

McAuley

Our impact
2023–24

Help when they need it most

For over 35 years, McAuley Community Services for Women has helped women, children and young people who have faced family violence and homelessness take control of their lives and build a brighter future.

We work at the intersection of family violence, homelessness and mental health, providing 24/7 support 365 days a year, as well as temporary accommodation, independent housing and supported community care.

Of the women and children we support each year most have experienced family violence and the vast majority are at immediate risk of serious harm through physical and emotional violence, threats, sexual assault and stalking.

As the number of women and children who find themselves homeless grows exponentially, so too does the demand for McAuley's unique programs and support services. Today, family violence is the single largest driver of homelessness for women in Victoria.

Services that fit together

Our programs are uniquely holistic, recognising the complexity of the needs and experiences of the individuals we support. We work closely with our partners to provide wraparound care, bringing together health, legal, financial, education, accommodation and recreational responses.

A voice for systemic change

We have a long and proud history of advocating for the removal of systemic barriers that inhibit the ability of women and children to live safely. We challenge the status quo, influencing policy and resourcing for better systemic responses and ensuring the best solutions to help more people, more quickly and comprehensively.

Acknowledgment of Country

McAuley recognises that we live, learn and work on unceded lands. We acknowledge the First Nations Peoples as custodians, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonisation and the disproportionate representation of First Nations women as victim-survivors of family violence.

Acknowledgment of victim-survivors

McAuley pays respect to victim-survivors of family violence and recognises their strength and resilience. We acknowledge the devastating impact that family violence has on individuals, families and the broader community and recognise the courage of those who share their stories. We acknowledge those whose lives have been taken as a result of family violence and pay our respects to their families and loved ones.

Inclusion statement

McAuley celebrates and draws strength from diversity and respects the dignity of all people. We value an inclusive culture where LGBTIQ+ people have the right to be safe.

Contents

A message from our CEO 2
A year of success 4
Those we supported in 2023–24 4
INTEGRATED SERVICES: the right services at the right time 8
- Heywood House – a year in review 8
- McAuley House, a sector leader for women who are homeless 9
- McAuley House Ballarat secures another year of funding 9

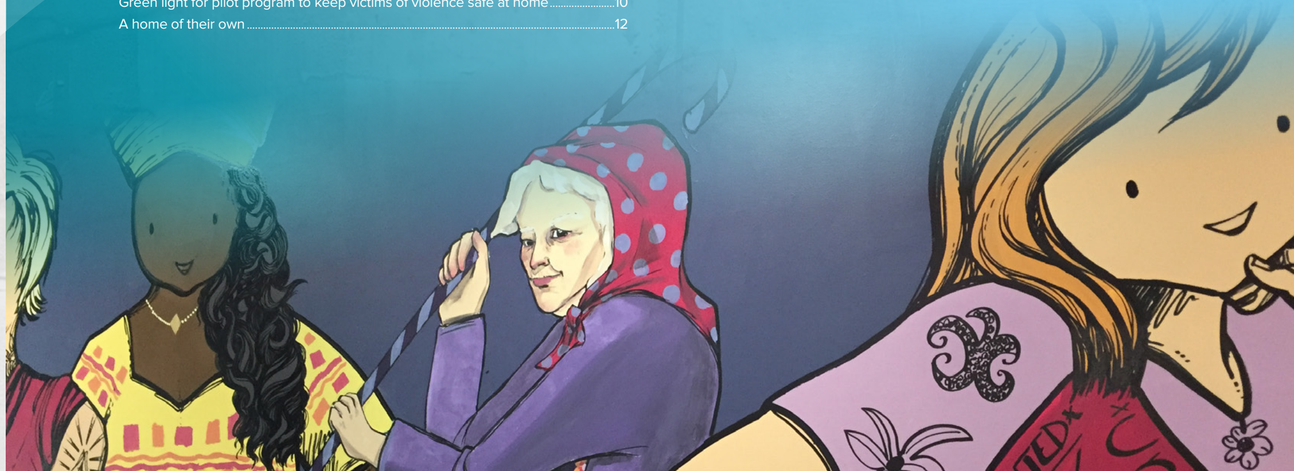
INNOVATIVE RESPONSES: helping more people, more quickly and comprehensively 10
- Green light for pilot program to keep victims of violence safe at home 10
- A home of their own 12

