

Marist180 – National Assembly Report

What has been happening in Marist180

Over the last three years Marist180 has continued to implement and grow its footprint of services across NSW. It now runs 9 program areas over 19 different service streams with a team of over 500 operating from close to 60 locations (residential homes, offices, construction sites) in NSW, QLD, and the ACT. Every year we work with more than 600 young people, vulnerable clients, and their families.

Operating 24/7, the Marist180 team has delivered 437,000 direct care hours to young people in residential care, supplied close to 55,000 meals, and provided 7,500 hours of training to direct care staff over the last 12 months. The additional complexity of COVID meant the Marist180 team also managed 890 incidents since June 2021. Whilst a small number of corporate support staff worked from home during COVID lockdowns, all residential care homes remained open and staffed. Omicron saw at least a third of our team isolating at any given time over the Christmas New Year period. As always, the team pulled together as a whole with team members doing longer and extra shifts to ensure our young people never went without necessary supports. We also became quite adept at doing thorough house cleans when young people or team members tested positive.

We hear and quote often from St Marcellin Champagnat, *“To raise children, we must love them and love them equally.”* What does this look like in Marist180 when dealing with some of the most traumatised and vulnerable young people in society. Young people who have been abandoned by family, society, and the system. The behaviours these young people display can be confronting, violent, and at odds with the law. Not always those we would naturally gravitate to with love. However, if we look at the scriptural use of ‘agape,’ this love refers to a pure, willful, sacrificial love that intentionally desires another’s highest good, then this is what every team member at Marist180 models each day. They may not use the language of love – they live it.

The aspiration for all vulnerable people that are supported through Marist180 is to create hope for the future, create positive change. There have been numerous positive stories of children, young people and vulnerable clients doing 180’s and moving into independent living, stable employment, higher education and living their best lives. This takes persistence, commitment of time and an audacious belief in the least, lost and forgotten. It is not always straightforward and can be full of obstacles but the Marist180 team continue to witness to the mission of the Church simply by how they engage and support the many orphans and disadvantaged persons that come into our services. It is closely aligned to the healing ministry of Jesus and his love for the poor and outcasts.

Like Mary, we journey and stand by with the children, young people, and vulnerable clients in our care. Even in the darkest of hours we are there. The many images of Mary cradling Jesus at birth and in death and being a constant through his ministry, at the cross, and in the post-resurrection Church is akin to how our Marist180 team is present to those who need protection and refuge. Whether it is supporting clients at court, in prisons, in hospitals, and in workplaces to advocating to government, communities and neighbours to change their attitudes and responses to our clients, as Marists we draw on our audacious hearts and a daring spirit to say YES in responding to the most urgent needs of our children, young people, and those at the margins. (Guiding Principle 6)

Marist180 Programs

Daramu Aboriginal Youth Service

The Daramu program provides a range of culturally responsive, early intervention services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth who may be either at risk of involvement in criminal behaviour or have been in recent contact with the police, courts, or Juvenile Justice NSW.

Through intensive case management and culturally specific programs, young people are supported to choose positive, pro-social pathways and to address the specific issues which may be influencing their propensity to offend. Young people are also assisted to access services such as educational and/or vocational training, youth health services, counselling, accommodation providers, as well as to enhance their knowledge and connection to traditional culture. Daramu assists 40 young people and their families every year.

Mudjin Byala Family Yarning Circles

Mudjin Byala Family Yarning Circles is a unique family support initiative which utilises the dynamics of the yarning circle to engage vulnerable Aboriginal families and young people in an inclusive, culturally responsive problem-solving process with local Elders and/or respected community members, as well as with appropriate local service providers. Through this collaborative problem-solving process, social inclusion and social participation is promoted, connections and linkages are made and maintained and skills and resilience are developed. Mudjin Byala assists 20 young people and their families every year.

Marri Ba Vocation, Training and Employment Centre

Our Marri-Ba Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC) provides employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients across Sydney and helps them build up their professional skillset. We partner with organisations that are passionate about achieving cultural diversity in their workforce and connect our clients to employment opportunities, in a variety of industries.

The Marri-Ba VTEC program is delivered by a skilled, experienced, and passionate Aboriginal team. Our cultural support isn't delivered in one session, it forms part of our casework practice and is evident in daily conversations, family connections, personal barrier management, career planning, health, language, literacy and numeracy support and training support. Marri Ba VTEC supports 90 people every year to find employment opportunities.

