

OAKE TREE



HOLYOAKE NEWSLETTER **ISSUE 2 2014**



Welcome to another issue of Oake Tree.

Holyoake was established in 1975, and we look forward to celebrating our 40th anniversary next year. Over the years countless people have trusted us to help change their lives for the better.

We continue to provide a safe and caring environment in which our clients feel empowered to express their feelings and gain the skills to work through their challenges.

This issue of Oake Tree includes two heart-warming testimonials which demonstrate how self-determination can overcome any challenge. I hope you are as inspired by these experiences as I am.

We are pleased to launch our new consumer involvement campaign to encourage our clients to give us feedback. Your comments and suggestions will help us improve our services.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Angie Paskevicius
CEO

Holyoake welcomes and values feedback



At Holyoake, our clients are at the heart of everything we do. Our purpose is to help bring lasting change to lives and communities affected by alcohol and drugs. We welcome clients with a non-judgemental approach in a safe and caring environment.

Over the past 39 years, we have constantly responded to increasingly complex and changing needs of the community. As a result, we now offer a wide range of programs for people of all ages who are impacted by alcohol and drugs – directly and indirectly.

We encourage our clients to give us feedback about the quality of our programs, suggestions for improvement, and additional services we could provide. Our new consumer involvement campaign is designed to make this process even more convenient.

We have developed new posters, feedback forms, and electronic forms to give our clients easy options to provide feedback. They are welcome to speak to us in person, or send us feedback via post, email or our website.

If you are a current or former client of Holyoake, please feel free to express your thoughts. We value your opinion and will treat it confidentially and with due respect. Your opinion does make a difference.



Remember, you are also welcome to join Holyoake Connect – a support group through which you can attend workshops, inspire others with your experiences, and stay connected to Holyoake.

For more details, please call 9416 4444 or email connect@holyoake.org.au

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"Holyoake helped me more than I could ever imagine. I had very low expectations of myself and the program when I started. And now, I can hardly recognise myself!"

*- Pat**

"Holyoake is a place where I felt welcome and without judgement."

*- Peter**

"I could talk to my counsellor about any issue and would get clear, relevant, and sometimes uplifting information. I am enthusiastic about the future."

*- Bev**

"Holyoake has lifted my spirit. I've learned to live, laugh and love again. Thank you."

*- Julie**

"I had a bad meth problem due to depression. But now I have the skills to spot depression early, and to deal with it before thinking of turning to drugs."

*- Sam**

The joy of moving on from parental guilt

“My adult son has been living with me for the past few years since his return from overseas. His stay was to have been for a few months only but as a result of his alcohol and drug use, this didn’t happen. One day after a particularly disturbing occurrence which left me feeling helpless and inadequate, a dear friend suggested that I contact Holyoake.

The thought of pouring out my ‘tale of woe’ to a stranger filled me with dread. However, from the very first counselling session I felt a huge weight lifting from me. Here was a welcoming professional who treated me with respect, listened attentively and didn’t blame me as I stumbled through my story.

I was offered alternative ways of viewing my situation, encouraged to be patient with myself, and advised to participate in the Parent’s Program. Since I had never attended a group program before, I felt quite vulnerable. However, the welcoming smiles and greetings relaxed me immediately. I soon found myself looking forward to connecting with people

who understood my frustrations, and were experiencing similar difficulties and emotions. Their individual and collective wisdom supported me and presented me with new ways of looking at my problems.

I realised that I could not change my son’s alcohol or drug habits, as much as I loved him. Only he could do that. In fact, I learned that if I wanted change to occur, then it was I who would have to change. This included reassessing my expectations of ‘success’ for my son and for me.

At the end of my Holyoake experience two years ago, I felt equipped to deal with anything. But after a year, my son reverted to patterns of drug and alcohol addiction. I became aware that my emotional state mirrored his - when he was happy so was I, but when he was depressed I fell into a pit of anxiety and fear.

So... back to Holyoake! Again I was welcomed and amazed at the different insights I obtained. I was in a different space, my son was in a different place

and the group dynamics were different. I felt that I was fine-tuning the skills I had learned previously but was not applying effectively.

