

SPRING 23

# ROSIES

*Friends on the Street*



SHARING FRIENDSHIP CREATES BELONGING. DARE TO REACH OUT TOGETHER.

## INSIDE ROSIES

A message from  
**OUR CEO**

**HEALING**  
through volunteering

A place to  
**BELONG**



**DONATE NOW**  
through our QR code





## A MESSAGE from our CEO

Each one of us has lived through some devastation, some loneliness, some weather superstorm or spiritual superstorm, when we look at each other we must say, I understand. I understand how you feel because I have been there myself. We must support each other and empathise with each other because each of us is more alike than we are unlike - Maya Angelou

Friendship on the street means welcoming those who attend with open arms and open hearts. It means acceptance where you are and as you are. It means a sense of belonging and no judgement. It may look like a hot drink, a snack or a bite to eat, a blanket or a link to another service – but most importantly, it is a smile, a conversation and the investment of time in others.

In Queensland one in every eight is currently living in poverty, struggling to put food on the table and a roof over their heads.\* Queensland has the highest rental inflation of any jurisdiction in Australia and this, coupled with high rental demand and the rising cost of living, has pushed many people out of long-term stable accommodation and into couch surfing with friends and family, living in cars, living in tents or sleeping rough. Many are moving into parks and other suburban locations seeking shelter and safety – more women and more families. The numbers on the street continue to increase, impacting those who never expected to be in this position.

Rosies is a safe, consistent, dependable place where volunteers and our friends on the street come together to create a supportive community, lending a helping hand to those who are new to Rosies and those most in need. Everyone is welcome, everyone is cared for, and everyone is important.

We all need help sometimes, and we are better with one another.

Jayne Shallcross  
CEO  
Rosies – Friends on the Street

*\*QCOSS Indicators of Poverty & Disadvantage  
in Queensland report, October 2013*

## HEALING THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

### Amiee's Story

Rosies' mission is to always ensure no Queenslanders feel left out or disconnected from their community. While outreach is extremely important for our patrons' mental and physical wellbeing, our volunteers are equally rewarded through their service and dedication. One of our volunteers in Cairns, Aimee, knows the impact of this better than most. This is Aimee's story:



Hi! My name is Aimee. I've been in Cairns for over a year now and grew up on Magnetic Island. I spent 13 years in Perth where I started taking heavy drugs, dating abusive drug dealers and selling my body for drugs. I lived on the streets for about 5 - 6 years.

I spent countless nights without a home and countless days selling my body to pay for my drug habit and hustling just so I could get by. I spent a lot of time in women's refuges in WA and spent a great deal of time around 'bad boys'.

I started using drugs from a young age and never finished school. I then worked while still managing to take drugs. I lost touch with my friends and family and had nobody but myself to blame.

I lost myself for years. I wasn't able to eat, sleep or live a normal life because my body relied on drugs and negative habits. I couldn't go to the shop without having used or being with someone, I was co-dependent.

There have been times where my life was at risk. I overdosed many times. Once I was found in bushland in Western Australia, where I had overdosed and was burning from the heat, I was severely dehydrated, and my body was shutting down.

An angel managed to call the ambulance and I was in hospital overnight with nobody to visit me or ask if I was okay. Nobody was there to pick me up the next day when I needed someone - because I chose a life that was very

lonely. I left the hospital that day and went back to my life of abuse and drugs.

Fast forward a few years from there - January 2022, when I was in hospital once again having experienced domestic violence. I was withdrawing from using and I had nobody, no home to go to and I was lost. It was then I asked for help - I asked my friends to fly me home. I needed out. Something or someone was watching me - I like to call it the Holy Spirit.

I arrived in Townsville and spent 3 months detoxing from my drug habit with my sister on Magnetic Island and moved to Cairns in April 2022.

I found myself. I found that without drugs I was a decent human being. I had heart, I had intelligence, I had passion and goals and I have now been sober for 16 months (May 2023). I have completed my Certificate 3 in Community Services, am applying for a Bachelor in Social Work at JCU and I have a goal that I will complete.

I love volunteering for Rosies because it gives me purpose and joy as I have been on the other side of it. Free of judgement, I am here for the patrons because I want them to know, it's okay to not be okay.

**Volunteering has given Aimee an opportunity to give back to her community and to develop a strong sense of achievement in helping others to combat loneliness and isolation.**

*If you find any of the content in this story distressing, please contact the National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline on 1800 250 015 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.*

## A PLACE TO BELONG

### Sue's Story ♥

The desire to belong is something that is uniquely human, we were not meant to be solitary creatures. Psychotherapist Angela Theisen states that, "We cannot separate the importance of a sense of belonging from our physical and mental health. The social ties that accompany a sense of belonging are a protective factor helping manage stress and other behavioral issues. When we feel we have support and are not alone, we are more resilient, often coping more effectively with difficult times in our lives."\*

It is the desire to belong that draws many patrons to our outreach locations in Ipswich. Sue has been attending every Wednesday for the last five years with her three children, "I like coming here because it's a good environment for my kids, I'm friends with all of the volunteers."



Our Ipswich branch is well supported by the local community and works very closely with other services like Orange Sky laundry and Down to Earth, a meal service started by one of

Rosies former Youth Engagement Program participants, d'Arcy Witherspoon. A local bakery also donates pies, sausage rolls, sweets and sandwiches that haven't been sold that day for our patrons.

Ipswich Branch Coordinator Barry Reinecker said, "We offer much more than a cuppa and a snack in order to meet the needs of our community. Many of our patrons are housed and work but still find it hard to make ends meet, the donations from the local community really help with easing some of the pressures associated with food insecurity."

"Coming to Rosies helps with the family budget and I'm grateful for that," Sue said. She continued,

**It's more than just the food though, the volunteers are very welcoming and inviting. It doesn't matter what your circumstances are, whether you're homeless, or in need you are all treated equally.**

Rosies Branch Coordinator Barry has developed a very special relationship with Sue and her children. "All the kids are very shy and neurodivergent, it's important to treat them as you would any friend and let them know that they are important and what they do matters. Asking them basic questions and really listening to them when they answer, displaying an interest and celebrating their achievements no matter how big or small," he said.

**Our volunteers focus on fostering a sense of community and belonging with our patrons and that helps the children feel safe and coaxes them out of their shyness. We accept them as they are and acknowledge how they present themselves.**

Sue highlighted the importance of her children feeling safe and accepted, "The volunteers accept you no matter what. When we first started coming here my middle son identified

as female and now, he identifies as male, and the volunteers have been so inclusive with that. They have never made him feel bad or less than and that is important."

Sue and her family are just one of the many families who come to Queens Park each week to feel connected and experience true belonging. The patrons and volunteers have worked hard to build a community of people that not only receives but provides assistance to one another in whatever way they can. Coming together and sharing their experiences, achievements, and hardships helps to lessen the burden and to lighten the spirit.

If you'd like to help Barry and the team support vulnerable people in Ipswich, please visit [rosies.org.au](http://rosies.org.au) to find out how.

\*From the article Is having a sense of belonging important?  
Posted on 8 Dec 2021 on [mayoclinichealthsystem.org](http://mayoclinichealthsystem.org)

♥ Name changed to protect patron privacy

### Friendship - A good investment

Please return your completed form to  
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Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Rosies.org.au  
P (07) 3396 4267  
PO Box 908, WYNNUM QLD 4178



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that others may feel  
at home with us,  
  
so like Yours,  
that others may feel  
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so forgetful of self  
that we might simply  
become the place  
where You and they meet  
  
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Your love and the joy of  
Your friendship  
  
Amen



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