Sonny’s Scholarship

Every year our National Scholarship Program provides 22 young people with financial and staff support, the skills to develop their own support network and access to a personal mentor for guidance and support.

This year, Sonny, a student from our Koch Centre for Youth and Learning was successful in receiving one of our scholarships. Sonny suffered a traumatic loss in the family recently. The tragedy affected his family’s relationship with one another and put a lot of stress on the young person. Koch Centre staff worked with Sonny to assist him in any way they could to get him back on his feet.

He has shown incredible resilience despite his difficult circumstances. Every morning, Sonny helps his young siblings get ready for school, and then spends his school lunch breaks doing his homework because he simply doesn’t have the time and resources he needs at home.

Sonny’s perseverance and commitment to his education did not go unnoticed and he was put forward by the Koch Centre staff as a Youth Off The Streets National Scholarship applicant. He was successful and received the good news by David Koch and the Sunrise team earlier this year!

A scholarship means he can now afford to buy the books he needs for school, pay for his school fees, and get help with anything he needs through our scholarship team – as well as his mentor. A scholarship can mean so much to our young people as they continue through education.

His dedication to his family, community and achieving his academic goals has impressed everyone around him. His goal is to complete his Year 12 HSC and become the first person in his family to successfully graduate from high school.

We are confident he will achieve his goal and we are fortunate to be able to be part of this journey with him.

We are very proud of Sonny and look forward to him achieving great things in life.
Too often, I come across young people stuck in a cycle of disadvantage. These are kids who have grown up in the shadow of unemployment and poverty and, having been unable to access quality education, are lacking the skills required to get and maintain a stable job.

In my experience, when children are born into disadvantaged families they are much more likely to experience disadvantage themselves and these experiences are passed onto their children. It’s a cycle that I’ve dedicated my life to breaking.

**Education is a real driver of change and is the key to breaking this vicious cycle.**

I’ve seen firsthand the value of education and how it can help transform young people’s lives, providing them with the skills they need to break out of the cycle of disadvantage and live happy and fulfilling lives.

Thanks to generous donors like you, Youth Off The Streets has been able to invest heavily into our educational programs this year. With your support, we have opened a new school, The Lakes College in the central coast, and a new campus, Bowen Campus in south east Sydney.

These new additions will allow us to build the skills, capabilities and self-confidence of young people through tailored education.

In addition to our schools, it is important to teach kids practical skills to help them navigate their way through adult life. We offer work-ready programs to help kids in this area by providing them with skills in things like literacy, numeracy, computer skills, communication and presentation.

Youth Off The Streets is an approved Employability Skills Training (EST) provider through the PaTH initiative. The program gives young people the opportunity to gain the skills and experience required to acquire and maintain a job.

Youth Off The Streets is responsible for providing training for Block One of the Employability Skills training which focuses on pre-employability skills required from young people to operate within the workforce. This program will be based at our Koch Centre for Youth and Learning in Macquarie Fields.

I am constantly meeting young people facing extraordinary challenges. Many of these kids are very talented, but they are getting left behind by our educational system every year and are becoming further marginalised from their community.

These kids are more in need of the skills and self-confidence provided through education that allows them to, not just survive, but thrive throughout their lifetime. Thanks to generous donors like yourself, we are able to provide tailored schools and programs with the aim of closing this gap by providing the support young people need to achieve their full potential.

**Our programs are varied, but they all have one common goal: to build on each young person’s strengths.**

As a result, every year we help young people get one step closer to building a fulfilling future and continue their path out of the cycle of disadvantage their families often face.

I am confident that together we can reach out to more young people in need and provide them with the opportunities they deserve to live a happy and fulfilling life.

Thank you for your generosity.

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**Many of our wonderful donors have left a gift in their Will**

**A gift that lasts longer than a lifetime**

Every young person has the potential to make a positive contribution to our world. Leaving a gift in your Will means we can continue to reach out to young people in the future and help them to become active and valued members of their community.

When making the decision to leave a gift to Youth Off The Streets in your Will your first priority is to ensure that it reflects the way you want to look after your family and friends and then a lasting legacy to support your favourite causes.

The Father Chris Riley Society is a way that we can thank you now for your foresight and very special contribution to our vital work. Members receive invitations to special events, a unique pin and a certificate.

There is no cost or obligation associated with membership. For any enquires please ring our Bequest Officer Cheryl Johnstone on 02 93303530 or email us at bequests@youthoffthestreets.com.au
Thank you to everyone who responded to our recent Christmas Appeal. I have been overwhelmed by your support and all of the positive messages flowing in.

Your generosity has helped keep vital services running over Christmas. Through your kind gifts and messages of hope you have shown our kids that kindness does exist.

