

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Our Mission

- Provide backpacks to Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria Police and Out-of-home Care agencies, upon written request or by agreement
- Support carers by providing quality packs for the kids so they don't have to worry about little things like toothbrushes and hygiene while trying to settle a distraught teen or toddler
- Operate on donations, fundraising, grant applications and sponsorship
- Operate from premises which are available at no cost or at a minimum pepper-corn rent
- Use media available at low cost
- Accept donations of new and used items, and in-kind support from volunteers
- Build relationships within the local, state and nationwide community organisations to foster working together for a common cause
- Actively recruit and provide support to others willing to start satellite projects in their own areas
- Acknowledge donations and pledges with thank you cards or letters, and in accordance with individual and corporate acknowledgement guidelines
- Build relationships with businesses to facilitate continued material support of the organisation

Our Vision

To provide quality backpacks and nappy bags to children aged 0-17 years, entering foster care in Victoria. Backpacks or nappy bags will contain age and gender appropriate contents including essential items, clothing, blanket and a toy or activity which will belong to the child.

Our History

Backpacks 4 Vic Kids was founded by Sally Beard (nee Ritter) in November 2014 with the aim of providing essential items such as clothing and toiletries to children being placed in out-of-home care. Having been a foster carer herself for a short time, Sally experienced children arriving with nothing more than what they were wearing at the time, no belongings at all, and living in a rural area there was no way of rushing to a shop to purchase suitable sleepwear and essentials for those children. Some 20 or so years later, with her own children now grown, Sally decided to provide a bag of much needed items, as well as comfort items, to children being relocated. Sally and her husband Ross founded our organisation and operated B4VK from their home, in a purpose-built detached room until June 2016, when after a period of rapid growth B4VK moved to its current home - a 240m² factory in Cranbourne.

At the time of writing this report B4VK has distributed over 5,000 filled backpacks and baby care bags to children aged from new-born to 18 years. Our backpacks are now called ME (My Essentials) Packs. We have established the “Foster Feet Fitting Right In” program which provides children with new school shoes. In 2017 B4VK established the “Christmas 4 Kids In Care” program, which gives children in care age appropriate Christmas gifts of a book, a soft toy and a toy or game. Our B4VK Tiny Sites initiative has been recently launched. We are looking forward to providing more support to more children in crisis in the future.

CONTENTS

Our Mission	2
Our Vision	2
Our History	2
About Us	4
Our People	4-5
Chairman’s Report	6-7
Operation’s Manager’s Report	8-9
Financial Statements	10-13
Acknowledgements	14
External Fundraising Activities and Grants	15
Corporate and Community Partners	15
Organisations who have handed our ME Packs to children in crisis	16
Contact Us	17

ABOUT US

Backpacks for VIC Kids is run by a voluntary Committee of Management. There are 9 potential positions on our Committee of Management.

We are a registered not for profit charitable organisation with DGR Status 1 and TCC. We have three part time employees collectively working 64 hours per week.

OUR PEOPLE

Committee of Management

Name	Position	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
Mark Guthrie	President	8/11/17-30/11/18
Wendy Draayers	Vice-President	8/11/17-30/11/18
Sally Beard (nee Ritter)	Secretary	8/11/17-30/11/18
Ian Cross	Treasurer	8/11/17-13/03/18
Ross Beard	General Member	8/11/17-30/11/18
Ian Wilshusen	General Member	8/11/17-10/07/18
Dawn Whiting	General Member	12/12/18-30/11/18
Gaynor Lowery	General Member	12/12/18-15/05/18

Helen Brown	General Member	10/07/18-30/11/18
Kirsty Barrie	General Member	30/11/18-30/11/18

Employees		
Name	Position	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
Sally Beard (nee Ritter)	Operations Manager	9/05/17-30/11/18
Sally Draayers	Operational Administration Assistant	9/01/18-30/11/18
Marne O'Beirne	Warehouse Co-ordinator	29/05/18-30/11/18

Mark Guthrie Committee of Management	Wendy Draayers Committee of Management	Sally Beard Committee of Management and Operations Manager	Helen Brown Committee of Management	Dawn Whiting Committee of Management
Ian Wilshusen Committee of Management	Ross Beard Committee of Management	Sally Draayers Operational Administration Assistant and Christmas 4 Kids in Care voluntary co-ordinator	Marne O'Beirne Warehouse Co-ordinator	Kirsty Barrie Committee of Management

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The best way to describe the past 12 months has been extraordinary. The development of the charity and the people has been amazing and we are in a constant state of growth and catch up. This has of course created some growing pains and sped up many initiatives but overall these have been worked through well and implemented without too much discomfort.

