

YWCA Hunter Region

Support, empower and connect

Women and families for a stronger community



YWCA
Hunter Region

YWCA Hunter Region Inc.
ABN: 72582209745

We would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal people who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would also like to show respect to the Elders, past and present, of the Aboriginal nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people.



Y President and Executive Director's Report



Yolande Willis
President
Board of Directors



Jenny Baldwin
Executive Director

Once again it is a great honour to be able to present the YWCA Hunter Region Inc. 2014/2015 Annual Report, covering the financial year from July 2014 to end of June 2015 to our members and supporters. This is our 93rd year of operation.

This report aims to provide Hunter members, stakeholders, partners and our many supporters with an overview of our performance in the financial year and to share some of the exciting things that have happened, both good and not-so-good during that time. We also aim in this report to impart an understanding of our future direction. At the AGM in 2014 Yolande Willis, who had taken on the role as acting President, was voted in as Board President. Stacey Lynch was voted into the role of Secretary.

As an organisation we appreciate the time and effort that this requires and the voluntary time and dedication that is required of all the Board Directors.

The Board this year have largely dedicated themselves to the development of the policy documentation required in a not for profit charitable organisation. We are also committed to the discussion around the future of the YWCA in Australia and together with the other YWCA's across the country we are looking closely at the sustainability of the organisation into the future on a national level and what model may be adopted to ensure effectiveness of purpose and sustainability.

To a much lesser degree compared to the last two years, although still significant, we continue to experience ongoing maintenance issues consistent with an old building.

The website, along with a facebook page, has proven to be a major source of attracting new clients. Vacation Care packages and membership are available on line with paying facilities through Pay Pal.

Yolande and Jenny

Y Vision

Support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.

Strengthened by the Christian faith and enriched by our worldwide membership of women and girls the **YWCA Hunter Region** exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.

The YWCA Hunter is part of a national and international movement, a global membership-based movement of women and girls, which promotes women's leadership and gender equality. In the Hunter, the YWCA has been supporting and working with women and their families since 1880.