We received hundreds of Christmas messages of support to pass on to our kids. Many were stunned to discover that so many people care about their happiness and future.

Thanks to loyal donors like you, we were also able to run our Christmas hamper drive again. I’m incredibly grateful to all those who provided time and resources to help us deliver essential food items and care packages to those doing it tough. Together, we have delivered over 400 hampers of food to families in need.

Thank you to those generous people who sent in gift cards to give to our young people as presents. We were especially moved when a donor contacted us on behalf of her four year old son, who was shocked that some disadvantaged kids won’t receive Christmas presents. He wanted to do his bit to help and offered to send a young person a Christmas gift.

These are the moments that keep us going and reassure us that the future is in good hands. When we invest in our children we are investing in humanity, and creating a better tomorrow.

Thank you so much for being there for our kids. Together this coming year we will continue to work alongside disadvantaged young people to help get their lives back on track.

We will never give up.

BECOME A MONTHLY GIVER

By donating monthly you will become a Street Lights Partner and make a lasting difference to homeless and disadvantaged kids. With your ongoing help we will be there for them for as long as they need us.

The consistent income from our Street Lights Partners allows us to help some of the 44,000 young homeless people in Australia and the 603,000 young people living below the poverty line. Knowing that your monthly donation is coming in means we can plan and deliver our services more effectively and reduce our administration costs.

To join our Street Lights program please contact our Donor Services Team on 1800 062 288.

Your decision to become a Street Lights Partner will help to light the way out of homelessness and disadvantage for hundreds of vulnerable young people in need.
Mobile Youth Centre: a first look

In September, we launched a Mobile Youth Centre, called the Convoy of Courage with a road trip from Canberra to Bourke. Since then, it has completed a tour to Wellington where it exceeded all expectations.

The Mobile Youth Centre offered kids in Wellington a safe space to engage with youth workers and get the help they need. They participated in fun games, activities and had a free meal. A group of 25 to 30 regular young people quickly formed. Attending every Outreach that they could, they had fun, learning about their culture and connecting with their community.

One of the most successful aspects of the Mobile Youth Centre has been the cultural activities on offer. We asked Indigenous young people in Wellington about their ancestry and only a few were aware of their culture and heritage. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth workers taught young people about the cultural significance of the local area and showed these kids why they should be proud of their past.

The young people discovered the different tools and weapons used throughout history; the culturally significant sites around their town; the different roles of people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mobs; and a bit of their native language. They also discussed what it’s like to live in a town like Wellington and how they can use their culture to develop as an individual.

Bringing cultural knowledge to the town and engaging young people in fun activities has captured their imagination.

After finishing up in Wellington 20 December, we plan to return to the town soon and will bring our didgeridoos with us - one of the most popular activities. We look forward to operating in more towns this coming year, so be sure to check in on our adventures via social media or our website.

OUR NEW PROGRAMS

Cycle of Courage

The Cycle of Courage is our very own cycling program that encourages young people to take up cycling and push their limits to achieve positive results. These kids are each given a road bike to ride and maintain – something many disadvantaged young people would rarely be able to experience.

The team is made up of young people from across all of our services, where they are encouraged to train on a regular basis and participate in events throughout the year. It’s a great way to not only get fresh air and exercise, but to also learn essential skills like communication, concentration, road safety, nutrition, teamwork and leadership while connecting with their peers and the community.

This year the team took part in a variety of events that challenged each person’s mental and physical strength. Here were some of the achievements:

- Two young people completed their first 22km Parramatta Club road race
- 11 students cycled from Blayney to Bathurst on the first weekend of school holidays
- 11 young people participated in the Sydney to Surfers bike ride, a gruelling 1000km, 7 day ride from Hornsby to SeaWorld, Surfers Paradise!

We are very proud of our young cyclists; their dedication to their peers and fellow riders as well as the Youth Off The Streets values is truly admirable. We look forward to seeing what they can accomplish next year!

In addition to our amazing young people, the Cycle of Courage team is made up of a wonderful team of staff, volunteers and supporters. One of our supporters, Mike Tomalaris, recently appeared in a video where he talks about the value of cycling and the positive outcomes this can offer young people.

To view the video, please visit: http://bit.ly/CycleCourage

A thank you note from a young person.

It has made me feel connected through everybody and made me feel very respected because we have come together as a team but also as a family but is has helped me understand how to work with others in different environments with my team/peers.

Streets Ahead
New beginnings: two new schools as Education expands

At the start of the 2017 school year, we had two new schools open their doors for young people struggling in mainstream education. The Bowen College and The Lakes College welcomed young people from South East Sydney and the Central Coast respectively.

Mainstream education isn’t suitable for every young person. Independent schools like The Bowen College and The Lakes College offer students an alternative education setting, where we can provide a specialised service that caters to the specific needs of our kids.

