



Bryony and social worker Renee from
BYS Centre for Young
Families



“BYS showed me
that my future
was not to be
defined by the
situation I found
myself in.”

WHEN BRYONY, 21, BECAME PREGNANT SHE WAS rejected by her mother, who had a mental health condition, and was unable to stay at her partner’s family home due to unhygienic and unsafe conditions. Bryony and her partner became homeless, she lost her job because of her pregnancy, and her partner had limited work options due to poor health.

Bryony’s goal was to find a home and create the best environment for her baby. Her journey ahead was one of poverty, stress and dramatic setbacks. She and her partner slept in their car or occasionally a cheap room, cooking meals on park barbecues and showering at public amenities.

They struggled to survive on limited income, and when her partner did get a job, within a week he had a violent seizure and broke both shoulders. At 6 months pregnant Bryony was still homeless and was a full-time carer for her partner. She made endless calls to support services to no avail. She and her partner were considering buying a tent, when a few weeks stay with step-family was offered to them.

During this time, Bryony heard from BYS in response to an earlier call. “Little did I know, they were going to save our family,” she said.

“Within a few days we had a face to face visit with Renee, a social worker at BYS and everything started to turn around. They helped with Centrelink, food shopping, and searched for housing opportunities. We were moving forward but at 8 months pregnant I was still homeless and faced the possibility of child safety stepping in due to my unstable living arrangements. I would have done anything for my baby and I wholeheartedly did all my social worker asked and more. But I was scared, and I missed having family support especially my own mum.”

Bryony gave birth to a daughter and 5 weeks later BYS found them crisis accommodation and eventually Government housing. She was

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BEATING THE ODDS

NEW LIFE FOR A BRAVE YOUNG MUM

determined to get an education, and while caring for her baby Bryony completed a Certificate IV and then a Diploma in Justice Studies. “I wouldn’t have been able to achieve this without BYS. I would tell my social worker every week what I had achieved and she was always so proud of me - this kept me going.” said Bryony. She also attended the BYS Young Parents’ Group at the BYS Centre for Young Families, which built her parenting skills and her confidence.

“BYS helped me at every point, not only with housing, but making sure I was well, safe and comfortable.” said Bryony. “I always tried to keep my chin up and thoughts positive, but Renee and BYS supported me through many dark days.”

“I now have a job and a car and have just moved into my own private rental. My goal is to get accepted into the police force next year, and to eventually own my own home. But my biggest success is my little girl, she is happy and healthy and looks at me every day like I’m the best thing ever.”

“Knowing
someone
is walking
alongside you
can make all
the difference.”
Renee — BYS Centre
for Young Families



NEW FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



STEVE RENOUF OUR NEW BYS PATRON

ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Most people know Steve for his outstanding career with the Brisbane Broncos, but he has also worked as an Ambassador for the Deadly Choices program and as a Youth Week Ambassador.

At a recent all of staff meeting at BYS, Steve shared his experiences of growing up in Murgon and his absolute commitment to doing what he can to support young people achieve their goals, knowing

that approximately 23% of young people accessing BYS are Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders.

Steve is a great role model for young Queenslanders and Brisbane Youth Service is very proud to have him on board as our new Patron.

Steve will be involved in a range of Brisbane Youth Service events and activities, and act as a spokesperson for Brisbane Youth Service on issues impacting young people and youth homelessness.

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

OCTOBER 16 MARKS THE BEGINNING OF ANTI-POVERTY WEEK IN Australia and it is timely to highlight that despite decades of economic growth, the proportion of Australians living in poverty has continued to increase in recent years.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to experiencing poverty and the impact can be devastating. Low income levels mean that young people do not have access to basic goods and services such as housing, food and clothing.

It is important to understand that poverty is not just caused by an individual's circumstances but that there are major inequalities in the structure of our society. Access to work and income, education, housing, health and community services all contribute to a person's experience of poverty.

