

FEARLESS, FLEXIBLE AND FOREVER FEMINIST!



Acknowledgement of Country

Bonnie Support Services acknowledges the Cabrogal clan of the Darug Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our organisation is situated. We extend our acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of this nation on which we call home. We pay our deepest respects to Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. Bonnie's is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders holistic, cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas.

Vietnamese

Dịch vụ hỗ trợ của Bonnie công nhận tộc Cabrogal của Quốc gia Darug là những Người giám hộ truyền thống của vùng đất mà tổ chức của chúng tôi đặt trụ sở. Chúng tôi mở rộng sự công nhận của chúng tôi đối với tất cả các dân tộc Thổ dân và Cư dân trên eo biển Torres Strait với tư cách là Chủ sở hữu truyền thống của quốc gia mà chúng tôi gọi là quê hương này. Chúng tôi bày tỏ lòng kính trọng sâu sắc nhất tới Tổ tiên và các bậc cao niên, trong quá khứ, hiện tại và mới nổi. Bonnie's cam kết tôn vinh những người Thổ dân Úc và Cư dân trên đảo Torres Strait có mối quan hệ toàn diện, văn hóa và tinh thần với đất liền, vùng nước và vùng biển..

Hindi

बोनी सपोर्ट सर्विसेज दारुग राष्ट्र के कैब्रोगल कबीले को उस भूमि के पारंपरिक संरक्षक के रूप में स्वीकार करती है जिस पर हमारा संगठन स्थित है। हम सभी आदिवासी और टोरेस स्ट्रेट आइलैंडर लोगों को इस देश के पारंपरिक मालिकों के रूप में अपनी स्वीकृति देते हैं, जिसे हम घर कहते हैं। हम पूर्वजों और बड़ों, अतीत, वर्तमान और उम्रते हुए लोगों के प्रति अपना गहरा सम्मान देते हैं। बोनीज ॲस्ट्रेलियाई आदिवासी और टोरेस स्ट्रेट आइलैंडर्स को भूमि, जल और समुद्र के समग्र, सांस्कृतिक और आध्यात्मिक संबंधों का सम्मान करने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं।

Arabic

تقى خدمات دعم Bonnie في الأبناء التقليديون للأرض التي تقع عليها منظمتنا. نقدم اعترافنا لجميع السكان الأصليين وسكان جزر مضيق توريس بصفتهم المالكين التقليديين لهذه الأمة التي نسميتها الوطن. نقدر أعمق الاحترام للأجداد والشيوخ ، في الماضي والحاضر والناشئ. تلتزم Bonnie's بتكرييم العلاقات الشاملة والثقافية والروحية للسكان الأصليين الأستراليين وسكان جزر مضيق توريس مع الأرض والمياه والبحار.

Urdu

بونی سپورٹ سروز داروگ قوم کے کبڑوں کل قبیلے کو اس زمین کے روایتی محافظت کے طور پر تسلیم کرتی ہے جس پر بماری تنظیم واقع ہے۔ ہم تمام قبائلی اور ٹورس آپنائے کے جزیرے کے لوگوں کو اس قوم کے روایتی مالک کے طور پر اپنا اعتراف دیتے ہیں جس پر بھر کہتے ہیں۔ ہم اپنے بزرگوں اور بزرگوں ، ماضی ، حال اور ابھرتے ہوئے کو انتہائی احترام کرتے ہیں۔ بونی آسٹریلین ایبورجینل اور ٹورس آپنائے کے جزیروں کو زمین ، پانیوں اور سمندروں کے جامع ، تفافی اور روحانی رشتہوں کا احترام کرنے کے لیے پر عزم ہے۔

Serbian

Бонни Суппорт Сервицес признаје Цаброгал клан Дарушке нације као традиционалне чуваре земље на којој се налази наша организација. Изражавамо признање свим Аборицинима и оточанима у Торесовом пролазу као традиционалним власницима ове нације коју називамо домом. Одајемо најдубље поштовање прецима и старешинама, прошлим, садашњим и новим. Бонније се залаже за поштовање холистичких, културних и духовних односа Аустралије Аборицина и острва Торрес Страт са копном, водама и морима.

Chinese

Bonnie Support Services 承认 Darug 民族的 Cabrogal 氏族是我们组织所在土地的传统监护人。我们向所有原住民和托雷斯海峡岛民表示感谢，他们是这个我们称之为家的国家的传统所有者。我们向过去、现在和新兴的祖先和长老致以最深切的敬意。 Bonnie's 致力于表彰澳大利亚原住民和托雷斯海峡岛民与陆地、水域和海洋的整体、文化和精神关系。

Spanish

Bonnie Support Services reconoce al clan Cabrogal de la Nación Darug como los Custodios Tradicionales de la tierra en la que se encuentra nuestra organización. Extendemos nuestro reconocimiento a todos los pueblos aborígenes e isleños del Estrecho de Torres como propietarios tradicionales de esta nación a la que llamamos hogar. Presentamos nuestro más profundo respeto a los Ancestrales y Ancianos, pasados, presentes y emergentes. Bonnie's se compromete a honrar las relaciones holísticas, culturales y espirituales de los aborígenes australianos y los isleños del Estrecho de Torres con la tierra, las aguas y los mares.

Contents



Artwork by Gooreng Gooreng/Kabi Kabi Family Worker Peta
Link: ***This artwork is about women coming together, sharing their stories and rising again.***



by women and *with* women

Executive Officer's Report	2
From our Chair, Betty Green	4
Program Manager's Report	5
Fearless, flexible and forever feminist!	6
We are Bonnie's!	7
Dream team	8
Working better, together	9
It takes a village	10
Housing is a human right	11
Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE)	12
Outreach: just a phone call away	14
Helping more women in the time of COVID	15
Welcome Hiroko	16
Continuing on our path to Reconciliation	17
Aunty Bonnie's	19
Creative Space	21
Kids Space	22
Hindi and Urdu Women's Health Group	23
The Shark Cage	24
Women supporting women	25
6 years of support	28
The Bonnie's Road to Safety	29
Our highlights	30
From the Blog	34
A Statistical Snapshot	35
Our Board	36
Organisational Chart	37
Five Year Financial Summary	38
Donors and Supporters 2021-22	39

Executive Officer's Report



Despite pandemic and floods, we have made it through 2021-22 with flying colours. Remarkably, we have even emerged stronger and with a

new understanding of how we can creatively reach and support the women and children who come to us.

It has been quite a year for the whole community (not to mention the world) and due to our location in south-west Sydney, in the so-called "LGAs of concern" we faced additional challenges.

We balanced working from home and in the office alongside on-site COVID clinics to ensure access to vaccination for as many people as we could. During the periods of lockdown, we were able to work remotely and still provide case management, groups for women and children, crisis and tenancy services, and strong advocacy in new ways to ensure that women and children felt safe and supported. The ability of the staff to be flexible in the way

they work has been so important and I want to acknowledge their great work in dealing with domestic violence and their commitment to the women and children who are impacted.

I am grateful for the funds allocated to provide additional brokerage support to women and children who were impacted by COVID and were unable to make ends meet. Grants for infrastructure projects, IT upgrades, additional outreach services, new groups and pet support

“

The ability of the staff to be flexible in the way they work has been so important and I want to acknowledge their great work in dealing with domestic violence and their commitment to the women and children who are impacted.

have all added value. (Yes, you read that right! Pet support.) A partnership with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been most fruitful and has brought more Japanese women to the service to deal with the impact of domestic violence.

We have been able to build on the previous years' work on our social media and use it to prove our impact, relevance and share what we know. Our audience has grown way above our expectations and in particular, we are reaching more young people through our beautiful and passionate Instagram page.

As a feminist service, we have women at the centre of all we do, so we didn't let the pandemic stop us from celebrating International Women's Day together this year. It's always an important date on our calendar and so a lunch with all the staff was a much needed and enjoyable respite. It was equally important for us to participate in a candlelight vigil to honour and pay our respects to the women and children who had been killed, in acts of violence, in the previous year. The pandemic has made it much more difficult for women living in dangerous situations to access service and support. The extra outreach services we have provided during this time have helped bridge the gap to bring more women out of unsafe situations and to safety.

Partnerships with other services continue to be key to providing seamless service provision and I would like to acknowledge the valuable role that these organisations play in our work. Our partners provide support through direct service provision, material aid, assistance with housing and maintenance. Thanks for your contribution.

The high cost of private rental and the shortage of public and social housing continue to be some of the greatest hurdles we face. Finding secure, sustainable accommodation is an ongoing barrier

to stability for many people so when women successfully leave our service to go into their new home, we share the joy. A secure home needs to be within the reach of all of us, not a luxury for some.

I am proud to say we have been able to reach many more women and children in this past year at a time of such great need. I believe the staff of Bonnie's have done this fearlessly and flexibly to ensure the best outcomes for the women and children we serve. I sincerely thank the staff at Bonnie's for their work and the women and children who trust us to support them at such a vulnerable time in their lives. Thanks to the ongoing support of the Board of Directors and all who assist us to provide the best support we can to help women to safety.

Tracy Phillips
EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Some of the Bonnie's team.

From our Chair, Betty Green



It has been a year of challenges and a year of wonder: another year punctuated with the management, and impact, of COVID-19.

And as the Board considers the achievements of Bonnie's, we are very proud of the strength and resilience of the team, their professionalism and commitment, throughout the pandemic.

The extended period of lockdowns of south-west Sydney LGAs continued to present particular challenges for staff and clients in maintaining much needed engagement without face-to-face contact. The harsher measures associated with the extended Delta wave lockdown added to the pressures for a crisis service like ours including the inevitable difficulties for some clients adapting to the absence of face-to-face contact.

The subsequent Omicron wave over the December-January period presented new and additional challenges: stretching us in managing staff illness and maintaining services. Our partnerships and networking are critical components in providing the holistic approach of Bonnie's woman-centred service. On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to our partners. In particular, I would like to thank the Local Health District for their support in providing outreach / mobile vaccination clinics for staff, clients and their families. On-site access provides opportunities for women and their families to receive important services in a safe, and comfortable environment. Our partnership with Women's Legal NSW continues to ensure access to important legal services and information for women in our community.

