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nccg
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHILDHOOD GRIEF

A Friend's Place

catch up
with nccg friends

Spring 2024

In this **Spring** issue

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Christmas Stall Fundraiser, Volunteers Needed!
(30 Nov to 24 Dec)

Dear NCCG friend,

Whenever I think the NCCG's care centre can't get any busier – it does!

In the last year we have supported a record 491 individual children and 306 parents and other adults. Each child has received a free, personalised program of care to suit their needs, from one check-in session to 15+ sessions, plus group programs over the year.

In this edition of our Catch Up newsletter, we share the Magova family's story of bereavement and resilience, a new support article from our Co-Founder Dianne on repartnering after a bereavement and a major upgrade to the centre's garden therapy program.

In the lead up to Christmas we also have some helpful volunteering opportunities and a gift suggestion that can 'give' all year!

All the best,
Chris

OUR IMPACT

A RECORD

1733

counselling sessions provided in one year

1733 sessions of free specialist bereavement counselling provided to children across Australia,
July 2023 – June 2024

DONATE TO SUPPORT BEREAVED CHILDREN

The Magova Family's Story

Ondrej and Katarina immigrated to Sydney from Slovakia in Central Europe in 2008 – bright young University graduates searching for new adventures and careers in an exciting country on the other side of the world.

Katarina says they both loved the outdoors – hiking, camping and photography. Sydney and Australia offered them so much adventure. "We would go out pretty much every weekend.", Katarina remembers. "We would just pick a walk and head out with friends, a bushwalking club or on our own. It was our lifestyle."

As they built their life together in Sydney, they had two children – Martin in 2014 and Emma in 2017.

Their lives changed forever on one of these adventures. One weekend Ondrej went on a walk with a group of mates on an off-track walk in the Colo Valley, north-west of Sydney...

READ THE FULL STORY

What the Children Say

As part of the NCCG's clinical services, clients and their parents or carers are surveyed for their feedback on their counselling sessions, how the service may be helping them and any other feedback they want to share.

Here are a few of many comments from the people at the heart of the NCCG – our client children – which reveal a broad range of insights into their experience of bereavement and grief, their personal journey and what the NCCG means to them. All feedback is shared anonymously here to protect children's privacy.

> *"I used to think…that without my dad I couldn't be in the real world. Now I understand he would have wanted me to live in it and do what I want to do, with him in my heart always"*
> ***Girl, aged 13-15 years***

> *"I have learnt that there is nothing wrong or bad with grieving and that it is totally normal. It reminds me that I am not alone in my grief"*
> ***Girl, aged 11-13 years***

> *"I like it here, it is very nice. My counsellor is the best"*
> ***Boy, aged 11-13 years***

> *"I enjoy coming to the NCCG because I get to do fun activities while talking about serious emotions"*
> ***Girl, aged 11-13 years***

Centre Garden Upgrades

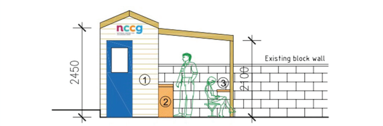
A new gardening activity hut will soon be built in the centre's garden – get ready for lots more fun and building memories with plants, soil and carpentry.

Gardening is an important and popular feature of the centre's counselling program. Getting hands-on with potting and nurturing plants and decorating pots are great ways to remember a loved one who liked to garden. Counselling sessions can also be that bit easier and relaxing outdoors in the sun and fresh air.

To enhance the gardening program, the NCCG has secured funding to build a new garden hut, complete with work benches and seating, a tool storage shed and additional planting. The local, Hornsby-based Granny Flat Foundation is also generously providing their professional designers and builders to enhance the project.

We hope to complete the construction before Christmas.

The NCCG wishes to thank the NSW Government (Community Building Partnerships program) and the Granny Flat Foundation for their generous support of this project.



Dating & repartnering after the death of a spouse

An NCCG Support Article

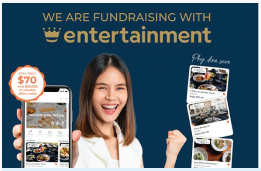
NCCG co-founder Dianne McKissock OAM discusses some thoughts and approaches to finding a new partner after the death of a spouse.

When grief after the death of a partner is raw and debilitating, the very thought of dating or repartnering can feel repugnant. Very few newly bereaved people are able, or want to, imagine being with someone new while pain is intense and feels like a connection to the person who died.

I've been asked many times over the years whether there is a right or wrong time to begin dating after the death of a spouse. I feel protective of bereaved people and for that reason, I'm happy to provide some rough guidelines.

It's best to wait until you've experienced at least one of everything – birthdays, anniversaries, traditional celebrations, and the anniversary of the death. Ideally, two years provides more time to feel in control of grief rather than being controlled by 'it'. But I'm a realist and life is rarely ideal.

READ DIANNE'S FULL POST



Entertainment Fundraiser

An exciting new way to support the NCCG's care services - a subscription to the Entertainment guide provides a huge array of discounts and offers on dining, shopping, things to do and more.

Save up to 50% on purchases and find great new local family entertainment options.

A one-off payment of $70 unlocks over $20,000 in offers and a full 12-month membership. 20% of your purchase price is donated to the NCCG.

All you need to do is buy your Entertainment membership from our special NCCG Entertainment page.
Check out the Entertainment offer here.

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAKE
TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAKE
TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS PUDDING
TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS PUDDING

Volunteering Opportunity
Lions Club Xmas Stall
NCCG Fundraiser

Can you spare a half-day to volunteer for the NCCG?

The Lions Club of Hornsby are running a weekend Christmas market stall to raise funds for the NCCG.

Last year over $8000 was raised selling a diverse array of festive gifts and Lions Christmas Cakes - an amazing effort which we hope to repeat in 2024! Volunteers are needed to help staff the stall at:

Westfield Hornsby
9am-12pm or 12pm-3pm shifts
every Sat & Sun, 30 Nov-22 Dec & 23-24 December

The NCCG is primarily funded by community donations, which make possible our free and unlimited care for bereaved children and their families.

If you are interested in supporting the NCCG by volunteering or fundraising, check out the **Get Involved page** or **email** the NCCG's fundraising team.

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NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
CHILDHOOD GRIEF

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