PROACTIVE ADVOCACY: influencing policy and resourcing for better systemic responses 13
- Working with WEstjustice to keep victim-survivors safe at home 13
- Building confidence through community immersion 13

OUR VOLUNTEERS 14
- McAuley's Learning Support Program is changing lives 14
- JB Hi-Fi staff provide a Helping Hand 14

THANK YOU 15

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 16



A message from our CEO



Jocelyn Bignold OAM
Chief Executive Officer
McAuley Community Services for Women

From our earliest days we were troubled by the question of why two damaging and corrosive experiences affecting women – family violence and homelessness – were so inextricably linked. This year, as we celebrated 15 years of McAuley Community Services for Women, we not only celebrated the 13,000 women and children we have supported during the most difficult time in their lives, but also the great progress we have made over this time; understanding the intersecting issues these women face, creating responses that better support them and in challenging the status quo, to bring about real systemic change.

Our dedicated team have worked around the clock, ensuring 24-hour support, 365 days a year. This year, we welcomed 831 women and children who were escaping family violence and homelessness into our services. And we have farewelled many into long-term housing to begin new and sustainable futures for themselves and their families.

Our teams celebrated their own achievements this year. Heywood House, our family violence refuge, marked its first year of operations, cementing practices that have helped to support women and children to be free from violence. While McAuley House Ballarat, our first service outside of Melbourne, celebrated its fifth anniversary and the state government's commitment to another year of funding.

Another highlight was Deloitte Access Economics' review of McAuley House. The report recognised McAuley House as an example of best practice support for vulnerable women. Using this report, we can strengthen our advocacy efforts, showing proof of concept that person-centred, integrated models for women can be effectively implemented and that the McAuley House model could be scaled to improve delivery of integrated care throughout Victoria.

We were particularly proactive in our advocacy efforts this year, contributing a submission to the inquiry into capturing data on family violence perpetrators in Victoria and sponsoring and contributing a number of articles to the Homelessness and Gender edition of Parity magazine – the journal of the Council to Homeless Persons.

Our advocacy continued through our key initiative, Safe at Home. We were encouraged by a seemingly fundamental shift in Australians' mindsets that change around family violence and homelessness is now not only inevitable but essential. As Safe at Home entered its third year of development and co-design, we began work with lived-experience participants and facilitators, including victim-survivors of family violence, frontline workers and people who use violence, to better understand the barriers to collective impact and sustainable change – what works and what doesn't.

We were thrilled when this extraordinary foundation of work culminated in the announcement of over $6 million in State Government funding for a Safe at Home trial in Geelong. Safe at Home will transform the established practice that sees women and children 'escaping' violence to become homeless: instead, supporting them with a rapid response from an integrated multi-disciplinary team, to stay in their home or in their communities safely, while ensuring accountability for the person using violence.

With these great developments underfoot, we have also experienced transformational change here at McAuley. In October, McAuley became part of MacKillop Family Services, forming a single entity under the MacKillop ABN. In most respects it has been business as usual for us, with little visible change in how we go about our day-to-day work. However, behind-the-scenes we have seen our capacity expand with the bolstering of HR, finance, IT and facilities functions to better support our needs and growth. These changes have only strengthened our resolve to continue to provide the best possible outcomes for the women and children in our services and to continue innovating for improved system outcomes around family violence, homelessness and mental health.

This year's achievements, and there have been many, have relied on the vision, enthusiasm and hard work of our teams. We are also incredibly appreciative of the efforts of our supporters, funders and service partners, who support our goal of a safer future for women and children.

As we look toward another big year, the challenges and possible successes that lay ahead, the hills we are yet to climb, it is equally important to stop and take time to think about just how far we have come.



This year's achievements, and there have been many, have relied on the vision, enthusiasm and hard work of our teams. We are also incredibly appreciative of the efforts of our supporters, funders and service partners, who support our goal of a safer future for women and children.