The latter part of the reporting period has many of our staff returning on-site with the resumption of groups and outreach services. The Board continues to be amazed by the leadership and achievements throughout the year. Examples are the recent funding of a specialist position by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the establishment of a NILS project funded in partnership with Good

Shepherd. Both affirm the expertise, reputation and skills of Bonnie's staff as a service of excellence.

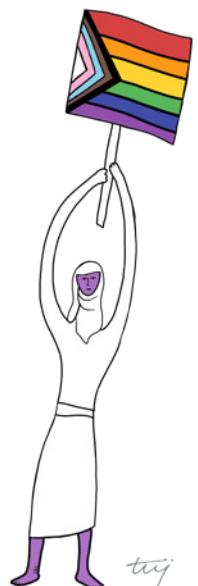
On behalf of the Board, I wish to extend our appreciation of donors who have so generously supported Bonnie's. We are grateful for the ongoing support of Sydney Women's Fund, Street Smart, MFS. These funds assist in providing important services such as arts based and therapeutic group work programs and the development of our next Reconciliation Action Plan. Thank you also to Habitat for Humanity for again assisting us to maintain our properties so they are welcoming, safe and comfortable landing spaces for our families.

I would also like to offer a special thank you to recently retired MP Mr Chris Hayes for his interest in and support of Bonnie's over a number of years. Chris has been a tireless supporter mentioning Bonnie's work and leadership in many Parliamentary speeches. He has been an active anti-violence campaigner in speaking out about men's violence against women and children.

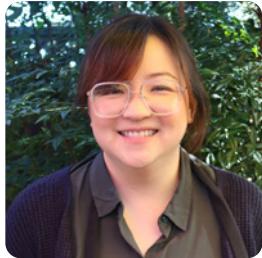
Thank you to the Department of Communities and Justice for their continued support. The Board and staff look forward to the year ahead as we continue to build a strong, dynamic, best practice and leading compassionate women's service in south-west Sydney.

Finally, I wish to thank my fellow Board members for their continued commitment and support in volunteering their skills, time and expertise. Governance is a team effort and it's a pleasure working with you all. On behalf of the Board thank you to Bonnie's staff for your dedication and passion in supporting women and children affected by domestic violence and a special thank you to our Executive Officer Tracy Phillips in providing the leadership and energy that is crucial to the quality and impact of what we do.

Betty Green
CHAIR



Program Manager's Report



As our agency grows, we are asked by more people about what we do here at Bonnie's and why our work matters.

They're not asking in terms of why eliminating domestic violence matters but rather, how the work we do day to

day creates an impact and change within the system as a whole. Luckily, I only have to start telling the stories of our programs for them to find the answer!

The world can look a little different depending on where you work. At Bonnie's, it is a world where we see women's resistance to control and harm. We see our job as being revealers, challengers of perpetrator narratives, clarifiers and contesters. We do this so often that our work is a part of us. Actually, from our very beginnings nearly 50 years ago, it has always been a part of us. We bring it to work every day.

When I first started in this sector, I worked in a case management role supporting a woman. We went to the bank and we went to Centrelink; I wrote support letters to advocate on her behalf which she approved before I sent them off. We chatted a whole lot and we laughed (though it took her a while to laugh again). Years later she visited me and reminded me of our conversations in those early days. She said she values these conversations because, over time, she recognised that I did not want anything in return. Conversations were just that, conversations.

Some people will label us as "difficult women" because we challenge how society sees women's role in the world. We're proud to challenge thinking, languages, and social attitudes. The most important thing is that to the women we work with, we are not "difficult" but women who listen to the stories they want, and need, to tell. Sometimes we advocate on the women's behalf, and sometimes the women advocate for themselves. Always we are advocating together.

The thing is, we do not want to be "difficult" at all. We do this because the women who come to us tell us stories about their abuser's tactics. How their

abuser minimised, concealed, obscured, blamed, changed the narrative, manipulated, and used other people to make it impossible for the women to reveal the oppression and abuse. We see our work here as communicators to other professionals and communities about recognizing women's resistance. Only through the women's resistance can we identify the true cost the abuser's ongoing tactics and violence have, and the repercussions for their family, their community and a safe society as a whole.

Now with a team of more than 30 staff, we have almost tripled in size since I started at Bonnie's. Amazingly, this has not eased the need and demand for our work. This year we again faced a higher volume of referrals and we supported more women and children.

We are thankful as a team that we are flexible, adaptable and solution focused because when the end of the year comes, we always look back and wonder how we did it all.

Of course, we don't do it alone. Having support makes our work possible. We want to make Bonnie's a place where women, at this crucial and very dangerous time in their lives, don't have to sit on waiting lists before they can access the services they need. Our ongoing partnerships allow us not just to work in collaboration between agencies but together. The workers that join us weekly become part of the foundation and a movement to eliminate violence against women and children.

We are thankful for the in-house outreach from Women's Legal Services, Services Australia – Centrelink, Department of Communities and Justice – Housing, The Salvation Army – Financial Team, and Good Shepherd – NILS Program.

We love working together, not to be difficult, but to make life less difficult.

An Le
PROGRAM MANAGER

“

It actually doesn't take much to be considered a difficult woman. That's why there are so many of us.

JANE GOODALL

WE ARE BONNIE'S

Fearless, flexible and forever feminist!

FEARLESS

because of the courage, strength and resilience that Bonnie's women embody every day.

FLEXIBLE

because of the ways we continue to creatively adapt to help more women.

FOREVER FEMINIST

because our rich feminist history makes us who we are. Bonnie's has almost been running for 47 years and we are still here.



Our philosophy

Bonnie's operates within a feminist philosophy and an unshakeable belief that women and children have the right to be safe and feel free. All women deserve access to services which enable them to be autonomous, independent and self-determining.

Our vision is for a world where women and children flourish and reach their full potential.



Our commitment

Our commitment to safety is based on principles of social justice, equity and provides:

- ➊ An environment which values each person's right to be heard.
- ➋ An environment that acknowledges the importance of every woman and every child's story.
- ➌ A professional quality service that facilitates reciprocal learning, respects differences, recognises and supports each person's knowledge, experience and right to self-determination.
- ➍ A deep respect and understanding for each person's cultural background, language and religious beliefs.

WE ARE YOU, AND WE ARE HERE!

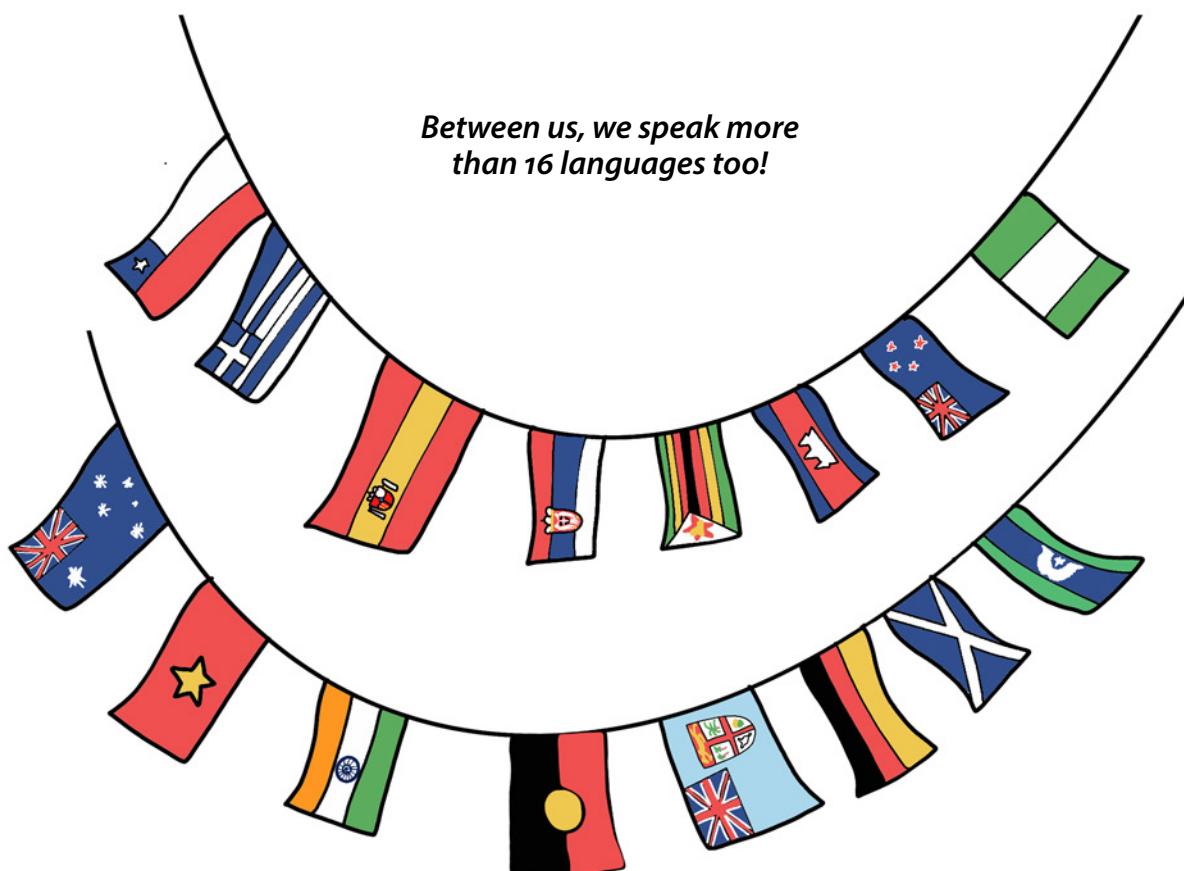
We are Bonnie's!

What we do

Bonnie's provides support and/or accommodation for women and their children who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or escaping domestic violence. We work to enhance women's skills, knowledge and capacities with a range of services that allow women to make informed choices and enhance their opportunities. Bonnie's supports women to develop supportive and trusting relationships, self-management skills and accountability thus enhancing confidence and living skills.

Who we are

All staff at Bonnie's collectively have a total of 44 qualifications among 23 women ranging from Certificates to Master's Degrees. Most of the staff at Bonnie's are also either mothers themselves, or aunties to beautiful nieces and nephews to whom they help impart all their wisdom. There is a list of the myriad of qualifications running around on any given day at Bonnie's on our website. This diversity in experience and skill make Bonnie's a place with a wealth of knowledge in this sector. It keeps getting better and better as a few staff members are studying for even more qualifications.