Time to Work

Time to Work supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults exiting custody to prepare them to find employment and reintegrate into the community upon their release. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults who are within three-to-four months of their release from prison receive support from a Marist180 Caseworker. Marist180 completes a comprehensive assessment of the client's employment barriers, and helps develop a detailed transition plan, and a facilitated transfer from their in-prison service provider to their post-release employment service provider, where possible. The Time to Work program support 40 people leaving prison each year.

Specialist Homelessness Services

Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) provides accommodation and/or casework support to clients at risk of homelessness and currently experiencing homelessness. The program supports to remain safely in their existing housing, or to secure and maintain stable housing.

SHS includes:

- The HYAP (Homelessness Youth Accommodation Program), a program that supports client and families before family breakdown.
- The Juvenile Justice crisis bed (located at Maggie's Place), which supports young people released on bail who cannot return to their family home.
- Going Home Staying Home, a program that provides refuge accommodation (Going Home) and outreach support and transitional housing (Staying Home).

Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP)

HYAP supports children aged 12–15 who are experiencing difficulties in their family home, using a trauma-informed and therapeutic approach. Our Caseworkers aim to maintain each Client's placement in the family home by providing early intervention through Outreach, and in some cases providing temporary accommodation, with the focus of restoring the Client back into the family home.

If returning to the family home is not a safe option, the Caseworker will help the individual find alternative long-term accommodation. HYAP is a program run in conjunction with Mackillop Family Services who hold 60% of the contract and

Marist180 hold 40% of the contract. HYAP can only have two Clients at one time for the accommodation component of the program, however Outreach endeavours to assist approximately 20 Clients per year.

Juvenile Justice Crisis Accommodation

Marist180 closely works with Juvenile Justice NSW to support young offenders who are on supervision orders and require crisis accommodation. Our accommodation service ensures Juvenile Justice NSW Clients have access to accommodation during times of crisis when they are close to being without a home, have recently been discharged from custody or are in a placement that has broken down.

We accommodate Clients for 28 days while our caseworkers help them find stable, long-term accommodation or restore the Client to their family home.

Going Home Staying Home Program

The Going Home Staying Home Program is covered under the one contract however Marist180 has separated the program into two service delivery factions. Going Home comprises of a Crisis Refuge and ensuring the Client is restored back with their family or a safe environment, while Staying Home comprises of Outreach support, to ensure the Client remains at home in a safe environment or resides in the Transitional Independent Living Program.

Marist180 currently has three locations for Crisis Accommodation, The Siding, Maggies House, and HAYS. The Siding House will accommodate Clients for up to two weeks. Maggies and HAYS will accommodate Clients for up to 3 months.

Hebersham Aboriginal Youth Service (HAYS) provides a culturally responsive, supported accommodation service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 16-18 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Staying Home – Transitional Independent Living

Developing the skills needed to live independently is an important step for people looking to build their future. This program helps individuals, couples and young families who are ready to live independently but may need some support. We give them the opportunity to learn the skills they need in a safe and supportive environment.

Marist180 caseworkers help our Clients develop the confidence to live independently through a trauma-informed and therapeutic approach. Marist180 offers accommodation in Guildford, Granville, and Girraween for 3 to 12 months, depending on the Client's needs. During this time, Marist180 caseworkers will help Clients enhance their ability to live independently. They'll also encourage Clients to engage in education and employment, which will ultimately help secure longer-term accommodation. Marist180 partners with Evolve and Community Housing Limited to manage lease signing.

Targeted Earlier Intervention [TEI]

Targeted Earlier Intervention [previously known as Getting It Together Scheme] is an early intervention program funded by the DCJ to empower clients who are and/or have been affected by alcohol and/or drugs.

The program provides services and support for Clients to transition to or resume self-sufficient living, free of dependence on alcohol and/or drugs. Marist180 offers TEI via brokerage, connecting clients with DCJ funding to support income, health, mental health, social support, housing, justice, education, and employment and training needs e.g., purchase of a new laptop to enable return to school.

Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors:

The Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor (UHM) Program provides care to non-citizen children who have been assessed by the Department of Home Affairs as entering and residing in Australia without a parent or legal guardian. Clients aged 3 – 18 years old, granted an eligible protection or humanitarian visa will generally be referred to the UHM Program.

Clients receiving services under the UHM Program are broadly categorised as either:

- an 'IGOC minor' (the policy term for a minor for whom the Minister is their legally recognized guardian under the Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946 [IGOC Act]); or
- a 'non-IGOC minor' (the policy term for an unaccompanied minor who entered Australia in circumstances that are not specified in the IGOC Act and are therefore not under the Minister's guardianship). Whether these minors are eligible for the UHM Program is considered on a case-by-case basis by the department.

