



UNDERCOVER NEWS

SPRING 2016

GRANDPARENTS

An important part of prevention

DOUGHIE

The retired school bus

Colourful
FUNHOUSE
Lives on

STUDIO
DELIVERS
peace of
mind

**WHO
WE
ARE**

OUR VISION Where no young person in our community is homeless.
OUR MISSION Providing young people at risk of homelessness the foundations to strengthen their connection to family, community and education, and make a lasting difference.

SUPPORT NETWORKS VITAL IN PREVENTION

At this time of the year we bid farewell to the frigid nights that make life for any homeless person impossible to bear. With that sobering thought in mind I would like to extend my personal thanks to the many kind-hearted donors who supported us during this time via our winter appeal.

We sadly have to acknowledge that homelessness continues to be a major problem in Australia. During National Homelessness Week 2016 (1-7 August) we identified and recognised a vital support network that helps prevent youth homelessness. For many young people around Australia, the only element preventing them from sleeping rough is having the support of a loving grandparent.

At Kids Under Cover we work with grandparents of at-risk young people on a daily basis. Many delay their retirement and change their work practices while struggling to meet the financial obligations of raising children. We recognise and thank these grandparents for their commitment to preventing extended family breakdown and youth homelessness.

On a final note, I am proud of our involvement in a new initiative which we believe is of great importance in our quest to prevent youth homelessness. We have been advocating with Anglicare and other organisations on the 'Home Stretch' campaign.

As a collective we are lobbying state governments to extend the provision of care from 18 to 21 years. We believe giving young people the extended care option will provide them with prolonged stability and greater opportunity to grow and develop into an adult.

IN THIS ISSUE

RELIEVING PRESSURE AND DELIVERING PEACE OF MIND 4

OUT-OF-HOME CARE MUST BE STRETCHED TO 21 5

WORKPLACE GIVING IS A SMART WAY TO GIVE 6

PLUS Social Return on Investment

- Grandparents - An important part of prevention
- Porter Davis - Corporate build
- Retired school bus donation
- Homelessness Week and Choice Hotels
- Run Melbourne
- Cubby House Challenge
- Winter appeal

You can read more about the Home Stretch campaign on page 5.

I hope you enjoy reading the spring edition of Undercover News and, like me, delight in the warmer weather that is to come.

On behalf of our young people and their families, thank you for your ongoing support of Kids Under Cover.



Jo Swift
CEO, Kids Under Cover

Front cover: Fatuma with Trevor from Harris HMC.

THE EXTRA-FINANCIAL VALUE OF OUR WORK

In our work it is important to understand the Social Return on Investment (SROI) our programs deliver to determine the wider impact of our efforts and to ensure we are creating social change. Gaining deeper insight into the difference we are making also strengthens our credibility with donors and funders.

SROI is a principles-based method for measuring extra-financial value (such as environmental and social) relative to resources invested. It can be used to evaluate impact on stakeholders, identify ways to improve performance, and enhance the performance of investments.

Our SROI tells the story of the impact of our work, how change is being created within

society, and places a monetary value on that change comparing it with the investment required to achieve it.

There are many effects we value that cannot be easily captured in traditional economic terms. Conventional cost-benefit analysis does not consider anything beyond simple expenses and investments.

In light of our desire to understand, manage and report on the impact of our prevention strategies, Kids Under Cover is working with Ernst & Young to analyse and measure the greater effects that our early intervention approach has on society, and to deliver us and our stakeholders with a comprehensive report. This process is currently underway and we hope to be able to deliver a full report as part of our upcoming Annual Report in November.

GRANDPARENTS – AN IMPORTANT PART OF PREVENTION

During National Homelessness Week 2016, we identified and recognised the vital, yet hidden, support of grandparents in helping to prevent youth homelessness. For many young people around Australia the support of a grandparent is the only element preventing them from sleeping rough.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates there are around 23,000 Australian grandparent families caring for over 31,000 children. The 2006 census analysis revealed that there were 8,050 families where grandparents were raising grandchildren aged 15 years and under.

“Grandparents become the primary carers of their grandchildren through varied sets of circumstances,” explains CEO of Kids Under Cover, Jo Swift.

“It is these grandparents taking up the responsibilities of raising the next generation that is essential in helping prevent an even greater rise in youth homelessness across Australia.”