We know that education is the key to breaking the cycle of disadvantage that has trapped so many of our young people. A good education is essential to unlocking their full potential and we saw plenty of young people rising to the challenge last year in a bid to turn their lives around.

We’re confident that our young people can achieve whatever they set their mind to and we’re constantly surprised by just how much they accomplish given their circumstances.

In 2018 we will welcome more young people into the two schools and will continue to expand our educational services, helping young people unlock their full potential.

Auburn Outreach Launches!

As part of our commitment to ensuring the best possible care for young people in Western Sydney, Youth Off The Streets’ Cumberland Outreach has extended their services by opening Auburn Outreach.

The outreach was opened on the sweltering afternoon of Thursday 14 December 2017 at Auburn Park with the State Member for Castle Hill, Ray Williams officially launching the event.

“I get fascinated by the wonderful dedication and commitment Father Chris Riley and Youth Off The Streets has for young people” said Mr. Williams.

“Youth Off The Streets will reach out into the community, especially on behalf of those disadvantaged youth – providing them support with education and help into the workplace.”

The launch was emceed by a member of the Cumberland outreach Youth Advisory Squad and featured a Welcome to Country from Uncle David Williams, Bundjalung Elder and further speeches from prominent members of council, politics and supporters. Performances from young attendees of our outreach services delighted the crowd before the formalities of the day finished and the young people could enjoy some fun activities and a BBQ.

The new outreach will continue to run from Auburn Park every Thursday from 4:00pm – 8:00pm. It’s a place to meet new friends, play games, get help with school work and seek information and referral services for education, training, employment, health, relationships, legal matters, alcohol and drugs and housing.

Federal Member for Blaxland, Jason Clare summed up the commitment Youth Off The Streets has for our young people: “That’s what Youth Off The Streets does, changes people’s lives,” said Mr. Clare. “Thank you Father Chris for everything you do in our community, here in Auburn, Bankstown and right across Australia. Change is coming and that is thanks to Youth Off The Streets.”

John Munce – Dooleys, Hon Jason Clare MP – Federal Member for Blaxland, Father Chris Riley

The Lakes College, Central Coast

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The kids of class 3-4D at Hannan’s Road Public School have built cubby houses as part of a school project and auctioned them off to local businesses. The funds raised have gone to helping Youth Off The Streets.

Mark Dulaurens, the teacher of the class, started the project because some of the kids were struggling with their learning. He found that they weren’t coming back from lunch or were coming back to class 30 minutes late. He went searching for them one day and found them building tiny houses out of sticks. This discovery led to the cubby house project.

“I originally visualised the classroom with blankets, pillows and fabric structures. But when they did the research they all liked these big wooden structures, I thought to myself ‘whoops’ ha-ha. Because they liked it so much, we just went with it,” says Mark.

The cubby house project took two terms from start to finish. The kids did a lot of research during term three of the school year and started building the actual cubby houses in term four. They had a lot of help: teachers, parents and volunteers all doing their bit to assist the cutting and building process.

The best part of the project for the kids was when the walls started to go up. This was the biggest hurdle in the project and they could finally see it all taking shape. Once the walls were erected, all the kids wanted to do was play in their cubby house and a finished product was no longer the top priority.

The kids finished building the cubby houses the day before the auction! Not a moment to spare.

**Kids helping other kids**

While they were building the cubby houses the kids started to research what to do with them when they discovered an issue they had no idea about. There are homeless young people on the streets of Sydney. The idea shocked the class and they thought that a homeless young person could live in the cubby houses they were building.

While it was a cute idea and their teacher Mark knew that it wasn’t possible, he did help them come up with an alternative. The class decided to auction off the cubby houses to local Riverwood businesses to raise funds for homeless young people. The charity they chose was Youth Off The Streets. The kids all wrote letters to local businesses to get them to come along to the event.

**A bid for prime real estate**

Auctioneer Joe Jerkovic from LJ Hooker Riverwood was in charge of proceedings and did a remarkable job. The local businesses and community members that attended the event all participated in the bidding for the cubby houses and the kids tried to get involved at times with some outlandish “infinity” bids!

Youth Off The Streets would like to thank everyone for their efforts on the day. A huge thanks to the kids of class 3-4D and the local Riverwood business that donated on the day. It was a fantastic idea and we wish the kids great success in their future endeavours.
Merchandise
Father Chris Riley’s books, stationery and eGifts are available to purchase online through our eStore.

In Memoriam and Celebration
For donations in lieu of flowers or celebration gifts please ring Cheryl Johnstone on 02 9330 3530.
You are welcome to request donation envelopes for a funeral service.