2023



Jul

Launch of McAuley's Peer Support Program

Thanks to a generous grant from Metro Trains, we began developing our Peer Support Program, providing connection and support through shared experiences and knowledge. Peer work fosters mutual support between people with similar lived experience, creating an environment free from judgment to share and receive help. We are excited to add this program of support to our integrated services.

Aug

McAuley celebrated its 15th Anniversary

The month of August marked a significant milestone, celebrating 15 years of McAuley. Together, we celebrated the 13,000 women and children we have supported during one of the most difficult times in their lives. Through multiple state-of-the-art facilities and uniquely integrated support services, we will continue to expand our service offering and support more women and children throughout Victoria to rebuild their lives.

Sept

Launch of Parity –Gender and Homelessness edition

In September, McAuley sponsored the Homelessness and Gender edition of Parity magazine, the journal of the Council to Homeless Persons. We contributed a number of articles to the edition, including an opinion piece by McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM, which discussed the inextricable link between family violence and homelessness and the need for a Safe at Home approach to bring about fundamental system change.

Oct

Best practice at McAuley House

In October, Deloitte Access Economics evaluated the success and impact of the McAuley House model. We are delighted to be an example of best practice in supporting women experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

MacKillop Family Services

In October, McAuley joined MacKillop Family Services. The McAuley name and brand remains, and existing programs continue, with Jocelyn Bignold OAM retaining the role of McAuley CEO.

Nov

Walk Against Family Violence + 16 Days of Activism

McAuley joined thousands of individuals and organisations for the annual Walk Against Family Violence. Together we stood in solidarity with victim-survivors, calling for an end to family violence and violence against women. The walk also marked the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, an international campaign that shines a spotlight on violence against women and girls.

Dec

Safe at Home Advertising

Safe at Home, McAuley's early intervention advocacy initiative became an advertising campaign developed with Are Media. Full-page ads were featured in national women's magazines including Woman's Day, Women's Weekly,, Who and That's Life! The campaign captured readers' attention and challenged them to rethink Australia's decades-long approach to family violence.

2024



Jan

Celebrating milestones

The new year gave us much cause for celebration. Heywood House, our family violence refuge, completed its first year of operation, supporting 90 women and children to be free from violence. While McAuley House Ballarat, our first service outside of Melbourne, celebrated its fifth anniversary, providing accommodation and outreach support for more than 80 women during that time.

Feb

Evaluation and Advocacy Community of Practice

Early in the year, McAuley took part in the Evaluation and Advocacy Community of Practice. The network, for professionals in the sexual assault and family violence sector, provides opportunities to work collaboratively to enhance evidence and evaluation capabilities. Together, we shared knowledge, explored opportunities to collaborate on key projects and aligned our advocacy initiatives.

Mar

International Women's Day

In honour of International Women's Day 2024, we were delighted to welcome Micaela Cronin, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, and Kate Colvin, CEO of Homelessness Australia to launch Homelessness Australia's new report on homelessness and domestic and family violence. It was an important opportunity to come together to discuss the growing crisis of women and children fleeing family violence into homelessness.

Apr



Women Supporting Women annual fundraising event

Our annual Women Supporting Women fundraising event was once again a huge success. 350 people attended the event helping to raise vital funds to further our work with Safe at Home. Old and new friends came together to learn more about our work and to make a difference to the lives of women and children experiencing family violence. We heard impactful stories from amazing speakers while enjoying a beautiful lunch at Zinc in Federation Square, Melbourne.

May



McAuley House Ballarat receives another year of funding

McAuley House Ballarat welcomed State Treasurer Tim Pallas and local MPs Juliana Addison and Michaela Settle, for the announcement of another year of funding for the service. It was a great opportunity for meaningful discussion about McAuley's impressive outcomes, while highlighting further funding opportunities within Ballarat and throughout the state.

Jun

$6m Safe at Home funding announced

In an exciting end to the financial year, we were thrilled by the announcement of at least $6 million in funding support by the State Government for a Safe at Home trial in Geelong. After years of advocacy and working alongside many sector professionals and people with lived experience, this announcement marked a significant first step towards real systemic change.

