

## For the first time, Caitlin is excited for her future

Caitlin<sup>\*</sup> was like any other teenager. She did well at school and spent time with her friends. During high school however, she began to experience depression and anxiety, facing extremely difficult emotions she did not know how to manage.

Some new friends introduced her to marijuana, and smoking felt like a reprieve, a way of soothing her mental pain. However, she says, "It all snowballed." Her substance use became a dependence, which she tried to hide from family and friends.

For a while, Caitlin thought she was managing her addiction, but when she was in her first year of university her life unravelled. She failed a semester, struggling with depression and experiencing addiction. She gave up on her dream of being an artist and started working a range of jobs that didn't require her to be sober, thinking she was managing her addiction.

Caitlin says, "I thought I was a lost cause. I was really disappointed in myself because I do come from quite a successful family and I was the black sheep. I basically wanted to die."

Finally, Caitlin realised she could not continue on her path. She called her mum and, for the first time, asked for help.

Thankfully, Caitlin decided to go to Triple Care Farm. To withdraw safely



from substances, she first went to David Martin Place, the detox centre on-site at the Farm. At David Martin Place she finally found an environment where she was supported not only to get well from addiction, but also to address the deeper mental health issues that had led her to use substances in the first place.

Caitlin attended therapy sessions where she was able to talk openly about the issues she was facing and learn healthy ways to cope without using drugs.

She had always loved painting but had given up on her dream of studying art. In a supportive environment, she started painting again and expressing her emotions.

As she neared the end of the

Residential Rehabilitation program at Triple Care Farm, she said with tears in her eyes, "Since being here I have found a new love for life.

"I'm so excited every day. There is so much support and love here."

Caitlin made plans to move into an apartment with a supportive friend after leaving the Farm and finally get to start her life as an adult without the pain of mental health issues and addiction.

When she thinks about going back into the community, Caitlin is hopeful, feeling supported and ready for her next step.

"I'm excited for the future for the first time since I was 14," she says.

*\*Name and image have been changed to protect privacy.*



# From the CEO

## Q&A with Karen Elliff

**As I reflect on my first three months as CEO of Sir David Martin Foundation, I'm struck by the incredible legacy we've inherited and the unique position we hold in addressing youth drug and alcohol issues across Australia. Our Foundation's focus on this critical area, combined with our passionate team and loyal supporters, provides us with both the purpose and agility needed to make meaningful change in young people's lives. I'm excited to share some insights from my journey so far and thoughts on our path forward.**

### **What strengths have you observed within the Foundation?**

I think one of the key strengths has been how loyal our supporters are and the importance of Sir David Martin, and the empathy that he brought to young people. So many wonderful people are helping us to continue his legacy and the ongoing family connection through Will Martin and Anna Beaumont on our Board is something we're very lucky to have. We have a really engaged community with great opportunities to deepen those relationships and create meaningful change together.

Another strength is our clear focus on youth drug and alcohol issues. There aren't many organisations solely focused on this area, which is often underfunded by government and others. Our sharper focus serves us well because we're looking at this

issue through a unique lens that considers different approaches across states and cultural perspectives. It's an issue that's not unwieldy—it can be solved, and people understand that investing in young people is important and produces good outcomes for individuals, families and the wider community.

The passion of our team is also really special. We have a great culture and agility that allows us to pitch in, help each other, and stay nimble in our approach to solving problems.

### **Can you share a meaningful interaction you've had?**

I have been spending a lot of time talking to others in the sector to build my knowledge and it is amazing learning from people who have been working in it for 10, 20, 30 or more years. One person I spoke with who worked in youth homelessness told me she had referred a young woman to Triple Care Farm. She recalled that about three or four months later, that young woman called her to say, "Thank you so much. You've given me my life back." She said she sounded crystal clear, positive, and completely different from the person she'd been just months earlier. That was a powerful moment that showed the real value of the work being done at places like Triple Care Farm.

### **Any highlights from your first 90 days?**

The Connected Conversations Breakfast Event we hosted in March was wonderful. Having Zoë Robinson, NSW Advocate for Children and Young People, as one of our speakers there was really

valuable—she's so in tune with how to engage young people in a genuine, authentic way. We need more leaders who approach youth engagement with humility and a genuine effort to involve young people in decisions that affect them.

Visiting Triple Care Farm was definitely another highlight. It was a great opportunity to connect with the work we support and meet many like-minded people who love our organisation and mission.