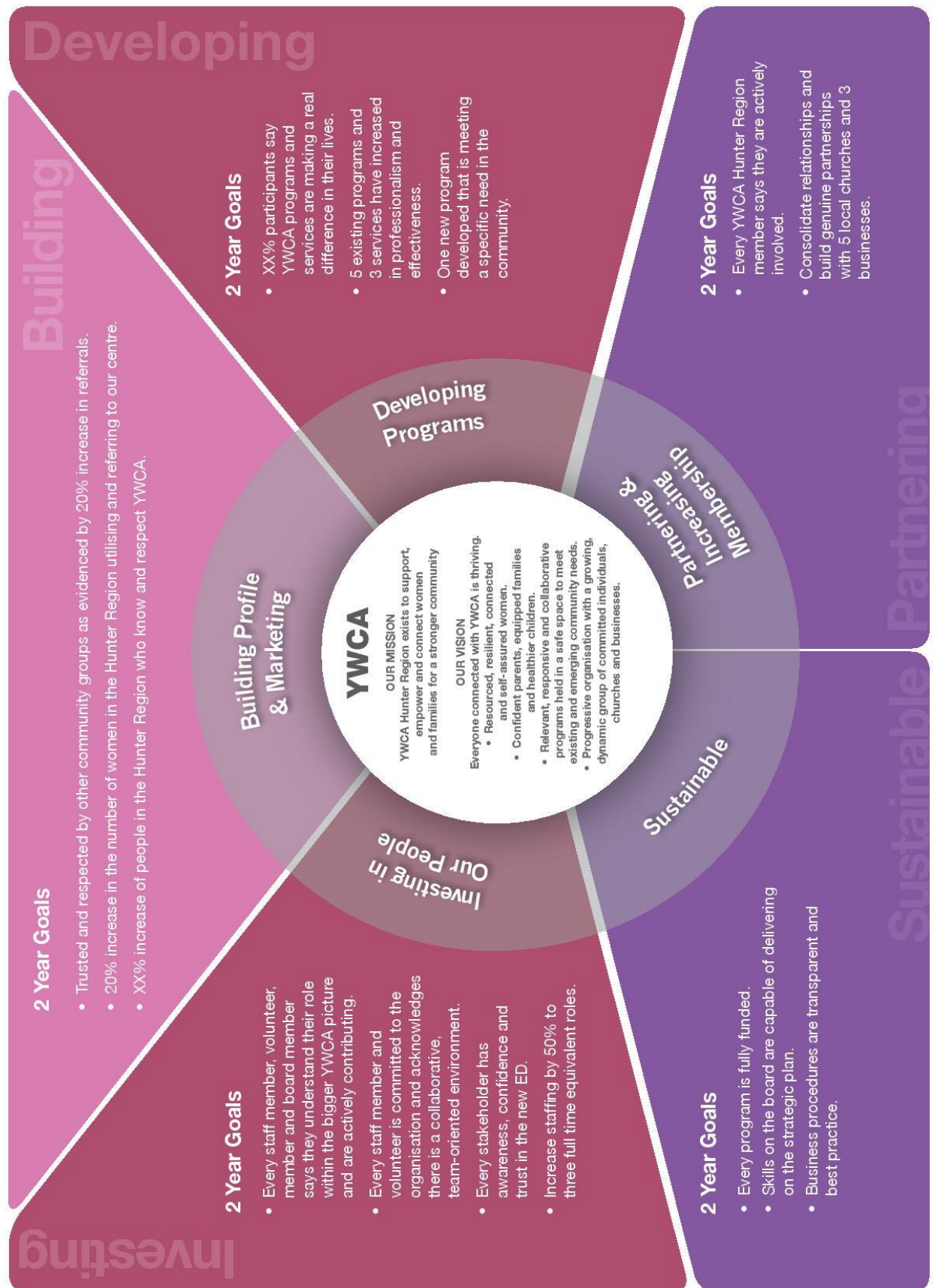
The **World YWCA** is a global network of women and young women leading social and economic change in over 122 countries. The World YWCA is one of the world's largest and oldest women's organisations with a global reach of 25 million women and girls. It advocates for peace, justice, human rights and care of

the environment, and has been at the forefront of raising the status of women for over 150 years. The World YWCA develops women's leadership to find local solutions to the global inequalities women face. Annually the network supports 25 million women and girls.

In Australia, the YWCA is established in all states and territories, and delivers services to more than a quarter of a million women, men and children through over 100 sites across rural, regional and metropolitan areas. For over 125 years, **YWCA's in Australia** have been developing the next generation of women leaders, and providing services which meet the needs of women and girls, their families and communities. YWCA's in Australia provide strong leadership, mentoring and opportunities for women and girls; advocacy with government and programs and services that support women and girls, their families and communities.



YWCA Hunter Region Strategic Plan



Y Hunter Board 2014/2015:

The Board of Directors comprises women from diverse backgrounds, ages and experiences who share a common passion for social justice and supporting young women to fulfil their potential.

Alisa Coons and Margaret Mowday stepped down from the Board in February and Julie Lindemann stepped down from the Board in March due to her increased work commitments. Cheryl Burke joined the Board at the beginning of the calendar year.

Yolande Willis was elected as the President at the 2014 AGM and Stacey Lynch as the Secretary. We are

PRESIDENT Yolande Willis

SECRETARY *Stacey Lynch

BOARD MEMBERS *Stacey Lynch,
Judy Gresham,
Amanda McInnes,
Cheryl Burke,
Jenny Baldwin.
*Julie Lindemann
Margaret Mowday
Alissa Coons

*Denotes young women (aged 30 years or under) at time of appointment. The YWCA Hunter maintains a commitment to 30 per cent of Board appointments are held by women aged 30 or under.

particularly grateful to the current Board who began their term at the AGM in 2014. They have given of their time and shown commitment to the organisation.