Those we supported in 2023–24



Family Violence Programs

HEYWOOD HOUSE
- 46 women — Average age 34
- 51 children — Average age 6
- 110 days — Average stay

REFUGE
- 8 women — Average age 38
- 16 children — Average age 11
- 313 days — Average stay

OUTREACH
- 137 women — Average age 38
- 186 children — Average age 9
- 106 days — Average support

Homelessness Programs

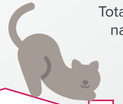
MCAULEY HOUSE FOOTSCRAY
- 71 women — Average age 42
- 82% — Experienced family violence
- 87% — Experienced mental health issues
- Average stay 402 days

MCAULEY HOUSE BALLARAT
- 28 women — Average age 37
- 82% — Experienced family violence
- 74% — Experienced mental health issues
- Average stay 504 days

18 Total pets supported

37 Total number of nationalities

44 Number of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



HOMES FOR FAMILIES
- 21 adults* — Average age 36 — *3 of whom were men
- 50 children — Average age 8

Together, we supported 831 women and children.

We also supported 28 men.



101 Women supported



381 Legal and financial issues addressed

Restoring Financial Safety
WEstjustice partnership



$912,737 Total financial benefit
($810,488 waived in fines and debt and $102,249 in compensation gained)

49 Participants

52 Average group sessions per month

Skills 4 Life
Social connection and skills development

2,238 Group work interactions



2,143 One-to-one interactions





20 Children supported
Average age 12

McAuley Learning Support
Supporting children whose education has been disrupted



259 Tutoring hours



178 Adults supported*
*25 of whom were men

PARC
Prevention and Recovery Centres

138 Experienced family violence



20 Children supported



16 Women housed

Wilma's Place
Social housing for women and children



11 Children housed

Heywood House – a year in review



Heywood House opened in January 2023 and was named in honour of Sr Sheila Heywood, one of two Sisters of Mercy who founded McAuley's family violence operations in North Melbourne in 1988.

The accommodation is warm and welcoming, a safe haven where women and children can feel at home in one of 14 accommodation units; seven family suites and seven single units as well as several workspaces and communal areas including a beautiful children's playroom, garden, and courtyard. These units give women and children the dignity of living independently and with privacy alongside access to on-site services and support.

"We worked very hard to ensure that Heywood House was a space where women and children could find safety and refuge," said McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM. "It's wonderful to hear feedback at the end of this first year that we have achieved that goal and created a space where women and children can rest, recover and heal, on the way to building their new life."

We are proud to have supported 90 women and children over the first 12 months at Heywood House.

"Most of the women who came to us over this last year needed help to find somewhere to live and support to feel safe", said McAuley's Head of Community Services, Linda Bradley. "Many were involved with child protection agencies, and over a third of women held an intervention order, so it was really important that we were able to balance their autonomy and freedom of movement with safety."

In line with McAuley's holistic approach, teams at Heywood House worked with integrated support partners across medical, legal, and financial services as well as onsite skill building workshops.

"The skills women acquire through McAuley programs help them to build a future, where they flourish, not just survive," said Linda. "We support them to rebuild their family and community connections, develop their independent living skills, and begin their journey towards independence."

The teams at Heywood House aim to address all the factors that are keeping women trapped in cycles of homelessness, family violence and mental illness.

"To all the beautiful, wonderful workers here" said a Heywood House client, "thank you for your kindness, support, listening ears and patient care at such a difficult time. McAuley has been a safe haven."

Georgia

After escaping a violent relationship, Georgia* became homeless and her four children were placed in the care of their paternal grandmother. Georgia was referred to McAuley, seeking refuge at Heywood House where, after eight-months apart, she was reunited with her children.

Since then, the McAuley Care team has worked with Georgia to identify her needs and provide support for both her and her children. Georgia has been linked into a variety of services to address her physical and emotional wellbeing and has worked with McAuley's partners to ensure her financial security and manage her legal concerns. She has been supported to access government funding packages, and her children have been enrolled in school and childcare.

The children's team at Heywood House worked closely with Georgia's children to address their trauma. Sadly, it was discovered that while in the care of their grandmother, the three elder children had endured further abuse.

The McAuley Care team have helped Georgia and her children to find housing and they have since moved into their new home and begun to build a future together.

*Name has been changed to protect anonymity. The image on the left is used for illustrative purposes only.

