14 August 2020

A note to potential donors from McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM and Tania and James Hird

**Who is McAuley Community Services for Women?**

McAuley Community Services for Women support women and their children to be safe from **family violence** by providing 24/7 crisis support and temporary accommodation. The women needing our support have experienced, or are at immediate risk of, serious harm: through physical and emotional violence, threats, sexual assault, and stalking. We work alongside them to plan the steps they need to take to move towards a new life free from violence.

We also provide accommodation and support for women who are **homeless**, many of whom have also experienced family violence. Our McAuley Houses, in Footscray and Ballarat, are welcoming places for rest, recovery and reconnection and **offer women a safe community in which to live while they regain their health and wellbeing.** We support women to rebuild their family and community connections, develop their independent living skills, and begin their journey towards independence.

**Immediate needs of women and children in this fundraising campaign:**

1. **Women who don’t fit neatly into support/funding categories and can therefore not access accommodation because they do not have income or means to pay the minimal rental costs**

Last year, 16% of women who sought assistance from McAuley had no or less than the minimum income.

* 1. **We are currently addressing 3 specific issues impacting 5 women who have a history of Family violence (seeking $20,000 total):**

Case 1 - $5000 for occasional accommodation costs

This would assist a woman who is currently living in her car on a block of land in Melbourne who has past experience of Family violence and now has a disability.

McAuley is currently working on a plan to install a ‘mini’ house on her block to provide safe, permanent accommodation with kitchen and bathroom facilities.

In the meantime, she requires flexible support to accommodate her in motel accommodation once or twice a week; especially in extreme weather conditions so that she can have shelter and attend to her personal needs.

Case 2 - $6000 for the cost of hotel quarantine

A long-term McAuley client with family violence history who has two young adult children and who lives in private rental on a very low income. She has recently travelled to NZ to be with her mother during her dying days and must now pay for hotel quarantine following her return.

Case 3, 4 & 5 - $9000 allowance for personal needs ($3k per woman)

This allowance would provide a year’s support for 3 women currently living in temporary or crisis accommodation provided through McAuley (Due largely to Family violence) but who have no income due to not being permanent residents. Allowances of this nature provide women the ability to pay for personal items without having to ask; affording them a level of dignity and autonomy.

McAuley is providing accommodation & food, utilities at no cost (and with no government funding) as well as supporting applications for residency status.

They are unable to work.

* 1. **Rent Subsidies x 4 properties (seeking $40,000 total):**
  + We have access to two properties in Metropolitan Melbourne that we would like to convert from low cost holiday accommodation to medium term accommodation for women without income. This would require a rent subsidy in excess of **$20,000pa**
  + We have two further options to Head Lease units (one in regional Victoria) – would require a rent subsidy in excess of **$20,000pa**

1. **Chrome Books for Children and Young People’s Tutoring Program (seeking $12,000 total)**

The McAuley Tutoring Program was an initiative started 18 months ago to reconnect children disconnected from school and learning. The program has moved online and requires children to have suitable access to the Google Suite of products via Chrome Books devices.

As families flee dangerous situations and are forced to hide in refuges and motels their connection to school and learning is immediately severed. The tutoring program was designed to help children to see themselves as learners, re-introduce them to supported learning tasks and provide an outlet and a contact to support their wellbeing. Long term, our aim is to help children get back on track with their learning and to grow in confidence and strength as they settle back into school life and emerge from their trauma.

Chrome Books provide us with one of the most cost efficient and manageable accesses to online resources as well as ongoing learning. As families flee family violence, they are often forced to leave resources behind. The emotional benefit to both the mothers and children of getting their education back on foot is immense.

We plan to bridge this gap by supplying:

* A Chrome Book per learner at $400 each (including a carry case and management licence)
* 30 Chrome Books will be required for initial round of support- totalling $12,000

**How would the funds be managed?**

McAuley has set up a fund quarantined to align with this proposed fundraising campaign to ensure all funds donated through the connections of Tania and James Hird will be allocated specifically to the needs itemised in this letter.

EVERY dollar donated will go to the needs of the women and children. **None of the funds will be allocated to administration expenses** (including in the processing of the funds).

**How are donations made?**

Donors are fully tax deductable and can be made via:

1. Credit Card - at <https://www.mcauleycsw.org.au/donation/>

Reference – **T&J Hird Fund** in comments field

1. Bank Transfers - BSB 083004

Account 147632950

Reference – **T&J Hird Fund** and email details of donor & donation amount to **fundraising@mcauleycsw.org.au**

Thankyou. We are so grateful for your interest in our work and in the women and children we support. We hope we can welcome you to one of our events once the lockdown period is over and we can recommence our events program.

Kindest regards

A picture containing drawing

Description automatically generated

Jocelyn Bignold, OAM

CEO