### **What's 2025 looking like for Sir David Martin Foundation?**

Looking ahead, we're excited about our upcoming 35th anniversary celebration and sharing the outcomes of our Youth Network evaluation later in the year. We're currently also working with the Alcohol and Drug Foundation on a project to understand what youth-focused alcohol and drug services there are across the whole of Australia. This will help us understand where the gaps are, who the players are, and will help build our knowledge and understanding of the problem we're trying to solve. This is a really important piece of work for us.

The Foundation is also approaching the end of our current five-year strategic plan, so we'll be developing our next vision and strategic framework over the coming months, which is really exciting. Being able to build on the great work that has been done over the last 35 years, while strengthening our role and voice within the sector will be critical. It will ensure our long-term sustainability, ultimately enabling more young people to beat addiction and change the trajectory of their lives.

# Challenging the statistics and transforming lives

Your support creates pathways to recovery for vulnerable young people facing multiple challenges. Every donation helps build a foundation for lasting change in these young lives.

## The transformation journey

### When young people arrive



**100%**  
substance  
misuse



**73%**  
unemployment



**92%**  
mental health  
issues



**65%**  
homeless

### After Triple Care Farm



**67%**  
reduction in  
substance use



**68%**  
engaged in education/  
employment



**83%**  
decrease in  
suicide attempts



**96%**  
in safe, stable  
housing

## The difference you make

Your generous support enables us to offer a comprehensive recovery journey through our holistic approach:

- **24/7 Medical Withdrawal Support** - Providing safe, medically supervised detox as the crucial first step
- **Residential Rehabilitation** - Creating a supportive community where young people heal together
- **Vocational Education & Training (VET)** - Building practical skills that open doors to future opportunities
- **Mental Health Counselling** - Addressing underlying trauma and developing healthy coping mechanisms
- **Aftercare Support** - Continuing guidance for 6 months after residential program completion

## The ripple effect

Your investment multiplies throughout society. For every \$1 you donate, the Australian community receives a \$7 return through improved health outcomes, reduced criminal behaviour, and increased community participation.

## Continue the journey

Your continued support doesn't just change statistics—it transforms real lives. Thank you for being part of this journey.



**Your gift today can help a young person  
break free from the grip of addiction.**

To donate scan the code or visit  
[martinfoundation.org.au/donate-impact](https://martinfoundation.org.au/donate-impact)

### Donate by direct deposit:

Account name:  
The Trustee for Sir David Martin Foundation  
BSB: 032005 | Account: 148799  
Reference: Your full name





# Bill's walk for youth

Bill Bracey from Sydney Financial Planning has been a dedicated supporter and friend of Sir David Martin Foundation for over 13 years. In 2024, Bill had a bold new idea – a way to engage his financial planning colleagues with the Foundation's work and garner support for the cause. With this mission, he launched Walk for Youth in Crisis and set an ambitious goal: to collectively walk 4,000km while raising funds to help young people access vital recovery programs.

The event was met with enthusiasm and generosity, with Bill also enlisting the support of AMP Foundation to match donations from financial advisers. As a result, more than 4,500km was walked and \$130,000 raised, proving the power of collective action.

Bill's dedication has not gone unnoticed – in March this year he was honoured with the Astrum Award for Community Service, a financial services industry accolade celebrating his commitment to making a difference.

Following the success of the inaugural Walk for Youth in Crisis event, Sydney Financial Planning is leading the charge once again in 2025. This year, organisations across all industries are invited to join the challenge! By forming teams and committing to walk 100km throughout May, participants will not only raise vital funds but also foster team spirit, spark friendly competition, and push each other to achieve something truly meaningful.



Is your organisation ready to step up? Join Walk for Youth in Crisis this May and be part of a movement that's changing lives - one step at a time.

**If your organisation would like to get involved, please contact Ruth Markham at [r.markham@martinfoundation.org.au](mailto:r.markham@martinfoundation.org.au)**



## Giving young people a safe place to detox

**David Martin Place serves a unique purpose as the Withdrawal Centre at Triple Care Farm. It is a safe place that provides a detoxification inpatient service for young people aged 16-24 experiencing drug and alcohol addiction. For many of the young people who come to David Martin Place, it is one of the first steps in their journey to recovery.**

Nestled in the NSW Southern Highlands, David Martin Place is a modern building in a tranquil setting that gives young people 24/7 care while they detox. A nurse is always available onsite, as well as a support team who see to each young person's physical and psychosocial needs.

As well as medical and psychological support, young people at David Martin Place can access programs like Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, Vocational Education and Training, music and sport programs.