WE ARE BONNIE'S

Dream team

Community Worker Story

When women first arrive or ring into Bonnie's it's the intake team they meet.

We've got a wonderful team, Alison, Sue and Fiona who then connect our clients with everything they'll need. This is the essential beginning of a woman's journey to safety.



Alison, what's the best part of the job and why?

"Meeting the women who come into Bonnie's. Often a woman's first contact with a service like ours is quite stressful. She is extremely

vulnerable and in a place of fear. But once she knows the options available to her things turn around quite quickly. I find this very inspirational. These women are incredibly strong, especially considering the disempowerment they have experienced – in some cases for many years. I notice with many of our clients that once they are out of survival mode, they just flourish."



Sue, is there something about us as an organisation or a team that has made you particularly proud this year?

"There's a sense of pride and happiness when we take a new client into their room in the refuge. Our Environment Officer, Marcela, always makes the rooms look very welcoming with two beds made up, beautiful donated throws and toiletries etc on the beds. It's a huge emotional moment for the women – finally a safe place to put their heads down and know that their children are safe. We also are able to provide them with frozen pre-cooked meals, an intake hamper (long life food) and vouchers if needed. We provide them with a box of Oz Harvest food and groceries each Friday. This way the women don't have to leave the refuge immediately to get supplies. They can just relax if that's what they want to do."

"I'm also always proud of our amazing team, who can work cooperatively, flexibly and quickly to support women."



Fiona, has anything changed or happened this year that's meant you needed, or wanted, to change the way you work? What's the story behind that?

"I started during lock-down and had no sense of what had been lost with the ending of group activities and face to face meetings. It's been fantastic to see the organisation come back to life post pandemic! It feels so vibrant and dynamic with clients and all staff back in the building!"



WE ARE BONNIE'S

Working better, together

Family Worker Story

It's no secret that the last two years have taken its toll on everyone in Australia, especially our vulnerable communities. As Family Workers it's our job to make sure vulnerable women and children don't fall through the cracks and they get the help they need.

In the last year, we have seen more women arriving with complex situations and needs. The rental and cost of living crisis has put a strain on many families trying to find safe and affordable housing. As a domestic violence and homelessness service, we understand the importance of having a place to call your own. We also know how hard it is to heal when you don't know where you are going to sleep every night. With the support of other housing organisations and the amazing work of Tenancy Officers we are able to make this happen.

We wear many different hats in our role as Family Workers and no day in the job looks the same. Just like no person's experience of domestic violence and homelessness is the same.

A highlight for me this year has been in helping one of my more complex clients receive priority housing. This woman who left a dv relationship,

has four children and many trauma associated health problems. The deterioration of her physical health meant she had expensive specialist bills that Medicare couldn't cover and she struggled to work. When she arrived at Bonnie's she had nowhere else to go. I advocated hard for her, not only because she is my client but because she represents women we are seeing more here. She is now able to receive extra support from the Department of Communities & Justice. It's us all working together that can make the biggest difference!

I've been pleased to see how adaptable and flexible the team of Bonnie's has been since I've started working here. COVID-19 presented us with many challenges, but it also refocused our priorities and values. Bonnie's is alive and always evolving and learning. It's been great to see that the team and management are open and adaptive on how we can do things better. Growing and learning as a team is what will make us strong.

Written from a conversation with Family Worker, Anyce

“

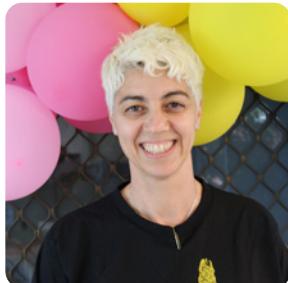
We wear many different hats in our role as Family Workers and no day in the job looks the same. Just like no person's experience of domestic violence and homelessness is the same.



WE ARE BONNIE'S

It takes a village

Story from Child and Youth Workers Marryanne and Adelle



Marryanne



Adelle

We work alongside Family Workers in ensuring that families, especially the kids, have our 100% support. This includes providing assistance to refer children to other services such as schools, childcare and healthcare.

COVID-19 presented many new challenges for parents. Kids were stuck at home with no opportunities to see friends, play or go to school... and parents? Well, all of a sudden they were teachers too! We were able to support our parents by dropping off arts and craft supplies and activities during the term and in the holidays. We also answered any questions related to parenting and homeschooling... Our year 6 maths was a bit rusty, but we always got there in the end. Emotional support was what Mums really needed.

A lot of the schooling activities were online, and some families didn't have access to computers or couldn't afford wifi. We helped source these things for families and also made sure to contact the school to make them aware of the sometimes tough situations at home. This way we are creating a community of support for women and their children. Because it really does take a village!

Something that was really helpful for many of our women was the Virtual Parent Support Space on Zoom last year. This was a place for women to come together and talk about parenting, seek advice and share stories. One woman, Sophie* said she didn't usually socialise with others due to her anxiety but these Zoom meetings were a stepping stone to where she is today. She said she found the connections with other Mums helpful, identifying that otherwise she would only have had her children to speak to. She described how Zoom allowed her to put a face to the names of other women in our service and made it easier for her to socialise with other parents. For example, when she attended Bonnie's office for vaccinations she said it was easier to speak with the other Mums having met them on Zoom previously.

Written from conversations with Child and Youth Workers Marryanne and Adelle

“

Hi Marryanne,

Just wanted to say thank you so much for today! The children and I couldn't stop talking about the fun we had and really I'm so grateful for the support Bonnie's provided. My world doesn't seem so small and the thoughts of being alone and going through depression have lifted. I have been so grateful to the many lovely people surrounding me, which sustains me and yes that means you!

— CLIENT

WE ARE BONNIE'S

Housing is a human right

Tenancy Officer Story

Women experiencing homelessness and leaving domestic violence need housing no matter the circumstances out there. Throughout the pandemic, we were still here doing what we do – helping women find somewhere safe and comfortable to live. Being able to help families and provide that assistance is so satisfying. Housing is so important. It's a human right to have a roof over your head. It's very important for the kids too. They need stability in order to flourish.

What we did this year

We had 23 new tenancies in our transitional properties during the year and 39 in our crisis accommodation. That's not including the 7 properties our partner Hume Housing saves exclusively for our clients. We also have a four bedroom house where we can house families who are on visas. We supported four visa clients at one time. We did a lot!

What have you been proud of this year?

The ability to keep running our service during the hard time of the pandemic was a big achievement in itself. Yes we did reduce staff in the office and we restricted what work we did but we still ran our service. And we're so proud we were able to do that.

What's the best part of the job?

We've got an amazing team. Yes, it's just Bianca and I but we work so well together that we feel bigger! We know each other's strengths and support each other. Seeing the women's faces when we take them out and show them the properties is wonderful. And hearing things like "OMG now I can start my life and set myself up." That's pretty wonderful too.



Housing is so important. It's a human right to have a roof over your head.

Written from conversations with Bianca and Dragana



WE ARE BONNIE'S

Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE)



Georgia



Nonye

Georgia and Nonye both work on the DVRE team and they sat down together to talk about the past year.

GEORGIA: So, Nonye, as you are one of the newer team members, can you remember what made you decide to work with us?

NONYE: While I was job scouting, I saw this opportunity at Bonnie's and decided to go onto the website just to get to know more about the organisation. I read through all the information but the one thing that stood out to me most was the 'Our staff' section. The diversity was/is everything! I saw that Bonnie's wasn't only preaching diversity but putting it into practice. Did you know the staff speak about 16+ languages? There is also such

diversity in knowledge, expertise, and skills and this was all spelt out on the website. I felt I already knew my colleagues before attending the interview. The cultural diversity and trauma informed practices Bonnie's puts in place is what makes working here a genuinely great place to be.

GEORGIA: How do you describe our team, and the work we do?

NONYE: The Domestic Violence Response Enhancement (DVRE) program at Bonnie's provides weekend, after hours crisis support to women and children experiencing domestic violence. These families might have just left a violent relationship

or are wanting support while still in it. It's crucial support. We assist women with temporary accommodation, safety planning information, housing support and advocacy, court support. And access to specialist domestic violence services such as victim services, support with visas and immigration referrals and more.

GEORGIA: Is there something that you find really challenging about our job?

NONYE: Oh my, yes. Working on the frontline supporting families in crisis, there are plenty of challenging things we see and hear. Some of the stories can be really difficult and as a self-reflective person I tend to internalise them. But while these stories are hard to hear, they're always accompanied with important reflections and learnings. Like seeing the power of human resilience. Having a supportive team, and creating my own self-care practices, is important because I certainly want to remain in this sector.

GEORGIA: In the last few months, can you tell me about a time that you thought, 'Oh yeah, this is really working. We should be doing this!'

NONYE: DVRE worked with a client who came into our service through a friend of hers. This client was in a severe domestic violence relationship with her then husband. She was a bit stuck – on the one hand she wanted the abuse to end and her freedom and independence back but on the other she was scared about the consequences of leaving. This is a very common mixture of feelings that most of the women we work with go through. However, with the help of her amazing friend who continuously encouraged her to connect with us, the DVRE team were able to get her and her children out of the house and into her own home. We sourced furniture and other home items and provided Housing and Centrelink advocacy. She said to us that she "never knew a day would come when I would feel safe and secure in my home and more optimistic about the future." And now she does!



The DVRE team, from left to right: Tanya, Nonye, Ciara and Georgia



Outreach: just a phone call away

*Outreach can offer support to women who are still living with DV or in an unsafe environment.
This is a key difference to our other programs.*



Ebbe

This was the second year of our Outreach program. It was also the second year of living with a pandemic and our outreach program was absolutely crucial in supporting women who were living in unsafe conditions. Most

of this work is done over the phone: we can make personalised safety plans and also offer emotional support over a series of up to 10 – 15 sessions.

Due to the severity of the lockdowns, a lot of women were finding themselves in situations where they just couldn't leave. Not being able to get a job made finances tight and homeschooling kids meant it was more difficult to find the time necessary to plan to leave.

Often the biggest barrier to leaving the violence, was having the perpetrators at home, all day. It was

simply too dangerous to leave. Our personalised safety planning had to be really careful and thorough while also being flexible in finding times that were safe to have phone calls. Despite some of these additional challenges we were still able to help 90 clients.

