

Foster Care A role that makes a difference

When we consider our hopes and dreams for our children I imagine we all pray for their health, happiness and security. Although every child deserves to experience the love, pride and support of their parents, sadly, for a range of reasons, they don't always receive it. For many of these children, foster care is the only option.

BC(SA)'s foster care model differs from traditional foster care. It relies on the dedication of people who want to help children and young people recover from trauma, family violence, child abuse and neglect. For a child in need, a safe home environment and a loving and supportive relationship with their carer are paramount for healing to begin.

We're seeking foster carers in both metropolitan and country South Australia. If you're committed, caring, patient and willing to learn, we'd love to talk to you! You don't need to be married, own your own home, earn a high income or have previous fostering experience. The special attribute we seek comes from the heart: a genuine desire to offer young people a new, positive outlook on life.

Even if you can't commit to full time care, we'd like to hear from you as there are other options including respite care and mentoring.

Please contact Ann Briggs on 8277 8116 or email abriggs@baptistcaresa.org.au for further information.



Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Paul representing BCA at the recent Australian Churches Gambling Taskforce meeting.

Since our last newsletter much has been going on in the world; from famines in Somalia, debate about social issues like gay marriage and pre-commitment for problem gambling, rioting in the streets of Britain and now the latest global economic crisis.

It's easy to be fearful about uncertain times and maybe even pessimistic about the complex world we live in, but Jesus did warn us that times such as these would come. So what are we to do? Are we simply to shake our heads or shrug our shoulders?

Here at Baptist Care, we daily pray about what we do in our work and what's happening in the world. We all need to remain faithful to the task of sharing the good that we have to offer. The light of the gospel shines through many things; a helping hand, a listening ear or providing financial support. I hope you enjoy reading some of our good news stories in this edition and thank you again for supporting us.

Paul Scully
Chief Executive Officer

Living his Dream

Not so long ago, Aaron was miserable. Although he'd started high school as a happy, well adjusted teenager, years of relentless bullying had left him withdrawn from school and family life. His self esteem in tatters, he spent hours locked in his room. In desperation, his mother sought to engage him in a BC(SA) youth intervention program.

This proved to be a turning point for Aaron. "As soon as I met Aaron I knew this was such a wonderful young man and that all he needed was the right guidance and direction," said Youth Education and Transition Services Case Manager, Jude Hughes. Together, the two of them worked through a list of potential courses that would harness his passion for mechanics. He then received assistance purchasing safety gear and was soon enrolled at TAFE.

Despite one of the main bullying perpetrators also enrolling in the same course, Aaron persisted with his work and was described by his lecturer as an "absolute pleasure" to teach. His confidence bloomed visibly as he progressed through the course and sourced several work experience placements. In a short time, he impressed his employer so much that he was offered an apprenticeship.

Today, Aaron is a picture of happiness as his positive attitude and strong work ethic have reaped the ultimate rewards. Thrilled to be employed in his chosen vocation, he's all smiles now. Without the ICAN¹ programme, Aaron feels that he could easily have still been at home, not sure what to do with himself. To his credit, however, his determination saw him make the most of his opportunities.

"I cannot thank BC(SA) enough," said Aaron's mother, Fay. "I have my happy boy back."

¹ Innovative Community Action Network



A smiling Aaron has reached his ultimate goal of obtaining a mechanics apprenticeship.

Mandatory pre-commitment putting a fence at the top of the cliff



Tim Costello (centre of picture) chairs the heads of churches and church caring agencies to stop harm from gambling

Australians spend almost \$12 billion on poker machines every year and at least 40% of this revenue is generated from problem gamblers.¹ Sadly, the gambling of problem gamblers is often driven by struggles with depression, relationship issues or past traumas. Furthermore, pokie players are using a machine that is highly addictive; refined and designed to entice and hook them into losing big time. These machines have the capacity to swallow up to \$1,200 from an individual per hour.¹ Pokie addiction destroys lives, causes the loss of homes, the decimation of families, and sometimes, a dissension into criminal activity. This is why it's described as the "crack cocaine of the gambling industry."²

Gambling venues have used many tactics to keep people engaged in gambling but an effective means of protecting consumers from this potentially harmful product is the introduction of a mandatory pre-commitment scheme. The scheme reduces access to the machines by requiring gamblers to nominate a spending limit at the beginning of their session. Once that limit has been reached they cannot play any pokies for a set period of time. This prevents the hook of adrenalin embedding itself and allows people to limit the amount of money lost and take back control of their spending.

The gaming industry's argument that introducing the mandatory pre-commitment card is like requiring a person to have a license to gamble³ is misleading, as gaming venues already use loyalty cards to track patrons' gambling spending.

As part of The Australian Churches Gambling Taskforce, Baptist Care Australia is committed to ensuring legislation

is passed by the Federal Government to achieve mandatory pre-commitment. The scheme will provide much needed relief to the 200,000 problem gamblers in Australia by minimising the significant social harm caused to them, and also to their family and friends.

