

Family and Community Services

Wesley Mission's Family and Community Services have managed critical programs and activities for many years in Youth and Recreational Services, Wesley Dalmar, Family Services and Supported Accommodation. Wesley's conference facilities host youth and family camps, providing space and opportunity for people to grow. Wesley Mission's commitment is clear: to care for the youngest and most vulnerable in society, to promote healthy family relationships and to empower people to move forward.

Genuine commitment

Work among young people is one of Wesley Mission's key areas of service to the community. Newcastle Youth Service, Nepean Adolescent and Family Service and Mount Druitt Integrated Youth Service care for young people dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault, alcohol and other drug abuse, education difficulties, gang violence, crime or family breakdown.

Wesley Dalmar Penrith, Castle Hill and Hunter-Central Coast centres have nurtured positive relationships with communities, the Department of Community Services (DoCS) and the carers and children who make up each program. Wesley Dalmar's Foster Care program trains and approves foster carers for children, 0-16, funded by the DoCS. Foster carers are also supported, monitored and reviewed continuously, with a case manager for each child.

Wesley Mission Family Services is creating innovative programs to help strengthen families. The community hub model, demonstrated in western Sydney, enables a flexible approach to family support and community development. Wesley Mission is the lead agency for the Brighter Futures Early Intervention Program in Blacktown/Baulkham Hills, Cumberland Prospect and the Nepean local areas. These programs are for families encountering problems that impede on their ability to care for their children. Sixty per cent of referrals to the program come from DoCS and the rest come from community pathways sources.

Committed to succeed

There have been many positive aspects to our work in the past year. Two young people from the Keeping Connected left the program as they turned 18 and entered into adulthood. These were great success stories for the young people and the case managers who have accompanied them over the hurdles they have faced along the way. Wesley Dalmar Penrith and Brighter Futures are working together on a special program for children on grief and loss. Brighter Futures Blacktown Baulkham Hills moved from an outgrown site at Seven Hills to Flushcombe Road, Blacktown, close to public

transport. The new premises are much more practical with adequate room for an extended team of 12 with group education and counselling spaces.

Rouse Hill Families Connect has partnered with Hills Community Health and Hills Family Centre to run a fathers group which has received very positive feedback. The group looks at positive parenting strategies for dads, building confidence, practical skills and social connections with other new fathers. Riverstone Families Connect has been working to build a strong partnership with Community Health through the Community Nurse who visits families with new babies at a regular morning tea for mums and babies, with other mums sharing thoughts, experiences and ideas.

Operation Hope, a unique activity program at Wesley Mission's conference property, Vision Valley gives 'at risk' children the opportunity to grow, achieve and develop in a challenging yet caring environment. Operation Hope is a sponsorship program that enables for disadvantaged children and young adults, to attend our holiday camps program.

Housing Services have now acquired the bedsit properties and clients previously managed by Wesley Rehabilitation Services. Even in the short time that has elapsed, the clients have adjusted to the changes. It is expected that they will have a strong association with the bedsit project at Miller and Warwick Farm.

The need for courage

The Pacific Education Resource Exchange (PERX) officially finished on 30 September 2008. The program had been running successfully for three years but can only be resumed with additional funding. Burwood Girls' High School has requested that we run this program but without funding this is not possible. The Riverstone Arts and Vocational project ended in June 2009 after three years' funding. This is a loss of around \$70,000 per year and a 38-hour per week worker, who worked with 30-40 young people in youth drop-in activities.

Ongoing commitment

The Wesley Dalmar team has developed and expects to work towards expansion in our service areas. A new team leader, education officer, carer support and recruitment officer have joined and this, along with several people moving onto other positions has created a dynamic environment for the team. We are adapting well and keeping strong, focusing on the needs of our clients and assisting our carers to support the children.

2008-2009 is the first year that the Central Coast program received renewed government funding in recognition of service provided to children. Previously, funding was fee-for-service only. This change has also meant that the program is now responsible for monitoring and funding all the children's needs, including carer allowances and additional therapeutic and specialist costs.



Clinton shows courage in facing his grief

Two days after 11-year-old Clinton, his mum Sam and his twin sisters were signed up to the Brighter Futures Early Intervention program, Clinton's dad committed suicide. The family's case worker provided great support and compassion during this tragic time. Every week Clinton attends a grief and loss group for children called Bright Sparks.

In the early weeks at Bright Sparks, Clinton drew a very angry red and black picture that depicted death and dying. After six months Clinton looked at this picture and said, "If I drew this picture again, it wouldn't look like this again, 'cos I was angry when I drew this and I am not now." This is testimony to the support Sam's whole family has received from a very dedicated and skilled team. Watching Clinton work through his heartbreak of the sudden death of his beloved father has been a moving experience.