To summarise, these are the major points of interest for the year:

- Our revenue has increased dramatically due to both more grants being won but also much bigger donations / grants being received. The major stand outs for this were the Freemasons of Victoria donations (both individual, major events and ongoing support), the CommBank Foundation, The Garry White Foundation and Western Program Alliance.
- The work with our Tiny Sites and the collaboration with the roads projects consortium, Western Program Alliance and not-for-profit organisation, TRY Australia has seen our first Tiny Sites container completed and ready for installation. This will provide a much-needed resource for remote locations.
- The growth of roles and the restructuring of our day to day activities in the workshop. The increased stock levels have led to the need for a computer-based stock management program which will be crucial to our future growth. We have also employed a number of key people to fulfil roles including the creation and filling of the Operations Manager, Warehouse Co-ordinator and Operational Administration Officer.
- The changing of the board and the need for more defined roles, more ownership and responsibility to be taken by more people and the better structure and planning for the future. This will have an

ongoing effect and will allow for further growth of our organisation. The Future Strategic Plan was commenced and workshopped and the creation of Sub Committees was the initial step in providing more responsibility and working ideas.

- The closing of the B4VK Charity OpShop. This had been a very good avenue for turning unwanted donations into a source of revenue in the early days of establishing our Headquarters. It was decided the amount of resources used could be better utilised elsewhere. The reduced revenue has been more than compensated by extra revenue from grants elsewhere.
- The sorting out and improved financial recording of our activities. This was a major concern throughout the year with no treasurer for long periods, short term placements and a continual uneasiness about our reporting responsibilities. This will remain an important focus as we increase revenue but also in monitoring our expenses and always ensuring we are mindful of equitable situation.
- The naming / renaming of our backpacks to ME (My Essentials) Backpacks. This involved much interaction and feedback and we finally settled on the new name.

The ground work over the last twelve months has given us the perfect platform and systems to focus the next period of time on increasing our output of backpacks as well as other associated new initiatives. This needs to be done with both increasing our profile within the community to continue to receive grants and donations but also increasing our profile to the necessary social workers to ensure those in need know who we are and what we offer. We have enjoyed a year of new challenges and growth. The challenge ahead is to maintain the frenetic pace we have seen and to continue to remain focused on the original goal of assisting children in need in our community.

From a personal point of view I thoroughly enjoyed my first year in the role. As this is the first time I have performed this role I found it interesting and it provided many new learning opportunities. I hope that in the future I can continue to grow in the role and learn new aspects as well as performing better in the day to day roles too. I feel that I can give more in the future and wish to become more visible in both formal engagements as well as in everyday activities in and around HQ. My confidence in the role and within the organisation has grown as I have learnt more and feel this will only improve in the future. I feel lucky to have been part of the growth of the organisation and to work with some amazing people and look forward to even more development in the year to come

Mark Guthrie
President
Backpacks 4 VIC Kids

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

Firstly, let me thank the Committee of Management for their confidence in me and ongoing support in my role as Operations Manager. Rapid growth can be a challenge for any organisation but thanks to the amazing team we have, Backpacks 4 VIC Kids has continued to grow and strengthen our foundations. As we work to provide urgently needed resources to children in crisis, we have created new procedures to improve our processes, increase awareness of our cause and increased our programs.

The closure of our B4VK Charity Op Shop in October 2017 took many by surprise. We had many customers and staff expressing their sadness at the closure of one of their favorite op shops. This ongoing fundraising enterprise did indeed prove successful from the second week it opened, raising enough income to pay our rent and overheads, ensuring a space for us to carry out our core mission of supplying filled backpacks. As B4VK's turnover grew, so too did our need for additional shelving and work spaces. I wish to thank all who volunteered in our Op Shop, with your wonderful merchandising and customer service skills we had regular positive feedback from our community and customers. Our site on Camms Road certainly lends itself well to

this type of enterprise. Although missed, our Op Shop was a fundraising activity which we had to cease in order to regain the floor space at HQ.

