

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-20



EXPRESSION THROUGH ART GROUP PROJECT

03 9543 8911
info@dixonhouse.org.au
www.dixonhouse.org.au

2 Dixon Street
Clayton VIC 3168
Melbourne, Australia

MISSION & CONTENTS

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As a way of experiencing and showing God's love, Dixon House Neighbourhood Centre aims to benefit residents of Clayton and surrounding areas through providing:

- educational, recreational and welfare programs to foster learning, personal wellbeing and social connectedness
- community development opportunities for individuals, groups, and organisations to collaboratively address needs in the local area
- opportunities for volunteers to improve their skills and support their local community

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ATTENTION: Traditionally, program reports have covered periods between AGMs (i.e. November to November), while the financial reports relate to the financial year (July to June). To maintain consistency and to avoid confusion for contributors as well as readers, we will now align program reports to the financial year as well. **As such, you may notice some duplication of information in the program reports here with the 2018-19 report.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Committee of Governance has met on five occasions in the 2019-20 financial year. There has been good attendance at all meetings. Dixon House has been well served by the Committee which was elected at the AGM last November.

PRESIDENT	Vaughan Smith	MEMBERS	Margaret Boccabella
VICE PRESIDENT	Vacant		Alison Bunting
SECRETARY	Rajesh Arja		Milroy De Vos
TREASURER	Ian Wilding		

The Vicar of All Saints, Charlie Fletcher and our Manager attended all Committee meetings during the year in a non-voting capacity. They continued to provide a valuable link with the parish and the operational aspects of Dixon House.

In the second half of 2019, we ran several programs focused on supporting those from a non-English speaking background. The employment support program coordinated by Lorien Vecellio progressed well with five individual workshops completed. The one-to-one mentoring was supported by half a dozen keen volunteers (including members of the Committee). The final phase of a peer support group followed in Term 4 2019. A big thank you to all involved who made this a very successful program to deliver. Lorien also formed a partnership with Footsteps Fam to deliver a creative youth program based in Dandenong, which involved dance and music-making workshops facilitated by experienced youth workers. This program was coordinated by Dixon House using the expertise of Footsteps to deliver the program. I thank Oanh who also volunteered her time for this youth project.

2020 has been a very different, in some ways tumultuous year for Dixon House with the lockdowns imposed by the Government to battle Covid-19. This has meant a significant curtailment of what services could be offered as well as a very quick development of online program options. The reduced program has given us time to consider future developments and consolidate existing courses that we offer so that we can reopen strongly when the Government allows us to.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Work has continued on our Strategic Plan and consideration is being given to new programs which meet the needs of the Clayton community. Of critical importance after the lockdowns is addressing social isolation in the local area and encouraging people to again develop social contacts. Such activities as the Community Lunch are planned to recommence as soon as this can be achieved in a Covid-Safe way. We are fortunate to be in a financially sound position when we reopen due to Governmental financial support and Jobkeeper helping to maintain our existing staffing levels.

It is pleasing to note the activity of our emergency relief program this financial year and the ongoing Commonwealth funding of this program run in partnership with Anglicare. Many individuals and families received Christmas hampers in 2019 (large families received two). Several of these families were also supported with the generous gift of toys for their children. During the pandemic many family groups were provided with food and financial support. Dixon House was open to support desperate requests by providing a Covid-Safe method of distributing help for needy families.

I wish to thank our Treasurer Ian and Finance Officer Naomi for their guidance and support pertaining to the financial health of Dixon House. Particularly noteworthy is Naomi's key role in sourcing and applying for available governmental support during the pandemic, which has greatly assisted our financial framework. I must also thank our Manager, Winston, for all the work he has done in maintaining our current reduced program as well exploring future developments at Dixon House. He has been flexible in his working conditions, working from home most of the time when Dixon House was physically closed except for emergency food relief. Special thanks must be given to our paid staff and volunteers who have continued to support us during the lockdown period and who have developed online resources in support of the most suitable programs.

It must be noted that the agenda of the Committee of Governance includes a section related to Health and Safety and any issues resulting to Health and Safety concerns are raised as appropriate. Anyone can raise issues of concern and these should be addressed to the Manager (Winston Chee), directly with any member of the Committee, or myself.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Finally, Dixon House has come through the pandemic in good shape financially although we have lost many active members who have previously supported the organization. A strong member drive is needed in 2021 to rebuild our member base and hopefully expand the Committee of Governance in its work. This will be a critical task in the new year and I seek support from all members.

