

# YOUTH RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

The Youth Reconciliation Program is a free, confidential counselling support service for homeless or potentially homeless young people and families. The Youth Reconciliation Program helps young people to talk about family difficulties and personal issues resulting from or impacting on homelessness (such as anger, separation, loss and grief). The program also explores options for positive change, developing strategies to resolve conflict and strengthen relationships, and provides access to family mediation.

## WHY IS THE YOUTH RECONCILIATION PROGRAM DIFFERENT?

The Youth Reconciliation Program worker focuses on the young person's strengths and abilities and strives to empower the young person to develop meaningful solutions that work for them. The connection is absolute and genuine and supports young people to make their own life choices by suggesting a wide range of options and facilitating re/connections to family, significant others and community as well as other services.

## CAPACITY BUILDING IN COMMUNITIES

An important aspect of the Youth Reconciliation Program involves building connections and partnerships within the community to encourage early intervention to help prevent issues affecting young people and young families that may lead to homelessness. The Youth Reconciliation Program also offers workshops and information sessions on topics such as Health and Wellbeing, Stress and Anxiety Management, Healthy Relationships and many others that give young people the tools they need to promote personal growth, responsibility and self management.

Please read the story overleaf about how the Youth Reconciliation Program helped Mandy and her baby son reconnect with family to help build a more positive future.





## CASE STUDY MANDY AND JACK

Twenty-one year old Mandy and her toddler son Jack became homeless and after being referred to Hope Street they moved into the Young Family Unit in Brunswick (crisis accommodation). After Mandy was linked to the Youth Reconciliation Program for one-on-one counselling support, she identified that she would benefit from family mediation with her mother, as she felt her mother did not understand her.

Mandy and her mother participated in Family Mediation with the Youth Reconciliation Program worker, leading to a mutual agreement about how they would behave with each other in the future and concrete actions they would take to improve their relationship. After the mediation, Mandy said she felt like “a weight had been lifted from (her) shoulders” as she said she had not felt “heard” before. Both Mandy and her mother said that they now communicated more effectively, and they both felt a better understanding of each other and would honour their behaviour agreement.

Mandy continued to have counselling sessions focused on developing self-management skills and coping strategies. The Youth Reconciliation Program worker was able to offer evidence-based suggestions to help Mandy achieve her goals. Support was given in the context of her being a parent, providing early intervention to assist in the prevention of further homelessness.

Mandy and Jack secured long-term accommodation after leaving the Young Family Unit. Mandy also felt more supported by her mother.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE HELP LIKE MANDY AND JACK,  
OR YOU WANT TO REFER A YOUNG PERSON TO THE  
YOUTH RECONCILIATION PROGRAM, CONTACT:**

### Access Points

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Melbourne Youth Support Service | 9614 3688 |
| North East Housing              | 9479 0700 |
| Homeground                      | 9288 9611 |
| VincentCare                     | 9304 0100 |

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