



Cara House
A Place of Healing, Growth and Discovery

Cara Vibe

A Message From the CEO

Welcome 2019.....



CaraCare
A safe place for children to grow

As well as the direct personal harm suffered, child maltreatment thwarts children's and young people's right to live free and safe lives and robs them of a sense of agency. Like other oppressed groups, 'they are reminded of their group identity and feel either marked (when the behaviour is aversive) or invisible (when the behaviour is avoidance) or not taken seriously or demeaned,' (Mullaly 2010, p.74). Feeling marked, invisible, not taken seriously or demeaned all compromises children and young people's sense of self agency.

One of the main considerations in the therapies offered by CaraCare and Cara House is to thicken the narrative around times when children and young people have resisted the impact of maltreatment. By doing so a platform exists where children and young people can reclaim aspects of their lost agency, feel visible, be taken seriously and not be demeaned. Staples (2012) regards group work as providing the opportunity for children and young people to reclaim their self-agency which is seen as being strongly connected to social justice.

CaraCare groups are based on this social justice principle. We believe that upholding the rights of children and young people means that they are involved in all levels of our service delivery. To this end the CaraCare children and young people evaluated groups, had input into program content, co-researched a group, wrote their own song and authored their own newsletter. Next year we are preparing to expand their involvement further into program and policy development.

Cara House services are equally based on social justice principle. We provided children and young people with the opportunity to break the bonds of epistemic injustice perpetrated by adults that silences or devalues their story. In conversation and creative arts they found the path to epistemic resistance and their story was heard. Thank you, all our partner agencies who entrust us, to work with children and young people. Thank you to the incredible CaraCare and Cara House staff who serve children and young people with great integrity and skills. And.. a big thank you to the children and young people who dared to make Cara their own and will continue to do so more and more as each year passes.

If therapeutic intervention into the lives of children and young people effected by maltreatment is to provide a platform for their healing and reclaiming some form of self-agency then it is imperative that children and young people are given an active role in the evaluation of services.

Our New Address

Cara House has a new home! Our new address is: **1 Davidson Avenue, Concord, NSW, 2137.** Although we are now a touch bigger, we are still set in a comfortable cottage-styled house with colourful rooms that support relationship and recovery.



Cara House held a beautiful housewarming in July and was officially opened by MP John Sidoti. We welcomed many friends and supporters from services including Victims Services, Barnardos, Jannawi, West Tigers Football Club. A massive thank you to SMEG who catered the event!



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Cara House Update



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Cara House celebrated it's 20th year of being in service to children, young people, adults and families. Founded by Mary Jo Mc Veigh in 1998, Cara House has assisted thousands of vulnerable people along their healing journeys. Mary Jo's lifelong dedication to working with vulnerable communities was honoured by her staff who entered her in the 2019 Australian of the Year Awards. Mary Jo was a finalist in the Local Hero category.

Cara House has also recently welcomed an organizational structure change that utilizes a core counselling team as well as our consultants. This new counselling team consists of CEO, (Mary Jo Mc Veigh), Manager (Manny Kassiotis), Senior Clinician (Margaret Cartmell) and two trauma therapists (Alys McLennan and Ashley Gobeil). In using this new modality, Cara House are better able to provide training to foster carers and workers in addition to the usual counselling and assessment work already provided. To make any inquiries or bookings please visit our website found at <http://www.carahouse.com.au/>



Human Rights Symposium

Cara House will be hosting our first Human Rights Symposium on Friday 22 March 2019! This day is for all professionals who are interested in utilizing a human rights framework in their working relationships with children and young people. Please contact intake@carahouse.com.au for further information. The Symposium day will focus on:

- ◆ EXPLORING CHILD PROTECTION AND THERAPY WITHIN THE COLONIAL HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA.
- ◆ CHILD PROTECTION FIELD WORK AS A RIGHTS BASED PRACTISE.
- ◆ EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUT OF HOME CARE.
- ◆ EMANCIPATION THERAPY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE





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Through Her Eyes

CaraCare views success through the eyes of the children so as we look towards the year ahead we would like to share with you a piece written by a young lady who participated in our flagship program, *Wrapped in Angels*, in 2018.

*The *Wrapped in Angels* group was highly beneficial for me because at this time I was going through a lot of tough, painful memories, and through trauma and angst.*

This experience helped me find a purpose as to what aspects in my life are most sentimental through beliefs, values, personal identity and morals that I live up to. It supported me to constructively wash away some of the pain that I faced, and still do to this day. It also helped me to strive for what I believe in and keep moving forward in my life and seek hope for a more positive future to become a stronger, more independent young woman. This supported me to take pride in what I aspire to do and remain hard working in all tasks that life provides; to learn to flourish as an individual, and keep being strong and positive...

Thanks for all your wonderful encouragement.

Sincerely, Name withheld, 17 years old

International Childhood Trauma Conference

Mary Jo McVeigh, Emmanuel Kassiotis and Amanda Boyd represented CaraCare at the 3rd Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference in Melbourne July-August 2018. The theme of the conference was trust, love and betrayal - therapeutic interventions that work in the face of relational and complex trauma.

Mary Jo, Amanda and Emmanuel presented on the CaraCare writing and gardening groups. These groups provided a safe and creative space for children who had experienced abuse to express themselves, find their voice and connect with each other and the land. An amazing magazine, *CaraKids – For Kids by Kids*, and beautiful gardens were produced by the participants.

The importance of children's rights and participation, sense of agency and choice was discussed in the conference presentations and ended on the message; it is time that children are regarded as experts in their own 'subjective' experience.



Annual Gala Ball

Date: Saturday 4th May 2019

Time: 6.30pm– 11.30pm

Venue: Le Montage

Tickets available for purchase at

www.caracare.org.au/events/tickets





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Community Spirit Continues to Grow

We are so very grateful for the support of our local and wider community and would like to recognise and give thanks to the following groups, businesses and organisations that have contributed to the continued success and growth of CaraCare throughout 2018.

- ◆ City of Canada Bay Council
- ◆ Canada Bay Club
- ◆ Le Montage
- ◆ Smeg Australia
- ◆ Google Volunteers
- ◆ Stitching Hearts Quilters
- ◆ The Rossi Foundation
- ◆ The Rotary Club of Maroubra
- ◆ Australian Chinese Charity Foundation Inc



We thank you for your generosity and time, but most importantly, for your belief in the important work of CaraCare – A safe place for children to grow.

To Purchase CaraCare oils please visit:
<http://www.secretscents.com.au/caracare>



To purchase books please contact Cara House



Donations
To show your support for traumatised children please donate to CaraCare by visiting our website:
www.caracare.org.au/

To purchase the Annual Gala Ball tickets or register for other events please visit:
<http://www.caracare.org.au/>