



Filling the gap after the initial crisis

For women impacted by family violence most programs provide support only during the initial crisis stage.

Recovery for women who have experienced family violence can be a long and isolating journey. They leave behind family, friends and financial security and often return to an abusive situation multiple times before finally moving on. Kara House identified that many programs provide support during the initial crisis and there was an opportunity to provide support and education post crisis and ultimately reduce the propensity to return to the abusive relationship.

In 2018, we developed "MOVING ON" Family Violence Support Group to support women impacted by family violence who are beginning to rebuild their lives. The group is a FREE six-week course facilitated by Specialist Family Violence Practitioners. The aim of the group is to provide education and support for the participants to build their self-worth and move forward.

FREE childcare is provided to help participants concentrate on their own well-being. The program includes group discussions, one-on-one chats as well as relaxing activities like music therapy and breathing techniques. It's a safe place to take some time out, make strategies for the future and connect with other women in similar circumstances.

We have been running the group every school term since 2018 with great feedback from the local community. In a survey, 5/5 women shared that they felt safer, enjoyed meeting other women and felt they were better informed about family violence.

"Meeting with other women, talking, sharing, realising that I have come so far since living with Family Violence and how I am stronger and able to study and get work soon."

PARTICIPANT JULY 2019

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of the **Blackburn South Community Bank** and the **Rotary Club of Boronia** we will be able to continue the group in the local community for the next 4 school terms.



Welcome

It's wonderful to have support from organisations like **Blackburn South Community Bank** and the **Rotary Club of Boronia** who share our vision of a world where all women and children can live free of family violence. It enables Kara House to expand our services and provide much needed support to women in our local community.

Catherine Lockstone
CHAIR
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



A vital role in educating emerging family violence practitioners

Dr Ilsa Evans MEMBER – MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Field placement has long been an integral part of vocational education and training for those intending to work anywhere across the family violence sector.

It offers students applied work experience, networking opportunities and a greater understanding of how professionals operate across the sector. It also hones the skills required to effectively facilitate independent learning while providing, crucially, a platform for students to link class-based theory with actual practice. The vital importance of field placement is recognised by both the Australian Council of Community Workers (ACWA) and the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW).

Each year Kara House offers a number of placement positions to students who are undertaking related courses, such as the Diploma of Community Services or the Bachelor of Social Work. The students are allocated to the mentorship of a staff member on a rotating basis, under the auspices of Kara House's Specialist Senior Family Violence Practitioner Jen. About the program, Jen says *"Kara House offers the student an insight into intensive crisis case management and risk assessment and allows the student the opportunity to interact directly with clients impacted by family violence."*

A significant proportion of these students come from Chisholm Institute of TAFE in the south-east, and a mutually beneficial relationship has been built over the past five years.

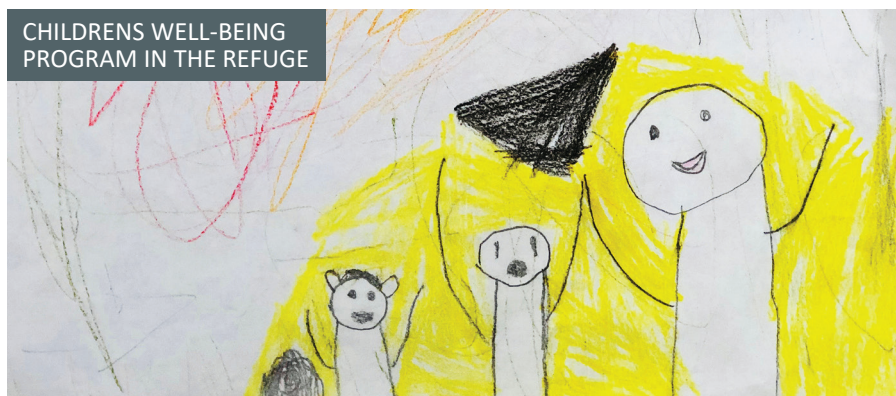
An indication of the programs success is that all recent students have since gained employment within the broader community services sector, and most within the family violence sector itself. As the most recent placement student, Lea, says *"Kara House provided me with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude to be able to work within Family Violence."* About to graduate from her diploma Lea is an excellent example of the vital role of student placement.

Fully-supported supervision and the willingness of the staff at Kara House to share their time and knowledge has been the bedrock of the program's success. In this, they do not just benefit both organisations involved but the sector as a whole.

Family Violence can be a challenging area within which to work and operate, and it is imperative that newly emerging workers have an understanding of the procedures, protocols and practice as well as the values and philosophies of the sector as a whole. Kara House is to be congratulated for playing their part so ably in this regard.

Dr Ilsa Evans is Group Coordinator in the Community Services Department at Chisholm Institute

CHILDRENS WELL-BEING PROGRAM IN THE REFUGE



5 QUICK BITES

1. This year we have distributed 14 Fresh Home Start Packs

The packs include microwave, dinner set, toaster and all the things you need to set up a home from scratch. Perfect when our clients move onto the next accommodation.

2. 72% of our clients disclosed a previous mental illness

These include anxiety, depression and PTSD. We work with our industry colleagues to provide the appropriate services to assist with their recovery.