Vaughan Smith - President - Dixon House Committee of Governance

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial year 2019-2020 has been a year of two halves. During the second half of 2019 Dixon House was able to meet its goals through normal activities but during the first half of 2020 providing activities has been severely affected by the necessity to comply with the restrictions imposed in the attempt to arrest the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Fortunately, funding and support from various organisations and individuals has continued and another generous donation from the Toorak Op Shop is acknowledged with appreciation. Moreover, financial support from the Australian Government and the Victorian State Government has compensated for reduced income and there has been no need to limit the development of online programs because of financial constraints. Indeed, at year's end the balance sheet showed an unexpected operating surplus of \$21,389 increasing the equity (net assets) to \$55,818 as at 30 June 2020. The strong financial position means that Dixon House is well placed to resume its full commitment to its Mission Statement by again providing the full range of on-site activities to benefit the local community once the pandemic restrictions are eased. The annual accounts for the 2019-2020 financial year have been audited by Mr Garry Andrews CPA, who has confirmed that they represent a true and fair view of the transactions for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Our banking continues to be managed via the Westpac Banking Corporation, with security processes for managing the inflow and outflow of cash and with two signatories required for all transactions. We are paying most of our bills via online and a Visa debit card and use cheques only where it is not feasible to pay online. Our major programs including staff salaries were funded by the Department of Human Services, City of Monash, All Saints partnership and community fund-raising and by the above mentioned government support. For the 2020 financial year, we are planning for a surplus of \$7,787 although this may well be reduced by new 'start up' costs (e.g. extra cleaning) once normal on-site operations can be resumed.

I would like to thank the Committee of Governance and the Dixon House Manager for all their support and help in performing my function as the Treasurer of Dixon House. A special thanks to Ms Naomi Lim, Finance Officer, who has again done an exemplary job, in managing the finances of Dixon House, reporting all transactions and producing the final financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Ian Wilding - Treasurer - Dixon House Committee of Governance

AUDITOR'S REPORT

AUDITOR'S REPORT – YEAR 2019-2020

FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND ALL MEMBERS OF DIXON HOUSE
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE INC. INCORPORATION NUMBER A0058595N AND
ABN 86648041219.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE AUDITED THE BOOKS OF DIXON HOUSE
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE INC. FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2020.

DURING THE AUDIT THE BOOKKEEPER, NAOMI LIM, PROVIDED ALL
DOCUMENTATION INCLUDING THE FINAL ACCOUNTS, PROFIT AND LOSS
AND BALANCE SHEET ALONG WITH ATTACHMENTS, QUERIES RAISED
WHERE ANSWERED BY NAOMI LIM ON ALL OCCASIONS TO MY COMPLETE
SATISFACTION. I FOUND THE RECORDS IN GOOD ORDER AND UP TO DATE.

BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED AND SIGHTED I CERTIFY THAT THE
PREPARED AND PRESENTED REPORTS, SHOWING A PROFIT OF \$ 21,388.70
FOR THE YEAR REFLECT A TRUE AND FAIR VIEW OF ALL THE
TRANSACTIONS, THIS BEING A DIFFERENT AND RESTRICTED YEAR DUE TO
THE COVID-19 VIRUS, GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO A
STRONG OUTCOME, THE EQUITY AS AT BALANCE SHEET DATE IS
\$55,818.04. DIXON HOUSE, 2 DIXON STREET, CLAYTON, VIC. 368.



DATED; SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

SIGNED;

GARRY ANDREWS
CPA, TAX AGENT

Phone; 9584 9871
0409834618

BUSINESS ADDRESS.
1 HIGHAM STREET
CHELTENHAM VIC 3192.