Increasing our employee roles from one part-timer to three part-timers has boosted efficiency and good practice, improving our communications, inventory management and workplace safety. Sally Draayers was appointed Operational Administration Officer in January of 2018 and Marne O'Beirne began as our casual Warehouse Co-ordinator in May 2018 and is now employed on a permanent part-time basis in the same role. Although we continue to rely heavily on volunteers, we have needed to place the responsibility for some tasks under employees for a number of reasons but mainly for consistency and ongoing reliability. As our organisation continues to grow, we are continually looking for ways to improve, reviewing our employee roles in order to continue best practice and best ongoing management of our assets.

With the increase in our efficiency, even with a stall in production due to the rearrangement of our headquarters and the implementation of an inventory management system, we exceeded last year's achievements by far, delivering 1668 ME Packs and ME Jnr Packs, approximately 3,200 Christmas gifts (to 997 children), 12 Toilet Training packs and 38 pairs of new school shoes. Well done to all involved, these are achievements to truly celebrate, and we know from feedback the children receiving our gifts do indeed feel special and supported.

My Essentials Packs – ME Packs

The quality of the contents of our ME Packs has improved with now over 90% of each pack being new items. This achievement is due to the rising support we are gaining from our generous community and of course, the dedication and attention to detail of our wonderful volunteers at HQ and externally hosting drop off points. It is a privilege to work alongside so many wonderful people, who give their time and share their expertise to support B4VK and kids in crisis. Many of our team members have given both operational and emotional support to myself and to each other, and it's really lovely to be at HQ where there is so much heartfelt giving. My thanks to you all for your energy, your time and your support. Thank you to everyone, individuals, groups, families, schools, companies and organisations who have collected and donated items for our ME Packs. We couldn't have achieved such a great result without your ongoing kindness.

Christmas 4 Kids in Care

We officially ran the Christmas 4 Kids in Care program, opening up registration to agency staff and case workers who oversee placements. Sally Draayers led the program voluntarily and together we attracted donations of gifts, books and soft toys to give to 997 children in out of home care placements and residing in secure facilities. Sally has done a fantastic job with what sometimes seemed an overwhelming number of registrations. All gifts were new and distributed throughout Victoria and Tasmania. With 1503 children so far registered this year, it's a big program! Our goal is to give again each child a book, a soft toy and an activity or educational based gift. As this program also increases so too does the need to consider a grant to assist in the costs and co-ordination of the program in the future.

Foster Feet Fitting Right In

Bata Shoe Co. Australia donated around 80 pairs of new school shoes for the second year of our Foster Feet Fitting Right In program. What a pleasure it is to see the faces and eyes of children light up as they slide their feet into new, comfortable and well-fitting shoes. Some kids dance from the sheer joy of having shoes just like the other kids at school. Carers have expressed their gratitude, especially kinship carers, as the costs of caring for children is often a struggle.

My thanks to City of Casey for the nomination of 2017 Victorian Premier's Volunteer Champions Awards in the Leadership category. It was an honour to receive this award from Minister Daniel Andrews at Government House earlier this year.

We've welcomed several corporate teams to HQ including staff from LOSCAM, Mercedes Benz Cars, and Pentana. It's wonderful to have really good help from staff members being given the time to contribute meaningfully in their communities. Thank you for choosing Backpacks 4 VIC Kids. We have also welcomed the assistance of students from schools including Emerald Secondary School, Carrum Downs Secondary School, St Peter's College, and St Francis Xavier to name a few. These students came to our Headquarters to give us a hand, and to better understand the needs of some of the children in their community.

We have a few new projects in the pipe-line but will focus for now on finding a bigger more suitable premise and on streamlining our processes to improve efficiency and response times. I'm so proud of our leadership team, our volunteers, our community and everyone who contributes to the success of Backpacks 4 VIC

Kids. It truly is a privilege to have my 'job'.
 Sally Beard
 Operations Manager

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Donors (of donations > \$99) *please forgive any errors or omissions.

