HOPE

HOPE IMPACT REPORT 2026

Built on Trust, Growing Together

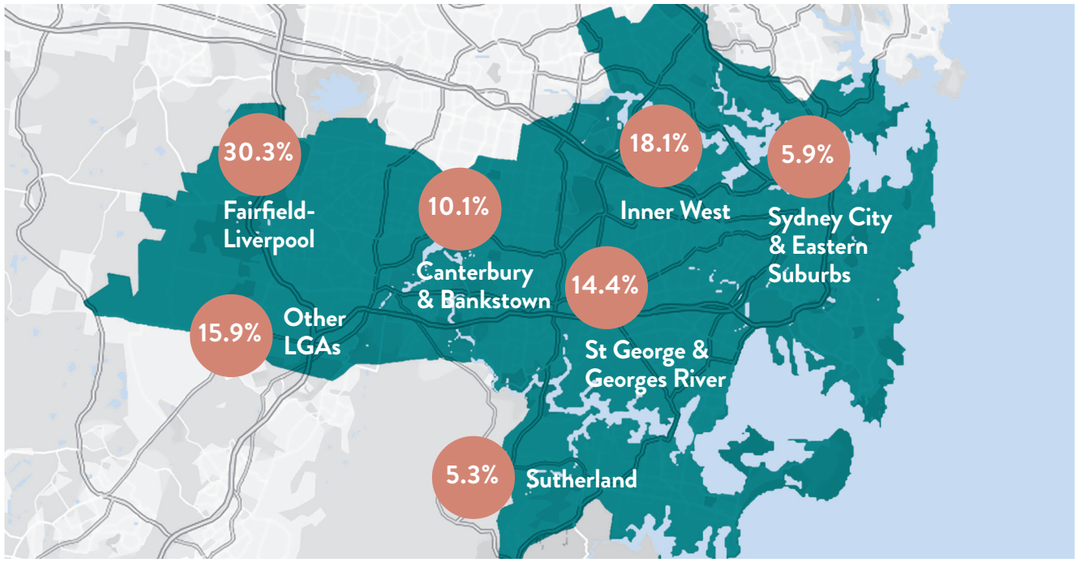


Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands of the Gadigal, Wangal, Dharug and Dharawal Peoples, whose lands include the areas of Eastern Sydney, Inner West, Sutherland, and South West Sydney. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We honour their enduring connection to land, waters, and culture and commit to walking together in reconciliation.

Acknowledgment of Babies, Children, Young People and Families

HOPE acknowledges and deeply appreciates the young parents and children who share their lived experience with us. It takes great courage and strength to tell their stories. By opening up their homes, they help shape the way we work, inspire others with their experiences, and ensure that the voices of young parents and their children remain at the centre of all we do.



A breakdown of where HOPE families are based by their LGA.

Dear HOPE Supporters,

It is a pleasure to share the HOPE Impact Report for 2026, celebrating the young families at the heart of HOPE and the community that walks alongside them.

Young parents come to HOPE with aspirations and hopes for their children, while often navigating significant challenges. This year, 84% of our families experienced three or more areas of need, reinforcing something fundamental to HOPE: that no single service, organisation or person can create lasting change alone.

Change begins with trust. Through consistent relationships with Family Workers, young parents are supported to feel safe, seen, heard and respected. From there, confidence, connection and possibility can grow. Families identify what matters to them and are supported to build on their strengths, bolster relationships with their children and create their own pathways forward.

As illustrated in this report, we can see what that trust and support exhibits in everyday life: a parent finding a safe and stable home, reconnecting with education or employment, growing in confidence, strengthening their relationship with their child, or finding friendship and belonging within their community. These moments matter because their impact can extend well beyond a family's time with HOPE.

The results we see are encouraging. Three-quarters of parents strengthened their parenting confidence, more than three-quarters improved their wellbeing, and almost nine in ten family goals were achieved or continued to progress.

HOPE also continues to listen, learn and evolve alongside families. Through initiatives such as Listening to Your Baby, which helps parents recognise and respond to their baby's communication and cues, and more flexible service delivery shaped by family feedback, the voices and rights of babies, children and young parents are increasingly embedded in the program.

Supporting every outcome is a community of people working together to support young families. Our Family Workers, referrers, service partners, donors, businesses and supporters each bring different strengths, resources and opportunities. Through these trusted relationships and a shared commitment to young families HOPE provides support that is responsive, coordinated and lasting.

Most significantly, this report reflects the voices, choices and achievements of young parents, babies and children themselves.