Not being in paid work means that young people are reliant on income support and the low levels of these are a major factor in increasing poverty amongst young people.

We all know that there are large numbers of young people out of work. August employment data shows the average youth unemployment rate in Queensland was 13%, double that of the adult rate. In regional and rural areas the figures are much higher with Cairns at 27% and outback Queensland as high as 35%. In 2015/16 our data shows that 46% of the young people accessing BYS for assistance were unemployed and 15% had no current income.

Not being in paid work means that young people are reliant on income support and the low levels of these are a major factor in increasing poverty amongst young people. Newstart Allowance is \$266 a week — more than \$100 a week below the poverty line and the gap between it and the poverty line is increasing each year.

What many people are unaware of is that if young people are aged 21 years or under, the income support they receive is the Youth Allowance which, at \$216 per week, is significantly less than Newstart.

Australia's unemployment benefit is one of the lowest in the developed world and it has been 21 years since the Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance were increased in real terms.

For young people who are experiencing homelessness or attempting to live independently these low income levels seriously impede their ability to access affordable housing, adequate health and dental care and to pursue education and training, employment and recreational opportunities.

At BYS we are committed to helping young people find ways out of poverty and hardship and we appreciate your ongoing support in assisting us to help young people to create new, positive futures for themselves and their children.



“Poverty is not just caused by an individual’s circumstances — there are major inequalities in the structure of society.” Anti-Poverty Week encourages research, discussion and action to address poverty, and Annemaree Callander, CEO of BYS, highlights the issues for young people.

Oral therapist Nicole Cockburn unpacks the new dental unit funded by the Ian Potter Foundation.



Smiles all around - Matthew, Nicole and Phil Smith, our Health Team Program Manager. Matthew is one of many BYS clients who will benefit from our new dental clinic.

NEW FUNDING BRINGS SMILES ALL AROUND

THE ON-SITE MEDICAL CLINIC IN FORTITUDE Valley provides free, non-judgmental, youth friendly medical care and meets the cost of prescription medicines and other treatments. We have on-site doctors for 2 sessions a week and a nurse 4 days a week. They provide physical and mental health checks, immunisations, first aid and wound care, sexual health screening, and education around safe and healthy lifestyles.

In 2015/16 we provided 1,830 medical clinic appointments to 331 young people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness, and who had little or no income.

One of the many expenses of the medical clinic has been disposable instruments used for first aid, wound care, and general medical checks. Last year The Honda Foundation, through a grant endorsed by Austral Honda Newstead, funded an autoclave sterilizer which sterilizes stainless steel instruments and eliminates the ongoing cost of disposable instruments. Autoclave sterilization is recommended for sterilizing instruments, providing a high standard of infection control.

It has been a long-term goal to extend our services and offer dental care to young people.

“We know that many young people who come to BYS have significantly poorer health than the general community — some people we work with have never been to a dentist,” said Phil Smith, Health Team Program Manager. “Support for the health of these vulnerable young people is crucial, and poor dental health impacts physical health and overall wellbeing.”

BYS collaborated with Nicole Cockburn, an oral therapist, researcher at QUT, and Vice-President of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Dental and Oral Hygiene Therapists Association, to develop a plan for the implementation of ‘pop-up’ dental clinics at our Valley Hub. Additional work was done to prepare a grant application and we were excited to receive funding from the Ian Potter Foundation.

The first clinic commenced in October, with further sessions in February, April and June of 2017. Young people will receive check-ups, cleans, and basic fillings and referrals for more complex treatments. The clinic is staffed by dental professionals who have generously donated their time.

“Young people have responded enthusiastically because it meets a gap in existing services, is free, and is provided in an environment they are already familiar with and trust,” Phil Smith said.



Shane Bright from Austral Honda Newstead with BYS nurse Mary Ann and the new steriliser generously funded by The Honda Foundation.