Many of the women during this time were also just looking for someone to talk to. We provided a lot of emotional support and were constantly reminded by our clients just how good it was to have someone out there that was available and cared for her. In these conversations, we could organise safety planning, victim services, housing, support letters, but we also talk about her dreams and goals for the future.

*Written from a conversation with Ebbe,
Outreach Worker*

This program has been funded by Women NSW and has been a vital service to women, especially during the 2021 COVID-19 lockdown.

Supporting Sarah

Sarah* was on the run from her partner and she had already moved a lot to find safety – different suburbs, different states. She changed where she slept most nights and couldn't make it into Bonnie's. The Outreach program was great for her because throughout it all I was able to call her wherever she was and provide her with my unwavering support.

We created a safety plan, I got her housing, I connected her with the 'Dress for Success' support so she could get clothes for her job interview, Centrelink and helped her find some domestic violence counselling. And I did this all over the phone.

This was her first step to safety, and the first is always the hardest and can be the most dangerous. There are many barriers to women seeking help but the Outreach program aims to make the transition between staying and leaving safer and better. This way we can help women who aren't ready to come to a refuge, or who aren't ready to leave.

Adelle, Outreach Worker

*Not her real name

SPOTLIGHT – OUTREACH

Helping more women in the time of COVID



Mel

This financial year Bonnie's applied for and received a fantastic grant from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to provide some emergency relief support to people experiencing hardship due to COVID.

We had to move quickly, the money came through fast and people needed help right away.

We developed a streamlined referral and intake process so we could make things as easy as possible for clients to access support. We created a flyer and started getting the word out... and then the referrals started coming, and coming and coming! We had families with rental payments, bills they couldn't pay and lots of people who simply needed help buying food and medicine. There was also a lot of emotional support needed for women who were scared and isolated.

One particular story stands out to me. A young mum who had just recovered from COVID but was still in isolation and hadn't been able to work for 2 weeks.

Have you been impacted by Covid?

We can help!

We can help with groceries, bills, rent and other financial support for women and children.

Call our Covid Response Team

Monday - Friday
9.00am - 4.30pm

Mel: 0437 426 627
Georgia: 0400 215 627

She was crying on the phone and explained to me that she had just given her baby the very last scoop of formula and she had absolutely no money left. She wasn't sure how she was going to feed her baby that night, let alone herself. We of course went into action mode and arranged a grocery voucher for her, however knowing it would take time for a grocery delivery to get to her we also picked up the formula she needed as well as some other essentials and dropped it to her door that afternoon.

We kept risks as low as possible for our team, doing most work over the phone. There were however a few occasions where we had to suit up in PPE and manage risk as best we could, at the end of the day making sure families had what they needed had to come first.



It was a very busy time for us and the paperwork felt endless! I personally could not have gotten through this program without the support of our amazing team at Bonnie's and I thank every one of the women I work with for their help and kindness. What we were able to achieve for so many women and their children in a few short months was incredible and we are so grateful for this funding to help some of the most at-risk people in our communities get through a very difficult time.

My main takeaway from this whole experience is that when a crisis such as COVID hits, the vulnerable are hit the hardest and help cannot come fast enough. I hope that whatever comes next for us be it floods, fires or pandemic we will be ready to take care of each other!

Written by Mel, COVID Outreach Worker and Family Worker

SPOTLIGHT

Welcome Hiroko

"I see the law as a woman's metaphorical sword and Bonnie's support as the shield to protect her – because she needs both hands to fight."

HIROKO

In 2022 we received funding to employ a Japanese worker to work directly with Japanese women needing support in NSW. And with that funding, we welcomed a new caseworker, Hiroko!

HIROKO: Before I began working, the Consulate General of Japan sent out messages to various agencies across NSW informing them that Bonnie's was soon going to have a new Japanese caseworker helping women who have experienced domestic violence.

So on my first day on the job, I had a call from one woman seeking help and 2 emails in my inbox from others. They all had questions like: "Am I experiencing domestic violence in this relationship?" and, "Can you help connect me with help?" It became immediately apparent that my help was needed. Language and lack of understanding of

the Australian legal and social service system can hinder a lot of women in receiving the appropriate care and support and that's where I come in. A lot of my work is to link Japanese women with services like the Women's Legal Service, Centrelink and Housing.

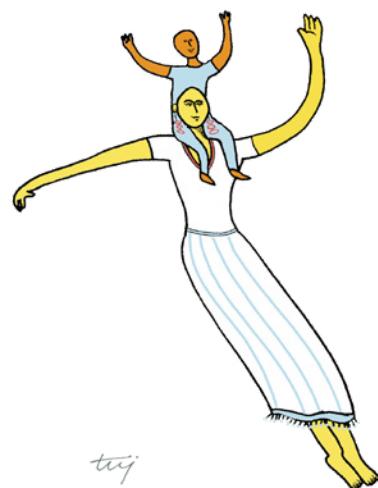
I have been amazed by the access Bonnie's has to these services and the collaboration that goes into helping one woman. For example, it has been so helpful for my clients to receive legal aid from the

Women's Legal Service. Japanese women seeking custody or joint custody in Australia is very different to seeking custody in their home country. In Japan there is no joint custody of children, custody is either given to the mother 100% or the father. So we have to ensure that if a woman wants to go back to Japan she will be able to take her children with her. I see the law as a woman's metaphorical sword and Bonnie's support as the shield to protect her, because she needs both hands to fight.

Written from a conversation with Hiroko

We received this funding from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney. Thank you

ありがとうございました



SPOTLIGHT

Continuing on our path to Reconciliation

We started our Reconciliation Action Plan journey almost 5 years ago and in that time we have greatly benefited from our commitment to learning, healing and providing better care for First Nations families. When thinking of these last 5 years, I reflect on all the big and small ways this learning has made our organisation not only a better place for First Nations women and children, but for us too.

When we began we had no permanent First Nations staff, now we have two full-timers, Peta and Daniella and have welcomed Wendy as our newest board member, joining Karen Beetson. These four provide valuable insight and care for our First Nations clients and have greatly contributed to the building of our

good reputation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Liverpool and Fairfield area. Learning about Aboriginal knowledge and healing practices through programs like Aunty Bonnie's and the safe cultural exchange these women create is a powerful thing to behold and it has ripple effects on how we are with one another at Bonnie's. Proud to share some of the things we did this year...

Sonya and Yatungka

The team got together for a Cultural Awareness Training Day with our friends Sonya and Yatungka. We learned more about Australia's rich Aboriginal



Peta and Daniella

Continuing on our path to Reconciliation – continued



National Sorry Day

and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and the ongoing impact of colonialism. We did some historical truth telling and looked back at important dates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history that are often left out of history books. Thanks again to Sonya and Yatungka.

Sorry Day

National Sorry Day fell the day before the National Reconciliation Week 2022. The theme this year was: Be Brave. Make Change! We commemorated Sorry Day at the Liverpool Council, accompanied by two of our board members Betty and Wendy. Wendy is a First Nations woman and is one of our newest board members. She is such an insightful and valuable member and we are proud to have her in our corner.

Overcoming Indigenous Family Violence Forum

This year 4 members of our team travelled to Melbourne for the Overcoming Indigenous Family Violence Forum, where we were able to come



together in person, to listen to and learn from those working to bring positive change to Indigenous Family Violence. We engaged in panels and yarning circles to speak about our experiences and learn from one another.

Written by/with Georgia and Tracy

PROGRAMS

Aunty Bonnie's



"It's important that the women know they don't have to be artistic to join our group and they don't even have to talk if they don't feel like it. This space is designed so women can just sit together, heal together and know they are not alone."

PETA

Aunty Bonnie's program is a women's healing space led by Gooreng Gooreng/Kabi Kabi woman, artist and Bonnie's Family Worker Peta Link and co-facilitated with mental health professional Darany. This 8 week program is where our clients can come together, connect and learn from one another – yarning, creating and simply being together. We use art as a healing method and as a way for clients to use their hands and maybe get out of their heads. Some of our projects were making candles, sculptures and painting.

After the last two years of lockdowns a lot of our clients experienced extreme isolation and loneliness. We supported them by sending paints, brushes

and canvases so the women in this group could stay connected. We also made sure they received some self-care packages filled with lovely things, such as body butter, lip balm, scented candles and creams. All the things that women wouldn't usually buy for themselves, but were so important during lockdowns.

Keeping connected eased the transition from being home to face to face and once we were back together everyone felt comfortable and excited to be back.



Aunty Bonnie's self-care packages

Aunty Bonnie's – continued



Co-facilitator Darany shares a story:

Getting into nature, learning on country

This is the first time I've been involved in a group like this and it's been so inspiring. I remember one day when I drove one of our participants home, a woman who doesn't speak much English at all, said to me: "I am happy! So happy, happy!" We were driving back from a beautiful day on Darug country where we had gathered natural materials to make artworks. It was a beautiful day of being in nature. I nodded and said 'Me too',

because it was true and the feeling is always mutual.

For many women in this group English is a second language and many are still learning but that doesn't discourage them from coming. This group is a judgement free zone and so diverse. There are 8 of us and we make up 7 different countries and cultural backgrounds. When we come together there is a real powerful but calm female energy where everyone feels supported and accepted.

Working at Bonnie's and in this group has demonstrated to me the incredible benefits of working in a multicultural and feminist organisation. Peta's guidance and the space she creates in healing, generous and welcoming.

Story written from a conversation with Darany

Big thank you to [@good360_australia](#) and [@thebodyshop](#) for all the donations!



PROGRAMS

Creative Space

Flying free, in the Creative Space

After two difficult years, it was our absolute pleasure to finally reunite with women face-to-face in our Creative Space Group. During COVID-19 we delivered craft activities to people's doors and connected with group members via WhatsApp and phone calls. It had been a difficult period for many reasons, as the women of this group had spent a lot of time isolating with their families and had extra obligations like home-schooling. They also couldn't attend TAFE or work which contributed to their feelings of isolation and disconnection. Kids couldn't go out

and see their friends and were home all day, so Mum missed out on extra support from friends and family and valuable time out for herself.

In saying this, it made the coming back together so much sweeter. Many of the participants told us how much they missed the other women and the facilitators. They also missed having this quiet space to relax and connect. We began creating beautiful artworks each week, exploring new ways to express ourselves.

It's incredible the healing power that comes from women sitting together in a safe space.

