

# Mirabel Newsletter

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### Looking to the future

There's been a natural period of reflection over the last few months as we've marvelled at the fact Mirabel is now a quarter of a century old!

And nothing made us reflect on the years more than at a celebration event of Mirabel Alumni. We felt as proud and overcome as their carers to see the impressive and compassionate adults that these children have become.

After some celebrations and many highlights, my eyes are once again firmly fixed on the future. The unfortunate reality in 2024 is that the demand for Mirabel's services remains as high as ever. Across Victoria and New South Wales, new children and their kinship carers continue to find themselves in need of help and so our mission continues – to never turn a child away.

Fundraising and awareness remain essential, while our board members continue to build a corpus to safeguard us from the ebbs and flows of the wider economy. I'm eternally grateful to everyone who plays a vital part of our Mirabel community, many of them since our earliest days.

The reality is that the extreme hardships that children and families face are not diminishing and there is no end date to our work. But at the same time perhaps we need to equally think of ourselves as 25 years young with a good news story worth celebrating every day.



### **Diving into nature**

Early 2024 has been a time of connecting with nature for some of our Mirabel young people in NSW, with several eco therapy group outings venturing everywhere from bush tracks to the beach.

In February, a Mirabel group headed to Caves Beach, south of Newcastle, enjoying a swim between the flags before an afternoon of exploring the caves and tunnels. One young person, who had always been afraid of the beach, put her head under the waves for the first time to big celebrations all round.

The next day saw the group kayak, with an emphasis on working together in the two-person boats. The post-camp reports were of the young people having a great time.

Another group outing was to Glenrock, where Mirabel young people walked the Yuelarbah Trail searching for geocaches and enjoying the bush. Another highlight was a speedboat trip on Lake Macquarie. The boat travelled from Belmont Wharf to Wangi, where the young people went on a bush walk before boating back home with the added thrill of a few exciting manoeuvres by the captain.

### A big day for all

The first Victorian Big Day Out for 2024 was held at Funfields theme park in early April, with 74 young people getting amongst the fun. The logistics were intense with transport required from Werribee, Preston, Cranbourne and Ringwood. Nine staff members and 39 amazing volunteers helped make the day a great success.

Another fun adventure for Mirabel children took place in November with a camp at Malmsbury for one of our action-packed boys' camps. Over two days the boys threw themselves into sporting clinics, activities and team challenges. The sense of togetherness and of being among other kids just like them really shone through.



Nick Maclaren applied for a vacant Mirabel Child and Youth Support Worker role by walking in the front door with his resume. Given human interaction is everything at Mirabel, how could he not be hired?

Twelve months on, Nick can't believe how much fun his job is. 'A lot of the children obviously have a pretty adverse background but it's so positive when we get out there as a group or on a camp. I love watching the kids interact and realise other kids are like them

and just have a great time together.'

Having studied psychology, on top of some business and marketing, Nick enthuses that he has the best job in the foundation, having adventures with the kids. He admits to a steep learning curve and pays tribute to Alan, Amy and other youth program leaders for guiding him. 'I've been blown away by the people in Mirabel,' he said.



## A great time to give

# Our mission continues

Mirabel's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary has been a chance to reflect on how many families we've helped as well as how many people have played a role in Mirabel's successes and

occasional sorrows. We've ridden the bumps together, without ever losing sight of our north star: that every child deserves a childhood. Thank you for your continuing commitment.

### A decade of support

Future Generation Australia (FGX) has been a tireless partner, supporting Mirabel's Toddler to Teen Program for a decade. By donating more than \$2 million over that time, FGX has tangibly helped thousands of children and young people have a chance at a better life. More than 2200 new children have been supported through crisis and able to remain in the care of their grandparents or extended family.

The unwavering support of FGX has been life-changing and continues to be. We're grateful beyond words for their 10 years of generosity and partnership.

### **Grassroots Sports Club lunch**

Grassroots Sports Club events are always memorable. At the annual AFL themed lunch in March, Mirabel Alumni Ashlee spoke beautifully to the assembled crowd, upstaging even premiership

Hawks like Jarryd Roughead and Robert DiPierdomenico. All funds raised go to Mirabel sports programs, and we thank everyone at Grassroots for their time, energy and funding support.



### The social click

Have you seen Mirabel's fantastic new website? It's an exciting refresh (with thanks to Mity Digital) and features an events page where you can see what's coming up on our calendar, as dates are locked in. Such as the impending launch of a new book, The Cubbies, by Joan Healey, one of the original carers who inspired the creation of Mirabel. Go to www.mirabel.org.au/get-involved/events

June 30 is on the horizon and that means it's a great time to consider End of Financial Year giving. Please remember that any donations of more than \$2 are tax deductible. You can fill out the form below or call us to discuss wider support.

#### Donate online at mirabel.org.au/get-involved/donate

| Your donation:   \$50   \$100   \$250   Other:   \$   All do   | onations over \$2 are tax deductible.<br>ABN 22 926 759 458 |
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