I sincerely thank the dedicated staff of Holyoake and the parents I met. My son’s struggle continues to be problematic, but I no longer mirror his ups and downs. I have reconnected with friends and have re-established a life of my own. This is not to say that I have stopped caring. I take comfort in the knowledge that should I need further support, the warm, empathetic staff at Holyoake would welcome me back.”

The Parent’s Program at Holyoake Vic Park is for parents, care givers and guardians affected by the problematic use of alcohol and/or drugs by an adolescent or adult son or daughter. If you or someone you care about needs help, please call 9416 4444 or email clientservices@holyoake.org.au

My dramas with drugs and a broken family

Holyoake manages the North East Metro Community Alcohol and Drug Service (NEMCADS) in Midland. We offer an integrated service which includes Next Step. In this interview Ashleigh* talks about how Holyoake helped turn her life around...

Where did things begin to go wrong?

After being married for 7 years and bringing up several kids, I discovered that my husband had an affair. It led to the deepest depression of my life. I stayed in this abusive relationship and tried to make it work because I come from a family with traditional values about marriage.

How did this affect your life?

I turned to drugs to manage my depression, and lost my family house, car

and all my friends. I went from being a respected mum to someone who could not be trusted.

How did you hear about Holyoake?

My ex-husband took all my children, and I was desperate to get them back. The court ordered me to get some counselling, and I contacted Holyoake. It was great because I could finally speak to someone who understood what I was going through.

How did your life change from here?

Holyoake helped me not only with counselling, but also by linking me to other services. They helped me with the Department for Child Protection paperwork and requirements to get my kids back. I always felt recharged and confident after



counselling. The counsellor helped me see the good things I was achieving.

How do you feel now?

I finally set goals and achieved them, building my confidence. I have all my kids back now. I am working, have a house, and back in contact with my family, who are very supportive. I feel at peace and will not make the same mistakes or build my life on someone else who could destroy it. I am looking after my kids and my own life. I am happy about where my life is at.

Programs@Holyoake



Alcohol and drug issues affect not just individuals, but their families and friends as well. This is why Holyoake offers a range of customised programs for people of all ages who are impacted directly and indirectly. So if you or someone you care about needs help, contact us for confidential counselling and support.

Building Resilience Through Play

(A special program for children who are affected by alcohol and/or drug use within the family.)

Children who are affected by alcohol and/or drug use by a parent, sibling or carer can experience a range of problems if they do not have an opportunity to express and resolve their issues. The Building Resilience Through Play (BRTP) program is designed to help them through this process.

BRTP is a play-based program which focuses on developing resilience, or emotional strength in children aged 5-15 years. We have a bright, safe room which is designed to make children feel welcome and comfortable. It contains toys, games, books, art and craft materials, role oriented play items (such as dolls, dress-ups and puppets) and a graffiti wall. Our aim is to use interesting activities to explore new ways to relate and communicate in a playful and enjoyable way.

This program aims to engage with children in a meaningful way to help them express and resolve their issues by:

- Providing a calm, safe and supportive environment
- Developing their skills around resilience, self-awareness, problem solving, conflict resolution, emotional growth and regulation
- Supporting them if they are impacted by substance use in their family or peer groups
- Developing understanding of their roles within their family and support systems
- Strengthening their family relationships and supports
- Providing culturally appropriate pathways of communication and education about current or potential substance use
- Working to prevent family separation as a result of alcohol and/or drug use
- Offering support links to the wider community



Parents and carers can also access this program for support with parenting questions, re-establishing healthy family dynamics, and accessing other child-related agencies and services.

This program is currently offered only by the Holyoake Wheatbelt Community Alcohol and Drug Service (WCADS) in Northam. For more information, please call (08) 96211055 or email adminnortham@holyoake.org.au

We reach out to about 6,500 people affected by alcohol and drug issues every year. You can help us continue our mission by including Holyoake in your Will. For more information please call Angie Paskevicius, CEO on 08 9416 4444 or email apaskevicius@holyoake.org.au

For more information on any of our programs please go to www.holyoake.org.au

Men's Program

Women's Program

Parent's Program

Relationships in Focus

Childhood in Perspective (for adults)

Couples Counselling

Young Adult's Program

Adolescent Program

Young People's Program

Art and Play Program

Prison & Justice Programs

Building Resilience Through Play

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