“We meet grandparents of at-risk young people every single day,” says Jo Swift. “They delay

their retirement, change their work practices, and struggle to meet their financial obligations alongside dealing with the stress of parenting.”

Kids Under Cover firmly believes that direct investment dedicated to assisting grandparents who continue to provide a support network is vital to early intervention to help prevent youth homelessness. Close to 20% of grandparents who become carers of children want to change their housing but are unable to due to the cost.

Kids Under Cover is able to support this invisible network of carers through the provision of our studio program.

“When you suddenly find yourself, as a grandparent, having to accommodate the needs of children, a studio can be a vital asset,” says Jo. “A young person can remain connected to their families and support networks, and it can give the grandparent respite. It is important that we take care of these carers as they are the frontline in youth homelessness prevention.”

RELIEVING PRESSURE AND DELIVERING PEACE OF MIND

With five children aged between 16 and 6 months, Mum and Dad, and only four bedrooms, things at home were spiralling out of control. Mum, Fatuma, was running out of ways to keep her eldest son at home.

Brothers Ali* (16) and Fahid* (13) were sharing a bedroom, which led to arguments, sometimes violence, and Ali would often run away from home. This was a constant concern for Fatuma, "I am so worried that my boy will run away and leave me forever," she said.

Wanting to keep her family together and ensure Ali completed his schooling, Fatuma moved her two youngest children into the main bedroom with her to give the boys their own rooms.

"I thought if they had their own rooms they would stop fighting, but they didn't," explains Fatuma.

The conflict within the home continued as Ali and his younger brother were constantly arguing. For Ali, the situation was intolerable; his younger brother would tease him, hide his homework and school clothes, among other things. The environment within the home was also taking its toll on the rest of the family. Relationships were strained, and Fatuma and her partner were constantly stressed and anxious. "Friday mornings I used to wake up so scared for the weekend, I didn't know where Ali would end up," recalls Fatuma.

Ali's home life was having a huge impact on his self-confidence and his school work was suffering. He was withdrawn and would often run away for days, sleeping rough just to avoid being near his brother. Fatuma didn't know what to do, but one thing she did know was that things could not continue as the outcome would most likely see Ali homeless.



To ensure he remained at home, continued with his schooling and to restore some peace within the family home Ali needed his own space... enter Kids Under Cover.

With the support of our platinum partner, Porter Davis, Kids Under Cover were able to build a one-bedroom studio in the backyard of the family home, meaning Ali could stay at home, remain connected to the family and continue with his studies.

During May Porter Davis employee volunteers participated in the corporate build to provide Ali with his own private space to retreat to, a place he can study within a safe and quiet environment, away from his brother. "He has really made it his own. He loves having somewhere to escape to, and now, the boys even like each other, they are friends!" Fatuma tells us.

Ali still receives support from his family. They share meals and spend time together, and already the worry and anxiety felt by other members of the family has been lessened, aiding better relationships with all family members. "Sometimes the brothers are having so much fun they have sleepovers," says Fatuma.

"I used to wake up worrying and go to sleep worried, there was no end in sight," remembers Fatuma. "The studio has given us so much; we now enjoy family time together without as much stress. Sometimes I go out into the backyard and cry when I look at the studio – I am so happy to know Ali is safe, at home. You people are angels," Fatuma can't stop smiling.

Kids Under Cover CEO, Jo Swift adds, "Situations like Ali's are a perfect example of why providing studios to families is so important – they really do make a huge difference to a young person's future and the environment at home."

*names have been changed to protect identity

OUT-OF-HOME CARE MUST BE STRETCHED TO 21

As an early adopter of the Home Stretch campaign, we firmly believe that extending the leaving care age from 18 to 21 for young people in the Out-of-Home Care system will have a significant impact on preventing youth homelessness.

Home Stretch, a national campaign, was formed to seek change to the current leaving care arrangements for young people in state care by extending the leaving care age from 18 to 21. Currently funding to the carer ceases when the young person turns 18 and they may no longer be in a financially sound position to continue to care for that person. Within a year, many of them will end up homeless and living on the streets.

Extending the care option will have a positive impact on at-risk young people by providing them with greater stability and opportunities to continue on the right path.

Out-of-home care refers to the care of children and young people up to the age of 18 who are unable to live with their families. It involves the placement of a child or young person with alternate caregivers on a short or long term basis¹. We believe these young people deserve support until the age of 21.

