



BoysTown

50 Years YOUNG

News UPDATE

50th Year Anniversary Edition 2011

Changing lives for 50 years!

BoysTown is celebrating 50 years of changing Australian lives, with both our services and lotteries reaching their golden jubilee.

In May 1961, our inaugural site at Beaudesert welcomed its first intake of young people and the BoysTown Art Union was launched to fund the service. At its peak, the Beaudesert residential school cared for a total of 110 young men annually. Fifty years later, we provide an extensive range of services to tens of thousands of children, young people and their families right across Australia.

In 1961, two shillings bought the first lottery punters a ticket to win one of four Holden EK Hydra-matics, valued at £1,000 each. In 2011, for \$15, lottery buyers can win a luxury house and travel package valued at close to \$1.4 million. We run 15 lotteries a year, including 10 million dollar house lotteries and five car lotteries. Since 1990, over 200 winners have shared more than \$215 million in prizes.

While much has changed in the last 50 years, some things indisputably remain the same. BoysTown remains firmly committed to our mission to help the most marginalised. The generosity of our lottery ticket buyers is also still paramount to the survival of BoysTown's services, providing close to 60% of our funding.

Key BoysTown services remain fully funded by lottery proceeds, including a family violence refuge and face-to-face parenting programs for disadvantaged young people and their children. Kids Helpline is primarily funded by the lotteries. Lottery proceeds also add crucial value to our many Government supported employment and training programs.

As we proudly pay tribute to the last 50 years and begin the next 50, on behalf of the thousands of young people and families you have helped, we thank you.

BOYSTOWN 150th Don't miss this one!

Highest First Prize Value Ever \$275,656
Gold Coast Home \$202,718 PLUS 3rd Best Buyer's Prize \$42,938

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BOYSTOWN HEADQUARTERS

James' Personal Response

Average Member

Win... Sunshine Coast

Together we make a difference

As we celebrate being 50 years young, three of our longest serving staff share their stories, proving that together and by association we can make a significant difference in the lives of young people.

Tracy Adams, our Chief Executive Officer, started as an administrative assistant 21 years ago. She talks about her parallel journey with BoysTown. Counsellor, Zoe Margaritis discusses her work with young people over the past 20 years. Last but certainly not least, Brother Brian Cunningham, our Chair of Mission, talks about his early experiences at our inaugural Beaudesert school. Brother Brian not only taught young people at Beaudesert for 15 years, but made a significant contribution to the development of the site and indeed, BoysTown.



Tracy Adams, CEO

Twenty-one years ago, I walked into BoysTown to fill a casual administration job I thought would last two days... two decades later I am that organisation's CEO.

Twenty-one years ago, both BoysTown and I were different. BoysTown had two major functions – it had a residential school at Beaudesert for young men who were wards of the state and a lottery to help fund it. I was a fresh faced young woman in my early 20s with no responsibilities and really no idea as to what my career would entail.

Today, BoysTown is a national provider of services to children and young people and families that may seem far removed from the BoysTown of 21 years ago, but some critical things have stayed the same. The Lasallian mission remains the foundation of our works; and the support of the community is the fundamental enabler of our services. Without either of these BoysTown would not achieve what it does.

BoysTown has evolved significantly, experiencing challenges along the way, but at all times has remained committed to achieving quality outcomes. I like to think that I too have grown. I have learnt much from an exceptional group of colleagues and in particular the Brothers, whose forbearers had begun their work with disadvantaged young people over three centuries ago.

When Canon John Baptist De La Salle of Reims, France, started a school for the poor boys of his native city, he could not have known his campaign would continue for several centuries and spread to distant countries.

BoysTown is proud to be able to continue this work, dedicating itself to enabling young people, especially those who are marginalised and without voice, to improve their quality of life.

To this end, one of the things I am most proud of achieving as CEO is BoysTown's increased advocacy. Our focus on evidence-based research sees us well positioned to be a voice for those who may not be heard otherwise. We have been actively engaged in providing responses to Governments on issues such as cyberbullying, youth suicide, homelessness, bullying, health and wellbeing and issues affecting the lives of people within remote Indigenous communities.