Profit and Loss
Dixon House Neighbourhood Centre Inc.
1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

	To June	To June
Income	2020	2019
Annual Membership Fees	240	325
Bank Interest Received	116	364
Donations - All Saints Church	4,776	5,550
Donations - Bendigo Bank (Community Lunch)	1,075	-
Donations - Individuals (All Saints Church)	824	350
Donations - Individuals	977	3,958
Donations - Individuals (Expression Through Art)	1,050	3,212
Donations - Toorak Op Shop (Dixon House component)	7,000	10,000
Funding - Anglicare (Emergency Relief Administration)	4,200	4,200
Funding - Department of Health & Human Services	82,634	79,277
Grants - City of Kingston Grants (Fit-To-Learn)	-	2,372
Grants - City of Monash (Volunteer Management)	10,000	11,000
Grants - Department of Home Affairs (Fostering Integration)	46,147	3,853
Grants - Department of Social Services (Volunteer Equipment)	5,000	-
Grants - Good Things Foundation (Be Connected)	363	3,500
Grants - Melbourne Anglican Benevolent Foundation (Homework Club)	10,650	6,650
Other Revenue - Hall Hire and Others	2,900	3,665
Pandemic Support - ATO Cash Flow Boost	10,000	-
Pandemic Support - Department of Jobs Business Support Fund	10,000	-
Pandemic Support - Jobkeeper Scheme	24,000	-
Programs - Art Class Fees	1,780	2,092
Programs - Community Lunch Donations	-	70
Programs - Computer Class Fees	995	690
Programs - Craft and Friendship Group Donations	385	326
Programs - English Class Fees	7,475	7,954
Programs - Sewing Class Fees	240	170
Total Income	232,827	149,577

Less Operating Expenses

Accounting Software - Xero	1,080	1,048
Bank Fees	102	221
Depreciation Office Equipment	224	374
Event Expenses	339	572
Fees - Auditor	200	200
Fees - Membership for Professional Organisations	650	610
IT - Hardware	84	874
IT - Webhosting and Software	154	199
Jobkeeper Top-up Payments	12,785	-
Miscellaneous Expenses	87	910
Office - Cleaning	1,717	-
Office - Equipment and Printing	5,916	2,152
Office - Refreshments	169	469
Office - Stationery	629	753
Programs - Art Group Materials	310	363
Programs - Community Lunch Expenses	469	200
Programs - English Books	21	341
Programs - English Stationery	-	33
Programs - Fit2Learn Expenses	-	49
Programs - Fostering Integration Expenses	15,121	67
Programs - Homework Club Program Needs and Equipment	56	179
Programs - Homework Club Refreshments	99	359
Programs - Sewing and Craft Class Expenses	3	17
Rent Paid to All Saints Anglican Church	7,410	7,200
Staff - Admin ER Support	4,155	3,642
Staff - Admin Officer	27,397	23,478
Staff - Adult Education Coordinator	20,262	10,484
Staff - Annual Leave	3,083	2,565
Staff - Art Teacher	2,380	3,589
Staff - Computer Class Tutor	557	155
Staff - Coordinator	44,562	47,101
Staff - English Tutor	1,694	-
Staff - Fit2Learn Coordinator	-	473
Staff - Fostering Integration Officer	16,653	3,150
Staff - Homework Club Coordinator	9,245	9,171
Staff - Long Service Leave	6,959	1,718
Staff - Portable Long Service Leave Levy	2,235	-
Staff - Super Contribution	12,836	10,435
Staff - Travel Expenses	130	107
Staff - Volunteer Management Coordinator	8,892	9,684
Staff - Work Cover Insurance	2,527	2,438
Staff and Volunteer Training	-	225
Working with Children and Police Check	245	278
Total Operating Expenses	211,438	145,881
Net Profit	21,389	3,696

Balance Sheet

Dixon House Neighbourhood Centre Inc.

	To June 30 2020	To June 30 2019
ASSETS		
Bank		
Billing Account	144	144
Community Solutions Cash Reserve	87,314	117,986
Community Solutions Cheque Account	1,694	488
Petty Cash Community Lunch	78	104
Petty Cash General	113	178
Westpac Debit Card Account	531	266
Total Bank	89,874	119,167
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	320	880
Other Receivables	18,000	1,500
Total Current Assets	18,320	2,380
Fixed Assets		
Office Equipment	3,960	3,960
Accumulated Depreciation	-3,623	-3,399
Total Fixed Assets	337	561
Total Assets	108,531	122,108
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accrued Liability	5,514	-
Deferred Income	7,212	59,947
Other Payables	160	-
PAYG Withholdings Payable	8,640	5,990
Provision for Annual Leave	14,161	11,078
Superannuation Payable	2,907	3,504
Total Current Liabilities	38,594	80,518
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	14,118	7,160
Total Non-Current Liabilities	14,118	7,160
Total Liabilities	52,713	87,678
NET ASSETS	55,818	34,429
EQUITY		
Current Year Earnings	21,389	3,696
Retained Earnings	34,429	30,734
Total Equity	55,818	34,429