Thank you to every family who has placed their trust in HOPE, and to everyone who continues to believe in and invest in this work.



Richard Timbs
Chief Executive Officer
CatholicCare Sydney

HOPE Families

During 2025-2026, HOPE supported 85 families, comprising:

93
Parents and carers

107
Babies and children

200
People supported in total

100%
OF FAMILIES COMPLETED PRESERVED AS A FAMILY UNIT



The Conditions Shaping Young HOPE Families' Lives

Young families bring strengths and hopes for their future while navigating barriers to safety, stability and opportunity. These figures reflect the experiences of HOPE families and highlight the importance of working together to remove barriers and create opportunities.

88% of families experienced financial stress, with rising housing costs and income insecurity often felt more acutely by young people without broader family support.

71% of families had experienced domestic and family violence, reinforcing the need for coordinated, culturally safe and domestic violence informed supports and services.

70% of families navigated challenges to their mental health and wellbeing, showing why accessible support, trusted relationships and community connections matter.

67% of families experienced housing instability, highlighting the challenges of navigating uncertainty and the importance of safe, stable and accessible housing pathways.

48% of families navigated alcohol and substance use challenges, highlighting the importance of recovery and wellbeing-focused support.

32% of families had experienced sexual violence, 10% higher than the population-wide rate, highlighting the need for trauma-informed support that strengthens safety, trust and agency.

27% of families had experienced out-of-home care, reinforcing the need for trauma-responsive support that strengthens families and connection.

27% of families experienced high or complex medical needs, requiring flexible support and strong coordination across health, family and community services.

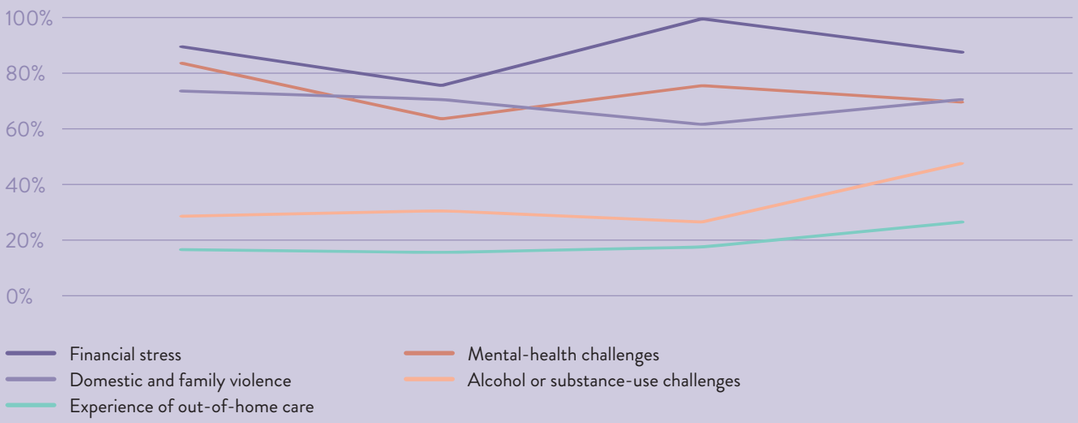
10% of families lived with a physical or intellectual disability, reinforcing the need for accessible, individually tailored services that recognise each person's capabilities.

84% of families experienced three or more areas of need, demonstrating that challenges rarely occur in isolation and cannot be addressed through a single-service response.

A Snapshot of HOPE over 4 years

HOPE Family Circumstances

CIRCUMSTANCE	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	4 YR AVG
Housing instability/ homelessness risk	71%	77%	100%	67%	79%
Financial stress	90%	76%	100%	88%	89%
Mental-health challenges	84%	64%	76%	70%	74%
Domestic and family violence	74%	71%	62%	71%	70%
Alcohol or substance-use challenges	29%	31%	27%	48%	34%
Experience of out-of-home care	17%	16%	18%	27%	20%



Annual percentages represent different cohorts of families. They show patterns in the circumstances surrounding families, rather than change experienced by the same families over time.

4 Years Alongside Families

MEASURE	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	4 YR PICTURE
Families supported	111	107	84	85	387
Children supported	157	129	130	107	523
Children per family	1.41	1.21	1.55	1.26	1.35 avg
Satisfaction	72%	73%	98%	99%	86% avg
Goals achieved and actively working towards	77%	72%	79%	86%	79% avg



Program Highlights

How We Grew Together in FY26

1. The Change Families Achieved

86% of
young parents
moved beyond low parenting and family confidence.