Our Birds of Hope

The theme for a term this year was "Birds of Hope".

We chose birds because they often symbolise hope and healing across all cultures and spiritualities. Some of our craft and artworks looked at the idea of a bird's nest, as a symbolic way of understanding home and the rebuilding of a family home after perhaps being fractured due to family violence.

We also liked how a bird's ability to fly and soar through the sky can represent freedom, independence and a 'letting go' of any burdens many women have been experiencing in the last two years. Because to be a bird is to be lighter and freer, like women who are now safe from domestic violence.

Bonnie's Creative space has been running for 7 years and is organised by Community Worker Alison, in collaboration with Ruth from Rosebank: Child Sexual Abuse Service.



“

Many of us know the experience of being caged and having our voices silenced, our wings clipped, and our nests broken. We made this book to tell the story of how we have been lovingly rebuilding our nests and learning to fly, sing and soar again.

PROGRAMS

Kids Space

Monsters and Superheroes

This year felt like we could finally see the pandemic in our rearview mirror. After two years of doing the Kids Space remotely, with activities via Zoom and over the phone, it's been great to come together again. Being face-to-face has reminded me of why we began this group in the first place.

Kids Space has been running as an afterschool program for almost four years. It's a 5 week program we hold during every term. We have developed games and craft activities for the children whose Mums have come through Bonnie's. We often pick

them up from their houses, bring them into Bonnie's and drop them off again afterwards. It gives Mum a bit of a break, but really it's just a great way for kids to hang out with other kids. There is so much spoken and unspoken growth that happens during these afternoons. We aim to create spaces where kids feel safe enough to express

themselves, play, and have fun while building up their confidence and communication skills.

“

There is so much spoken and unspoken growth that happens during these afternoons.

My favourite activity is when they draw monsters and superheroes. These spaces are silly and full of play. The other game the young people love is when we get them to act out characters; it is a really powerful method of lightening up the kids' lives but also for us to learn more about them. Sometimes they will tell us things, other times we'll be able to find out what's going on at home through their drawings or their acting. Something that always stands out for me is when I ask a child to draw a monster or something that scares them and they draw this wonderful, funny monster and it turns out to be their brother or sister.

Children's hopefulness and positivity always stands out for me. Sometimes we tell the kids a scenario of Dad yelling at Mum. We ask them what they think each character is feeling and we ask if Dad deserves a second chance. And 99% of the time, they'll say that Dad does deserve a second chance. It's this positivity and inherent belief that things in life can get better that is such an important thing we can nurture.

Written from a conversation with Marryanne.



PROGRAMS

Hindi and Urdu Women's Health Group



15 years and going strong

When the pandemic began in 2020 many women in the Hindi Urdu Women's group were very afraid. Most of the women in this group are elderly, between the ages of 50-90 years old, so were of course vulnerable to the virus. Language barriers meant there was a lot of confusion and fear.

But this year was different – this year the women were COVID-19 experts! I was very proud to see this development. They were up to date with their vaccinations, wore masks everywhere and also made an extra effort to stay connected with me, their families and other group members. It was a tough year as some of the women in this group sadly lost loved ones to the virus. But we got through it together and are so happy to be back, they just love being together. We've created our own family in this group and we missed each other a lot.

This group was first created, almost 15 years ago now, to connect Hindi and Urdu speaking women living in the Fairfield and Liverpool areas. It started off with just three of us and now we are a group of almost 25. We come together every Friday at the Liverpool Women's Health Centre and share food, talk and sing. It is so important for these women to have a culturally safe space where they can come together. In our home country people live in big families and come together often, but it is different in Australia. This increases feelings of isolation. So it's important that in our group we have an open door policy so we can come and connect in our language. I can still remember when one woman came up to me after her first meeting, and said: "This group is heaven to me. This group is heaven!"

Written from a conversation with Nancely.

“

One member had lost her son. She was distressed and in so much grief. But one thing I encourage in this group is to sing Indian songs. Singing in a group can be a great alternative to talking, it is very healing too. So on this day we sang some sad Indian songs and she sang them along with us. Afterwards she was much lighter. She was able to let out some of that pain. And then a few weeks later she was ready to talk.

PROGRAMS

The Shark Cage

The Shark Cage group is about self-love, feeling connected and empowering women.

This was the first year Peta facilitated the 8 week Shark Cage Framework program. We had 6 women join us.

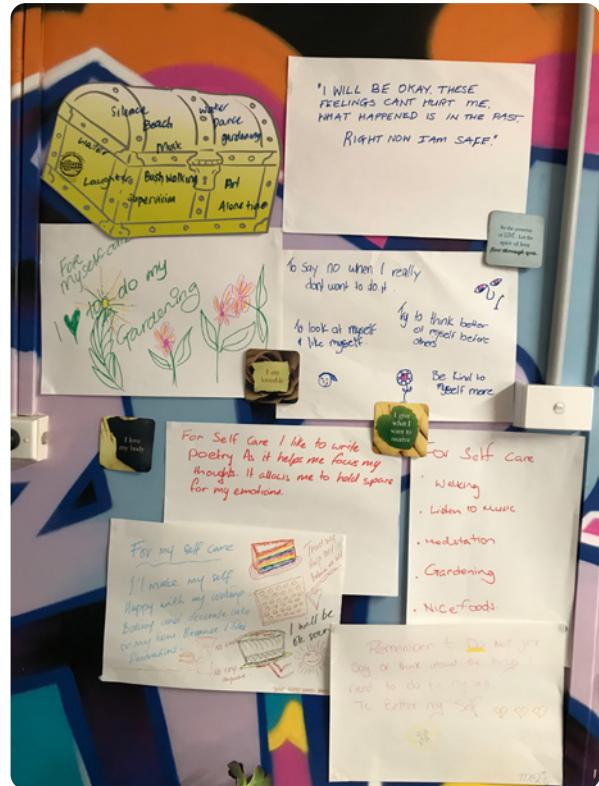
Shark Cage framework is designed for survivors of family and domestic violence (DFV) to understand the re-victimisation* process that can happen in an abusive environment. It helps to reframe the DFV in a way that does not blame the victim. For example, many survivors often ask self-blaming questions like "Why does this keep happening to me?" In this program we help survivors make sense of their experience and make clear that violence is NEVER their fault.



The "Shark Cage" is a powerful metaphor to empower women who find themselves stuck in the cycle of abuse. It stems from the idea that the world is a big beautiful ocean filled with lots of harmless friendly fish, as well as dangerous predators. To survive in this ocean, you need a good Shark Cage. People aren't born with Shark Cages, so we taught the women in this group to build their own!

Each bar of the cage represents a different skill and for every week we worked together, we added a new skill by teaching women about their physical, emotional, social, financial, technological and spiritual rights which may have been abused in the past and coming up with new ways to protect them.

We received amazing feedback from the participants, all relaying that even though parts were difficult to hear, it was much better that they



have this knowledge. The first way out of the cycle of abuse is understanding, and this is what the Shark Cage Framework does. It was a very successful experience and we are glad to be hosting more.

Written by Kate

Shark Cage was created by psychologist Ursula A Benstead. She has 25 years' experience in the field of complex trauma. Through Ursula's training both facilitators Peta and Darany have brought Shark Cage to the women of Bonnie's.

*Re-victimisation is when a victim faces any sexual abuse or assault subsequent to a first abuse or assault.

DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

Women supporting women

Intro

As the Finance Officer here at Bonnie's I want to highlight what a difference your support makes in the lives of women and children. Each year we get companies, trusts, foundations, local clubs and individuals donating their time, expertise and funds to improve the lives of families in our service. It's incredible and we couldn't do the work we do, without you!

Something special I want to mention this year is the funding we received to take women and children on school holiday activities and why it's so important. Many of the kids that come into Bonnie's have witnessed or experienced regular acts of violence, and can need extra emotional and behavioural support. On these excursions, our Child and Youth Workers can observe kids' confidence, self-esteem, interpersonal relationship skills and how they interact in a group. If there's something

to be addressed, we can create targeted support plans for the kids and their families. These trips are also a great way for Mums and their kids to bond and heal after domestic and family violence may have fractured their connection.



You see, a lot more happens in this relaxed and fun space than meets the eye!

On behalf of everyone at Bonnie's, thank you.

By Heike

A woman's best friend

Recently, a woman and her son who had just left an abusive relationship arrived at Bonnie's. Mum wasn't in a good way and didn't have many belongings except for her best friend and confidant – her cat. She carried her cat in a Woolies shopping bag and

asked us if we were able to help their family of three. We were happy to say yes! All thanks to the **Paws & Recover** grant. While we settled Mum and her son in our refuge, we were able to house her cat at Paws & Recover. P&R understands the importance of sharing the care of pets during a crisis and that pets are part of the family. This gave Mum peace of mind knowing her cat was being looked after and showered with love, sharing texts and photos of the cat looking healthy and happy. This also gave our client ample time to focus on her and her child's own health and wellbeing while looking for accommodation for all three of them.



Boxing to end gender-based violence

Amrita Saluja fought for women and children who survived family violence; she also generously raised almost \$2000 and donated it to us.

“

I wanted to raise funds for women and children surviving violence because they are the real fighters and my source of inspiration. I work in SWS as a lawyer for Legal Aid so I've seen first hand work by Bonnie's and the life changing role they play to survivors of violence.

Amrita Saluja

Donors and supporters – continued



Going shopping

When Emma arrived at Bonnie's with her hands full with 6-month-old twins and an 8-year-old child who has extra needs due to a disability, she had virtually nothing but the clothes they were wearing. In the coming weeks, she was so busy with her three children, settling them into their new home and caring for them, that there was no time for shopping. She hardly had the energy to get through each day. She wore the same bra each day and washed it each night.

When the beautiful clothes from Big W arrived via Good360 Australia, she was so excited and relieved to hear she could come into the office and "go shopping". She received new clothes for her and the children and a new bra. The pressure to go shopping and wash her bra each night had disappeared. Thank you Big W and Good 360 for giving Emma this gift and making life so much nicer for the family. They all loved the clothes.

Written by Sandra.



Brush with Kindness

Thank you to **Habitat for Humanity** and all your wonderful volunteers who have brushed us with your kindness! They have done an incredible job of painting some of our transitional properties. This is a great financial relief for us and has made our houses look more wonderful than ever. We have worked with Habitat for Humanity for the past few years and we are so grateful for this consistent support from you and your volunteers.