Wesley Youth and Recreational Services

Wesley Dalmar

Wesley Family Services

Wesley Supported Accommodation Services

Family and Community Services

Youth services

Total number of young people assisted

Quakers Hill Youth Support Service	47
Mt Druitt Integrated Youth Service	43
Bankstown Pacific Education Resource Exchange-PERX	376
Riverstone Arts Project	221
Newcastle Youth Services	850
Nepean Adolescent and Family Service	69
Total	1606

Recreational services

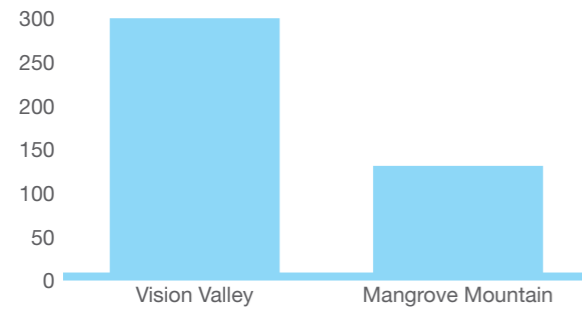
Operation Hope

2008-2009

Total number of Operation Hope camps	4
Total number of sponsored campers attended Operation Hope camps	186

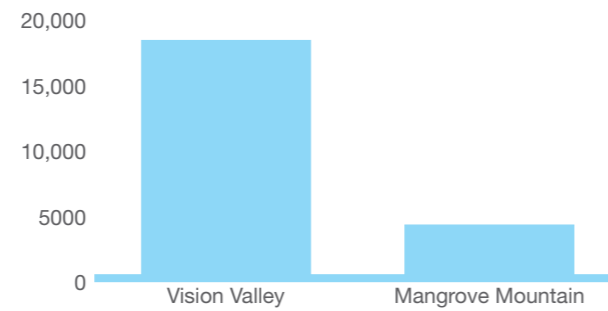
Recreational services attended (groups)

Total number of groups that attended the Wesley Recreational Services in 2008-2009 was 427



Recreational services attended (guests)

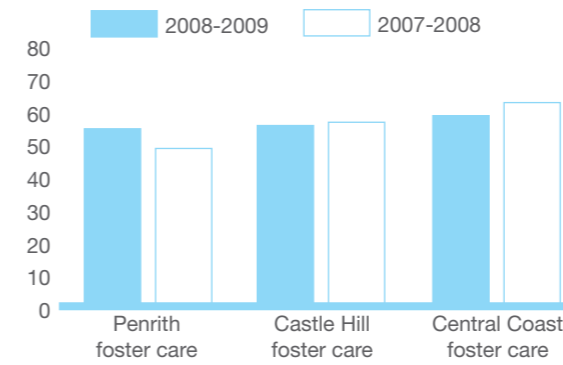
Total number of guests that attended the Wesley Recreational Services in 2008-2009 was 22,592



Child services

Children in care

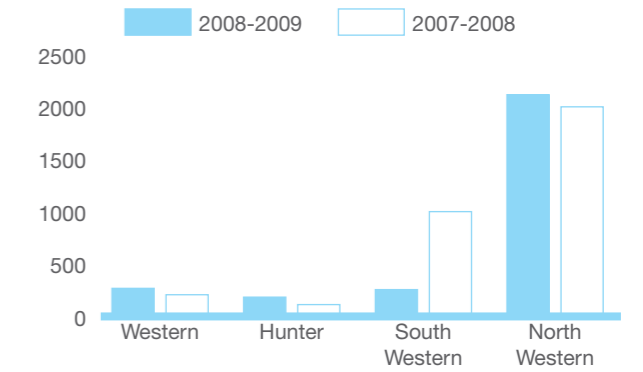
Total number of children in care in 2008-2009 was 170