Raising the foster care age from 18 to 21 would save money and reduce the risk of young people becoming homeless. "We now know that it's not just the right thing to do, but the fiscally responsible thing to do," said the Chair of the Home Stretch campaign, Mr Paul McDonald.

Many young people who are required to leave their care setting at 18 become homeless, involved with the criminal justice system, unemployed or a new parent within the first 12 months. The termination of care by state governments at 18 is not consistent with current living arrangement trends, which indicate young people remain home well into their 20s.²

We envisage this campaign to be slow and steady. Lobbying the government and change takes time, and obtaining the outcome Home Stretch is seeking is a must to ensure prevention of youth homelessness.

You can find out more by visiting the Home Stretch website and we will keep you up to date on the campaign through social media, our newsletter and our website.

¹Victorian Department of Human Services, 2007

² www.thehomestretch.org.au

PORTER DAVIS – BUILDING STUDIOS

For three years Porter Davis have created many opportunities for their team to be a part of the work Kids Under Cover do. This has included corporate golf days, regular cash donations and a strong workplace giving program. Porter Davis have funded three studios to date, with over 70 volunteers participating in builds located in the south-west, west and northern suburbs of Melbourne.

The Corporate Build

For partners who contribute to the funding of a studio, Kids Under Cover can provide a unique team-building experience for staff and other volunteers to participate in.

Volunteers are involved in all aspects of the build, and there are jobs to suit all skill levels.

If you think this is something your team would enjoy and would like to discuss further, please contact Kerry to find out more:

partnerships@kuc.org.au



ASHLEE AND RHIANNON FROM PORTER DAVIS

WORKPLACE GIVING IS A SMART WAY TO GIVE

Easily set up through your payroll system, employees make regular donations from their pre-tax pay... with an immediate tax benefit! While every donation counts, Workplace Giving is at its most powerful when your workplace matches employee contributions.

Small, regular donations can make a real and lasting impact.

A workplace with 5 colleagues each contributing \$20 per month would donate \$1200 each year. If matched by their employer that would become \$2400 -which would fund at least two annual scholarships for at-risk young people.

Do you know a business that wants to make a difference? Find out how easy it is to join our Workplace Giving program by contacting partnerships@kuc.org.au.

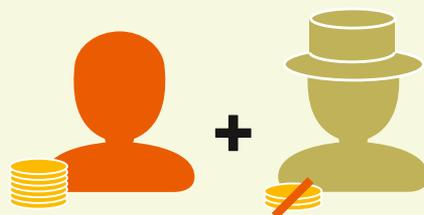
How does workplace giving work?



\$10
My Pre-Tax
Donation

\$10
Company
Matched
Donation

\$20
Total Donation
to Charity



**Giving \$10
only costs you \$6.25**

(\$2.25* not paid to Tax Man!)

*Based on \$50,000 annual income in Australia



RETIRED SCHOOL BUS HELPS PREVENT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

After 10 years of running the Donate Your Car® program, Kids Under Cover has received their first bus donation.

'Doughie' the school bus had been the flagship of Tim and Sharon Phelan's Bairnsdale bus company for 17 years. When it was time for the cherished bus to retire, it was important for them both to give her to a good cause. "Doughie carted school kids around for years, so I think

MARKING HOMELESSNESS WEEK – CHOICE HOTELS SUPPORT KIDS UNDER COVER

Choice Hotels employees, franchisees and supply partners continue their commitment to providing safe accommodation for young Australians and have been active in helping us create studios from the ground up!

During National Homelessness Week 2016, Choice Hotels donated \$2 from every room booked. The campaign raised \$60,000, ensuring the provision of another studio with Choice Hotels employees as volunteer builders.

“Every young person deserves a safe place to sleep at night,” explains Trent Fraser, CEO of Choice Hotels Asia-Pac. “Our goal for 2016 was to enable more at-risk young people to live in a comfortable and protected environment.”

We are extremely grateful of the support we receive from Choice Hotels, and were very excited to have long time Kids Under Cover supporter and patron, Daryl Somers OAM there on the night. Thank you to everyone involved with the campaign.