The pro's in pro bono

Thanks to **Gadens** and **Gilbert & Tobin**. Your legal knowledge and expertise were crucial in helping Bonnie's. You simplified an otherwise incredibly complex legal system, and re-assured that women and children could live on, safely and supported.

Donors and supporters – continued

Crochet queens



Three of our friends from **Austral Retirement Village** popped by with the most beautiful handmade blankets, jumpers and scarves. When the women receive the blankets

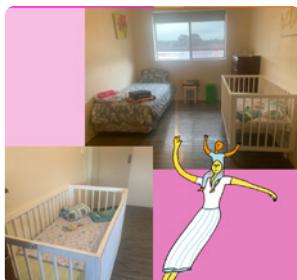
many say they enjoy wrapping themselves in them to keep warm and to comfort themselves. They are so beautiful and we really appreciate the time and creativity that goes into these beautiful creations. So clever!

The Dandelion Support Network

"When I asked the **Dandelion Support Network** if they had a set of winter clothes for 6 kids at Bonnie's, I was so happily overwhelmed when they arrived with x6 big bags of clothes and x6 big bags of toys for each child! Having your own clothes and your own toys when you're in a big family is a big deal and it was amazing to see the reaction of the family. They told me it felt like early Christmas!"

– Family Worker, Mel.

StreetSmart – Sleeping safe



When women and children first arrive at their room at Bonnie's they are greeted with the beautiful sheet sets and towels included in the **StreetSmart's** sleeping safe kits. That first night in our refuge

is often the first safe night's sleep they have had in a long time and being welcomed into a room with nice furniture and sheets make a big difference. Thank you StreetSmart!

GIVIT

Thank you to the team at **GIVIT** who have supported us with petrol vouchers and vouchers for our families; these are extra expenses that many women don't usually have the money for and it makes a big difference in getting families from A to B!



OzHarvest

When families arrive at Bonnie's they often only arrive with the clothes on their backs. No food, no wallet or bank card, no toothbrush, no shampoo. That's why when boxes full of donations, like fresh food from **OzHarvest** arrive, we are so grateful. **It's great to be able to stock the refugees' fridges and send boxes full of fresh produce that haven't been wasted.**



"When a client and her son who were both on visas were at Bonnie's, I gave them a hamper with food and frozen meals from OzHarvest. This mum didn't have an income and couldn't work due to her visa status, so having free and nutritious food available for her was really important. I saw her recently and gave her another hamper, she said, 'Food, food, food! Everytime I see you – you give me food, thank you!' We shared a little chuckle." – Community Worker Sue

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

6 years of support



Tell us a little bit about your company.

Established in 1924, MFS is an active, global asset manager with investment offices all around the world.

At MFS, responsible investing also means investing in the communities where we live and work.

Can you remember what made you decide to work with us? How did it happen?

Our aim is to engage with local charities for which our donation will be impactful and that aligns with our own culture of inclusivity, respect, and humility. That's when we discovered Bonnie's! We have partnered with Bonnie's since 2017, making this our 6th year working together to support vulnerable women and their children who are striving for a better future with your support. We continue to have a strong connection to Bonnie's and the work that they do.

What makes our work resonate with what's important to you?

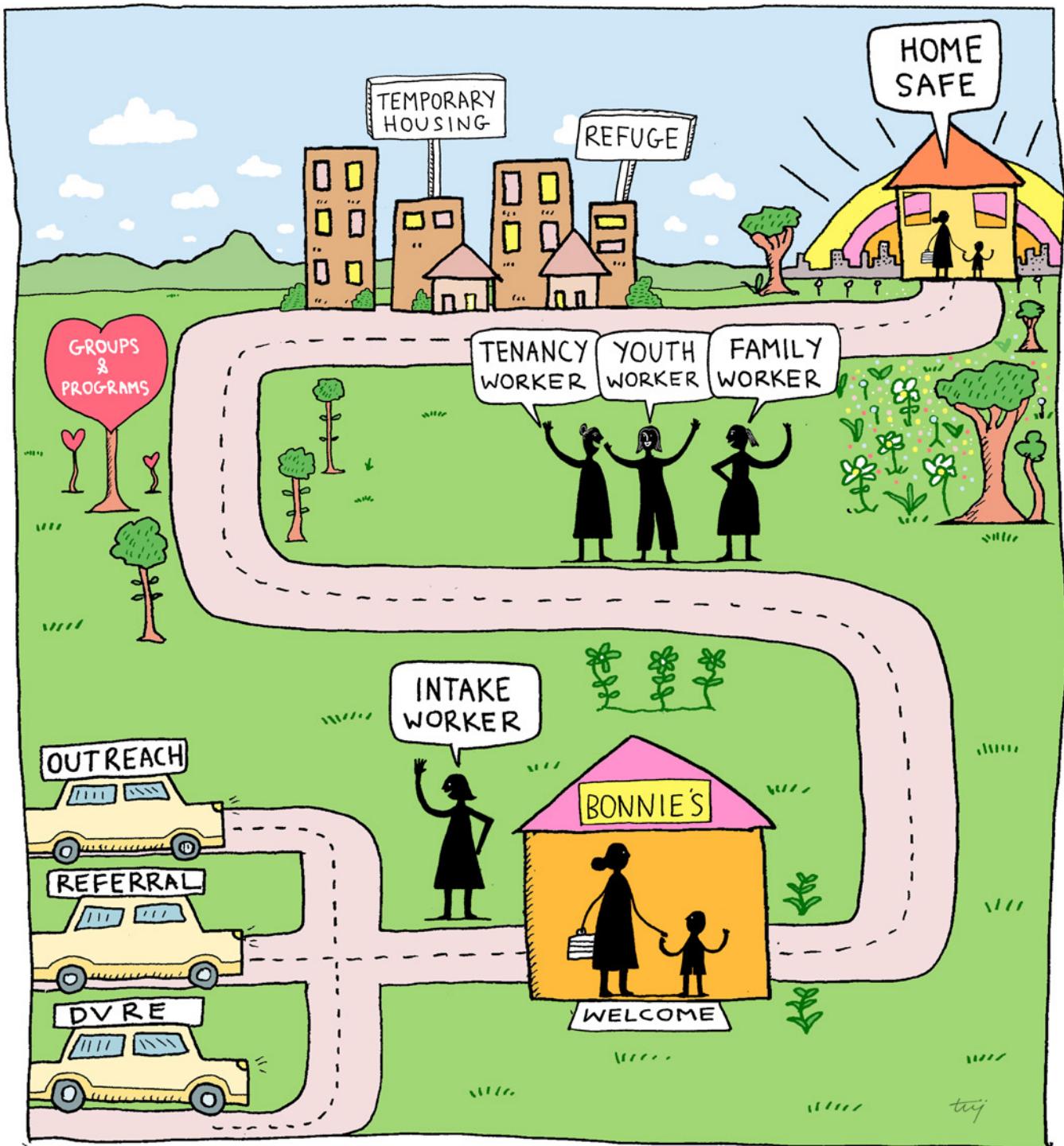
Bonnie's promotes self-sufficiency and inclusivity, supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our community. We know that this work is vital and helps to protect numerous women and children in our community, which is why it is so important for us to be able to fund some of these projects and help their cause. We also know that our donations have been truly appreciated and valued.

Is there a particular story you share with others about our work that shows why you value us? Can you share it?

MFS is highly focused on inclusivity and one of the first projects that we helped support was the Hindi/Urdu Women's Health Group. Sydney is one of our most culturally diverse offices with employees from all corners of the world. We understand that loneliness and isolation is a real issue particularly for people who speak limited English or find it difficult to fit into their new surroundings. The Hindi/Urdu Women's Health Group created an amazing opportunity for Indian women of all ages in our community to connect and feel a sense of belonging. We were so very proud to be able to help.



The Bonnie's Road to Safety



SPECIAL MOMENTS THIS YEAR

Our highlights



#WorkingfromHome

One of the only benefits of working from home was definitely having more time with our furry families!

One stop shop

It's been great to welcome people back into the office for in-person consultations and workshops. Bonnie's has always operated as a one stop shop for women, where we facilitate meetings with Housing, Centrelink, Women's Legal Service, Financial Capability Workers and Financial Counsellor's from the Salvation Army. Representatives from these organisations come into Bonnie's weekly or fortnightly to provide easier access to information and advice to our clients. This work is really important and enables more women to get the help they need with people they trust.



The Unseen Project

What an incredible week this was! Here we are pictured at the The Unseen Art Project, an installation located across central Sydney. This project shared the hidden experiences of women and homelessness. We were honoured to be invited to participate and be part of the conversation. Part of the installation was a tiny home, a couch and a car to symbolise the different ways sleeping rough and homelessness can look for women. One of the regular participants of Creative Space, Noor, played a big part in the project and featured in the car. Our very own Family Worker Peta installed her artwork in the exhibition space.

"Participating in UNSEEN was very emotional. To begin with, the process of painting my artwork opened old wounds but on the same token, it allowed me to speak my truth. It's very empowering, I have survived to tell our story." – Peta





International Women's Day – 47 years of Bonnie's

Every International Women's Day, we come together to celebrate Bonnie's rich feminist history and reflect upon all the work women have done to get us to where we are today. It was so nice to finally all be together in the office again too. This year's theme for International Women's Day was #BreakTheBias so we, alongside women across the world, crossed our arms to demonstrate breaking all kinds of biases that are present in the world.



Candlelight Vigil

This was the first year we didn't host our own Candlelight Vigil, we were generously invited to take part in SWSDVC's. We were brought together to commemorate and mourn the 38 women who were murdered in 2021. These events are always difficult to attend, but being together and knowing how many women we have been able to help encourage us. Let's continue to #UnMaskDomesticViolence!

Diwali

Peta tells the story of her Client Jade* who held her first Diwali at Bonnie's and invited her caseworkers and other women living in the refuge to come and enjoy.



"Jade led me to the common room of the refuge, and I joined a couple of colleagues and another resident and sat down. Together we watched Jade and her children perform the Diwali prayer and ceremony. They were all dressed in beautiful traditional clothing. They chanted prayers in their language. And the food was glorious. It was my first time tasting vegan Indian sweets. Jade had been cooking for 3 days straight in the lead up."