Financial reports prepared by Naomi Lim - Finance Officer

MANAGER'S REPORT

A Year of Two Parts

To echo Ian's sentiment, 2019-20 was truly a year divided into two parts - "business as usual" and "life during lockdown". Truly the highlight of year has been the Fostering Integration Project that we undertook from July 2019 and concluding in March 2020. We were very excited to have been provided this substantial one-time grant by the Department of Home Affairs to undertake three projects which aim to improve integration of immigrants into Australian society. These projects include an employment support program, a youth creative expression program, and an English and Australian culture excursion program. You can read more about these programs in detail in their respective sections later in this report. I would like to make special mention of Project Officer Lorien Vecellio who worked tirelessly on the employment and youth program to ensure its success, and also our English Coordinator Roslyn Brown who energetically delivered the excursion program.

Staff Transitions

In Term 3 2019 we saw Renuka Taluja take over the role from Rita Ames who returned to her home country. Renuka undertook the role with passion as a long-time educator of young children. After two terms Renuka transitioned to more hours of employment in a different role elsewhere, which was a loss for us, but an exciting new opportunity for her. We welcomed back Oanh Lam to the role of Homework Club Coordinator in Term 1 2020, a position in which she has thrived previously. With the onset of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown, Oanh was able to maintain participation in the Homework Club as an online program, and even managed to recruit new volunteers in that period! I would also like to thank the Melbourne Anglican Benevolent Society for their generous support of our Homework Club program, without which we cannot afford to run.

Computer Programs

Spinning off from our Be Connected program for over 50s, we were requested to provide tailored computer tutoring for a client of an employment support agency. Our long-time computer tutor Bhumika Patel has been teaching in this program. With the onset of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, we struggled to get any students for Be Connected due to the difficulty of attracting beginner learners to attend online tutoring. If you know anyone over 50 who would like free tutoring, please contact us.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Volunteers

We had a volunteer and member Christmas celebration event at the end of November 2019 attended by around 50 people. It was a "low-key" event with people bringing dishes to share, and Dixon House providing additional catering, carols singing, and opportunities for people to socialize and learn about each others' involvement at Dixon House. Our volunteers (70+) are the backbone of our organisation, without whom we would be unable to run our service. As you can imagine, over the course of a year we have new volunteers joining us and others moving on, with some having been with us for many years. We appreciate each and every volunteer for their selfless contribution and we truly hope that every volunteer leaves us with our expressed appreciation, a sense of achievement, improved skills, and new friends and connections. The financial year also saw the concluding phase of the Volunteer Management Project funded by the City of Monash. This project has radically transformed our volunteer-related systems and processes, making it more streamlined and efficient. An indication of its efficacy is that during the lockdown we were able to continue recruiting volunteers without significant issues or delays. We look forward to resuming operations at Dixon House and re-engaging with our volunteers.

Winston Chee - Manager - Dixon House Neighbourhood Centre

CREATIVE PROGRAMS

Craft and Friendship Group

This group is run by Gwen Clark and Dianne Payne who have clocked in over 25 years in the program between the both of them! The group is well attended and the room is often at capacity with women from different age groups and cultural backgrounds. Although the women work on their own individual projects (mainly knitting), the relaxed and friendly environment makes it as much of a social group as it is a craft group. Gwen and Dianne provide homemade treats for every session for afternoon tea, which is enjoyed by all the women who attend. Some of the women have maintained phone contact during the lockdown period, and no doubt everyone will be very keen to get back to this group when the restrictions have been lifted.

Sewing Class

The Sewing Class ran in Terms 3 and 4 2019 and partially for Term 1 in 2020. One highlight during this time was one student working on a doona cover which is quite an ambitious project. Others worked on practical items including shirts and shopping bags. The class has had healthy interest from mainly women (and one man) over the years. Our tutor Liliana Dardengo gets as much satisfaction from being able to impart new and invaluable skills to her students, as they are in developing these skills. This is why she has been with us for over seven years now!

