



the infants' home  
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

each child, every opportunity • Spring 2016

# HAPPENINGS

Donors and Supporters • Thank you from The Infants' Home to those who help make our work possible

## Nadeen Breaks the Cycle

With a history of significant childhood trauma, Nadeen found herself years later living with domestic violence, reliving the turmoil she faced in childhood. Struggling with parenting her daughter Eliza, who was 2 at the time, she was also expecting her second child. Nadeen says when she was referred to The Infants' Home (TIH) by a hospital social worker, her and her daughters' lives have changed for the better, ever since.



Eliza (top right with the plaited hair) enjoys reading time at Johnson House



Abigail loves painting experiences at Gorton House

Searching for early childhood education provision in the area, pregnant with Abigail and challenged by Eliza's extreme behaviours and nutritional needs, Nadeen held little hope. She faced waiting lists of 18 months long whilst dealing with complex issues of various forms of abuse in her life. As soon as she was referred to TIH, she was "straight through the door".

Nadeen received a transport scholarship from TIH to help ensure her children were able to attend our early childhood education centres regularly. She took part in parenting programs and art and play therapy with her children at The Infants' Home, and was linked to networks of support. These services helped Nadeen access further therapy services for herself and change the circumstances of

domestic violence within which she was living, as well as strengthening her relationships with Eliza and Abigail.

For Eliza, TIH has been a safe haven. Since her arrival as a toddler, educators worked with Eliza to help her regulate her emotions, form and sustain relationships with her peers, and develop the skills necessary to cope in her transition to school earlier this year. Due to Nadeen's engagement at TIH, Abigail was born into a much calmer household and was able to access speech therapy support from our allied health services.

Nadeen has come a long way toward healing her own childhood trauma, having realised how significantly it influenced her adult life. She is now completing a Certificate IV in Community Services to establish a career, and help other parents like herself, and children like hers. Her story was chosen by the Department of Family and Community Services as one out of sixteen to support other people who are fearful of community services in addressing the cycles of poverty and/or abuse they live in. As a single parent stuck in the system, the support provided by The Infants' Home has helped her become an advocate for herself, for other women facing similar issues, and for her daughters.

**“It's been tremendous how much The Infants' Home has helped me, I've learned to understand and implement so many parenting techniques. I've been able to really tell with the behaviour of my youngest. Abigail's easy peasy and I think early intervention was the key, the younger the better!”**

NADEEN

**You can help** ensure the continuation of our programs for vulnerable children and families. To donate, please use the form on the back of this newsletter, visit [theinfantshome.org.au](http://theinfantshome.org.au) or call 02 9799 4844.

**Thank you.**



## The Sydney Child Development Clinic: Set to Open in 2017

Thank you to all those who contributed generously to help make the Sydney Child Development Clinic a possibility. Special thanks to The Honourable Anthony Albanese, Member for Grayndler, who popped in to our Children's Carnival in May to announce our \$20,000 grant through the Stronger Communities Program, and to NAB for \$50,000 towards this project through the NAB Community Grants Program. The Infants' Home are proud to announce that we have partnered with Child Think - a well-established speech, language, literacy and occupational therapy practice, to operate the clinic and provide a range of needed health support services for the community.

**TIH CEO Anita Kumar with The Honourable Anthony Albanese**



## TIH AGM Supports Message of Respect

This year we welcomed special guest, Ashfield local and White Ribbon Campaign Ambassador Dominic Leaver to speak at our Annual General Meeting. Mr Leaver reflected on the important work being done to end the tragic incidence of violence against women, and the critical need to proactively teach children - especially boys - to respect girls and women early in life. He gave an inspiring account of his involvement in educational programs that successfully engage boys in a discussion about respect for women and girls in fun and effective ways.