"This was the first time I had seen this ceremonial prayer performed in real life and it was a privilege to watch."

"But what made this moment even a greater privilege, was that it was Jade's first time she had led and performed a Diwali ceremony without her husband, without her Dad and without her extended family. It was just Jade, her children and a handful of people who were meant to be there. She shone with pride."

Renovations



Can you believe that we've been based at this location for almost 40 years! And after so long we were bound to need a bit of a makeover. Both our refuges underwent renovations and the results were great in making these spaces feel

more like home and particularly improving the outdoor facilities and playgrounds. For many women experiencing domestic violence, leaving their home, the space that they've created for their family, can be one of the most difficult parts of their process. That's why having a refuge that feels comfortable and like a home is incredibly important.

P.s. We've also been able to put solar panels on our roofs!

Draft National Plan

In February 2022, when the Draft National Plan to End Violence Against Women was released for consultation, we knew it was vital we contribute to the discussion. The National Plan lays the foundation for ending gender-based violence in Australia and services, individuals and organisations across Australia like us reviewed and contributed to it. This plan has 4 steps: Prevention, Early Intervention, Response and Recovery. As frontline workers we provided feedback for all steps with an emphasis on 'Response' which is the core of our work. As a feminist service we aim to be a voice for all women experiencing gender inequality and gender-based violence and were happy to contribute to this national plan and to see its implementation in the coming years.

Off the charts – Personal Well-being Index

We are happy to report that when our clients exit our service they are scoring above the national average for overall well-being. We found this out by collating the data of our Personal Wellbeing Surveys we give out to clients when they arrive, during their stay with us and when they leave. The results told us that once a woman leaves Bonnie's she has a better sense of wellbeing than the average Australian person. While women's empowerment and overall satisfaction with life is difficult to measure in a standardised test, this is a great way to keep a broad overview of the work we're doing.

DVNSW

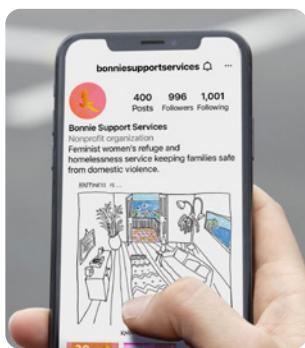


"When I walked into the conference organised by Domestic Violence NSW, I was overwhelmed with mixed emotions. I felt joy to be among so many like-minded people and incredible humans fighting against domestic violence and then sadness. Sadness that in 2022, we are still fighting to end gender based violence (GBV) and gender inequality. The conference had great panellists and speakers who discussed issues within the Domestic Violence sector, especially on issues of financial and technological abuse. So while GBV still exists, it is comforting that agencies like us still exist too. We are all in this together."

Story by Nonye



Happiness Is... a nationwide social media campaign



For this year's 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV), we invited our followers and friends on Instagram to share our 'Happiness Is...' series. This series was created with

Only Human Stories and Tennyson Sidney Nobel, to highlight what's possible when women are free from domestic violence. These artworks were

based on real stories by women who have come into Bonnie's and shared their positive experiences of being independent and free. The aim of the campaign was to not only share these stories but ignite a conversation, asking our followers to imagine a world that is free of GBV and share their own seemingly small but powerful moments of independence in their own lives. It was wonderful to see how many other organisations and individuals connected with this message and shared it around. Through our commitment to storytelling and social media, we have been able to reach more women and more supporters!



Christmas at Bonnie's

Christmas is always a bustling and joyful time at Bonnie's, our meeting table becomes Christmas present HQ, and our staff transform into elves excitedly wrapping away to get presents out to families for the festive season. We understand that this time of year can be very difficult for families, so we do what we can to help Mum out. Bonnie's is fortunate enough to receive countless donations around this time, with many

presents and hampers given to us for our families. Most years we host a Christmas party for our families, however, unfortunately we were unable to get together this year due to the pandemic. Nonetheless, we were still able to deliver to the families, and the staff dropped off the gifts on Santa's behalf.



From the Blog

My heart, my home – Afghanistan

The Taliban are back. As I sit in my living room, the TV blaring, my pregnant belly kicking, I can't believe I am seeing my parent's nightmares become a reality, again. I might never be able to go back to Afghanistan- back to my country, my hometown.

I am originally from a town called Mazar-I-Sharif. This town is the place that I consider my home, even though I was born in Iran, and have spent most of my life here in Australia. Life in Australia has given me many opportunities and opened many doors for me: I've had access to education, a safe and secure home, adequate health care and overall freedom. And I know my baby will have these freedoms too, except maybe one: visiting a safe Afghanistan...

Continue reading at: <https://www.bonnie.org.au/my-heart-my-home-afghanistan/>



Then and Now, Bonnie's 20+ years ago

It was 1996 and Diane was just 21 when she first started working at Bonnie's. During her time there she saw Bonnie Women's Refuge, a small grassroots feminist collective, begin to transition into the community organisation Bonnie Support Services is today.

Lisabel Zoomed in with Diane to hear stories about her time at Bonnie's.

Hey Diane, thanks for sitting down with me. Tell me a bit about your time at Bonnie's and what you did there. For example, were you a social worker?

Continue reading at: <https://www.bonnie.org.au/then-and-now-bonnie-s-20-years-ago/>



We'll hold each other's hands through this

Hi Bonnie's Blog readers,

This is my first blog, so I thought I'd introduce myself: I'm Georgia, a member of the DVRE and COVID Response team at Bonnie Support Services.

I didn't always work with women or in social work, I was actually in hospitality marketing before I got the job here. I took the job because I wanted to do something that aligned with my values. At first I wasn't sure what that looked like, but after starting at Bonnie's and having an amazing experience with my first client, I knew I had made the right move.

I can still remember my first client it like it was yesterday...

Continue reading at: <https://www.bonnie.org.au/well-hold-each-others-hands-through-this/>

Light Bulb Moments

12 months seems like a long time to help a woman to safety from domestic violence but it's not. Not when abuse has existed in their families for years, even decades.

As a caseworker, it's my job to do everything to help break this cycle. In some cases it can take years, in other's, when a woman is ready, it can take as little as a meaningful conversation.

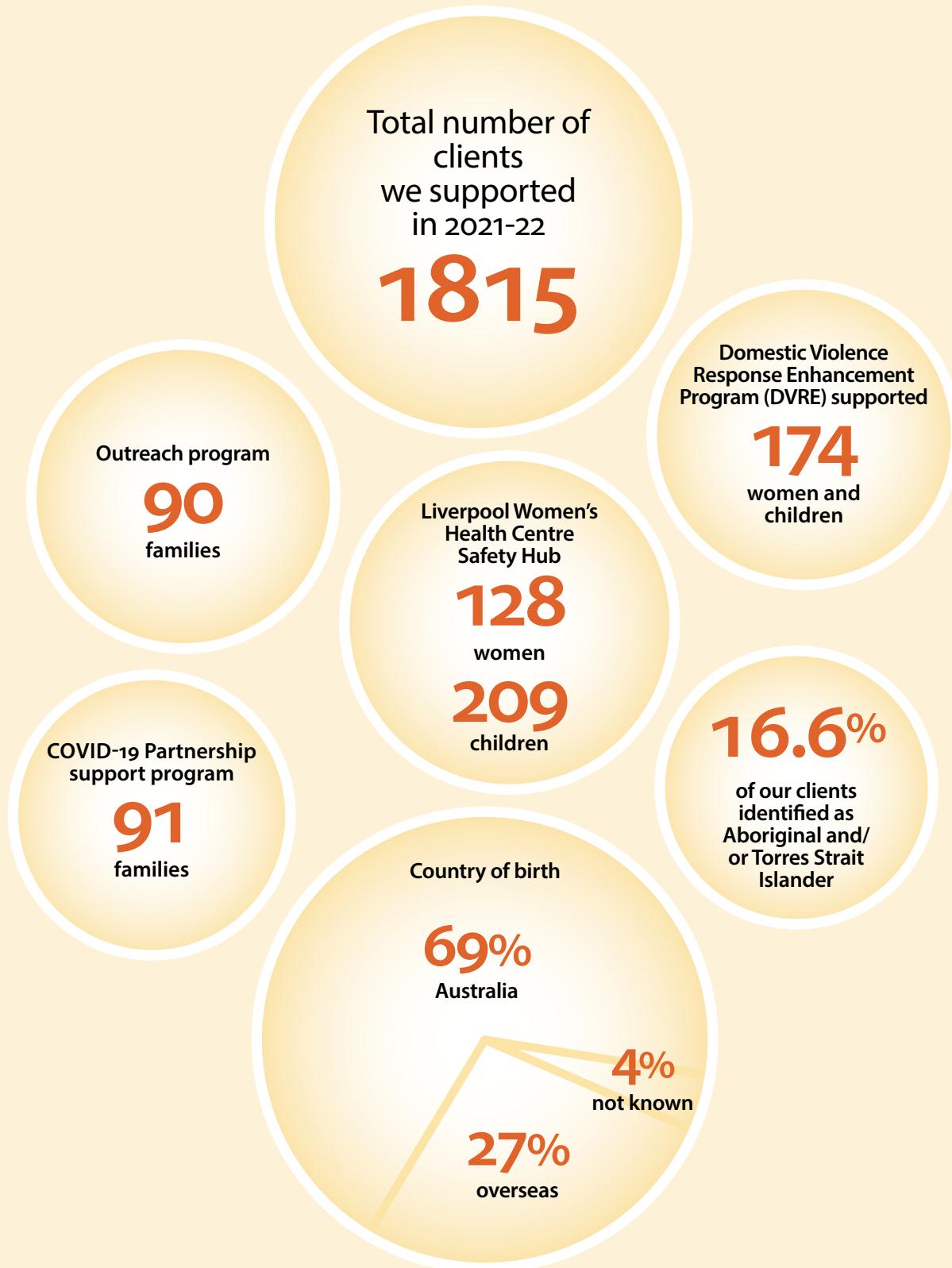
Like with Sally.

I worked with Sally for three months. She had experienced a lot of adversity and abuse during her childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. She experienced violence from the people who were supposed to love and care for her the most- her father, brothers and partners.