INTEGRATED SERVICES: the right services at the right time

McAuley House, a sector leader for women who are homeless

Deloitte Access Economics published a report this year that recognises McAuley House as a model of best practice support for vulnerable women.

McAuley House operates in Footscray and Ballarat providing secure, medium-term accommodation and support for women who are homeless. McAuley House Footscray supports up to 25 women at any time, plus up to an additional 30 women through independent housing in the community, while McAuley House Ballarat accommodates eight women. Women at McAuley House have access to a range of integrated programs to develop skills and build connections, as well as access to partner programs including legal, healthcare and employment.

The Deloitte evaluation found McAuley House to be a highly effective service model for addressing homelessness, family violence and mental health.

The report found that women leaving McAuley House felt safer, were able to find long-term housing, and benefited from improved mental and physical wellness. In fact, in a survey of 23 former McAuley House residents, 100% said they got the help they needed and 96% said the support they received continued to make a difference after leaving McAuley House.

"They actively supported me through pretty severe mental health issues," a former resident said.

"For the first time in a long time, I started to see life didn't have to include violence."

Another woman said, "I now have permanent, stable housing that makes creating a better future possible."

According to the report, McAuley House is proof that person-centred, integrated models for women can be effectively implemented and that McAuley House could be funded as a scalable model to strengthen delivery of integrated care in Victoria.

"Our services are centred around building women's confidence, improving health and wellbeing and providing consistent ongoing connection", said McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM. "Ultimately, we are able to address the complex reasons women become homeless in the first place and provide them with a suite of supports to rebuild their lives."

McAuley House Ballarat secures another year of funding

Despite five years of delivering outstanding outcomes, funding for McAuley House Ballarat remains uncertain.

There was much relief, when in May this year, the State Government announced that funding for the facility had been extended for another 12 months.

McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM said "It's always a tremendous relief when our funding for this site is extended. It's such vital work in a place that has a very real need for supported accommodation like ours."

"The outcomes we've witnessed for our clients in Ballarat speak for themselves and the need is still overwhelming," said Jocelyn. "A secure stream of funding will allow the appropriate investment in skills and innovation to continue to develop and expand this vital work".

McAuley House brings McAuley's unique model of integrated support into regional Victoria, providing medium-term accommodation and outreach support for women who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness in and around Ballarat. In 2023–24, 23 women were supported while living at McAuley House Ballarat and 15 women were supported living in the community.

"I came to McAuley House at the lowest point in my life," said one resident. "I was scared and confused. My little unit became my safe place and gradually, I regained some direction in my life."

While McAuley welcomes the government's commitment, ongoing funding for this service continues to be a concern. Year-to-year funding commitments limit McAuley's ability to make long-term plans. Ongoing funding is critical to enable both stability of service delivery and encourage the expansion of services in the region.

Green light for pilot program to keep victims of violence safe at home

In an exciting end to the financial year, we were thrilled by the announcement of over $6 million in funding support from the State Government for a three-year Safe at Home trial in Geelong.

For several years McAuley has lead advocacy for a Safe at Home approach; an early intervention model that will allow more women to remain safely in their homes, by working with the whole of household to address the violence, thereby reducing the likelihood of them becoming homeless.

Years of research, collaboration and advocacy informed the development of the Safe at Home trial. Developed for collective impact, it was co-designed by victim-survivors of family violence and homelessness, frontline workers and men who have previously used violence.

"Input from those with lived experience was integral to the design of this initiative," said McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM. "We have consulted extensively with our teams and with women who have used family violence services to find out what could work. It was important to include users of violence in those conversations too, as they provided valuable insight into what would help them avoid using violence."

The trial proposes an early, rapid and flexible response. This addresses what we learned about the need for swift, timely and co-response models: otherwise, women will have already left home, seeing no other option, or families remain in unsafe circumstances without a means of addressing the violence.

"Working with a network of sector partner organisations, learning together and aligning and integrating our actions is fundamental to creating lasting impact," said Jocelyn. "Together, through Safe at Home, we hope to build community capability to support early intervention and ultimately prevention of family violence. This trial marks a significant step towards real systemic change."