A CREATIVE COMMUNITY WITH HEART

Brisbane has a thriving creative community and we love connecting with them in our work with young people. This community has also designed ways of including BYS by raising funds to support young people experiencing homelessness.

Thank you to the designers, musicians, dancers, chefs & fashionistas of Brisbane who have excited, amused and enriched us with their creations for our cause!

STREET WEAR MEETS STREET ART

AS PART OF THE BRISBANE STREET ART FESTIVAL, FASHION BLOGGER and entrepreneur Natalie Rapisarda of Interlaced Media created an event at Kerbside Bar in Fortitude Valley that combined street wear, dance and music - performed, played and designed by local artists. The hip crowd who came to this edgy event donated hard coin at the door.



DIVINE DESIGN STUDENTS

A GROUP OF 15 GRADUATE DESIGN STUDENTS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN Institute of Creative Design created "Divinus" Fashion Show, with proceeds going to BYS. Design is the religion of this next generation of fashion designers, and fashionistas of all ages came to witness the results on the runway at High Church in Brunswick Street.



THE HOME SESSIONS

MUSICIANS WHO GIG EVERY FORTNIGHT IN BRISBANE PUBS AS "The Open Sessions" decided to bring their genre to support young people doing it tough. They created a fundraising event called "The Home Sessions" at The Mill on Constance, and showcased brilliant talent worthy of recording contracts. A massive thanks to the organisers, supporters, and the artists who came and gave their all.

RIGHT: "Chesterfield" rockin' it out



LEFT: James D'Ath from DA'Burger of New Farm. James, Wendy and Jason have created a business that is passionate about giving back to the community.

DA'BURGER OF NEW FARM

JAMES D'ATH, WENDY, JASON AND THE TEAM AT DA'BURGER CREATE delicious gourmet burgers. This devoted team supports BYS in many ways. They run a suspended burger system where customers pay for an extra burger for a homeless young person, and every couple of months we are gifted with a stack of vouchers to give to our clients who really need a healthy and hearty meal. DA'Burger has also provided employment and work experience for our clients — giving them a start in the workforce and a chance to learn new skills.

They also raise funds with their counter collection and by being part of "winters uncoolest day" Daggy Jumper Day, as prize sponsor and participants. The DA'Burger team love a laugh and expressing their inner dag so it works! Thank you DA'Burger for sharing the love with us and the whole community, the value of what you do is immeasurable. Get down to DA'Burger and try them, they're DA'Bomb! DA'Burger is at 876 Brunswick Street, New Farm.

RIGHT: Suspended burger voucher system organised by DA'Burger — you can donate a burger when you buy your own.



DAGGY JUMPER DAY LAUNCH

DAGGY JUMPER DAY 2016, SPONSORED BY QUEST AND DA'BURGER, KICKED off with the daggiest, quirkiest fashion parade ever held on the stage in the Queen Street Mall. Seven courageous volunteers wearing ultra-daggy jumpers and accessories daggy-danced and paraded around the stage to tunes like "White and Nerdy", "Thrifty Shop" and "I'm too Sexy" with DJ Brent Walters on turntable and Dene Harris providing hilarious commentary.

Our CEO Annemaree Callander launched the campaign with the help of our new patron Steve Renouf, and since then we have steadily built a large group of daggy fundraisers including schools, pubs, cafes, corporates and government departments. Thank you to all our volunteers, and everyone who joined the campaign to raise funds. The dollars are still rolling in — we'll have more reports and photos next edition!

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

STAFF PROFILE — CONNIE REED, HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT WORKER (CENTRE BASED ASSESSMENT & REFERRAL)

Connie came to BYS in November 2015 for her final Social Work placement. During this time Connie gained supervised experience with different BYS teams and programs, including Day to Day Living as part of the Health Team, and with the Homelessness & Housing Team. After graduating Connie worked as a casual, then in August 2016 she applied for her current role and works for BYS 4½ days a week.