The Board this term has largely concentrated on the governance work plan and on the compilation and updating of the governance policies required in a not for profit organisation. Along with the other YWCA's across the country we have given considerable time to the concept of the sustainability of the organisation nationally into the future.



Community Engagement

Hit-The-Bricks in November

Comprising the finest street artists from across the globe with a stack of walls and a whole lot of paint, Hit-The-Bricks saw Newcastle walls across the city transformed into an amazing collection of live artworks. As part of the Hit-the-Bricks festival in November the YWCA had the back wall of the building that faces Glover Lane painted by BMD artists from New Zealand. They painted a set of sequential stages in the life of a meltingsomething.

It has been quite a topic of conversation and certainly changes the character of the lane. The neighbours in the lane expressed delight at the transformation. As part of an excursion to experience and appreciate the huge walls painted across the inner city the children in the vacation care program walked around the streets of Newcastle. Their excitement was evident but none

more so than with our own piece of art work.

Darby Street Community gardens

The YWCA works to be a contributing partner in our community and we are involved in the Darby Street Cluster group whose aim it is to breathe constant life and interest into the Darby St precinct of Cooks Hill.

The YWCA acquired and contributed 100 railway sleepers to the project. The children in the vacation care program have visited the gardens on a number of occasions to plant and pick produce.



April Storms Bring Down the Trees

Just as the April 2015 vacation care came to an end the storms with high winds hit Newcastle. Two of the very large old fig trees in Council St uprooted and landed heavily on our building. The two other trees adjacent to the front of the building moved dangerously in the winds. All were subsequently removed by council arborists as considered hazardous.



The building suffered considerable damage as the tree hit the wall and smashed through the roof.

It was August before repairs began on the building and the basketball court flooded a number of times in the meantime as the wind removed the covering tarpaulin on a regular basis.



We closed to the public as all regular serviced ceased for the month of August. The preschool relocated for the first week while the roof was replaced. Our clients who rent out the hall were forced to find other facilities for the month

But once the repairs started the builders moved quickly. We were very impressed as the old asbestos roof was removed with the new one going up just as quickly. They worked professionally with all care taken. The vacuum cleaners were running constantly in the ceiling cavity and air monitors around the area reassured us that all was being handled according to strict regulations.

The floor was sanded back and revarnished and lined.

We now have a beautiful new basketball court.



YWCA Australia:

Women Leading Change: the YWCA Australia in 2014-2015

Celebrating our role in the global YWCA movement launched the year on a high for YWCA Australia when we welcomed 21 colleagues from 12 YWCAs to Melbourne for the International AIDS Conference. Bringing a vital voice of young women of faith to the meeting, the YWCA delegates were strong advocates for a progressive agenda that included access for young women and girls to comprehensive sexuality education and access to contraception.

Our national voice for young women was strengthened with the release of the *She Speaks Report*, showcasing the views of over 1600 young women and girls. The survey respondents called on the Prime Minister to show leadership to end gender stereotypes, and found that 79% of participants believed that gender stereotypes affected their day-to-day lives. A team of YWCA young women from around the country took the report to Parliament and the findings from the report have informed our advocacy during the year, including our analysis of the federal budget presented at our Young Women's Budget Briefing event, deepening our work to oppose changes to paid parental leave, and bringing the voice of young women to the Council of Australian Governments' work on gender based violence in an online environment.

We were delighted to work with the pro bono support of Imagination during the year to redevelop the branding of YWCA Australia, which was launched to great acclaim in November. The new brand

celebrates the many facets of the YWCA's work and honours our global brand: the triangle of mind-body-spirit. We have been thrilled to see so many Member Associations across Australia adopt the brand as their own.

Every Girl, our program targeting girls in the final two years of primary school, has gone from strength to strength. We celebrated International Day of the Girl in Perth with the Honourable Senator Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Women and Every Girls from the Lockridge Primary School. With the support of the Australian Government we reached 254 girls with our 8 week program which focuses on leadership, human rights and finding each girl's voice for change.

