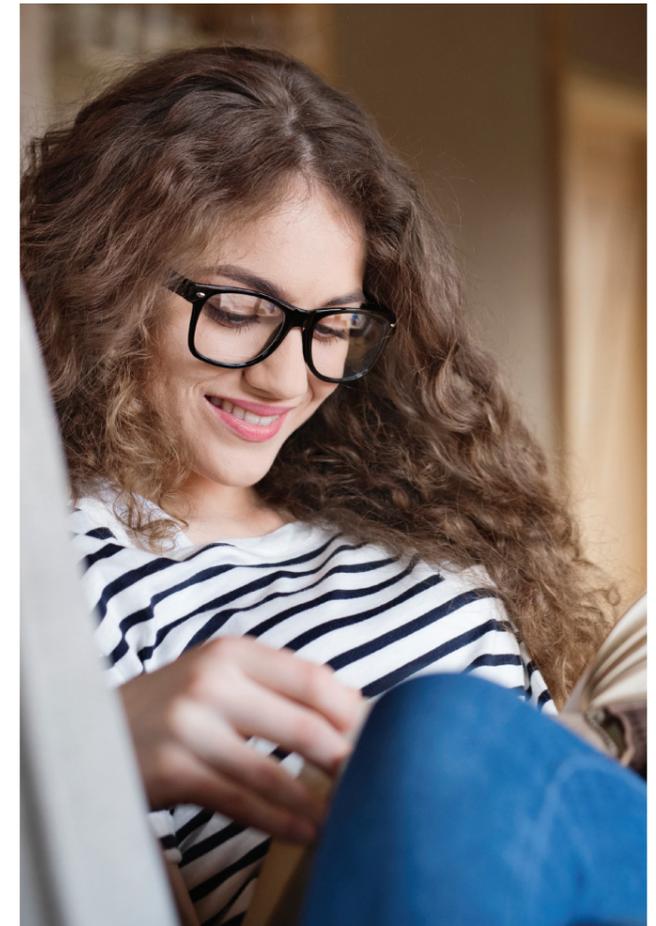
With six weeks to leave care, I felt really alone. I had reached out for help but I was getting the same thing from everyone: they all kept asking if I had found a place to live. I hadn’t turned 18 yet, but it seemed to be all my responsibility.

How did you find out about COMPASS and how has it helped?

I had made a last minute decision to attend a meeting (with COMPASS). I didn’t know what COMPASS was. I left that meeting with a sense of hope that I might not have to live with strangers. I felt safer and looked after. I wasn’t going to be left to handle everything on my own and I would also be able to concentrate on year 12. I think that every person should be given an equal chance at life. Just because some kids start off disadvantaged, everyone should be able to make something of their future.

Is there anything else you want to say?

The key worker model is really good. If I’m having a bad day or I’m stressed, I can just call someone and tell them how I feel instead of just keeping it to myself which is really important. I remember once I had a really good chat with my key worker about school - I explained to him about how I felt I don’t need things or objects, a simple chat and gentle encouragement from my key worker is more than enough. This is the happiest I have ever felt.



THE NEED FOR COMPASS



Homelessness

- 18.5% of homeless adults had been placed in foster care (out-of-home care) at least once before they turned 18. (The 2009–10 Intergenerational Homelessness Survey)



Health

- Between 30 and 45% of care leavers experience poor mental health outcomes, according to studies in both Australia and the UK.



Education

- 53% of care leavers surveyed in the AHURI Report had an educational attainment of Year 10 or below
- Early school leavers are two and a half times more likely to remain permanently disengaged from education, training and work than people who complete Year 12.



Offending

- 34% of young people appearing before the NSW Children’s Court were, or had been, in out-of-home care, and that children in care were 68 times more likely to appear in the Court than other children.



Employment

- 29% of young people aged 15 to 25 who were in care or who had left care were unemployed (CREATE Report Card 2009)

Yes, I will help keep families together.

Donation Option

Please accept my single gift of:

- \$25** can teach skills to parents and support them with positive role models.
- \$50** could send a family to conflict resolution sessions – to help them resolve issues without resorting to violence.
- \$100** could send a family therapist to help in a situation where children are at risk of harm.
- \$ _____ as a donation of my choice

Donations greater than \$2 are tax deductible.

Payment Details

- Cheque/Money Order enclosed**
(made payable to: ANGLICARE VICTORIA)

My details are

Title: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

DOB: _____

Email: _____

My Parish: _____

Please debit my credit card

- VISA MASTERCARD AMEX DINERS

Card Number - - - - / - - - - / - - - - / - - - -

Expiry - - / - -

Card Holder's Name _____

Card Holder's Signature _____

- Please send me information about becoming a regular monthly giver
- Please send me information about leaving a Gift in my Will to Anglicare Victoria
- I have already left a Gift in my Will to Anglicare Victoria

Please post to:

Paul McDonald, CEO of Anglicare Victoria
PO Box 45 Abbotsford VIC 3067

Alternatively you can:

Donate online at www.anglicarevic.org.au
Phone 1800 809 722 to donate

THANK YOU

We value your privacy. Please contact us on 03 9412 6136 to find out how we manage your personal information.



Give children the love and stability they deserve – by helping their families.

