

A practical response to need in our community



Lifehouse

Project Inc

Annual Report 2003-2004



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Lifehouse Project Values

Relationships

Participation and partnership

Community

Learning, social and personal development

Professionalism and excellence in all that we do

Team Work

Lifehouse Project Inc is a community project that was set up in 2000 and incorporated in 2003 to assist young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The organisation's main aim is to assist young people gain life skills, parenting skills, housing and employment through the provision of housing, programs, mentoring and grants.

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It is a great pleasure to write the inaugural Chairperson's Report of Lifehouse Project Inc.

I am very pleased to say it has been an exciting and successful first year!

Lifehouse was founded on the belief that we can all play an important role in making our community a healthy and safe place. Lifehouse has spent this year developing initiatives that provide a practical response to the needs of young people and young parents who are at risk. Our mission and values reflect the importance we place on building relationships in the community and demonstrating God's love in a practical way.

Setting up a community organisation is no easy feat! There are many legal obligations to comply with, high insurance costs and very little funding around. Despite this, Lifehouse Project has had a fantastic year with many people supporting our vision and providing us with the funding to start some exciting projects. We have been very grateful to receive funds from The District Youth Achievement Plan (Education Queensland), Gambling Community Benefit Fund, Youth At Risk Alliance, Gold Coast School and Community Families Project and Dream Centre Church.

We have also been given support from Microsoft, Network Communications, Gold Coast Family Connections and a number of individuals who have provided donated goods and funds. We have enjoyed working closely with YHES House and look forward to an important partnership with them in 2004/5, running Asher Grove, our first accommodation service for pregnant and parenting mothers.

Lifehouse Project has been involved with some exciting and innovative projects in its first year. We have run the Directions Transition Program, Talking Realities, The Young Parents Mentoring Program and a

Brokerage Scheme. Through these projects, we have worked with over 800 young people and supported 21 young parents this year. Details about these projects follow this report.

We have had an incredible team this year: 15 volunteers in our mentoring program, 5 young mums volunteering with Talking Realities, 9 management committee members and 1 full time youth worker for 6 months. This team has been a tremendous group of committed people who have served willingly to support young people in our community. Thanks to Belinda Rolle, who did an amazing job coordinating and running the Directions Transition Program between January – July 2004. Through this project we have had the privilege of getting to know some fantastic young people who now have a lot more self-confidence, self-esteem and goals for the future.

The management committee are a united team of committed professionals and parents. Without this team, Lifehouse Project would not have got off the ground and achieved all it has this year. It is a pleasure to be friends and colleagues with Zeke, Bev, Neal, Naomi, Robyn, Lisa and Craig. Thank you for your continued commitment and passion.

I am very excited about what the next year holds for us. Lifehouse Project aims to develop the Young Parents Mentoring Program and accommodation service, as there are many young mothers on the Gold Coast who are homeless and need appropriate support programs.

In advance, I want to thank all those who join us in 2004/5 to make Lifehouse Project a successful and relevant ministry in our local community.

Ruth Knight

Ruth Knight
Chairperson

Chairperson's Report

Staff & Volunteers

4002-3002

Management Committee

Ruth Knight	Chairperson
Craig Nevin	Vice-Chair
Beverley Birch	Secretary
Zeke Knight	Treasurer
Neal Birch	Committee Member
Naomi Leyshon	Committee Member
Robyn Evans	Committee Member
Lisa Condon	Committee Member
Sarah Wilson	Committee Member (to March 04)

Staff

Belinda Rolle	Directions Transition Program (to July 04)
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Volunteers

Simone Carey	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Lisa Mahony	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Jill Donoghoe	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Tania Russell	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Nancy Burnett	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Sian Michalk	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Anita Burgess	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Sue Siganto	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Cathy Simpson	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Melissa Rowsell	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Naomi Leyshon	Young Parents Mentoring Program
	Talking Realities
Rachel Bonney	Talking Realities
Toni Baird	Talking Realities
Annette Morris	Talking Realities
Tracie Lewis	Talking Realities

Industry Volunteers

Daryl Tobler	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Helen Morris	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Frances Callaghan	Young Parents Mentoring Program
Marie Frazer	Young Parents Mentoring Program

Directions helps young people discuss today, think about tomorrow and plan for the future.

We received funding in 2003 to develop and manage The Directions Transition Program. 'Directions' is an exciting initiative working with young people at risk of early school leaving. The objectives of the program include assisting and guiding students to learn life skills; how to identify their goals; interests and skills, and developing the confidence and self-determination to accomplish those goals.

Forty young people, students at Ridgeway TAFE, Benowa, Coombabah and Tamborine Mountain State High Schools, agreed to participate. They attended weekly workshops and were individually case managed by the Directions Project Officer. Life skills and employability skills were developed with the students during the workshops and students used The PLAN workbook to guide their thinking and discussions. The approach used in the group workshops encouraged students to think critically about their own behaviour, attitude and goals, and allowed students to identify the link between school, learning and work.

The program worked collaboratively with School Principals and Deputy's, VET Coordinators, Guidance Officers, School Chaplains, School Based Youth Health Nurses, Youth Support Coordinators, SCISCO Career Pathways, TAFE and the Centrelink Careers Information Centre. We have been able to help students link in with the supports available to them and build their capacity to find and ask for help and advice when they need it.

The outcomes of the program have been very encouraging! At the beginning of the program only 30% of the students said they wanted to complete Year 12 or University, but at the end of the program 81% of the students said they now aimed to complete Year 12 or University. 81% said they believed they make better choices now and 78% said their attitude had improved. 93% of the students said that they felt more confident in making "big life" decisions, and the skills they had learnt would help them in the future. 59% thought the program was not long enough and 100% said they would recommend it to their friends.

Lifeshouse Project is very grateful to everyone who has helped make Directions a success, for working collaboratively and helping us make a difference to the lives of these young people who are now confident and excited about their future. Thank you to the District Youth Achievement Plan committee for funding the initiative, the schools, TAFE, Gold Coast Family Connections, Network Communications, SAILS and Scisco Career Pathways for all your support.

Belinda Rolle

Belinda Rolle
Project Officer