We celebrated the hard work of sisters in Timor Leste when the YWCA of Timor Leste was registered with the Timorese Government. The dedicated support of the YWCA Australia Timor Leste Working Group has seen members self-funding trips to Timor to support the vital establishment phase and we were delighted that the movement was able to raise funds at our AGM to support the participation of YWCA of Timor Leste women at the forthcoming World Council.

The Equality Rights Alliance had a very strong year making strategic gender-based interventions on housing policy, taxation reform, young women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, and leading the gender equality sections on the human rights reports to the UN.

In March this year YWCA Australia took a delegation of eight women to the UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting, marking the twentieth anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Highlights included a strong role lobbying on resolutions adopted by the CSW; a standing room only NGO workshop on gender stereotypes and their impact on violence against women and leadership; and a powerful workshop focused on Indigenous women's leadership. Krista Seddon, Cara Gleeson, Alisa Draskovic and Claire Tatyzo contributed to the emerging Young Feminists Group at the

CSW, including taking a leading role in the Twitter-thon organised to put pressure on governments in the final days of the CSW.

We finished the year with the YWCA Australia Board committing to an accelerated timeline for the Sustainability Project. This vital project will ensure that the YWCA in Australia is strongly positioned to meet the needs of young women, girls and women in our community, with an organizational model that strengthens our collaboration, reach, voice and impact. We are looking forward to working with the movement on the next steps.

Y Staff Team 2014/2015



Jenny Baldwin
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Further changes were made to the permanent staff this year to cater for our program expansions.

Nina Aubin in the office left us to take up a full time position at a school. She has been the talented force behind the office reorganisation over the last two years and we owe so much to her skills. We welcomed the talent of Belinda Mathieson and Sharon Gruber to administration and we are appreciative of their great contribution to the office team.

This year we also welcomed Grainne Myles as a facilitator in the Encore Program. Grainne brings an expertise in Jazz and Zumba as well as a fitness trainer with her.

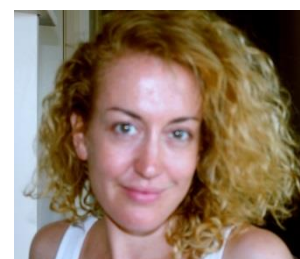
The staff is our most valuable resource and the innovation and passion with which they carry out their roles gives the programs that we deliver a unique and ever changing flavor. It is thanks to them that we see growth.

The 2014/2015 team consisted of:



**Children's Program
Coordinator –**
Rebecca Newton

Administration –
Belinda Mathieson,



Sharon Gruber



Encore Coordinator
- Sue Boswell

Finance Officer
Jennifer Sumner





Encore Facilitators -Sharon Jephson, Grainne Myles, Ann Grimshaw and Sandra Woods

EveryGirl Facilitators- Sarah King, Madeleine Lewin, Sam Reed

Kindergym Instructor - Lynette Edwards

Vacation Care staff 2014/2105:

Ben Pomplun, Bianca Uicich, Byron Richards, Jonathon Navarro, Stacey Colelough, Sam Reed, Jake Jubelin, Tannon Muller, Jessie Scanlon, Alanta Walker, Phoebe Baker, Laura Williams, Sean Kees





Y-Kids Programs

YWCA Kindergym and playgroup programs provide the opportunity for toddlers and infants to interact socially with their peers and to experience activities that enable them to explore and develop the social and gross motor skills essential for healthy neurological and social development for school readiness.

Play is more than just fun for kids. It's how babies and children learn, and how they work out who they are and where they fit in the world.

Our slogan emphasises the benefit of the Y-Kids programs and the activities involved - **'Y Kids Get a Better Start'**.

Rebecca Newton is the Children's Program Coordinator. The programming in all our Y-Kids programs is in line with our philosophy on play - the rights of the child and the child's right to play.

'I am learning through play for I will make a difference one day'.