Name	\$
Andrew Benedek	200.00
Anthony Petherbridge	2500.00
Be Your Best Physio	150.00
Belinda Hands	907.70
Berwick Springs View Club	161.90
Beyarra PTD/Hotel Ibis	3010.00
Blue Sky Real Estate	2000.00
Campbell Trefoil Guild	400.00
Carrum Downs Secondary College	4480.00
Casey Cardinia Libraries	300.00
Cassandra Johnson	300
Collie-Anne Jewellery	295.65
Cranbourne East Primary School	1265.00
Cranbourne South Primary School	1478.15
CWA Casey Dinner Branch	200.00
CWA Cranbourne	1000.00
CWA Pearcedale	300.00
Dromana Bay Probus	270.00
Emerald Secondary College	210.00
Eva and Les Erdi Humanitarian Charitable Foundation	6482.00
Fiddlers Green Friendship & Craft Group	500.00
FMV – Monash Gully District No. 113	500.00
Freemasons Victoria	1000.00
Grill'd Casey Central	700.00
Grill'd PTY LTD	2000.00
Jaspriit Bedi	360.00
K. Lannan	277.00
Lions Club Clarinda	200.00
Lions Club Mordialloc	500.00
LJ Hooker Narre Warren South	2500.00
Lodge of Good Companions – Social Club	500.00
Marandar Ladies Group	600.00
Medical and Aged Care Holdings P/L	5000.00
Mordialloc Lodge Social Club N 258	1000.00
Paul Raynes	200.00
Peninsula Grammar	3933.00
Sally Wilson	125.00

Simon Pilkington	391.75
St Francis De Sale Primary School	452.30
Sub Zero	100.00
Sunset Cinema	500.00
The Freemasons Lodge	500.00
Toorak College	1564.54
Trafalgar Masonic Lodge No. 497	1000.00
United Grand Lodge	1000.00
Yarragon Uniting Church	100.00
Zagames	1000.00

External Fundraising Events

Name	\$
Cheryl George: Donation drive	480.00
Dishna Wijenayake: An afternoon at The Palace	2530.00
SJD Homes: Live Band Night	12020.00
Western Program Alliance: WPA Van for Backpacks 4 VIC Kids	3809.30
Casey Aged Care: Raffle	520
Casey Manor: Raffle	104
Coral VanDyk: market stalls of handmade treasures	748
Lite 'N Easy staff	479

Grants

Name	Project	\$
Carrum Downs Community Bank Branch and Marriott Waters	Money Matters	1700
	2018 Video	1000
City of Casey	2018 Video	1000
	Op Shop Shelving	1000
Freemasons Foundation	2018 Video	1000
Freemasons Foundation	Lodge Noble 250 Packs	7000
Lodge Nobel	Lodge Nobel 250 Packs	7000
Gandel Foundation	Care Packs for SECASA's young clients	8000
Garry White Foundation	Inventory Management	9,500
Sidney Myer Foundation	Backpacks 4 Outback Kids	5000
CommBank Foundation	GoFund Me Help us pay for our Headquarters	30000

Corporate & Community Partners

Banter Toys

Toshiba Australia

Pigeon Australia

The Nappy Collective

123 Read to me

Western Program Alliance (including McConnell Dowell Constructors, Arup, Level Crossing Removal Authority and Mott McDonald)

Medical and Aged Care Group (Casey Aged Care and Casey Manor)
 Sukin Australia
 Outlet Shop for Kids
 RedInk Solutions
 Bata Shoe Co. Australia

We'd like to thank the following organisations who have passed on our ME Packs directly to children in crisis on our behalf

Organisation	Department/team	Location
SECASA		Dandenong
Latrobe Regional Hospital		Traralgon
Malle Domestic Violence Service/Mallee Sexual Assault Unit		Mildura
Baptcare		
WAYSS		Dandenong
WAYSS	Women's Services – FVO	Frankston
Gippsland Lakes Community Health		
Anglicare Victoria		Lilydale
Anglicare Victoria		Dandenong
Child And Family Services		Ballarat
Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative	Koori Kare	Bairnsdale
Mallee Domestic Violence Service		Swan Hill
Dept. Health & Human Services		Morwell
Dept. Health & Human Services		Swan Hill
Dept. Health & Human Services		Box Hill
Dept. Health & Human Services		Cheltenham
Community Housing Limited		
Uniting Wesley Homelessness Services		
MacKillop Family Services		
YES Unlimited		
Barwon Child Youth & Family		
Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-op		Maroopna
Berry Street		Shepparton
Berry Street Victoria		Gippsland
Berry Street		Ballarat
Berry Street Victoria		Morwell
Dept. Health & Human Services		Ballarat
Uniting Wesley		Ringwood
Salvocare Eastern		Leongatha
Salvocare Eastern		Mt Martha
Centre for Non-Violence		

Family And Community Services		Taree
OzChild		Dandenong

CONTACT US

Postal Address: 38 Toirram Crescent, Cranbourne

Delivery Address: 86 Camms Road, Cranbourne

Hours: Monday to Thursday 9:30am-4:00pm

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