Continue reading at: <https://www.bonnie.org.au/light-bulb-moment-to-break-the-cycle/>



A Statistical Snapshot



Our Board



Wendy Morgan

Wendy is an Aboriginal Woman from the Dyiringanj People of Wallaga Lake that forms part of the Yuin Nation. Wendy is an activist and Aboriginal rights

advocate who has worked with government, NGO's and local land councils for more than 30 years.



Karen Beetson

Karen is a Mandandanji woman from south west Queensland. Karen has worked for over 30 years in Aboriginal Community Development



Kiri-Ana Libbesson

Secretary

Kiri is a lawyer working in the not-for-profit and social enterprise spaces. She has a wide range of experiences working all over the world,

but always alongside purpose-led and grassroots organisations.



Frances Atkins

Treasurer

Frances has significant experience in banking and finance as is the co-founder/director of Giveable a platform that

helps businesses track their impact of social and sustainable purchases.



Betty Green

Chairperson

Betty is a committed feminist advocate and her work in the women's community services spans three decades. Violence

against women, particularly domestic violence, has been her focus.



Dusanka Mrdjenovic

Vice Chairperson

Dusanka has a passionate interest in human rights and social equity brought about by life experience of civil war. She migrated to Australia with her family some 14 years ago. These experiences expanded her horizons. Her life and work experience have contributed to Dusanka being very compassionate about general human rights and social equity.

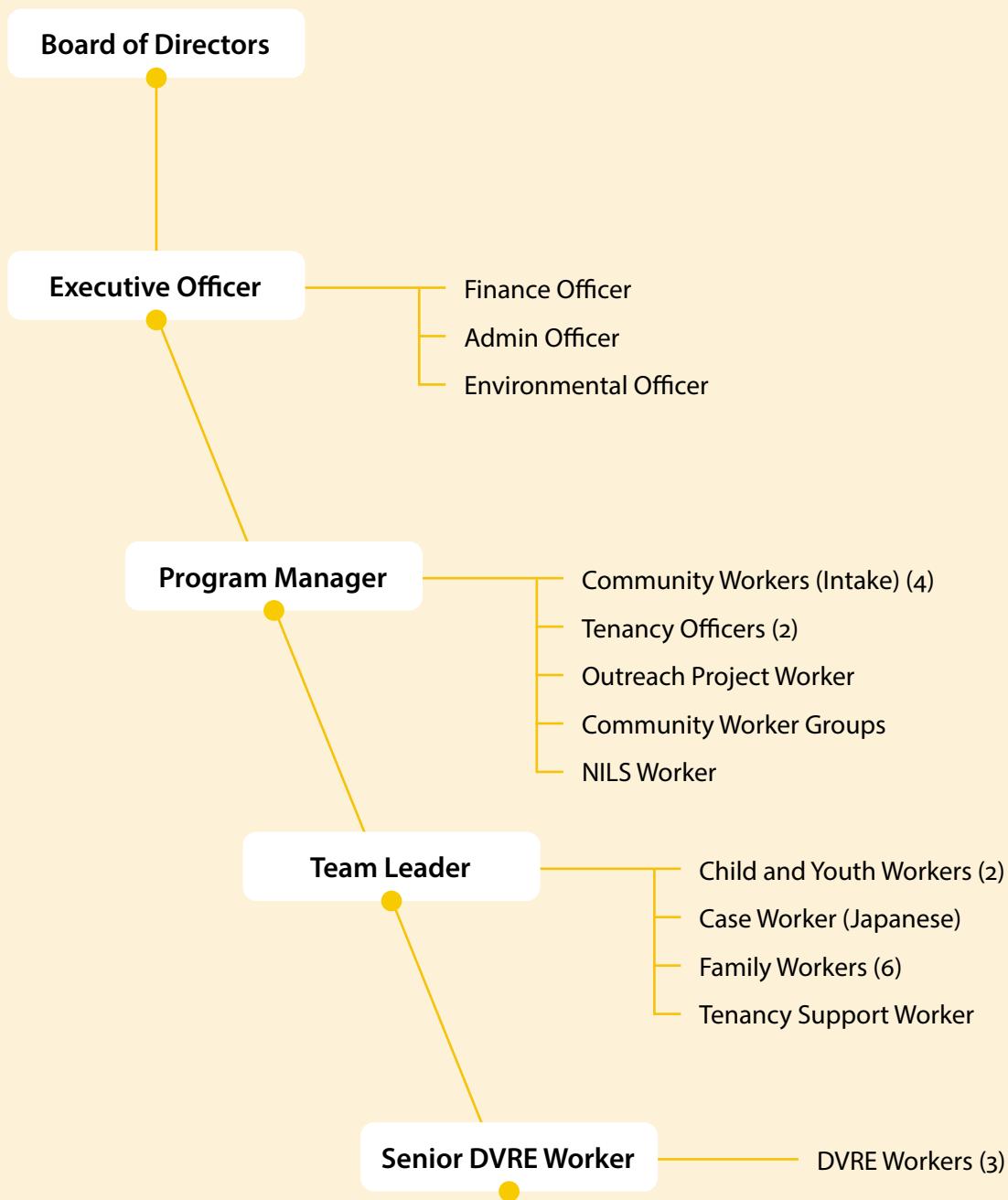


Amelia Scott

Amelia is Bonnie's longest serving Board member. Amelia has a wealth of experience in health and in particular women and children's health.

Organisational Chart

Bonnie Support Services Ltd



Five Year Financial Summary

Bonnie Support Services Ltd

ABN 24 003 100 445

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Income					
Government grants	3,002,043	2,643,992	2,330,669	2,304,565	2,036,393
Donations and corporate support	47,040	54,764	100,988	40,531	53,642
Rental income	255,596	246,149	273,681	227,370	210,092
Interest	1,773	4,875	15,998	29,259	27,806
Other	36,998	56,852	56,882	20,500	4,438
Total Income	3,343,450	3,006,632	2,778,218	2,622,225	2,332,371
Expenses					
Salaries and on costs	2,291,162	2,151,672	1,917,964	1,919,793	1,797,872
Client brokerage	295,812	282,343	209,122	151,269	94,780
Operating expenses	732,940	491,862	541,516	508,135	446,710
Total Expenses	3,319,914	2,925,877	2,668,602	2,579,197	2,339,362
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	23,536	80,755	109,616	43,028	(6,991)

The Company recorded an operating surplus of \$23,536 for the year ended 30 June 2022 compared to an operating surplus of \$80,755 in 2021. Income from government grants increased by 14% in 2022 compared to the prior year due to special COVID-19 support payments provided by the State Government to deal with increased demand in services. Salaries and operating expenses have increased correspondingly.

Bonnie Support Services measures its performance through annual accountability reports for each individual funding contract. The company also uses a range of other performance measures to ensure its strategic goals as stated in the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 are achieved.

The company monitors its performance against budget and rolling forecasts. The budget is approved by the Board of Directors prior to the commencement of the financial year. Financial results are presented to the Board who use this information for the purpose of tracking progress, determining if agreed objectives are met and to inform future planning.

A complete copy of Bonnie's Financial Report 2022 including our audited financial statements, accompanying notes and Auditor's Report can be downloaded from our website www.bonnie.org.au or the ACNC register. www.bonnie.org.au or the ACNC register.

Donors and Supporters 2021-22

Alison Ora	DVNSW	Life Without Barriers in Parramatta	Salmeen Altasle
angekinz	Ellis Legal	Linda & Brent Lawson	Salvos
Angelica Madani	Fernwood Fitness Wetherill Park	Liverpool Council	Sandra Slopek
Anglicare	First Steps Learning Academy	Liverpool Girls High School	Sandy Janjic
Aplenty	Generous and Grateful	Liza	Savannah McFerran
Argie Kokkinos and George	Good360	Lumka Coleman	Service NSW Liverpool
Argies Hair – Clients donated	Grace Communion Int'l Sydney	LWRC	Service NSW Revesby
Austral Retirement Village Craft Ladies	Grazia Siciliano	Lyn	Services Australia
Australian Childhood Foundation	Heidi Fisher	Maddy's mum and the community quilters	Shaibana Thompson
B & K City Kitchen Pty Ltd	Heike Obermayr	Madeleine Byrnes	Share the Dignity
Be Kind	Helen Callaghan	Mai Nguyen	Sheli Ringshow
Belinda	Helen Thai	Margaret Hayes	Sleep Safe
Benevity – UK Online Giving Foundation	Helping Hands NSW Sydney	Megan Frew	Southern Cross Austereo.
Bethany Smith	Jackie McKinnon	Meredith Gray	Listnr
Bossley Park High School	Jennifer Cummins	MFS Investment	St Raphael's Mission
Brenda Stajcic	Jinat Shahraina	Michaela Johansson	Stacey
Cabramatta High School	Joanne and Justin Camilleri	Michelle Wong,(Mat Herro, Dr Joel Vosu)	Staff at Fairfield Services Australia Office
Cabrvale Diggers	Joanne Lim	Monique Keating	Steve Austin
CandleXchange	John Ellis	Moya Sayer-Jones	StreetSmart
Carole Best	Josh McFerran	Nasleene Buksh	Susan Varga
Caroline Turvananavou	K R Chapman	Omran Omran	Suzanne Pope
Carolyn Russo	Karen Macey	One P Design	Synat
Charlie and Nelly Aklian	Karitane	Orange Grove Service Centre - Staff Fundraising	Taylor Owynns
Cheryl Keating	Kath Drake	Paola	Tex and Lisa Tannous
Chris Byrnes Community Quilts	Kathleen Maxwell	Paul Lynch MP	TGF Donnan
Commonwealth Bank	Katia Mallouh	Peggy	That Sumptuous Room
Craig Taunton	Kiera Fisher	Rapid Relief Team	Trudy Boyes
Daniel Johnston	Larsa Shaba	Ripples of Love	Two Good
Danielle Wilson	Laura Varrica	Robyn Metcalfe	Variety
Diane Powell	Libby Bragg	S Maja	Victor Xin
		Sacred Light Community	Wattle Grove Lions Club
			Your Cause
			Zora Morjcinoc







Bonnie's
02 9729 0939
24/7 Domestic Violence Line
1800 65 64 63

www.bonnie.org.au

*Translating and
Interpreting Service*

13 14 50
*Link2home
for accommodation*
1800 152 152



Communities
& Justice

Bonnie's receives our primary
funding from DCJ



Brand Story & Design: Only Human Stories
www.onlyhuman.com.au