Family services

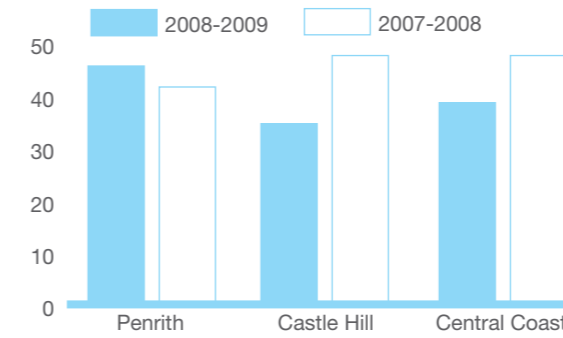
Families assisted

Total number of families assisted in 2008-2009 was 2824



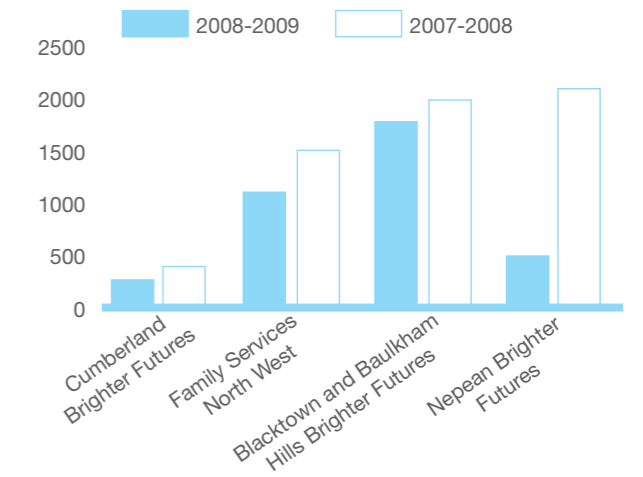
Foster care families

Total number of foster care families in 2008-2009 was 120



Counselling sessions in family services

Total number of counselling sessions in 2008-2009 was 3620



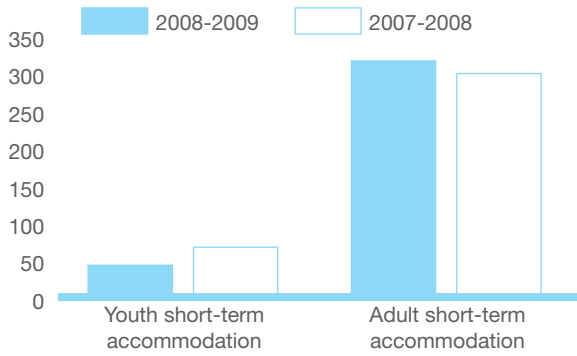


Family and Community Services

Homeless supported accommodation

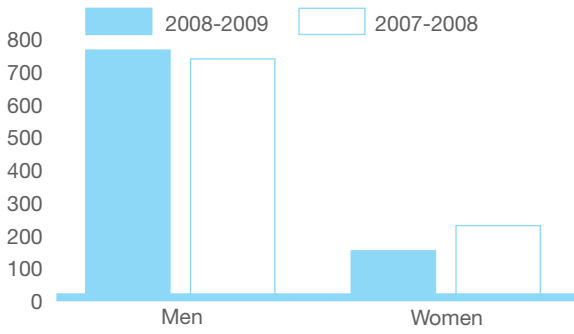
Individuals in short-term supported accommodation

Total number of individuals in short-term supported accommodation in 2008-2009 was 365



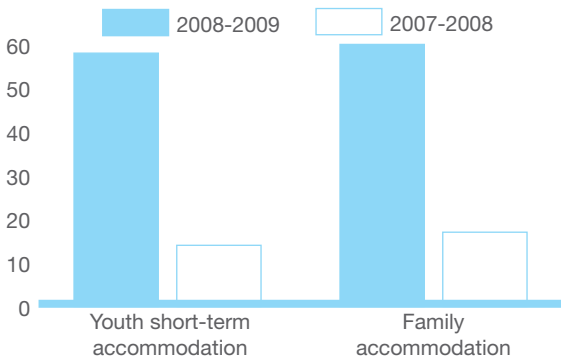
Individuals in crisis accommodation

Total number of individuals in crisis accommodation in 2008-2009 was 913



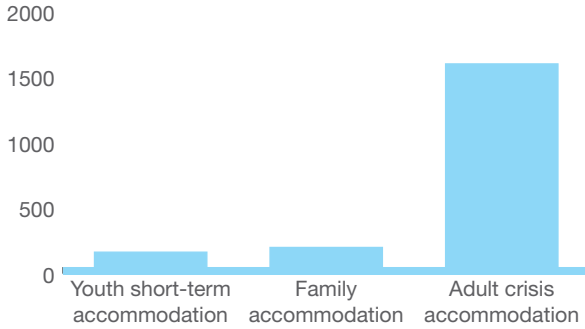
Families in supported accommodation

Total number of families in supported accommodation in 2008-2009 was 77



Unmet need

Total number of people turned away due to lack of vacancy in 2008-2009 was 1965



Average occupancy rate (%)