Expression through Art

The year began with the theme of collaboration and what it means to work together to achieve a common creative expression. One project was free form, in that each person could contribute whatever they wanted, and the other was a democratically chosen image that represented what the group wished to express together. Apart from these two major projects, there were also individual ongoing artworks that were being created, one of which was based on choosing a positive affirmation that each person felt they needed to be reminded of. This was being coloured in with their chosen medium and was to be framed and taken home as a colourful and gentle daily reminder.



CREATIVE PROGRAMS

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Expression Through Art Program (continued)

The first project was started on a large blank canvas and participants were invited to offer something to the canvas that was a felt expression. Each person was asked to recall and tap into a moment in their life which made them feel a different emotion. I read out each emotion and gave them time to close their eyes to see what came to them. This was journaled as a colour, shape, or symbol which connected and reminded them of each emotion. Each person stepped up to the canvas and made their mark according to what they had journaled. The rest of the group witnessed this process with great interest to see what was being offered to the canvas and of course some wanted to share a little about the story behind their offering. This was a rich weekly sharing experience.

For the second large collaborative piece I asked the group to envision a world they wanted to live in and a discussion ensued, wherein descriptors like peace, harmony, unity, equity, and a healthy planet earth came up and we talked about some of the symbols that would represent these qualities. I then brought in several images and placed them on a wall and each person voted for their favourite image. The use of recycled coloured bottle caps which we had collected during the previous year for this project were perfect in keeping with being mindful of looking after our planet earth. The image was traced out onto a large board and the process of filling our perfect world in had well and truly commenced when unfortunately our world changed with the arrival of Covid-19, which unfortunately put all of our projects and creative lives at Dixon House on hold.

Helen Plesar - Expression Through Art Tutor

(The images provided are of the Christmas Trees created at the end of 2019, some finished individual works, and the collaborative project in process).



ENGLISH PROGRAMS

The English component of the **Fostering Integration** program included weekly English classes alternating with excursions. In 2019, excursions saw us at the Tulip Festival in Silvan, Old Melbourne Gaol, Warburton, as well as Ripponlea and the Koori Heritage Museum. The excursion sessions all followed the concept of engaging students in exploring a related aspect of Australian culture, and then writing a report afterwards. The funding from Fostering Integration provided for transport, entry, and lunch costs for groups of typically a dozen students who may otherwise not have the capacity to visit these places. Apart from the facilitator, there was often another volunteer tutor who came along to assist and to promote English conversation among the students during the travel as well as on location. We were grateful to be able to run this program in Term 4 at Springvale Neighbourhood House and offering it to their English language students there, and also to access their community bus which enabled us to go beyond the limitations of public transport! In Term 1 2020, we managed three successful excursions prior to Dixon House closing. These were visits to the Koori Heritage Museum and Parliament House, Ripponlea Historic Mansion and Gardens, and Blue Lotus Water Gardens at Yarra Junction. Where there was additional capacity, other Dixon House English students were also invited to come along to these excursions. Each of the objectives of the Fostering Integration program was well-met. It was a joy to introduce students to the 'out-of-the-city' region of the Upper Yarra Valley, and to further their limited knowledge of Australian history, all whilst deepening social connections across cultures, extending English vocabulary and giving ample opportunities for English conversation.



TOP LEFT: RIPPON LEA MANSION

LEFT: PARLIAMENT HOUSE TOUR

ABOVE: BLUE LOTUS WATER GARDENS

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

PHOTOS: CLOCKWISE

- OUR MOST SENIOR STUDENT AT 91!
- END OF YEAR STUDENT CERTIFICATE PRESENTATIONS,
- END OF YEAR MULTICULTURAL CHRISTMAST FEAST,
- MULTI-LEVEL ENGLISH,
- COMPUTER ASSISTED LEARNING.

A New Way of Learning!