If you would like to know more about problem gambling go to <http://www.problemgambling.gov.au/>. Baptist Care (SA) CEO Paul Scully is the Baptist Care Australia representative, having been the former community advisor for problem gambling on the Queensland Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee.

¹ Productivity Commission 2010, Gambling, Report no. 50, Canberra.

² Andrew Wilkie MP, Independent Member for Denison

³ Clubs Australia

From Sea to Song

youths learn about self and community



Local youths enjoy the new mural at the Pt. Lincoln Skate Park.

There's been a fabulous amount of activity in BC(SA)'s Youth Connections and ICAN FLO¹ programs based on the Eyre Peninsula. Participants are youths who are disconnected from mainstream education and BC(SA) staff work passionately with local businesses and residents to transition them through life skills programs within their local community and beyond.

A snapshot of recent highlights include: participating in workshops to motivate and uplift through the unifying power of music and song; assisting local artist Jenny Silver in the painting of a mural at the Port Lincoln Skate Park; sailing aboard a traditional sailing ship to meet the challenging and ever changing elements of the sea; and enjoying a broad range of adventure activities through the successful Tumbelin and School Holiday programs.

BC(SA) would particularly like to acknowledge the local community who have been so supportive in assisting the young participants, and the extraordinary effort of staff that has been needed to create and implement such a dynamic program. ¹Innovative Community Action Networks Flexible Learning Options

Iron and Dust



Shane Long in front of his artwork.

Iron and Dust was one of the most exciting exhibitions of raw natural talent to have been showcased at the WestCare Karpandi Arts Centre. Featuring the highly original work of gifted artist, Shane Long, the collection included paintings on canvas or gum leaves, as well as sculptures made out of recycled materials.

Perhaps what is most inspirational about Shane's success is that just 2 years ago he was homeless and living in a tent in the parklands. He then came into contact with BC(SA) Arts Centre Manager, Mark Finlay, who was able to provide him with encouragement and resources to help nurture his talent. Shane now has a place to call home and his journey has taken him on the road to being drug free and towards recognition as an artist with a refreshing flair for finding beauty in even the most rustic of objects, and impressing that beauty upon his audience.

The exhibition, which was staged as part of the renowned South Australian Living Artist's (SALA) Festival, was a real celebration of the way Shane has turned his life around. The vision of the BC(SA) Arts Centre has always been to nurture and to facilitate the development of new artistic talent, and it's wonderful to hear stories, like Shane's, where this has taken place so profoundly.

If you would like to view or purchase any of Shane Long's work please contact Mark Finlay on (08) 8231 2850.

Yes, I want to help people in need . . .

- Please accept my gift of \$
- I would like to become a regular WestCare sponsor at \$30 per month.
- Please debit my credit card monthly until further notice.
- I would prefer to receive the Newsletter by email.
My email address is
- I would prefer not to receive information from BC(SA).

Name

Address

Church Affiliation (optional)

Cheque enclosed Mastercard Visa

Card Number/...../...../.....

Cardholder Name

Expiry/..... Signed

Post to: 157 Beulah Road, Norwood, SA 5067 • Telephone 1300 654 450 • www.baptistcaresa.org.au



Regional Award recognises innovation

BC(SA) and The City of Salisbury have won the regional award for Inclusive and Connected Communities for our Midnight Basketball Salisbury Tournament for disadvantaged youths.

The award recognises innovative projects and events that create opportunities for participation in leisure activities. The program, which was featured in the BC(SA) News Winter edition, will now progress to the National Awards in September.

Congratulations to everyone involved in this fantastic initiative!

Praise & Prayer

We have commenced a new residential care program for children in care of the Minister. Please pray for the managers and new staff as they take on this important role of caring for at risk children.

We anticipate opening in the near future our third home for unaccompanied refugee minors. We thank God for the opportunity to engage in this compassionate response to refugees.

We are about to recruit staff for our Seniors and Healthy Ageing program. Please pray for the right applicant to be appointed in this important role.

Praise for the ongoing generous support to Baptist Care; especially for the response to our need for emergency relief food packs at our inner city services.

Grants and Donations

Donations

We thank everyone who generously supported our Winter Appeal. Your support has helped WestCare to continue to work with those in need.

Successful Grants and Tenders

We also thank the following for their generous contributions to BC(SA) programs:



Funds for the Carols in Whitmore Square event



Australian Government
Indigenous Culture Support

My Story, Your Story, Our Story: story telling, arts program and community camps



Government of South Australia
Department for Families and Communities

Funds to run a movement therapy program for disadvantaged youths



Government of South Australia
Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology

Piloting a Certificate IV course in Peer Work - Funding for this training has been made available through the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, Adult Community Education Unit.