With all the Y Kids programs we aim to:

- build confidence
- develop social skills, language and communication
- learn about caring for others and the environment
- develop physical skills
- connect and refine pathways in the child's brain.

The YWCA Hunter is committed to continually improving our children's programs with contemporary programming and new equipment. Of course this means an investment of both time and money.

The number of children attending vacation care has grown with an average of 55 to 60 enrolments each day in the July holidays, and new families continue to arrive every school holidays. In order to maintain this growth there are many strategies in place ensuring a consistent pattern of best practice.

Y Kindergym is an essential preschool program that helps children from an early age to maximize their learning potential and develop gross motor skills for preschool readiness. It provides an opportunity for valuable insights into early childhood development while having lots of fun in the process.



This year we have offered Kindergym classes on Monday at 9.30am to 10.30am and two classes on Tuesday at 9.30am to 10.30am and at 10.45am to 11.45am.

The classes provide a structured program for children aged 1-5 years. Classes support a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to participate in activities that develop the necessary gross motor skills at this age.

Rebecca Newton leads our Monday kindergym session while Lynette Edwards, a trained kindergym instructor, facilitates the Tuesday morning sessions. Approximately 70 families attend.

....and what parents say:

"It's wonderful! So many skills are being taught and year old class tailors amazingly well to a varied age group. My friend and I have both a 3 1/2 year old and we love it"





Play is more than just fun for kids. At the YWCA Playgroup this is where babies and children learn and work out who they are and where they fit in the world.

Playgroup is about play and our program allows for lots of unstructured free play as well as sections of structured planned activities.

Rebecca Newton, Children's Program Coordinator, has an ever changing environment that encourages the children to explore, use their imagination and experience the different sensations and situations that are useful for healthy development.

The way children play changes as they grow older so our equipment caters for the toddler to the pre-schooler.

Over the past year the children have enjoyed many and varied activities. These have included multicultural days; Newcastle Art Gallery - I Spy Tour; raising money for cancer with 'The Biggest Morning Tea'; acknowledging national celebrated days and having our own Teddy Bear Picnic.

The multicultural days have proven to be a highlight for the program with Harmony day and Chinese New Year being most popular. A parent read and sang a nursery rhyme in Portuguese which was of great interest to the very multicultural group of families that attend the playgroup. Children have made their own peasant hats from paper plates and



made sushi with flattened bread. Currently we have two families who come from France and hearing them talk in their native language as they make a cup of tea makes you think you're in a Parisian cafe! The children are also involved as they sing the Frère Jacques nursery rhyme and make chocolate croissants.

We still have the loyalty card in place which gives children a lucky dip prize on their 20th visit. We are constantly welcoming new families and the loyalty system helps to create a bond with playgroup. Currently many families with more than one young child attend as it offers them a social environment where they feel safe to bring newborns, whilst siblings can run around and start building their own social skills.

During the next financial year we plan to utilise the outside grass area more with picnic rugs as the weather becomes warmer, and enjoy more themed activities which support community involvement.

....and what parents say:

"Thank you for making playgroup such a wonderful introduction to a structured environment for kids!! Ben has thrived, interacted learnt to cook etc and so much or. We have been coming to playgroup for 2years and it is such a great community, welcoming to mums and grandies and dads, as well as the kids"



Christmas party attendance fee - \$10.00 per child or \$12.00 per family for 2 or more children

*'Twas a few weeks before Christmas,
And here at the Y*

Y-kids Playgroup

*was preparing
to let the Christmas party fly!*

*Christmas fun in the hall,
Stockings hung on the stairs,
A jumping castle in the yard....
Santa soon will be here!*

Thursday, December 11 is the date
So make sure you're here
9.30am to 11.30am ...don't be late!

*Bring a friend if you like
And some party food on a plate!*

*So no matter how often you've
been at playgroup this year,
Come & see Santa
And whisper in his ear!*

*He's bringing gifts
For all the children that are here,
It will be lots & lots of fun
To end the playgroup year.*





Y Vacation Care

When schools are closing up for a break the YWCA Hunter swings open their doors to provide an innovative, fun packed Vacation Care Program to ensure that the children of working parents have a thrilling and enriching school holiday experience.