As you can imagine, pandemic restrictions since March 2020 threw the English program into turmoil. However, thanks to God's gracious enabling, including the lining up of life-events, I as the coordinator was well-placed to lead the team of tutors onto online teaching. The first few weeks were particularly challenging, but by the start of Term 2, we were able to offer a full program of five classes plus 1:1 tutoring. Two tutors felt unable to engage with online teaching, but four new tutors were trained and matched with students. It has been an extremely busy and challenging time, but we have so much to be thankful for. The Dixon House Zoom platform has been used for nearly all class meetings, and numerous 1:1 lessons too. Tutors have been encouraged to set up their own Zoom account so they can host meetings, and were supported by various training sessions. Student enrolments have decreased to about half due to the switch to online learning. Sadly, the students with the lowest levels of English, and therefore the neediest, were unable to participate. One positive side to our online program is that people can join from wherever they are, so we have tutors joining who live outside of Melbourne, and students joining from all over Melbourne. The upskilling that pandemic restrictions have necessitated has opened future options for the English program with Dixon House. Participating students were both happy and grateful to be able to continue their studies with us.



Roslyn Brown - English Coordinator

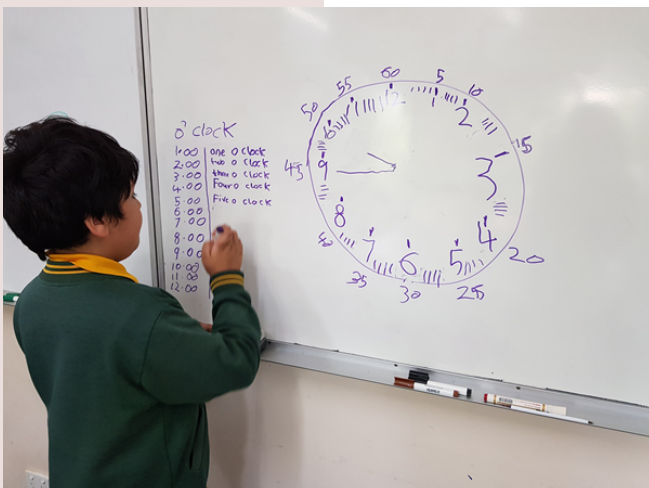
HOMework CLUB

The Homework Club provides a safe environment for children, and we equip our volunteers through workshops and hands-on training. Our volunteers play a key role in making this program successful. I truly believe that the Homework Club provides a great opportunity to bring education, community services and building social relationships together. I want to thank Winston, for giving me the opportunity to run this effective program. Many thanks to volunteers, parents and children for putting their trust in me. Thank you to the Melbourne Anglican Benevolent Society for funding this program and enabling it to continue operating.

The following feedback was collected from parents and students at the end of each term:

- *The homework club is very helpful, not only for my children but for us as well. If possible, it would be better if we can have two days a week.*
- *My son enjoys this class so much. I really would like to thank you for this class. Thanks Dixon House. Please continue this program.*
- *I got helped in all of my subjects, especially Maths. My English has gotten better. I have got excellent results for my subjects throughout my studies.*
- *Since I joined this homework club, I have improved my English speaking, writing, and answering questions. My teachers at school also noticed that my scores are getting better and this program has become my best tutor. The volunteers are very helpful and friendly to me. They all are supportive and help me to become the best I can.*
- *It helps me with all my assignments. It also helps me to improve my language skills and pronounce words properly. I wouldn't be able to finish all of my homework without the help of the homework club.*
- *The volunteers are very helpful, and they always explain to me whatever I ask. Their explanation makes it easier for me to understand my schoolwork, and my marks are gradually getting better since I joined the homework club.*

Renuka Taluja - Homework Club Coordinator (July to December 2019)