Volunteer
Call Rebecca McKillop on 02 9330 3558, or visit www.youthofthestreets.com.au/support-us/volunteer-main

Give a Monthly Gift
Your regular gift today provides us with the consistent income we need to ensure our young people receive vital support now and in the future.
All it takes is a small donation each month to help kids in need.
Call 1800 062 288 and become a Street Lights partner today.

Youth Off The Streets Speakers
Would you like to have a Youth Off The Streets speaker present at your next Rotary, Probus or Lions Club meeting?
Our presenters give a real insight into the organisation and the work of Father Chris Riley and his team. We present in the Sydney and Greater Sydney area.
Please call Cheryl Johnstone on 02 9330 3530 to book in a date.

Fundraise For Us
Host your very own fundraising event for us.
Email fundraising@youthofthestreets.com.au or visit www.youthofthestreets.com.au/support-us/run-a-fundraiser

Support our Op Shops
In Bowral, Cessnock, Maitland and Singleton. Call 02 9721 5700.

Donate Today
Call 1800 062 288 or visit www.youthofthestreets.com.au/donate

How to help

Volunteer Spotlight

Richard Payne
We shine a spotlight on one of our wonderful volunteers who has a green thumb and a heart of gold

Some volunteers get to see young people turn their lives around first-hand – like teacher’s aides and Outreach volunteers. Some, like Richard Payne, donate their time to behind the scenes efforts like ground maintenance and gardening at our youth centres.

The school presentation days at the end of the year are a great way for those volunteers to see and hear about the progress made by the young people they’ve seen throughout the year. Richard Payne has volunteered for four years helping Craig Davis College with maintenance and gardening.

“I basically do the gardening, weeding and just generally keep the place in order. I’ve always been someone that gives back to the community and this is a great way to do it,” says Richard.

Even though Richard is behind the scenes in maintenance, he still feels like he contributes to the success of young people and it’s great to watch their progress at the school presentations.

“It’s terrific to see the achievements of young people. On the TV at the moment there is a series called ‘Struggle Street’ and you watch that and cry at the situations of some people. So when you come to a graduation like this and see the progress of these young people it’s fantastic. I feel like I’ve contributed to their success,” says Richard.

Without volunteers like Richard, Youth Off The Streets would have to spend valuable resources on basic facility maintenance. We’re very thankful to our loyal and committed volunteers. If you would like to join the ranks and help volunteer for Youth Off The Streets, please email volunteer@youthofthestreets.com.au

Summer 2018
GET INVOLVED

You’re invited

Morning Tea with Father Chris Riley
Date: Wednesday 14 March 2018 at 10am
Venue: Eden Gardens 307 Lane Cove Road
(Cnr Fontenoy Rd) Macquarie Park
Hear Father Chris Riley speak, meet our young people, and enjoy a delicious morning tea.
$10 per person, payable on the day.
Bookings essential: Contact Eden Gardens on 02 9491 9976 or email: events@edengardens.com.au

Lipstick Luncheon
Date: Friday 1 June 2018
Venue: Sheraton on the Park, 161 Elizabeth St, Sydney NSW 2000
Enjoy fine dining, entertainment, a lively panel and networking.
For more information please contact Teresa Tree on 02 9330 3509 or visit youthoffthestreets.com.au/event/lipsticklunch
For more info: events@youthoffthestreets.com.au

Youth Off The Streets’ Open Day
You are invited to this annual showcase of our programs and services hosted by Father Riley.
Date: Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 10am – 1pm
For more info phone 02 9330 3500 or email RaeleneC@youthoffthestreets.com.au

What’s On?

HOGS For The Homeless
NSW Rugby League & Youth Off The Streets
Ride dates: Friday 16 – Sunday 25 February 2018
Rugby League legends ride through country NSW raising funds for Youth Off The Streets and holding coaching clinics for young people along the way. For more details visit www.nswrl.com.au

Sydney to Surfers Robbo’s Ride 2018
Date: Saturday 5 May – Friday 11 May 2018
The Sydney to Surfers Robbo’s Ride, supported by Macsim, is in its 20th year. It is a 7 day bike ride initiated by the Rotary Club of Engadine to raise funds for Youth Off The Streets. For more information or to enter, go to www.sydneytosurfers.org.au

Real Estate Sleepout
Date: Monday 30 July 2018
Venue: Bondi Beach
Real Estate Sleep Out, initiated by Cooley Auctions, sees hundreds of real estate industry professionals face the winter chill by spending a night sleeping on the sand at Bondi Beach. This event helps to raise funds and awareness for Youth Off The Streets.

STAY IN THE KNOW
and help us grow

Get the latest on upcoming YOTS opportunities, initiatives and events in 2 easy steps:
- Sign-up to news and events alerts at youthoffthestreets.com.au
- Follow us on social:

8 STREETS AHEAD