With the combined support of governments, corporations and citizens, BoysTown has adapted and changed its services to meet the changing needs of young people and families. This is how it should be. The sustained welfare of our community is not just the responsibility of one group, but is a role we must all be prepared to take.

BoysTown has grown a great deal over the last 21 years and even more over the last 50, but it has grown with meaning. BoysTown and I have been on a parallel journey of growth. I like to think I will continue to go forward, but I have no doubt that BoysTown's growth will far exceed my own.

Zoe Margaritis, Counsellor

Over the 20 years I have worked at Kids Helpline, I have witnessed many struggling young people grow into mature confident adults.

How am I aware of this? Many young people ring back and acknowledge the support they receive from the counselling service to get them through a difficult time.

I started at Kids Helpline in 1991, working on the phones as a telephone counsellor. Initially, Kids Helpline serviced kids in Queensland only but in 1993 it went national.

There have been many changes since I started at Kids Helpline. In the early years we had approximately 40 counsellors. Now there are around 120 available to counsel the young people who contact us. At the beginning, Kids Helpline was only a phone service for children aged 5 to 18 years. Now we cater for young people aged 5 to 25 years, and also offer web and email counselling.

Parentline was introduced in 1995 as a telephone counselling service for parents in Queensland. Today, it offers telephone, web and email counseling for parents in Queensland and the Northern Territory.

It has been such an amazing journey to see how much BoysTown has grown and a wonderful and amazing opportunity for me to be involved in this service. I feel very privileged to have worked with so many dedicated and committed counsellors who truly work incredibly hard to ensure that the kids of Australia have the best possible service available to them when they need help.

Over the years, I have spoken to and counselled many kids from around Australia and have been involved in watching them grow from being very fragile and vulnerable children to become resilient capable young adults.

Some young people first ring Kids Helpline 'testing the service' by joking around, but soon realise we are genuinely here to offer help and support. I have lost count of the number of times these young people have called us at a later stage in their lives and say "I can't believe I'm ringing Kids Helpline with a real problem." They admit that years ago when they rang and joked around with the counsellors they never imagined maybe one day they would really need help. They are always very glad we are still here and happy to listen and provide support.

Brother Brian Cunningham, Chair of Mission

The true miracle of BoysTown, both now and 50 years ago, is its power to 'convert' those most in need.

BoysTown had been in existence for a little over six months when I first walked through its doors. I was 27 years of age, with eight years of teaching behind me, some academic ability, some pedagogy, and absolutely no experience in social welfare. But these were days of challenge and pioneering, and being something of a free spirit, I saw no problems, no doubts and literally had no anxiety about the task that lay ahead.

I was welcomed into my new home by two other Brothers, a pair of houseparents

and eight young men whose ages ranged from 11 to 15. My room was a converted veranda, with open windows and lots of space for the hungry Queensland mossies to entertain me during the short evenings.

Older boys worked on the farm while younger ones were in the classroom. The occupation of the older boys became my responsibility. This was my first departure from the classroom and I found myself in a foreign world. I had no lesson preparation or homework to correct, both were replaced with supervising the young men.



One evening, I found myself walking up and down the long driveway wondering what I had got myself into. I had worked hard all day but there was this strong conviction that I had achieved nothing. I missed the classroom and my total control of the situation.

While the week days followed a fairly normal routine, the weekends presented a time of discovery and adventure. The young men were loaded into a five tonne truck and headed out in search of good swimming holes and climbing spots. The Kerry Valley offered us two rivers. The highest mountains in South Eastern Queensland became objects to conquer, and Mount Barney and Mount Earnest often found us camped on their slopes.

I began to realise a classroom does not need to have four walls. We were becoming innovators in experimental education and pioneering a mode of learning that parents had long used with their children, but which most leaders in education were not yet prepared to adopt.

In every sense of the word, BoysTown could bring about a changed outlook, a 'conversion' experienced both by each young person and myself.

This occurred in different ways and at different times. The best way to explain this is to relate just one event that helped bring about change.

Robert, because of his small size, was named 'the rat'. He seemed incapable of doing hard work, in fact of doing any work. In sporting events he was less gifted than the football, and like the football he was often kicked around and became the brunt of many jokes. Life had little joy for him and his every

effort to participate in anything resulted in failure. Consequently, when he was absent from the daily football training, little notice was taken.