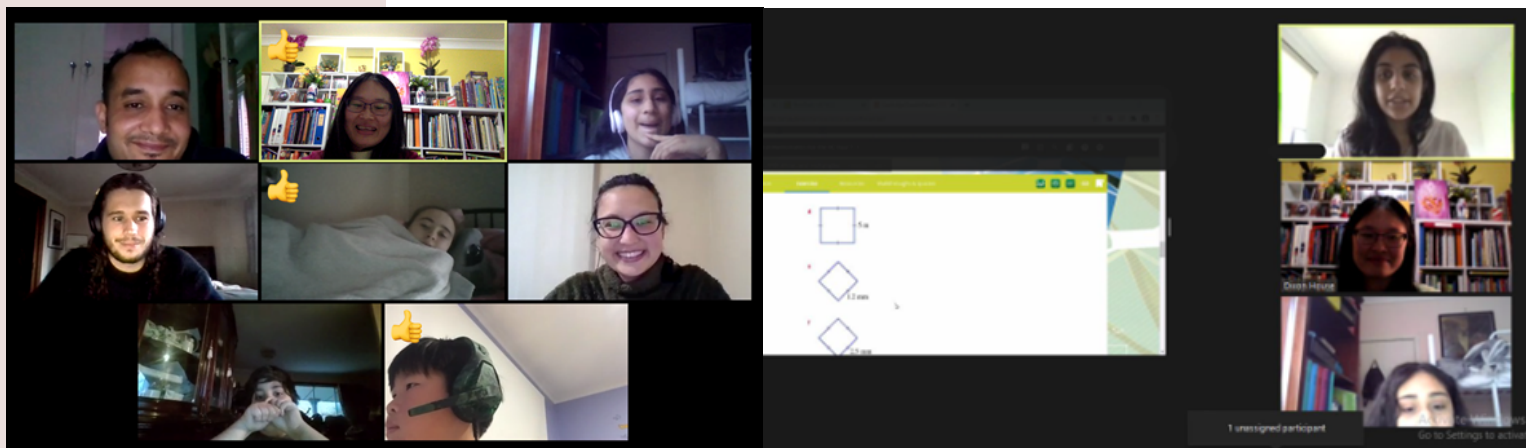


HOMework CLUB

The year has seen many changes in the Dixon House Homework Club. We have had the solid continuance of students and volunteer tutors in 2019 when Renuka Taluja managed the program until the year's end. Come Term 1, 2020, COVID-19 had impacted our ability to retain old volunteers, attract new tutors and students. Our five core students from Years 4-8 remained consistent in their attendance. In Term 2 2020 we were fortunate to recruit two volunteers to support the children's schooling throughout the school closures. Through the use of Winston's technological skills and knowledge, Centre for Multicultural Youth training and advice, and personal research and practice, the Homework Club calmly took to digital learning on Zoom. We initially had to be patient with each other as we learnt to communicate using the available emoticons and tools, and were resolute in rejoining the group should our internet stop our connection. It was a challenge to come up with engaging group activities that encouraged interaction and physical activity, but the parents and children welcomed the safe, familiar and supportive weekly Homework Club sessions. Our volunteer tutors kindly gave their time to assist students with their homework. Students brought curly Maths questions on shape and geometry, data and probability, decimals and measurement! Tutors would sometimes learn new content along the way as they supported the children to research on climate change and learning Indonesian, and practise orally presenting their moon and Earth projects. We kept active and had fun by tricking others with unexpected Simon Says instructions, drama games, and following Joe Wicks fitness videos. Tutors also played the important role of encouraging help-seeking, and building children's ability to persist with difficult tasks like reading and Maths problem solving.

Term 3 brought much more learning as four new generous tutors came on board to provide individual support for each child, and to develop their teaching skills - but more of that in next year's report! We would also like to thank Melbourne Anglican Benevolent Society for their financial support, without which we would not have been able to provide vital social connection, academic support and meaningful activity for our Dixon House Homework Club community.

Oanh Lam - Homework Club Coordinator (January to June 2020)



PLEASE NOTE: *The English component of the project is covered under the "English Programs" section in this report and the previous years' report. Much of the Fostering Integration Employment and Youth components were already covered in 2018-19 Annual Report despite the program falling within the 2019-20 financial year. Please refer to the note on Page 2 for further explanation about this.*

In November and early December we finished up two pilot projects funded by the Department of Home Affairs' Fostering Integration Grant to impact the lives of migrants and refugees: the Employment Support Program, and the Youth Creative Arts Program.

Youth Creative Arts Program

This was delivered in partnership with Footprints Fam and the City of Greater Dandenong, and consisted of a series of workshops at The Drum Theatre in Dandenong and Noble Studios in Noble Park, covering dance, spoken word and music industry skills. The workshops for young people were facilitated by skilled local artists from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Lebanese and South Sudanese. We witnessed the participants gaining increased confidence over the course of the program, and new friendships were formed across cultural divides. Some of the young people who participated in our workshops also performed in front of hundreds of people at Stairway Church in Vermont.