The Safe at Home pilot will be launched during the 2024–25 financial year and will run for three years, delivered in collaboration with long-term partner Meli and other key organisations throughout the Barwon Region.

"This trial marks a significant step towards real systemic change."





LET'S START A NEW CONVERSATION

Family violence is the **leading cause of homelessness** in Australia and leaves women and children at a significant disadvantage when they have to leave their jobs, schools and communities to seek a safer home.
Too often we ask, "Why doesn't she leave him?".
Instead, let's ask, "How can we better support her to stay?".

Safe at Home is an initiative to support women to stay in their homes while helping people who use violence to stop – or leave.
Find out more about how you can support women to stay safe at **mcauley.org.au**

A home of their own

The Homes for Families (H4F) program launched in October 2021 as a response to the many families who, during the COVID-19 pandemic, found themselves homeless and shunted into unsuitable emergency accommodation.

The H4F model aimed to support these families to move from crisis accommodation into safe and secure long-term housing along with providing flexible wraparound, individualised support.

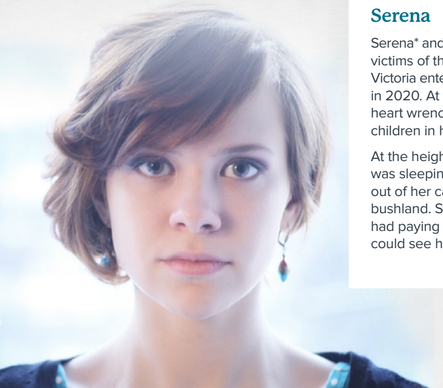
McAuley worked with 16 families from across Victoria's Western region, including Ballarat, to identify and address the barriers to securing long-term housing. All families included a parent with at least one child in their care, and over 80% of parents supported by McAuley were women. All families had been in emergency accommodation when Victoria went into lockdown and many had experienced family violence, and/or were impacted by various trauma, ill-health and/or medical issues.

McAuley assessed need and supported families by linking them into a personalised range of support services as well as into long-term housing. The team also worked with families whose children's education had been significantly disrupted, helping them to transition back to school. This holistic approach aimed to empower both individuals and their family unit in all areas of life and ultimately into a position where they were able to sustain housing.

"We know that a secure home is the foundation for family stability and the health and wellbeing of all family members," said McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM. "This type of program, where we ensure stable housing as well as brokerage access to the supports required for economic participation, health and wellbeing is what is needed to drive the future of homelessness responses in Australia."

Of the 16 families being supported by McAuley through the H4F program, 15 accepted and moved into permanent accommodation and the majority have experienced improved wellbeing. Those in the program have highlighted the sense of stability they now feel, enabling them to make connections within their local communities and establish strong support networks.

"I'm doing really well," said a H4F participant. "They [McAuley] have seen me make great progress. It gives me so much confidence that I'm capable to stand on my own two feet and not be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help when I need it."



Serena

Serena* and her children found themselves victims of the state's housing crisis as Victoria entered its first COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. At this time, Serena made the heart wrenching decision to place her children in her now ex-husband's care.

At the height of the pandemic, Serena was sleeping on friends' couches, living out of her car and even taking a tent into bushland. She spent what little money she had paying for motel rooms, so that she could see her children.

In addition to escaping a new relationship, marred by violence and drug use, Serena also braved several historic medical issues, which caused her chronic and unbearable pain.

When Serena learned that she qualified for the H4F program she said, "It was one of the best feelings I've ever had. It was like I had a heavy weight lifted off me and I finally saw a slither of hope that things would get better."

The H4F program provided Serena with a fully furnished three-bedroom home, and a McAuley caseworker supported her to identify and access the medical services she so desperately needed.

Thanks to her improved health and wellbeing, Serena has now secured a job and hopes to one day have her children live with her again.

"I am eternally grateful for the H4F program," said Serena. "It's saved my relationship with my kids. There are lots of reasons people become homeless – one small thing can change and suddenly you lose everything. I haven't felt safe in almost five years, but today I do. Finally, I don't fear the future."

*Name has been changed to protect anonymity. The image on the left is used for illustrative purposes only.