The program is funded through DEEWR with parents eligible for the Government's Child Care Rebates.

Some of the children live locally while many come with their parents who work in the city. Our aim for vacation care is FUN, where the children experience new ideas and activities and take home something in the form of craft, art, new skills, ideas and experiences.

The program runs at the YWCA centre through each school holiday break –two weeks each break and three weeks in the January school holidays. We enlist the children's suggestions and use the information from their interest lists to develop a program of activities, experiences and excursions that ensure no one is disappointed. Excursions are particularly popular but the children also get a thrill out of the themed onsite days where they create, cook, eat and play their way through the day.

From Spooky Day (seriously G rated spooky), Konichiwa Day where the



children learned about all things Japanese, or Vive La France where all things French were on the menu plus games, movies, T-shirt screen printing; mosaic designing; all things Naidoc including a huge canvas painting with local artist Ray Smith that now adorns the wall in the entrance of our premises; cooking and excursions. The children visited the museum; Ice skating;



Young People's Theatre; Blackbutt Reserve; Mattara Festival; Ice Skating; Hunter Valley zoo where most of our time was spent in the farm yard where children could feed the animals and come out smelling like them! The baby meerkats captured a lot of attention as they amused everyone by darting their heads through holes and looking out for potential intruders.

Plus numerous movies; beach activities and a community awareness



day with a visit to the Darby Street Community gardens. The children discussed the concept of a community



garden and its benefits to the community and they even planted a variety of vegetables and herbs. The program also saw many close encounters with cute furry animals and not so cute or cuddly reptiles. Children went home with photo memories and a chance to come up close with creepy crawling creatures



On circus day the children had their faces painted like a clown; made clown hats and juggling balls; watched a magic show and circus workshop by local clown Willy Doodrop from Ship of Fools. Willy also mesmerised by juggling a club and cricket



themes set under the government guidelines called 'My Time our Place'.

Much is owed to the staff team whose contributions, enthusiasm and energy are of an exceptionally high quality and we just couldn't do it without them!!!

Once again we have seen a significant increase in the numbers of families and

children attending the vacation care, with a total of 78 new families since June last year and provided fun school holiday activities for 450 children in total!



bat while riding a 6 foot unicycle. Children walked through town looking at the wall art from 'Hit the Bricks', and of course focusing on the one on our own back wall.

The most rewarding part of delivering vacation care programs is when children can come back to talk about activities they have taken home to enjoy or make again. One child was so excited to learn how to make vegemite scrolls that he made them for his lunch the next day. Another child played tic tac toe with her dad using the Aboriginal stones that she had painted during Naidoc day celebrations at vacation care.



Many of the photos make their way to our Face book page which delights the children.

All activities are delivered through much fun, community awareness and interesting

....and what parents say:

"It's so tricky to know when to pick my son up from vacation care because he always wants to stay longer. He even complained when I came at 6pm one day"

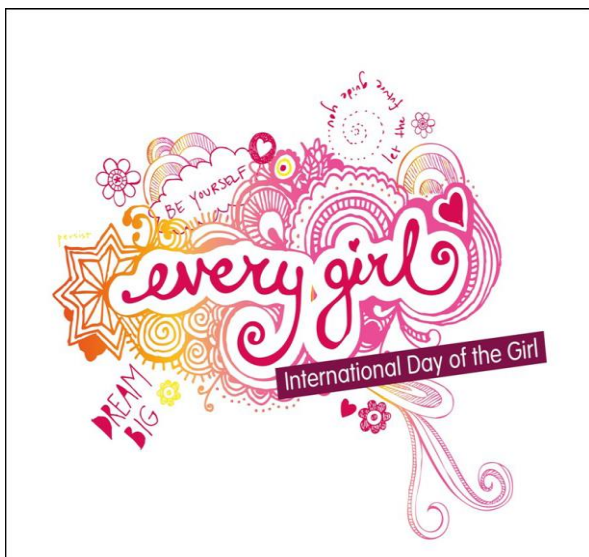
"Ben loved his first experience of vacation care at the YWCA and is really keen to get in as many days as he can next holidays"

"Being new to the area I asked all the parents I knew in 4 different Primary Schools what was their recommendations for a vacation care and everyone said the YWCA...and now I know why. Thank you so much!!"