Employment Support Program

This program included workshops to improve their job seeking strategies and job readiness skills; one-on-one mentoring by volunteers with good experience of the Australian job market; and a peer support group in which participants could encourage and support each other. The workshops were delivered by a career consultant with strong experience supporting migrants through the job search process, Michelle James from Auscareer Coach. The peer support group was facilitated by Vaughan Smith, and the one-on-one mentoring sessions were conducted by a team of eight volunteer mentors with diverse backgrounds including a Justice of the Peace, an IT professional, and a business owner. Participants learned about the Australian job market, engaged in discussions and interactive activities, and supported each other and listened to each other's journeys in the peer support group. They also received individualized assistance from their mentors, covering a range of topics such as how to improve their confidence and networking skills, improving their resume, how to approach employers who have not advertised a job, and options for volunteering and further study or training. During the course of the program, six of the participants found employment.

Lorien Vecellio - Project Officer

Anglicare Victoria in partnership with Dixon House and All Saints have faced enormous challenges this year, in trying to develop new and innovative service methods to support our most disadvantaged members of society, during this global pandemic. Anglicare has been busy applying for funding to establish a brand new 1800 Emergency Relief (ER) phone line, which will be staffed by Victorians who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and now face the unprecedented situation of having to apply for Centrelink for the first time in their lives. Notably the retail sector and hospitality industries have been hardest hit and we are seeing this first hand at the coal face, with increasing numbers of International students, and undocumented individuals & families with varied and complex immigration status, now without income and ineligible for the security of the Centrelink payment safety net.

CASE STUDY

Rachel is a 56 year old sole parent with two young children, who presented at our Dixon house Emergency Relief service in Clayton for financial assistance and food relief. Rachel was referred by the social worker at Monash Medical Centre after falling down a flight of steps and suffering a slipped disc, leaving her with a severe back injury and unable to mobilize or walk very far without the use of a walking frame. Rachel has been working in the transport industry as a sales representative for the past eight years, and has always maintained her "Income Protection Insurance" in order to meet her mortgage payments of \$3,200 per month. The onset of the COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in reduced hours and sales income forcing her to renegotiate the mortgage loan and suspend the payments for three months, and in doing this Rachel cancelled her "Income Protection Policy" which she had been faithfully paying for years, and now tragically when she had this serious injury was no longer covered by insurance. Rachel was forced to take "Leave without Pay" during her rehabilitation, and was hoping to return to paid employment if her current job was still available in the next 6-8 weeks. In the meantime Rachel is waiting for her application for Jobseeker to be approved and has run out of money for food and essential medications, and is quite distressed about an outstanding electricity account that is being threatened to go to debt collection.

Our volunteer team were able to help with a \$100 Coles food voucher, a food hamper from our Dixon House pantry; pharmacy vouchers for the pain medications and \$200 towards the outstanding electricity account to prevent the debt collection and alleviate further distress. Our volunteers encouraged Rachel to return to Dixon House ER in the coming weeks for further assistance until she got back on her feet, and arranged an appointment with a local Financial Counsellor to help apply for an Energy Relief Grant for the outstanding Gas and Water bills. Rachel was very grateful for the compassionate support and understanding from our dedicated team of volunteers at Dixon House.

Quick Statistics

Total numbers of Emergency Relief assistance provided – 1,141

Average value of assistance provided – \$51.91

Total value of assistance provided – \$59,234

I would like to acknowledge and extend my sincere thanks all our dedicated Emergency Relief Volunteers who have kept the program open during this challenging time, and in particular to John Wong who has worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure the safety and integrity of our ER program at Dixon House.

Suzanne Keil - Emergency Relief Services Coordinator - Anglicare Victoria

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

It would be impossible for Dixon House to do its work without the financial support of the following organisations during the 2019-20 financial year, for which we are immensely grateful.

- All Saints Church Clayton
- Anglicare Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services Victoria
- Department of Home Affairs
- City of Monash
- Melbourne Anglican Benevolent Society
- Toorak Op Shop
- Department of Social Services
- Federal and State Government Pandemic Relief
- Good Things Foundation
- Churches and Organisations supporting Emergency Relief
- Individual Donors