Average wellbeing rose from
67.2% to 75.3%,
matching the Australian population norm.

90% of family's goals were achieved or progressed.

These outcomes show children's rights being strengthened through everyday family life. When young parents have greater confidence, wellbeing, access and agency, babies and children are better supported to grow within safe, responsive and nurturing relationships.

2. Deepening Connection and Making Lasting Memories

HOPE expanded supported playdates and family events, creating more opportunities for young families to connect, belong and enjoy experiences together. From celebrating mothers to the Christmas Picnic and outings to playcentres and Taronga Zoo, families accessed practical support, built relationships and created memories with their babies and children.

"Thank you Susan for everything these last two years. You've really helped me and my family through so much! We're forever grateful"

3. Listening to Voices of Babies and Young Parents

Through the 'Listening to Your Baby' initiative, HOPE strengthened recognition of babies as active participants with a right to be seen, heard and understood. Baby voice was embedded into parent coaching, helping parents recognise and respond to their baby's verbal and non-verbal cues, while young parents' voices continued to shape HOPE's growth.



4. Strengthening Our Work with Fathers

More fathers engaged with HOPE in FY26, reflecting both growing need and the programs strengthened father-inclusive practice. Through Circle of Security and support tailored to their goals, Dads built parenting confidence, strengthened connections with their children and became more actively involved in the parenting team.

5. Families Safe and Together

Where families experienced domestic and family violence, HOPE applied the Safe & Together Model and offered flexible support arrangements, including co-case management where appropriate. Family Worker's partnered with victim-survivors, recognised their protective strengths and kept the person using violence visible and accountable while prioritising the safety, wellbeing and experiences of babies and children.

6. Turning Feedback and Children's Rights into Action

Families told us they wanted more service delivery options and an easy way to share concerns or provide feedback. We listened, learned and looped back, making changes to their experience. HOPE offered shorter and longer sessions, flexible support arrangements where possible, and created a direct feedback pathway.

Families' feedback has helped shape child and family friendly journey maps and the refreshed outcome tools, making goals and progress more accessible and meaningful. Children's rights were embedded throughout HOPE's outcomes approach, strengthening voice, participation and inclusion while helping challenge the systemic barriers young families experience.

The HOPE Journey

Every family's journey is different. Change grows when young parents' strengths and expertise are recognised, babies and children remain at the centre, and families can access the relationships, resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

1. Welcome and Belonging

Families are welcomed without judgement. Babies, children and young parents experience a safe and inclusive space where they feel seen, heard, respected and supported.

2. Listening and Understanding

We listen to each family's story, strengths, circumstances and hopes. Families and practitioners identify together what matters most and where support can make the greatest difference.

3. Tailored Support

Families access practical, personal and coordinated support shaped around their priorities. Our approach is child- and family-centred, strengths-based, trauma-informed and culturally responsive.

4. Parenting and Relationships

Parents strengthen their knowledge, skills and confidence while building safe, responsive and nurturing relationships with their babies and children.

5. Community and Opportunity

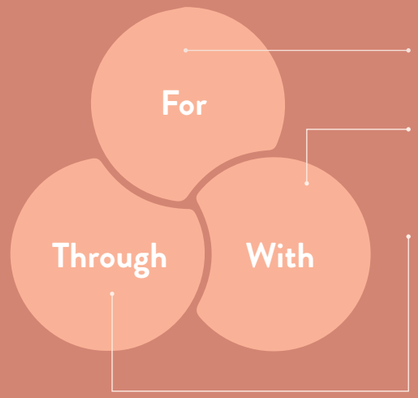
Families build trusted relationships and community connections that open pathways to practical resources, belonging, education, employment and other opportunities.

6. Moving Forward

Families transition from HOPE with greater confidence, stronger relationships and lasting connections. They carry forward the skills, knowledge and support networks needed to make choices, navigate future challenges and build the future they hope for.

"Since I started with HOPE I have gotten better as a mum, in how I parent."

Our Approach



We help create the conditions every baby, child and young parent needs to be safe, supported and able to thrive.

The voices, strengths, choices and hopes of babies, children and young parents guide every stage of support.

Lasting change grows through families' trusted relationships, community connections, strengths and aspirations. With greater access, choice, agency and control, and services and systems working together to remove barriers, families create their own pathways to opportunity and shape the futures they value.

How Change Happens

Change builds step by step, with families' strengths and aspirations guiding the journey and babies and children at the centre.