MATT TAYLOR, KERRY BUTCHER, DARYL SOMERS OAM AND TRENT FRASER

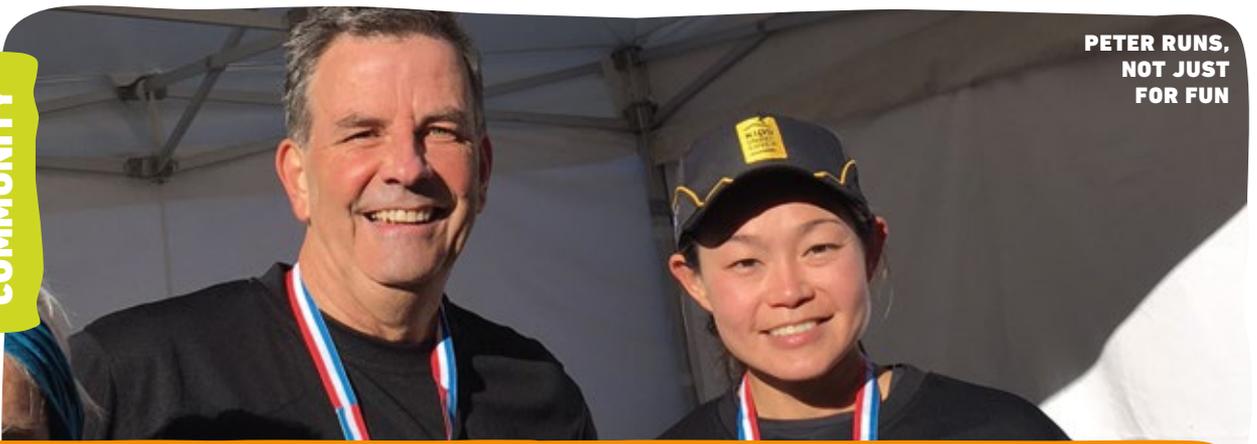
it’s great that she is going to continue to help kids”, Sharon says. By choosing to donate the bus to Kids Under Cover, the Phelans will help support disadvantaged youth at risk of homelessness.

With many fond memories, Sharon remembers the 2000 Sydney Olympic games as an absolute highlight. “A lot of buses in Victoria went up to help with transport, and we carried a lot of athletes around, including some of the Australian swimming team. She put in a good effort.” ‘Doughie’ has been a school bus all her life but according to Sharon, she could have other hidden talents. “Mechanically, she’s

reliable – she could be turned into a good motor home, for example” says Sharon.

CEO Jo Swift and her team are incredibly thankful for the bus donation – a very exciting first for Kids Under Cover. With more than 12,000 donations, which also includes boats, vans and now buses, the program has a big impact on our work. “All the sale proceeds are used to help at-risk young people stay connected to home and education,” says Jo.

Visit kuc.org.au or donateyourcar.org.au or email donateyourcar@kuc.org.au to find out more about how you can make a donation to the Donate Your Car® program.



THANK YOU FOR RUN(NING) MELBOURNE

A team of 25 runners took to the streets of Melbourne in support of Kids Under Cover at Run Melbourne in July. A cold, crisp morning made for perfect running conditions and a motivated and excited team ensured a terrific day was enjoyed by all.

The team had a \$10,000 fundraising goal and were determined to surpass that come race day. A final fundraising push post event resulted in the Kids Under Cover team exceeding that goal and raising over \$11,500. Long-time supporter Peter Lee contributed \$3,000 of the funds raised, participating in his third Run Melbourne event in support of Kids Under Cover.

Peter said, "Working for Porter Davis has given me great insight into the important work Kids Under Cover do. For me they are the best charity we have supported and being a Melbourne-based charity makes it even better. So when you put this great cause together with a fun run it's a no-brainer for me to get involved."

Peter has raised over \$5,000 for Kids Under Cover since taking part in his first Run Melbourne 10km event in 2013. In 2014 Peter took on the challenge of the half marathon and completed another half marathon this year.

We truly appreciate the support of our community fundraisers like Peter and

encourage others to take on a challenge and raise money to help us prevent youth homelessness. We will support you every step of the way, from signing up for the event and setting up your fundraising page to supplying you with a Kids Under Cover CoolDry running t-shirt and cap.

"The support I received in the lead up to the event was awesome," said Peter, "and the Kids Under Cover team were even there on race day to cheer me on."