In the years since it was built, the program at David Martin Place has developed, responding to the needs of the young people who stay there. The mission, however, has stayed the same: to give young people experiencing addiction the ability to recover in a safe, supportive setting. By giving young people dedicated medical care alongside holistic treatment, they have the support they need to get well.

# The vital role of family and community in sustaining recovery for young people



**When young people leave residential rehabilitation, they face the challenging transition back to everyday life. During this critical period, family and community support becomes essential in maintaining their recovery journey.**

Family involvement can create a supportive environment conducive to recovery. Young people with strong family support are more likely to complete their treatment programs, maintain sobriety, and experience fewer relapses compared to those without family involvement.

Effective family support includes participating in family therapy sessions, which help rebuild communication lines. These therapeutic interventions allow families to address underlying issues, express feelings in a safe environment, and re-establish trust.

Beyond family, community support systems serve as cornerstones for sustainable recovery. Local support groups like Smart Recovery, Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics

Anonymous provide platforms for sharing experiences and receiving peer support. Community health resources, including local clinics and wellness workshops, contribute to a holistic recovery approach. For young people specifically, youth-specific services that integrate with other support systems such as mental health, education, housing, and family services are particularly effective.

When families and communities work together to support young people leaving rehab, they create an environment where recovery can flourish. This collaborative approach enhances the likelihood of sustained recovery and contributes to improved mental health, stronger relationships, and a more positive future for young people.

Aftercare workers play a pivotal role in facilitating these crucial connections. The Aftercare program specifically works on developing, mending and building social and family relationships, ensuring young people have the support they need to rebuild these essential connections.

As one mother wrote in a heartfelt letter to Triple Care Farm program staff,

**“I cannot thank you enough for what you do for everyone who comes through your door for help... The Aftercare team at Walawaani have continued to support him through this, helping him adjust to a new way of living.... From the bottom of my heart, I cannot thank you all enough.”**

The importance of Aftercare in facilitating these connections cannot be overstated. The program provides young people with access to a youth worker for six months, supporting their connection with family, community, re-engagement with education, and preparation for employment opportunities. This comprehensive support system helps young people establish and maintain the social infrastructure necessary for sustained recovery.

By helping young people establish and maintain healthy relationships with family and community, Aftercare Workers serve as crucial bridges between rehabilitation and successful reintegration, ultimately helping to break the cycle of addiction and creating pathways for a healthier, more fulfilling future.

**Sir David Martin Foundation acknowledges that Mission Australia, our service partner, owns and runs programs at Triple Care Farm and delivers Aftercare programs for Youth Network.**



# Youth Week 2025 – Young people hold unique strength

This Youth Week (9-17 April), we're celebrating the unique strengths and potential of young Australians, affirming that every young person's voice is a vital force in shaping our world. The 2025 theme serves to recognise each young person's individual and collective power as our current and future influencers, leaders and decision makers.

At Sir David Martin Foundation, we see this strength and power in action every day. Through the programs we fund at Triple Care Farm, young people who have faced incredible challenges take

brave steps toward healing and independence. Triple Care Farm is a safe place for young Australians facing the challenges of addiction. Through best-practice youth-specific treatment young people have the opportunity to recover safely and rediscover who they are and what is important to them.

This Youth Week, we encourage you to reflect on the role young people play in shaping the future. How can we support them to reach their potential? How can we ensure they have the opportunities they deserve?



Together, let's celebrate the strength, creativity, and leadership of every young person. When we empower our youth, we empower our future.

## Zoë Robinson Joins Panel at Connected Conversations: Breakfast for Youth



L-R: Karen Elliff, Anna Beaumont, Zoë Robinson, Harry Waterworth

At our recent Connected Conversations: Breakfast for Youth event, we were privileged to welcome Zoë Robinson, NSW Advocate for Children and Young People, as a panelist. With a deep commitment to improving the lives of young people, Zoë brought invaluable insights into the challenges facing youth today and

the opportunities to create lasting change.

The panel discussion explored the pressing issues affecting young Australians, including mental health, addiction to new and unfamiliar substances, school and social stress and the overall importance of youth-specific support services. Zoë spoke

passionately about the power of listening to young voices and ensuring they are the drivers in decisions and conversations that affect their wellbeing.

Through her work as NSW Advocate for Children and Young People Zoë is an authority on what parents and the wider community can do to help our young people. Zoë shared, ***“Young people really want to be listened to. You have to do it in a space that is safe for them and makes sense to them...you have to be really patient, and you have to listen.”***

Thank you to Zoë Robinson and all our panelists for their commitment to creating a better future for young people. We look forward to continuing these important conversations and working together to ensure every young Australian is provided with safety, hope and opportunity.