Tell us about your studies and career path?

I started a Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Psychology) but after a year I felt I didn't have enough passion for this path and I changed to Journalism. During the first semester we were given examples of work we may be required to do in this career, such as interviewing someone who had just lost their son. I wasn't comfortable with this and at this point my feelings crystallised that I wanted to be on the support side of these situations. It all just clicked and I changed to a Social Work degree. Social Work offered a more holistic approach, and I can focus on a range of factors that impact on people's lives and situations, and offer different options and ways of support.

Why do you like this kind of work and your role at BYS?

I enjoy the fast-pace in my role, the variety each day, and building supportive relationships with young people from all kinds of backgrounds. So many of our clients have never had that trusting relationship. After completing my placement and working casually I was so happy to get the role as a Housing and Homeless Support worker. It's great being at BYS every day and having the chance to provide more follow-up with each young person. We assess them

when they come in - housing is of course a key area, and our work is client-focussed and strength-based.

I love that we don't turn anyone away — it's unconditional. My mum was a youth worker which I'm sure has influenced me. I'm not motivated by money or prestige, I care about people - it's the most important thing in the world to me.

What are some of the obstacles and challenges?

There are a lot of things that are out of our control when supporting young people - red tape, dealing with other organisations and complex systems when doing things like organising ID, bank accounts and support from government agencies. It can be very challenging when these things are so important to helping a young person move forward, but I have to realise I can only do my best and can't control it all. What I appreciate about BYS is that if I see something that needs fixing or that can be improved to better support young people, I have a chance to have input.

What is most rewarding?

Getting an insight into the lives of young people and building relationships with them. It takes a lot for people to open up about such personal and often painful things, and it's a privilege to be part of their journey.



“Caring about people is the most important thing in the world.”

ANTI-POVERTY WEEK 16-22 OCTOBER

A week when we can all do something about poverty

POVERTY AND SEVERE HARDSHIP AFFECT MORE THAN A MILLION Australians and more than a billion people globally. The main aims of Anti-Poverty Week are to:

- Strengthen understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship
- Encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organisations and government.

Last year, more than 10,000 people participated in Anti-Poverty Week activities and action.

Many of the young people who walk through our doors at BYS are experiencing extreme poverty which impacts on their health, lifestyle and ability to find secure housing and build a future.

You can take action by organising a fundraiser for BYS or making a donation. For more information contact BYS on 3620 2423 or fundraising@brisyouth.org or donate at www.brisyouth.org.

DONATE TODAY AND CHANGE A LIFE

Phone: 07 3620 2423 to donate by credit card

Online: Go to www.brisyouth.org and click on Donate Now for our secure online donation form

Mail: Credit Card or Cheque, complete the donation slip and post in the enclosed Reply Paid Envelope.

Brisbane Youth Service,
PO Box 1389 Fortitude Valley Q 4006
ABN 83 967 756 338

CUT HERE

CHANGE THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS – DONATE NOW!

Full name

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____ (helps us get to know you and plan more relevant communications)

Organisation/Position

Address

Postcode

Phone home ()

Mobile

Phone work ()

Email

☐ Please find attached my cheque or money order payable to Brisbane Youth Service

OR please debit my ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Credit Card Number

Name on card

Expiry Date

Signature

Amount Options are:

☐ \$30 ☐ \$60 ☐ \$120 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1500 ☐ \$5,000

Or other amount \$

☐ YES I would like to become a regular giver to BYS.
Please debit my credit card each fortnight / month for \$
Circle applicable period.
Monthly payments will be debited on approximately the 1st of each month and fortnightly payments on the 1st and 15th

☐ Please send me information on leaving BYS a bequest in my Will.

BYS understands the importance of protecting your privacy and will not provide your details to any outside entity. Should you wish to opt out of receiving information from us, or to opt out of appeals and just receive our Newsletter, please call 3620 2423 and let us know your requirements.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