Rosie* was 16, and struggling. Her mum and dad had split, and she was now living in a blended family with her mum, step-father and three brothers.

When Rosie's Dad died suddenly, she felt worse than she'd ever felt in her life. She spent hours in her room. There were constant angry arguments in the house.

Rosie said: "I started hurting myself. I just wanted to be with Dad."

It's in family homes like this that your donation today can make a transformative difference.

You'll fund Anglicare Victoria work that helps families manage conflict and teach parenting skills.

Your donation today will help keep children safe.

Rosie's mum Beth, desperately wanted to help her daughter, but she didn't know how. Her twelve-year-old son Daniel was also starting to show worrying behaviour. Beth reached out to Anglicare Victoria.

Rosie and her family took part in family therapy funded by Anglicare Victoria supporters like you. It wasn't easy, but they worked at it and their love helped them overcome their challenges.

Now she is heading for university and a career in criminology. Her mother is relieved and grateful.

"We feel like a family now," says Rosie.

Please donate generously and give more children a safe, stable and positive home life.

Housing woes worsen for Victoria's vulnerable young people

Anglicare Victoria's 2019 Rental Affordability Snapshot (RAS) was conducted as part of the national Snapshot undertaken by Anglicare Australia. The RAS examined how much access people on low incomes have to the private rental market. This important study and others like it wouldn't be possible without the wonderful help of supporters like you.

The following is a powerful story from this snapshot, highlighting how access to suitable, affordable rental housing has become increasingly difficult for people on low incomes in Melbourne and across Victoria.

Joe had the world at his feet. He was working long hours as a security guard and studying a 3D Animation and Communications degree. He and his partner, who worked full time in the medical industry, were expecting their first child together. They enjoyed a comfortable life renting a family home in outer Melbourne.

In 2014, at the age of 28, Joe suffered a debilitating stroke which derailed his work, study and eventually his relationship. As Joe was left largely incapacitated for a time, the family relied heavily on his partner's income; as well as working full time, she was required to manage the household finances and everyday organisation and caring for Joe and their young son.

Joe had recovered enough to work in a limited capacity, but was experiencing post-stroke symptoms including chronic fatigue, unbearable migraines and severe depression as a side effect of his medication. After working in a string of unsuccessful jobs, Joe became suicidal.

After years of their relationship deteriorating, Joe's partner left him at the beginning of 2018 and he

remained in their family rental property. Fines for toll roads and costly utility bills were mounting up and his hot water system had been leaking for months. As Joe legally couldn't prove he had separated from his partner, he wasn't able to access government assistance payments until December 2018. The fines and bills, along with his unaffordable rent, quickly plunged Joe into overwhelming debt.

Joe now has a housemate who helps him afford his rent, but each month is a struggle. When his partner left, he was reliant on his parents to help him afford to continue living where he is. He's looked at moving to a cheaper rental further out of the city, but he desperately wants to stay so he can be close to his son.

"I'm receiving Newstart payments now, but I need to work as I'm completely swamped by debt. Every day I worry my utilities might be cut off, I'll be evicted from my house, or they'll take my driver's licence away. I've been through a lot, but I'm a survivor," he says.

Through a support worker, Joe was referred to Anglicare Victoria's Financial Counselling program which has helped him coordinate payment plans for his outstanding fines, utility bills and overdue rent.

"It's reassuring to know there are ways out of the situation I'm in and I can get help to manage large monthly costs, such as my rent. I'm currently exploring the option of accessing my Super to pay off what I still owe. I'd love to be able to secure a stable job and return to study, but it's difficult to get all my ducks in a row with the debt hanging over my head.

For more information on the 2019 Rental Affordability Snapshot, please check out the link below:

<https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/news/housing-woes-worsen-for-victorias-vulnerable-young-people/>

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED?

How we choose to have our lives celebrated and the legacy we leave for future generations are two things we rarely think about in today's busy world.

While we plan for travel, finances, retirement and other important events – even consulting our families and solicitors if we plan to leave a Gift in our Will to Anglicare Victoria – so few of us realise how easily we can relieve the emotional stress, chaos and demands on those we leave behind.

Ensuring Peace of Mind; My Personal Wishes for Remembrance is a practical booklet, which allows you the space and guidance to record today how you'd like your funeral or memorial service to be.



Jenny Disney, parishioner at St Margaret's, Eltham, explains: "Once you start going to funerals on a regular basis, I think that's the time to think about how you'd like to be remembered."

"I've given away dozens of copies of **Ensuring Peace of Mind; My Personal Wishes for Remembrance** to other parishioners at St Margaret's. It's so well-presented and useful and is the most wonderful 'organiser of ideas' in the one place.

"Having my wishes documented will make things so much easier for family and friends who are grieving, and yet needing to make quick decisions, as it lets them see that this is who and what their loved one wanted."

Request Your FREE Copy Today



Ensuring Peace of Mind; My Personal Wishes for Remembrance is a 40-page booklet which could save some difficult conversations and minimise your loved ones' distress when they most need it – thus, giving you real peace of mind today.

- YES, please send me my FREE copy of Anglicare Victoria's **Ensuring Peace of Mind; My Personal Wishes for Remembrance** today.
- Please also send me further information about leaving a Gift in my Will to Anglicare Victoria.

Full Name: _____

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