Working with WEstjustice to keep victim-survivors safe at home

McAuley and WEstjustice have worked together since 2018 to address the economic abuse experienced by victim-survivors of family violence and restore their financial safety.

In 2023–24 WEstjustice supported 101 McAuley clients with 381 issues and saved them $913,000 in debt.

Rachel

Rachel*, a mother of three, was experiencing financial insecurity because of family violence. Despite an Intervention Order (IVO), her former partner continued to breach its conditions, including breaking into her house and assaulting her.

McAuley worked with Rachel to ensure she and her children could remain safely in their home. The team supported Rachel with safety planning and security upgrades to her home, including installing new locks and cameras. She sought assistance from McAuley to report the breaches of the IVO to the police and WEstjustice represented Rachel in court to successfully obtain an extension of her IVO.

Rachel was referred to WEstjustice's Restoring Financial Safety team to ensure her home was not repossessed and to help manage her overdue rates and amenities bills. She had a long list of overdue infringements and had lost her driver's licence.

WEstjustice helped Rachel save her home, securing a hold on her mortgage repayments and reducing her total loan balance by almost $24,000.

The team were able to have a significant portion of her fines withdrawn and her driver's licence was reinstated. In total, WEstjustice was able to save Rachel $37,000 in unpaid debt and fines. WEstjustices' Employment and Equality Law Team helped Rachel to secure a permanent, full-time position at work. Together, McAuley and WEstjustice were able to assist Rachel and her children to remain safely in their home and helped Rachel to break the cycle of family violence and financial insecurity.



*Name has been changed to protect anonymity. The image above is used for illustrative purposes only.

Building confidence through community immersion

For many of us, getting out in the local community is a commonplace activity, but for women who have experienced homelessness, mental ill health and family violence, navigating community areas and building relationships with others can present many challenges.

Thanks to a grant from the City of Maribyrnong, McAuley's Community Immersion Project supported former and current residents of McAuley House Footscray to build connections with the local community, as well as with each other.

Throughout the year, participants enjoyed a varied and exciting schedule of activities including a competition at the local bowling alley, a scavenger hunt through Footscray's Op Shops, and visits to the Footscray Community Arts Centre and Sun Theatre.

McAuley's Social Inclusion Worker, Brydie, saw the women involved grow in confidence and strengthen their relationships with one another.

"There were many clients who shared similar reservations about going out into the community beyond their comfort zone," says Brydie.

"They were brought closer by this collective experience and supported each other to take steps into unfamiliar territory together."

The final excursion of 2023 was a visit to the Peninsula Hot Springs, just a few days before Christmas. For many women at McAuley House, spending the festive season away from loved ones at Christmas can be difficult, so this excursion provided a welcome distraction and a fantastic, memorable way to finish the year.

McAuley Learning Support is changing lives

"I really do see the value of education," says McAuley volunteer Maryanne.

"The program felt like somewhere I could fit in and start giving value straightaway. It was a great match."

This sentiment is echoed by many of the McAuley Learning Support volunteers who, alongside McAuley staff, support children who have escaped family violence, to remain engaged with their education and to help them deal with the trauma in their lives.

"We know that the impacts on children and young people who have left family violence, particularly on their education and wellbeing, are deep and lasting," said McAuley Volunteer Coordinator Kirsty Manning. "They become disconnected from school, fall behind their classmates, and they struggle socially."

McAuley Learning Support's skilled volunteer tutors, trained in trauma informed practice, tailor education programs and their approach to meet the age and specific needs of each child. McAuley provides each student with a laptop to connect with volunteers and securely engage in online learning.

Tutors also work with mothers and primary carers to ensure that they are engaged in their child's learning and that learning routines are supported between sessions.

During FY 2023–24, McAuley volunteer tutors supported 20 children across almost 260 tutoring sessions.

Maryanne, who has supported 6 children in the 6 years she has volunteered with the program, said her desire to give back is why she continues her work with McAuley.

"That sense of fulfilment is so important in life, in what I do, in my value, in my skills. That's priceless for me," said Maryanne.

The program is one of many volunteer opportunities available at McAuley.

"We work with volunteers right across McAuley, from fundraising to food preparation", said Kirsty.

"We seek to understand their motivations and interests and work hard to ensure volunteers have meaningful roles and are the right fit for us."