**Top: White Ribbon Ambassador Dominic Leaver addresses the crowd**

As The Infants' Home is an organisation that assists families experiencing domestic violence, and respect is a core element of our educational programs, it was both sobering and encouraging to hear of the work being done to address this issue. Dominic's speech was followed in traditional style by our annual staff awards presentation to celebrate achievements and years of service. The event ended with a delicious afternoon tea where we enjoyed mingling and chatting.

**Bottom: Johnson House Director Mariam Christodoulos is awarded the inaugural Children's Advocate award by TIH Chair Denise Taylor**

## GiveAbility Day 2016 was a Huge Success

As the beneficiary of GiveAbility Day at Westfield Burwood for a second year running, we were really looking forward to a fun day. Westfield Burwood certainly delivered - they organised a great range of activities for the whole family including a Lego station, sausage sizzle, balloons, puppets, a bike and blend smoothie station, an NRL skills workshop with the Wests Tigers, flowers, fairy floss, popcorn carts and more!

We thank all staff volunteers from both Westfield and The Infants' Home for helping to raise \$7,000 on the day - held on Saturday August 6<sup>th</sup> - a great effort. This will be matched by Westfield Head Office, resulting in a total contribution of \$14,000 towards the Sydney Child Development Clinic, to provide early intervention health and support services for the community. GiveAbility Day is held nationally by Westfield centres to raise money and awareness for disability support services and we thank them for their generosity and partnership.



**TIH Staff and their families helped collect donations**

## Would you like to be our Event Partner?

Fundraising events and partnerships are one of the many ways in which community and corporate groups help raise funds in support of our programs and projects. We have a fantastic opportunity to work with 'Comedy for a Cause', to organise an evening of laughs, with all proceeds going to The Infants' Home's programs for vulnerable children. We are seeking a partner to co-host this event with us. If your organisation or group would like to be involved, please contact Anne-Marie Byrne: 8719 5002 / abyrne@theinfantshome.org.au.





the infants' home  
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

**The Infants' Home is a leading provider of:**

- early childhood education and care,
- early intervention and
- clinical health services for children from birth to school age.

Each year we provide services for over 2,500 children and their families. One third of these services are directed to children and families with additional physical or emotional needs, or those living in vulnerable circumstances. For 141 years The Infants' Home has been a dynamic and innovative organisation, championing the rights of children, women and families.

Our services include:

- Early Childhood Education and Care centres
- Family Day Care
- Supported playgroups
- Parent education and family support
- Postnatal Clinic
- Allied Health Clinic
- GP Clinic

Our programs are funded through Government, Trusts, Foundations, Corporations, local clubs, business and donors.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible. Please see donations form overleaf. Established 1874 Patron: Mrs Linda Hurley

**Contacts:**

17 Henry St, ASHFIELD NSW 2131  
Ph (02) 9799 4844  
Fax (02) 9799 4122  
mail@theinfantshome.org.au  
www.theinfantshome.org.au  
http://www.facebook.com/theinfantshome

**Leaving a bequest to The Infants' Home will ensure that each child is given every opportunity to reach their full potential.**



## National Science Week

Educators recognise the need to develop children's interests in science and maths, and National Science Week – an initiative by the Australian Government to increase engagement and interest in the sciences – is a perfect time to do this. Educators across our centres coordinated myriad scientific experiments and activities to offer children different opportunities to explore and learn.

Children learnt scientific terms and were supported to think critically with questions like 'What is your theory or guess?' They were encouraged to *observe, study and predict* the next reaction, or to hypothesise and describe chemical reactions.

**Children experiment with coloured water, paper, oil, vinegar and cornflour to see how they react with each other**

## Growing our Future

The Stage 1 Capital Infrastructure project, completed in 2013, saw the expansion of our services to meet continued and growing community demand for our range of integrated early childhood services. These services are operating at high levels of utilisation and are accessible to the wider community. Stage 1 encompassed new education spaces, clinical facilities, meeting venues and community spaces for parent education, playgroups and meetings and we thank all those organisations and individuals who helped make that major project a reality. We are pleased to say that planning for Stage 2 capital works has begun, and once again, we plan for continuous service provision with minimal interruption during the 2017-2019 construction phase. We look forward to keeping you updated as time progresses.