"We just loved how excited our children were every morning of vacation care. Getting them ready was so easy as they couldn't wait to get out the door. If only they were like that on school days! "

"As a parent you can feel so guilty working during every school holiday and having to find care for your children. But when you see them so excited to go in the morning to vacation care and tired in the afternoon it makes it all seem perfectly ok. Thank you so much you are all amazing"





Y *Every Girl*

The program uses a strengths-based approach and a human rights framework to connect girls to their community and to influence community change through weekly sessions that equip them to address the critical issues they confront in their daily lives.

EVERYGIRL is a transformative self-esteem program for girls 9-14 years of age.

The program is founded on research illuminating that poor self-esteem is on the rise among girls. This is having a profound effect not only on their development now, but also in the long term on the achievement of gender equality. YWCA has identified early intervention as vital to improving girls' self-confidence, social skills, leadership and community engagement.



Everygirl moved into regional areas of the



Hunter in the second half of the 2014 as we delivered programs in both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. In Term 3 we delivered two back-to-back programs at Cessnock West Public School and in term 4 the same in Kurri Kurri Public School to cover the year 5 and 6 girls. The program incorporates a community event which gives opportunity for the girls to be proactive in thinking about community needs and act on that recognised need. They are encouraged to focus on how they can use their voices to have a positive impact in their own communities.

Once again the students were very enthusiastic about their community engagement event. The girls were passionate about having equal opportunities to play sports with boys in their school and community. They planned a sports event for years 5 and 6 that involved three stations of different games that the children rotated through in groups. Several girls performed a dance to “Break The Chains” from One Billion Rising which calls for the end of discrimination and violence towards women and girls. Two girls gave speeches about what they had learned in the program and what the community event was about. They also wrote encouragement cards to neighbours which were posted out.

The Everygirl facilitators for Kurri Kurri Public School and Cessnock West Public School were Madeleine Lewin, Sarah King and Sam Reed. Sam joined as the assistant facilitator and she brought another valuable perspective into the YWCA Everygirl program. Sarah and Madeleine have contributed amazingly to the program by modifying and tweaking the content to create an extremely youth and girl friendly and engaging Everygirl delivery.



How exciting it has been to be part of the *Every Girl* Program. We believe that the program has tremendous potential to impact the lives and futures of the young girls who participate.

....and what the students say:

“I used to think everything was unfair but now I know I can be a part of changing things”

“We used to be really naughty, swearing and stuff...but in Every Girl we learnt that is not respecting ourselves and respecting ourselves and each other is important”

YWCAencore

after breast cancer gentle exercise program

Health & Well-being – Encore

YWCA's Encore is a free eight week program designed specifically for women who have experienced breast cancer surgery.

The program will:

- ✓ Improve mobility and flexibility in the upper body
- ✓ Improve general fitness, health and well-being
- ✓ Boost body image and self-esteem
- ✓ Help to relieve stress and tension
- ✓ Help to restore a sense of control
- ✓ Relieve discomfort associated with surgery and treatment
- ✓ Reduce the potential risk of lymphedema
- ✓ Assist in the management of lymphedema



Utilising both land and water based exercises YWCA Encore improves overall fitness as well as manages the side effects

associated with breast cancer treatment including pain, fatigue, loss of mobility and loss of strength. The program is tailored to each individual, accommodating all fitness levels.



In line with latest research the program targets the side effects of surgery and treatment through mobility, stretching, aerobic and resistance exercises.

