



General >

Whether you think you can or think you can't - you are right. ~Henry Ford

WHO AM I? In the Jacaranda house we have been focusing on this very topic, the essence of, as you work on the

interior, the exterior can shine through. In knowing this, here is some information about what the past few months have looked like for Jacaranda Cottage.

Mentoring Program > An arm of Jacaranda Cottage is our outreach case management service for 14-20 year old girls who do not live at Jacaranda Cottage. The program aims to inspire hope and purpose in young women in order to help them achieve goals in every aspect of their lives.

The young women are provided with support to build self esteem, confidence and capacity to deal with issues and move forward. Living skills are also addressed to develop skills such as budgeting, communication, studying and job seeking. A holistic approach is taken to address needs in 8 key areas: personal, emotional, social, spiritual, physical, financial, educational, and practical.

So far in 2011, we have been able to provide many means of support, standing with the girls through many hardships. With everything else going on in their lives, Jacaranda aims to release these girls from feeling even more overwhelmed than they already are. We have worked with girls on their tax returns, finding accommodation, budgeting, and meeting many other needs that arise. Thanks to **Shirewide youth service**, we have been blessed to assist in alleviating increasing pressures to the clients by allowing them to "work off" their debt. This is done by engaging in programs such as case management or volunteering. Thank you Shire Wide for being a voice to youth in the Shire.

Residents > We have had 4 residents living in the house in the last 6 months. We've tackled HSC obstacles, overcoming trust barriers. One of the highlights was the last night of the Esteem program where the girls, after building them up and encouraging them individually, we took them to a quiet lake where we discussed and got specific about lies that have been spoken over their lives. Lies of failure, blame, hurt and hate. We then gave the opportunity to write these lies on a rock and hurl them into the water. This was to symbolize the **letting go** of this from their lives. While it was hurtful to have to write this down and the girls were skeptical of how this was to esteem them, once we showed them that the point was that they could leave these things behind they felt the relief of letting go.

Wednesday nights at Jacaranda Cottage is **Home Night**. We facilitate workshops on various living skills or personal development topics for all our residents. For the past few months, the girls focused up on their Esteem- what it means to be a woman in the 21st century, who you are at your core, and how everything else flows from that worldview. Our vision is to impart **Hope**, facilitate **Restoration** and celebrate **Transformation**. This is exactly what was enacted in this course. **Lauren** led us through some core belief systems and mindsets, After looking at the interior, we were then able to focus up on the exterior and we were so privileged to hear from a great guest speaker **Sarah Tollhurst**, Fashion Guru. We had a night of looking at our body shapes, suitable colours and designs that would make us look and feel our best. Jo from **Top to Toe** donated manicures for the girls, making them feel extra special with a pampering night full of surprises and fun, and something they have remembered in the months that have followed.

We have also explored Budgeting in home nights recently. We looked at what our girls budgeting history was, and where they want to go as well as how to apply self discipline. Our aim was to empower the girls to financial freedom with principals that would serve them now and at any point in their lives in the future.

We have been running a night at Jacaranda that addresses what healthy coping strategies our residents have. At this point it is focused on baking. We have had ladies from the **Caringbah Lions club** (Ellen and Carol) come on our coping strategies night and bring all the ingredients and their years of experience and showed us how to bake scones. Everyone loved it and it was such a great experience to have an older generation sow into another in some way. The Lions Club have lined up to come in once a month till the end of the year.



The girls were set a task to run a home night themed on coping strategies and hobbies. We have tackled Running, Martial Arts and Baking. The girls did exceptionally well and learnt something new along the way.

If you have **expertise** in an area that you would like to impart as part of our living skills program, contact us at admin@jacaranda.org.au. We would **love** to hear from you!

Volunteers > As mentioned, a sense of esteem and well being is one of the most important aspects of our lives, as so much flows out of that belief system we hold. It's so great that there are companies that stand for empowering woman, who know how important it is to

esteem others. And that is **Top to Toe** to a tee. As Manager of **Top To Toe** and working in the industry now for 25 years, **Joanne Nicholls'** mission statement is definitely aligned with Jacaranda's core of who we are. Thank you for your kind donation.

Over the last month we had one of our residents who is on the home stretch of her HSC come to a freeze in her major art work. She had some great ideas but was stuck and became overwhelmed and felt powerless to complete such a massive task. Thanks to the mentoring and hands on assistance of **Josh Brown**, an unofficial ambassador of Jacaranda, our resident was able to work through her ideas and come up with an end product that excited both her and her teachers. Thanks Josh! Your help is always appreciated.

Our Staff> **Chris Byrnes-Mikelsons** has been Acting Coordinator for the last few months and has given the vision a different flavour in the wait of our trusty leader **Mel Fowler's** return.

As for the other workers, **Carly** has recently stepped out of her role at Jacaranda, in order to refocus and tackle the next new challenge in life. She has left a beautiful mark on Jacaranda and we are sad to see her go, but wish her all the best for the future. **Lauren** now a part time worker and just commenced her Cert IV in community services and welfare, **Laura** has taken on more responsibility and workload, and **Sarah** also taking on her Cert IV in community services and welfare recently is getting so much out of it as well. They are all working hard and developing beautifully as workers. We are all really proud to be part of a team that functions so well together and has such a keen sense of unity.

Community> Recently we received a telephone call from **Gymea Tradies**. They told us of an initiative they had called 'Tradies Tribe Give Back Program', which provides Tradies team members with the opportunity to give back to community organisations about which they feel passionate.

Nine Tradies team members selected Jacaranda Cottage as their cause due to the role it plays in providing accommodation and refuge to young women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. On Monday the 15th August, Jacaranda was presented with a cheque for \$600. We really appreciate these workers standing up and saying that these issues within their community matter to them. We couldn't run our program without generous donations like these. Every cent helps. Thank you.

Chris chaired her first Youth Network Meeting on the 4th August. This meeting is for all of the youth directed organizations in the Shire that work with youth in capacities of hardship and issues to come together and network and share information.



Jacaranda Cottage partnered together with **Curves Gym** in the aim to have people run 10kms for \$10K to go towards

running and maintaining Jacaranda Cottage and our program. On June 4, 91 people from all over the community ran or walked the 10kms on Lady Carrington Drive in the National Park. Within 3 weeks of the event, we had the \$10K in the bank. The day was beautiful, and everyone who came had a wonderful time, creating a sense of community. In this event we raised an awareness of youth homelessness in the Shire and where Jacaranda is providing some solutions. We offered an opportunity for people from the community to become part of that solution! The community answered that call. Thank you to everyone who got involved whether it be as a participant or a volunteer. We hope to run it again next year. A big thank you to **Curves Gym** and the **National Parks** for making the event the success it was.



Donations> Jacaranda Cottage is a house in the Shire. It is an older house that comes with many maintenance issues. We have had issues with not having fly screens for some of our windows and sliding doors. After a conversation with Rob Fuller, we had organized that **Waratah Air Conditioning** would arrange to have all of the windows and doors geared up with screens. Thanks to this display of bigheartedness, come summer, we can let air flow through the house without the company of mosquitoes. Thank you!



Also **Curves Gym** who have been a continuous support throughout 2011 are donating the profits from water sales to Jacaranda Cottage as their designated charity. We can't thank **Curves Gym** enough for their involvement and support.

Donations made to Jacaranda Cottage are **tax deductible**. We rely on the support of the community to continue our service.

Upcoming Events> The Cook Community Classic on the 21st November 2011. The Classic is all about helping us appreciate, support and value the generosity of our local community.

The team thanks you for your support
-Chris, Laura, Sarah and Lauren.