Special mention also to Martin Murley who also participates in Run Melbourne. This year was to be his fifth, but a family celebration in Cootamundra meant he would miss the event. This didn't stop him from taking on the 10km challenge and raising funds for Kids Under Cover. Martin organised Run Cootamundra, through the small Riverina town, and was joined by some 30 family members on the day! Martin not only achieved a PB for his run, but also exceeded his fundraising goal raising over \$1,700.

Why not challenge yourself with the City2Sea event on Sunday 20 November. Join the Kids Under Cover team and participate in the 15km or 5km run.

Contact fundraise@kuc.org.au for more information.

CUBBY HOUSE CHALLENGE PROVIDES COLLABORATIONS FOR DOING GOOD

Following on from the success of this year's auction, we were delighted to hear about the journey one of the cubbies has since taken.

Fairhaven Homes "Funhouse" cubby was bought by a loyal supporter of Kids Under Cover, the Portland House Foundation, who have since donated the cubby to the Inner North Community Foundation.

The Inner North Community Foundation is an independent community foundation with a vision of a prosperous, connected, cohesive community within Melbourne's inner north.

The Foundation placed the cubby with the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury. The League is primarily concerned with Aboriginal welfare issues and the preservation of Aboriginal culture and heritage. They provide a number of services to Koorie people, including

family support, food assistance, home visits, advocacy, counselling and educational programs, drug and alcohol awareness and funeral services.

Kids Under Cover CEO Jo Swift said the collaboration between so many diverse organisations, from the initial teaming of builders and designers, through to the final placement of Fairhaven's cubby demonstrated the power of collaboration and partnerships to unlock the potential for bringing about change.

"It is heartening to see what can be achieved when like-minded people come together," said Jo Swift.

SAVE THE DATE
2017 Cubby House Challenge
29 March – 2 April 2017
cubbyhousechallenge.org.au



COLOURFUL CUBBY LIVES ON



WARM HEARTS IN WINTER

The response to our recent Winter Appeal demonstrated that despite the cold, there was no hibernation for our generous supporters. Thank you to everyone who kindly donated.

Kids Under Cover studio and scholarship recipient Brittnie shared her story of triumph despite a tough start.

Just five years ago, Brittnie was stressed, exhausted and worried about her future. A studio provided Brittnie and her brother with desperately needed space, and Brittnie's life changed forever.

When we told Brittnie that our supporters donated more than \$46,000 during the Winter Appeal, her natural exuberance showed. *"Oh my God! That's bloody amazing! I can't even begin to comprehend people's generosity! It warms my heart that everyday people care about such an important cause!"* she said.

"Please tell the donors that they are actually making a difference, they're not just donating money and never hearing about it and nothing happens; that money has the ability to change somebody's life completely."

Your generosity enables us to continue to make a difference to people like Brittnie and her family, thank you.

DISADVANTAGE FORGES A LEGACY

The nature of our work in youth homelessness means we bear witness to some heartbreaking circumstances endured by young people. However, we are constantly buoyed by the generosity of others – frequently those who have experienced challenging circumstances themselves.

Kevin* was born in 1926. Having spent most of his life in and out of a religious mission in 1944, 18-year-old Kevin enlisted in the air force, serving for four years before returning to civilian life as a house painter working across country Victoria, his newly-bought motor bike his main passion.

At the age of 24, Kevin started his own business. Thus continuing a long life characterised by a strong work ethic.

Kevin passed away in 2015. His Will was testament to his many friendships, his generosity, and the impact of his challenging upbringing. He left significant monetary gifts to over 30 friends, but in addition, he also specified gifts to 11 charities, including Kids Under Cover.

Gifts in Wills are often a surprise to a charity, tinged equally with gratitude and sadness. It is always a privilege for us to be entrusted with such a gift to continue the fight against youth homelessness.

Kevin's legacy has benefited many young people who have had challenging starts to life.

For more information about leaving a gift in your Will, please email bequests@kuc.org.au or call Martin on **03 9429 744** for a confidential conversation.

*Name changed and identifying elements modified to protect privacy.





**IF UNDELIVERED
PLEASE RETURN TO**

PO Box 5141
Burnley Vic 3121

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

**kuc.org.au
1800 801 633**

THIS SPACE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY KIDS UNDER COVER.

By providing living space to young people at risk of homelessness, Kids Under Cover gives them the opportunity to pursue a better life.

**READ HOW OUR SPACES PREVENT
YOUNG PEOPLE BECOMING HOMELESS.**

KUC.ORG.AU