What changes first	What grows	What lasts
Families feel safe, seen, heard and respected	Trusted relationships	Connection and belonging
Immediate and essential needs are addressed	Parenting confidence and capability	Safe, responsive family relationships
Families identify their priorities and next steps	Wellbeing and practical life skills	Greater stability and choice
Support becomes easier to access and navigate	Community connections and support networks	Confidence and hope for the future

For more information about the HOPE process, read our What Starts, Grows, Lasts Report by scanning the QR code.

Case Study

Felicity's Story

When Felicity was referred to the HOPE Program at 20 weeks pregnant with her first child, Henry, she was preparing for parenthood amid significant change. Like many young families in Sydney, Felicity was navigating housing insecurity, financial pressure and the rising cost of living without the stable support networks many families rely upon. She was also living with disability and navigating the ongoing impacts of childhood trauma.

Yet Felicity was never defined by these circumstances. Her insight and determination stood out. Her hope was clear: to create a safe, stable and nurturing future for Henry.

Felicity spoke openly with her Family Worker about her sensory sensitivities, anxiety and experiences of becoming overwhelmed. She reflected on how these could affect her parenting, actively pursued supports, and identified two clear goals: to build confidence in her parenting and access disability supports that had previously been unavailable to her.

What Grows: Confidence, Understanding and Connection

Over the following 16 months, Felicity worked alongside HOPE and specialist services to pursue these goals. She completed an autism assessment and received a Level 2 autism diagnosis, providing her a greater understanding of her experiences and enabling access to the NDIS. For the first time, Felicity could access tailored supports to strengthen everyday living skills, independence and build confidence in her role as Henry's Mum.

The early months of parenting brought joy and challenge. At times, Felicity found it difficult to respond to Henry's needs alongside her sensory sensitivities. She drew on supports, developing a personalised safety plan and expanded the people and services she could turn to. Through parenting coaching, Felicity strengthened her understanding of Henry's cues, development and needs and identified strategies that worked for them both.

Housing remained uncertain. While waiting for a longer-term option, Felicity chose to remain in her family home so practical support would be available. She took steps to improve safety and hygiene in the home and became more confident in discussing Henry's needs with family members.

Felicity's partner, Simon, relocated from Newcastle to Sydney to provide practical and emotional support. Together, they strengthened their parenting partnership and continued working towards greater stability and opportunity for their family.

Through playgroups, library programs, swimming lessons and HOPE events, Felicity and Henry formed new relationships and developed a stronger sense of connection and belonging. These community connections reduced isolation, expanded the family's circle of support and created opportunities for Henry to play, learn and connect with others.

Progress was not always linear. As Felicity navigated the challenges of early parenthood, concerns about Henry's safety and wellbeing required additional support and child protection involvement. Felicity remained engaged with her Family Worker, taking practical steps to strengthen the safety and stability of their home. Through her ongoing commitment, alongside coordinated support from HOPE, the family made meaningful progress, strengthened protective supports and child protection involvement came to a close.

What Lasts: Agency, Advocacy and Stronger Foundations

Today, Felicity has greater confidence in her parenting and a deeper understanding of Henry's needs. She has strengthened her emotional-regulation strategies, built a warm and responsive relationship with her son and has grown increasingly confident in using her voice to advocate for their safety, wellbeing and future.

Felicity's story is not one of services creating change for a family. It is a story of a young mother exercising agency, drawing on her strengths and pursuing new possibilities despite adversity and systemic barriers.

HOPE and the wider service network walked alongside the family, supporting access, strengthening choice and helped to remove barriers, so change could grow through Felicity and Simon's strengths, agency and determination, creating the conditions for Henry to thrive.

They have built a safer, more nurturing and connected environment for Henry. Throughout every stage, Felicity kept Henry's safety, wellbeing and development at the centre of her decisions. Their determination, relationships and growing network of support have established stronger foundations for their family and for Henry to experience the secure and supported start in life every child deserves.

"When I first met my Family Worker I was anxious and nervous. She made me feel comfortable and I knew everything was going to be fine."





More than a Playdate

“I first moved into the HOPE transitional property when I was 35 weeks pregnant. I was very excited to have my own place and a backyard. It was a huge relief knowing I had a place for myself and my baby when she was born. It was also a new neighbourhood and I did not know anyone around me.