However, one day when the seniors were training, they stopped and in a surprised voice said, "Brother! Look at Robert!" The title 'rat' was forgotten. At the end of the field I had built a series of climbing poles with the highest one more than four metres high. There on the top of the highest pole was Robert. We ran up to Robert, who by now was at the base of the pole. I said, "Robert, can you climb that pole again?" Like a trapeze artist, up he went, touched the top and in even quicker time was down again. Despite the fact that each member of the football team tried to climb the pole, not one made it to the top. Robert was the 'king' of the pole and with that small success others followed. With this added confidence a very capable Robert came to the fore. After leaving BoysTown, Robert married, had children and spent a lot of his time helping other young men as a scout leader.

While the residential school may no longer operate, many of the ideas spearheaded there are still used today. We recognised early on that not everyone is a 'classroom with four walls' learner. Our programs combine experiential learning, vocational training and youth work support to help prepare young people for life.

BoysTown has had many 'Roberts' who have been helped to develop confidence in their own abilities and given the support to use their skills successfully. We also have many staff who have learnt a good deal from working with our young people. BoysTown has the impressive ability to change not just the young people we work with, but also those who work with the young people.



Br Raymond Concannon (far left) and Brother Brian (far right) with some of the Beaudesert boys visiting the Amberley Air Base in 1962.

Life changing wins

The BoysTown Lotteries is a win-win proposition for both supporters and those in need. Winning the lottery was certainly a life changing experience for these two winners.



Datsun 180B a winner's limo

When in 1977 South Australia's Bert Windsor won a Datsun 180B in the BoysTown Art Union, his life changed forever. A father of six, he had never owned a car because he could not afford one. He rode an old bicycle to work and rarely went anywhere else. Winning a car changed everything.

Although a bit of a tight squeeze, the Datsun had limousine status in the Windsor family. It meant the family could visit friends who lived further than 'just down the road' and also made the occasional holiday possible.

Bert also believed in getting value for money. Sadly, he passed away in 2002, but according to his niece Christine, he drove the Datsun until he could drive no more. "One of my lasting memories is of him with his car and how proud he was of it," she said.

"He only sold it in the late 90s when for health reasons he had to give up driving. He hated to give it up. I think it gave him an independence he thought he'd never have."

Bert's lottery ticket cost him 50 cents. Fifty cents for a car that lasted him 20 years was a good investment. The change it made to the lives of the Windsor family was beyond price.



A young Bert Windsor of the Australian Army's 9th Battalion.

Lottery win breaks drought

In July 2009, a \$1.9 million BoysTown prize home package win came at just the right time for sheep farmer, Peter.

Hailing from the Riverina in New South Wales, Peter had been struggling for some years prior, through the many droughts, which had hit his region. He didn't know how much longer he'd be able to survive.

Peter couldn't believe his luck when he got the call from BoysTown to tell him he'd won not one, but two luxury homes; on the Gold Coast and in inner-city Melbourne.

"It really did come out of the blue. I'd always bought BoysTown tickets because I believe in the great charity work they do. I never thought I'd actually win the thing myself," he said.

After much deliberation, Peter decided to rent both homes. His windfall means that he can now sleep at night, rather than constantly worry about money.

"To be honest, I've been very tempted to move into the apartment at Bilinga on the Gold Coast many times. It is truly magnificent. I may still retire there in a few years after I finish farming. In the meantime, the apartment is a great source of security for my family," he said.

"My other prize home in Melbourne's Kew has gone gangbusters, with the value rising significantly since I won. We couldn't be happier!"

A \$20,000 travel voucher he won as part of his BoysTown prize was also put to good use, with family members taking overseas trips.

Peter continues to buy BoysTown Lottery entries because it is "such a wonderful cause".

"I am proud to be one of the thousands of supporters over the years who have contributed to BoysTown turning 50. Happy 50th birthday BoysTown Lotteries and keep up the good work!" he said.



Peter from Riverina is set for life after winning a \$1.9 million BoysTown prize package.



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