3. We provide outreach support to women living in the community

We do more than provide secure refuge. We offer emotional support and outreach to women living in the community who have been impacted by family violence.

4. Family violence is the single largest driver of homelessness of women

For women and their children family violence is now the biggest cause of homelessness in Australia. (Source Homelessness Australia)

5. We work with clients from 45 different cultural backgrounds

We use an interpreter service to communicate effectively with our clients who are from 45 different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

[Go online to find out more about what Kara House does >](#)

"I was frightened to see him again and having someone to support me gave me the strength to go."

SARAH*

Often the thought of attending Court and facing the perpetrator is a frightening experience, and this is where a Kara House Specialist Family Violence Practitioner can help provide both practical and emotional support to help guide the client through the process.

When meeting with a client for the first time and assessing her risk, the practitioner will discuss the client obtaining a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO). A FVIO protects a person from a family member who is using violence.

To prepare a client for Court, the practitioner will refer them to a local service for legal advice and then contact the local Magistrate's Court to book a date for an FVIO application to be submitted. The FVIO application is a complex form and the practitioner assists in ensuring all the details are correct and factual.

On the Court date the practitioner will meet the client at Court and remain with them until the process is completed. There is usually a safe room where the client can wait with the practitioner to ensure they are not intimidated or at risk from the perpetrator.

The practitioner helps to navigate the often complex process, providing information, advocacy and emotional support. The practitioner will explain the Conditions on the Order and the breach procedure, should the perpetrator breach the FVIO.

The practitioner is also available to provide ongoing support if there is a breach or if the client is required to return to Court at a later date.

*Name changed

DONOR STORY FERNTREE GULLY VIEW CLUB



President Anne McPherson and Members of the Ferntree Gully VIEW Club

A wonderful view on helping others

The Ferntree Gully VIEW Club was established in 1995 and since then have consistently helped the disadvantaged in the community. Kara House has been one of the lucky recipients of this generosity. The members knit beautiful bears, rugs and beanies as well as collecting Material Aid to assist the women and children we work with.

The VIEW Club was established in Australia in 1965 by The Smith Family who saw the potential for an organisation which allowed women from all walks of life to assist others less fortunate in the community while providing a social outlet and creating long lasting friendships.

The Ferntree Gully VIEW Club now has almost 80 members who meet monthly for lunch. The club offers a unique combination of professional development with monthly educational guest speakers, time to catch up with like minded others and an opportunity to help others in the community.

Anne McPherson, President says

"Our primary aim is to help children have a successful and happy life by supporting the Smith Family. We also wanted to find a local organisation where we would assist young people in need. The great work Kara House does really resonates with all our members."

Thank you to Anne and The Ferntree Gully VIEW Club from everyone at Kara House.

92% of Kara House refuge clients were supported at court whilst applying for an Intervention Order

Now and next

Catherine Lockstone CHAIR – MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

It's hard to believe it's already October, with the seasons definitely starting to change as we head into summer. The refuge garden has seen the benefits of our springtime focus. Our garden project will kick off this month, with sincere thanks to a number of generous donations:

The Kiwanis Club of Waverley, Rotary MASH, Silent Arrow, Susanne Goldie (a past member of the Kara House Management Committee) and Stephen Crosby

We are going to refresh the garden, replace the soft fall in the children's play area, get arborists in for our trees, and create a retaining wall. Our refuge residents appreciate the outdoor space, and making it an inviting, safe, and fun space for families is a priority for Kara House.

The City of Whitehorse and the **Whitehorse Community Chest** have both provided grant funds to continue running our Art Therapy Program. This is a valued program that gives an outlet to the women and children in refuge, and we are all incredibly grateful for the ongoing funding for the program.

The new development for Kara House is still in the planning stage, and hopefully we will have more news to pass on by the end of the year. Kara House is actively working with the department to ensure the ongoing provision of our high quality service to those most in need.

We are currently fundraising for a number of items with a focus on the children in refuge. We are pulling together Excursion Packs for the kids – movie tickets, museum passes, trampoline vouchers, and food vouchers for the venues. For the slightly older children, we are fundraising for things like EB Games vouchers, iTunes vouchers, and clothing vouchers.

Thank you to all of our supporters, staff, and volunteers. Every contribution to Kara House goes towards our clients' well-being, and is valued.



Thank you for your kindness

We'd like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their support, kindness and generosity.



Club of Boronia



- Danielles Boutique
- The Rotary Club of North Balwyn
- The Rotary Club of Box Hill Central
- Waverley Day View club
- Ferntree Gully View Club
- Doncaster View Club
- Rotary District 9810
- Lisa Duncan
- Sandra Hough
- Kehela Vandenberg
- James Maurer
- Andrea Dillion
- Halal Food Bank
- Christine Cook
- Tracy Hart

Interested in finding out more?

Please contact **Ruby Lampard – Development Officer** Email ruby.l@karahouse.org.au or phone **1800 900 520**



Health
and Human
Services

We would like to thank the Department of Health and Human Services who provide our operational funding under the Funding and Service Agreement and to the staff in the Eastern Region who have assisted with their donation collections and ongoing support.

Kara House is a child safe and child focused organisation.

Kara House respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land we work on and pay respect to their Elders past, present and future generations.



Kara House