## Demystifying Hospital Visits

With several children at Gorton House attending hospitals for significant medical conditions and treatments, educators sought various ways to support children's understanding of hospitals, health, and medical assistance. To explore the questions and experiences of many of our children, educators and children created a 'hospital' setting within one centre's play area. Discussions led to children wanting to organise a hospital party that they could invite all families to.

The children gathered around the phone to make a special phone call to a friend who was away (from The Infants' Home) due to his ongoing medical treatments, to make sure he could come, and were overjoyed that he could join them at the party! The children also decided to have a dress up theme and could choose between wearing pyjamas or a superhero costume. For one child in particular, wearing a superhero costume during hospital treatments helps her feel strong and brave! The party was a great success and also helped to connect families of the children undergoing treatment as many attend the same hospital.



**Children wore pyjamas or superhero costumes to their hospital party**

## How you can help

Every contribution helps a child. If you would like to support us, please send this form with your donation to:

**The Infants' Home, 17 Henry Street, Ashfield NSW 213  
ABN: 71 174 918 661**

**Yes, I would like to make a difference to children and families.**

**Please accept my gift of:**

\$50  \$100  \$200  \$500

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please find enclosed my:**

cheque/money order OR please

debit my  Visa  Mastercard

Number:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**You can donate online, visit [www.theinfantshome.org.au](http://www.theinfantshome.org.au) and click on the 'Donate' button.**

**Yes, I would like you to debit my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month.**

Expiry date / /

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (H) \_\_\_\_\_

(M) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, I would like to give a lasting gift. Please send me information on leaving a bequest.**

**Yes, I would like to know more. Please send me information about your services.**

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. A receipt will be issued or all donations. The Infants' Home respects your privacy. We do not disclose personal contact information without permission.

**Please remove my name from your mailing list.**



## The China Early Childhood Education Society visits TIH

A group of 18 delegates from the China Early Childhood Education Society visited our centres, therapy rooms and work spaces in July whilst on tour to exchange thoughts and information on children's learning, development and childcare services. Delegates were keen to learn about our integrated services, and asked questions about play-based learning practices and how children are encouraged to explore and learn based on individual and shared interests and abilities. Our educators assisted with translations to facilitate the information sharing, and delegates were excited to share their newfound knowledge with colleagues back home.

## Our AFL Footy Clinic is supported by CBA

The Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Fund is Australia's longest-running workplace giving program. We are grateful to have secured a grant for almost \$7,000 for the Auskick AFL Clinic for children at The Infants' Home and the work we do to give each child every opportunity to be active, healthy and be a part of a team. The clinics enable children to practice listening, sharing, taking turns and to develop their gross motor skills.

**Robinson House children ready for their Tuesday footy clinic**



## Reconciliation Week

Children and families celebrated Reconciliation Week at The Infants' Home in May with a morning tea, music performance and art and craft sessions. Children sang songs and shared cultural stories with Luke and Oletha, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians, and enjoyed decorating paper boomerangs using dot painting techniques.

## TIH's Staff Training Day – Exploring Social Justice in Everyday Practice

Our annual All Staff Training Day is an opportunity to get together as a team and learn from a panel of professionals about early childhood related topics. To begin exploring this year's Social Justice Theme, Dr Jessica Kean, a lecturer in Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney, challenged staff to think critically about supporting children to understand gender diversity in the early childhood education environment.

Kathy Gelding and Alicia Flack-Kone from Social Justice in Early Childhood discussed why social justice in early childhood is important in the work TIH does, and our final speaker Professor Kerry Robinson shared the results of a recent study around gender and sexuality early in life. It was a full day of thought provoking presentations, with so much interest and discussion that we have launched a new monthly staff newsletter. The first edition of Social Justice @ The Infants' Home is available on our website under Publications.

**This year's training day was held at Canada Bay Club in August**