Permanency Support Program

Children and young people enter the Permanency Support Program when they can no longer remain in their family home, and they are at risk of entering or have already entered the care of the Minister of the Department of Communities and Justice [DCJ], whom the courts assign legal parental responsibility via care orders.

When a child or young person can no longer remain in their family home, they will be referred to one of the other services of the PSP. These services are:

1. Relative/Kinship Care, Foster Care and Aboriginal Foster Care
2. Intensive Therapeutic Care [ITC]
3. Supported Independent Living [SIL]

Marist180 provides ITC and SIL services under this contract. Intensive Therapeutic Care services aim to provide a holistic, individualised, multidisciplinary approach to address the complex impacts of trauma.

The ITC program encompasses 5 services:

1. Intensive Therapeutic Transitional Care [ITTC]
2. Therapeutic Sibling Option Placement [TSOP]
3. Therapeutic Supported Independent Living [TSIL]
4. Intensive Therapeutic Care Home [ITCH]
5. Therapeutic Home-Based Care [THBC]

Intensive Therapeutic Transitional Care [ITTC]

An Intensive Therapeutic Transitional Care Assessment House provides young people with a safe environment for a period of intensive care and clinical assessment lasting up to **13 weeks**. During this time, the therapeutic specialists and multidisciplinary specialist team assess the young person's baseline behaviours and individual needs, identify the best placement options for them, identify future step-down options that may work for them, and begin implementing interventions and case planning. The Marist teamwork with DCJ and other service providers to successfully transition the young person into the most appropriate placement for them. An ITTC can have four young people staying at a time, who are 12 years or over, with complex and high support needs, and a CAT score of High.

Intensive Therapeutic Care Home [ITCH]

The Intensive Therapeutic Care Home placement provides a safe and home-like environment, and day-to-day intensive therapeutic support from qualified, trained, and consistent Direct Care Staff. This is a long-term placement with the aim of transitioning young people to a less intensive placement type and a permanent home within **two years**.

Staff provide consistent and planned daily interactions and routines, casework support, access to specialist services, transport, supervision, support, and regular reviews and assessments of young people's changing needs. An ITC Home houses a maximum of four young people, who must be 12 years or over, with a CAT score of High.

Therapeutic Sibling Option Placement [TSOP]

The Therapeutic Sibling Option placement delivers full-time, live-in care by a consistent authorised Carer in either their own home or a home provided by Marist180. Marist provide the young people with ongoing casework support, respite, and access to specialist therapeutic services. This placement option is for siblings or related groups of young people and is designed to support sibling groups to live together as a family unit.

To enter TSOP, young people must be part of a group of three siblings/relatives at a minimum, at least one of whom requires Intensive Therapeutic Care and has a CAT score of High. Children under 12 years can be placed in TSOP to keep a sibling/relative group together.

Therapeutic Home-Based Care [THBC]

The Therapeutic Home-Based Care placement delivers full-time, live-in care by a consistent authorised Carer in either their own home or a home provided by Marist180. The carer's primary role is to look after the young person. This is primarily an individual, 1:1 placement, but may apply to related groups in special circumstances. THBC differs from foster care in that the young person receives the therapeutic specialist services offered as part of Intensive Therapeutic Care.

Young people must be 12 years or older, have completed a Trauma Treatment Service, and have a CAT score of High.

Therapeutic Supported Independent Living [TSIL]

The Therapeutic Supported Independent Living program is a 24-month, time-limited placement that aims to prepare young people for independent living and self-reliance by providing furnished accommodation, casework support, life skills programs, specialist services, and therapeutic care.

This program aims to

- prevent young people from transitioning out of ITC into homelessness services
- to maximise a young person's capacity for independent living
- and to improve social, economic, and health outcomes for young people leaving care.

TSIL exists for young people who demonstrate a preference for living on their own, and/or where other permanency options do not exist. Young people must be 16 years or older, with a CAT score of High, and must be able to demonstrate a basic capacity to care for themselves, as assessed in interview and through independent living assessments. The young person contributes towards the rent and utilities for their share of costs.

Housing arrangements may include:

- Supported shared housing – 3-4 young people, who do not require daily supervision, live in a share house.
- Lead tenant households – 2-4 young people, requiring daily supervision, have a live-in or volunteer Authorised Carer. The carer receives free rent and utilities to oversee the day-to-day running of the home and provide positive role modelling and receives 24-hour support. Marist180 provides casework support.
- Supported tenancies – 1-2 young people, who are not yet ready for a shared living situation, are not suitable for lead tenant arrangement, and require daily casework support.