After my daughter arrived, I wanted to get out of the house and make some connections. There was a neighbour who was also a HOPE mum that I had seen around, but we had never really spoken. One day, she dropped off some newborn clothes for my daughter but we didn’t really talk even though we lived next door to each other.

Our babies were a similar age, and we later went to a play date organised by our HOPE workers for just us. After that, we got each other’s numbers and began spending more time together. We went to several park playdates with other mums, went to playgroup together, and as our friendship grew we enjoyed a walk through the Botanical Gardens with our daughters.

Although my neighbour and her daughter have since moved into their own home and now live quite far away, they still come back to visit us. I was invited to her daughter’s first birthday, which was special.





We have faced similar challenges in our lives, and it has been comforting to have someone who understands and can relate to my experiences. Our daughters enjoy playing together and have developed their own friendship as well.

We no longer wait for others to organise catch-ups. We talk often and support each other through whatever is happening in our lives. Having each other means a lot to me.

To other HOPE mums, I would encourage you to put yourself out there and try to meet new people. You never know when you might find someone you genuinely connect with. The friendship I have made has been one of the best parts of my time with HOPE, and I hope it continues for many years to come”.

- Sofia, a 23-year-old HOPE mum with a seven-month-old baby, reflects on how HOPE events helped her connect with fellow HOPE mum Josie, aged 22, and her one-year-old child.

This story shows how a supported opportunity can become something families own and carry forward. One playdate created space for connection. The families’ trust, initiative and shared experience grew it into friendship, mutual support and belonging. It also gave their children ongoing opportunities to play, connect and enjoy community life, bringing children’s rights to express their views and be taken seriously, have parents that support their development and to rest, play and relax into everyday experience.

> *We have faced similar challenges in our lives, and it has been comforting to have someone who understands and can relate to my experiences.*
>
> **– Mum**

Learning into Actions:

What We're Growing Next

Deepening Baby Voice and Participation

Listening to Your Baby: Part Two will build on what we have learned and expand HOPE's insights, practical tools for recognising babies' communication and participation.



Building a Stronger Practice Partner Network

In response to partner feedback, HOPE will introduce a dedicated partner newsletter; sharing program updates, emerging insights, practical resources and opportunities for connection across the service network.

Safeguarding Through Partnership

HOPE will strengthen safeguarding expectations and shared accountability across its partnerships, ensuring children's safety, rights and wellbeing remain central wherever families engage with supports.



Supporter Acknowledgement

We are sincerely thankful for the generous financial and in-kind contributions made this year. Together, we are building a community of support that empowers young parents, strengthen young families, and ensures every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Our heartfelt thanks to our supporters, including:

Corporate

- Harris Farm Markets
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Government

- NSW Health

Individuals and Family Foundations

- Phillips Family Foundation
- The Harris Family
- Mrs. Catherine Harris
- Mr. and Mrs. A. Wales
- Mrs. Judith Beswick
- Mr. Charles Curran
- Mr. Anthony Herro
- Mr. Colin Manton
- Ms. Jessica Montague
- The Hon. Ms. Allegra Spender MP

Charitable Foundations

- Charitable Works Fund
- Betty Wade Charitable Foundation
- Big Sister Foundation

Community Housing Providers

- St Vincent de Paul Housing
- Hume Community Housing

Community and ClubGrant Partners

- Dandelion Support Network
- Bankstown Sports Club
- The Bower
- Club Ashfield
- Club Central Hurstville (Alt. Hospitality Group)
- Club Marconi
- DOOLEY's Lidcombe Catholic Club
- DV Safe Phone
- Liverpool Catholic Club
- Petersham RSL Club
- ReLove
- Santa Sabina College
- St George Leagues Club
- Wests Ashfield Leagues Club

Ways to Get Involved

We need to raise on average $17,000 for each young family that participates in the 12-month HOPE Program. This year, we aim to support up to 90 families.

Ways you can help us reach our goal:

- Become a regular giver
- Make a one-off donation
- Become a partner
- Fundraise for HOPE with your school or community group
- Leave a bequest in your will
- Share our work

Reach out to hello@catholiccare.org for more information on expanding your involvement with HOPE.

"I learnt so much about parenting and all the supports I can get for my child"

– Mum of 3-year old

"You cared for me and my son. You gave me courage. Courage to try new things and to speak up for myself."

– Mum of 16-month-old

" You've really helped me and my family through so much! We're forever grateful"

– Mum of 2-year old

" Honestly I haven't had anything that HOPE can't help with!"

– Mum of 5-month-old twins

Learn more
or donate to the
HOPE Program

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