The program also offers information through guest speakers, links into local services and an opportunity to connect with women who share a similar experience in a safe, fun and supportive environment.

Sue Boswell is the Co-ordinator of the YWCA Hunter Encore program. She is supported by Sharon Jephson and Sandra Woods as excellent and enthusiastic facilitators with Jennifer Sumner and Grainne Myles supporting where needed.

Encore season at the end of year 2014 and beginning of 2015 has been an exciting time. We finally managed to secure an excellent venue in the Port Stephens' area for ladies in the area who could benefit from the Encore program. The venue and classes were a huge success in the February/March sessions.

We were extremely lucky to have on board the help of Grainne Myles as a contact for ladies in the Pt Stephen's area to promote our Encore classes. Grainne was also a valuable help during the classes as an assistant. Her enthusiasm was infectious and the ladies have now taken on board further exercise classes in the Pt Stephen's area.

While sessions are focused on exercise, information sharing through guest speakers and valuable links to the community services and resources are also provided. Guest speakers travelled to Port Stephens' to promote these services highlighting the fact that knowledge is valuable to Breast Cancer ladies.

Relay for Life

Encore was represented at the Relay for Life Newcastle/Lake Macquarie on Saturday the 1st November at Glendale Sports Centre. This is an annual event to raise funds for the Cancer Council.

What a successful day of entertainment, food vendors, activities such as the best dressed, most laps recorded and of course the raising of money at each team tent. It was made all the more exciting and memorable by the 90km gusts of wind and 37 degree temperatures, followed by thunderstorms and heavy rain.

Many tents were blown away but with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers the

day/night was a success.

Participants stayed overnight and a midnight 5km run was organised. At 6.30am in the morning a free breakfast was served to all participants.



Breast Cancer Forum 2014 – Moving On

Once again Encore was represented at the Cancer Forum. The topics at this year's forum were informative and well planned for our Sunday get together for all interested parties in the Breast Cancer journey.

....and what our ladies say:

"best thing that happened to me after breast cancer was going to Encore.....it is what helped me to get started with exercise"

"I thought I was going ok until I did the Encore classes. I had been playing tennis etc then I realized that I should be doing exercises that help the lymphatic system. I now feel I am coping better"

" a very valuable time of meeting others who are journeying through the experience of breast cancer. ...a time of gaining valuable information from the different speakers. They all spoke on subjects relevant to our experiences. The staff of Encore were so welcoming and inclusive and helped to make our times together very enjoyable. I came away feeling much more empowered in my breast cancer journey and also felt that I have made some lovely new friends".

Low Cost Accommodation for University Students



- An ideal location:
 - Close to the city centre and sitting on the door step to the coffee strip of Darby St.
 - Close proximity to Newcastle University city campus and the conservatorium where the international students attend classes.
- Peace and quiet an ideal study environment with only 5 rooms

The top floor of the grand old building in Dawson St, Cooks Hill, one block back from the very popular and cosmopolitan Darby St is often the temporary home to 5 international female students. This year we have actually had Australian university students from out of the area stay with us. This year we have housed Chinese, Canadian, New Zealand, Norwegian, Indian students and Australian students.

The young women appreciate the homely feel of the residence and the security that it provides them. The building currently accommodates 5 female residents.

There are many advantages to staying at the YWCA:

- Tenants have secure and safe accommodation for females only – giving reassurance and peace of mind to their parents.
- Budget accommodation with competitive rates (\$160-180 per week)

It is always extremely interesting and a valuable learning experience for both the students and for us to have the cross cultural connection with these lovely young ladies. As is the case with all cultures, everyone is different and the surprise that this brings into the Y building has been a delight for all the staff. The tenants often need a guiding hand or voice of encouragement as they step out into the Australian culture on their own.

.....and what the tenants say:

“what a fabulous place to live. I absolutely adore living in my gorgeous room in such a wonderful location”.

“a big part of my stay in Australia will be fondly remembering the time I stayed at the YWCA in Cooks Hill. I just have loved it so much”