This service is like Supported Independent Living [SIL], but is considered an ITC Service, as it is designed for young people with more complex needs, who require intensive therapeutic support and has a therapeutic specialist attached.

Supported Independent Living [SIL]

This service is like Therapeutic Supported Independent Living [TSIL] but is not a part of the Intensive Therapeutic Care services as it is designed for young people with less complex needs, who require less intensive therapeutic support.

The Supported Independent Living placement is a 24-month, time-limited accommodation and support program that aims to prepare and support young people for independent living and self-reliance before they exit care, or to support them after leaving care. SIL exists for young people who demonstrate a preference for living on their own, and/or where other permanency options do not exist. Young people must be 16 years or older, with a CAT score between 1 and 4, and must be able to demonstrate a basic capacity to care for themselves, as assessed in interview and through independent living assessments. The young person contributes towards the rent and utilities for their share of costs. The program aims to:

- prevent young people from transitioning from residential care into homelessness services
- maximise a young person's capacity for independent living
- and improve social, economic, and health outcomes for young people leaving care

Family Preservation:

The Family Preservation Program (FPP) is contracted by DCJ to work with

- Families who are at risk of having their children removed due to a risk of significant harm;
- Authorised carers of children in OOHC at risk of placement breakdown; and
- A family working towards restoration following a child's entry into OOHC.

With a child/young person between the ages of 0-15 years placed in Out of Home Care.

The FPP supports families within the Metro West Regional area (Lithgow, Blue Mountains, Penrith, Hawkesbury, Blacktown, Parramatta, Holroyd, and Auburn).

The program is 12-24 weeks long and includes assessing a family's strengths and areas that require additional support and uses a strengths-based approach to support families to learn new parenting skills. This work occurs inside the family's home or within their local community.

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The road ahead for Marist180

Marist180 has recently completed its Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2025 which will officially launch on 1 July to coincide with the new financial year. The planning process commenced with our Board retreat in June 2021 and involved many levels of the organisation reflecting on the last few years and discerning our call to imagine a positive future and where the impact of Marist180's mission should be focused. Marist180 remains hopeful about the future and dares to dream with ambition that we will build a positive future for all people in our communities.

Marist180's approach in the next three years will centre around five strategic pillars - Integration, Our People, Our Capability, Our Clients, and Impact. Our Mission remains to create hope in the lives of young people at risk and their families and Our Vision, in the spirit of St Marcellin Champagnat, is to create an inclusive community where young people at risk, and their families, are inspired and equipped to live fulfilling lives and contribute to the common good.

Drawing on our five Marist characteristics, the values we will live are:

- **Respect:** We support people's rights, encourage diversity and seek inclusiveness.
- **Belonging:** We value relationships built on trust, fairness and lasting connections.
- **Presence:** We are there for each other and those we support.
- **Compassion:** We are committed to support those who are vulnerable and in need.
- **Simplicity:** We say what we believe and show it.

We will continue to be a disruptive edge by pursuing the following agenda:

- Agitating governments to raise the age of young people being supported in out of home care from 18 to 21 (The Home Stretch)
- Changing community attitudes and stereotypes of young people in care
- Working collegially across communities to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in out of home care and juvenile justice
- Seeking better support for those at risk of, currently experiencing, or transitioning from homelessness (From Street To Home)
- Supporting the increasing number of unaccompanied humanitarian minors seeking asylum and refuge in Australia.

Whilst we operate in a complex and rapidly changing landscape, and navigate complicated legislative and regulatory environments, our inspiration draws from our "anchor of hope that will open new horizons, making us capable of dreaming what is not even imaginable." Pope Francis also pointed to "Mary as the great icon of hope, transformed to her very depths and this hope is similar in that it changes us within, it changes our attitudes." (Pope Francis, Hope the hidden virtue, 2013) I would ask the Association to keep all the Marist180 team in their prayers asking for the grace to be people of hope.

Our strategy

2022-2025



Our mission

Creating hope and positive change in the lives of young people at risk, and their families.

Our vision

An inclusive community where young people at risk, and their families, are inspired and equipped to live fulfilling lives and contribute to the common good.

Our strategic pillars

Integration

Our organisational integration enables efficient growth of capability, service excellence, and social impact.

Capability

Our organisational innovation capability helps Our People to exceed expectations.

Our people

Our workplace is led by love, nurtures learning and connection, enabling Our People to be the best they can be.

Our clients

Our commitment to research and evidence based practice enhances our client outcomes.

Our impact

We are a trusted, respected, and influential leader, that inspires hope and makes a positive impact.

Our values

Respect

Belonging

Presence

Compassion

Simplicity