JB Hi-Fi staff provide a Helping Hand

In 2019, McAuley and JB Hi-Fi began a long-term partnership through its multi-award-winning, high-impact workplace giving program, 'Helping Hands'.

The program allows JB Hi-Fi employees to donate to one of ten charity partners, of which McAuley is one, through regular payroll deductions which are matched dollar-for-dollar by JB Hi-Fi. In FY 2023–24, matched donations by JB Hi-Fi staff made up over 15% of McAuley's overall fundraising, a significant figure that has greatly impacted our innovation capacity.

"Long-term, ongoing partnerships like the one we have with JB Hi-Fi enable us to continue to pursue our innovation and advocacy agenda, influencing policy and resourcing for better systemic responses," said McAuley CEO, Jocelyn Bignold OAM. "Sector-leading advocacy projects like Safe at Home and McAuley Learning Support require years of research, collaboration and advocacy to ensure we are developing the best solutions to help more people, more quickly and comprehensively. Support from partners like JB Hi-Fi is critical for initiatives like this."

We thank JB Hi-Fi and its generous workforce for their incredible ongoing commitment and help to grow support for our work. We look forward to continuing this partnership and ensuring that together we can continue to make a real impact in our communities.

We are incredibly grateful to our wonderful donors for their commitment and dedication to helping women and children find a safe home and build a brighter future. Because of your support we can continue our vital work.

Thanks to the steadfast support of our philanthropic partners and regular workplace givers, without whom we could not continue to advocate for systemic change and innovative programs.

Thank you to the Sisters of Mercy and their network who continue to champion the values of Catherine McAuley. We are humbled by your generosity of spirit and your unwavering devotion to championing vulnerable women and children.

***Photos:** Below left: Liz Rodriguez, Jocelyn Bignold & Sal Balharrie at Grossi Florentino; Middle: McAuley Volunteers at Women Supporting Women event; Top and bottom right: Corporate partners providing a helping hand at McAuley House Footscray.*









Income and expenditure statement

Income	2024	2023
State Government funding	8,388,616	8,343,061
Donations/bequests	1,397,142	1,786,389
Rent received	452,905	308,472
Interest received	55,213	44,889
Profit/(Loss) on disposal of fixed asset	(85,078)	(44,103)
Miscellaneous	146,879	84,505
Total Income	**10,355,677**	**10,523,213**

Expenses	2024	2023
Employee benefit expenses	7,733,398	7,297,278
Depreciation and amortisation expense	395,946	363,528
Program resources	1,114,569	812,302
Occupancy expenses	394,600	575,193
Administration expenses	529,379	783,546
Finance charges on lease liability	13,489	15,548
Total expenses	**10,181,380**	**9,847,395**

Entity surplus/(Loss)	**174,297**	**675,818**

Statement of equity

	2024	2023
Retained earnings at beginning of financial year	5,283,711	4,607,893
Entity profit	174,297	675,818
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	5,458,008	5,283,711

In 1986, the Sisters of Mercy established Regina Coeli (now McAuley House) and later, in 1988, Mercy Care (now McAuley Care) was founded. Twenty years later, in 2008, the two were combined to become McAuley Community Services for Women, expanding the Sisters of Mercy's commitment to women and children and social justice. In 2023, McAuley Community Services for Women became part of MacKillop Family Services. While it remains business as usual, the change will allow for a closer alignment between the two organisations and will strengthen McAuley's ability to grow services.

This year we celebrated 15 years of McAuley Community Services for Women.

We are proud of our deep Mercy roots and our values which are inspired by the spirit and ethos of Catherine McAuley, who founded of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin almost 200 years ago. Catherine's visionary values continue to live through the work of McAuley Community Services for Women and we follow in her footsteps, providing disadvantaged women and children with housing, education and social services – supporting them toward a brighter future.



"You kept me strong when I've felt weak, you've held me together when I would crumble and most importantly you've shown me genuine care and comfort in times I've needed it most."

McAuley Community Services for Women
Level 1, 81–83 Paisley Street
Footscray 3011

mcauley@mcauley.org.au
mcauley.org.au
ABN 79078299288

You can like and follow us on: