

"Since joining Foyer, I've been able to ditch my training wheels, break out of my cocoon and spread my wings all within the safety net that is Foyer. I feel supported and confident to step into the next chapter of my life."

Coco, an Education First Youth Foyer student



Dear {{FirstName}},

The new year brings with it resolutions, the tennis, and albeit briefly, finally some much welcomed Melbourne summer warm weather. I hope it finds you also with a newfound energy to be part of creating positive change to ensure our beautiful city is a liveable one for all of us.

Here at Launch Housing, we see first-hand the new beginnings that are possible when people have housing and the right support.

And to kick off the new year – thanks to supporters like you - we're highlighting some amazing new beginnings, particularly for families and children who come through our doors here at Launch Housing.



Bellfield residents settle in and start anew



Video courtesy of JT Productions

We're pleased to share that residents are now settling into their new homes at Bellfield, our 58-apartment social housing block nestled in the growing north-eastern suburb.

A partnership between Launch Housing, Homes Victoria, and Banyule City Council, this project sets a new benchmark for social housing in Melbourne, helping to boost local affordable housing stock, and takes a significant step towards a brighter future for the local community.

Many residents were in emergency housing and experienced homelessness beforehand. Now they are in safe, secure and affordable housing.

We were honoured to have Minister for Housing Harriet Shing, and Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carabines join us to officially open Bellfield.

[Watch a short video of the opening event here](#)

Our newest board member knows what it's like to sleep rough



In late 2023, we were pleased to welcome Fiona Schlenso to the Launch Housing Board.

A proud Yidindji woman with 16 years' working in the housing and social services industry, Fiona comes to Launch with a nuanced understanding of cultural safety and community wellbeing.

She also has first-hand experience with homelessness, having slept rough in Melbourne as a young person. Fiona hopes to bring some of that lived experience and client voice to Launch Housing to help create successful housing pathways.

"I have a real understanding and a real, relatable experience to support people through that same journey. I think you've got to be empathetic with the people that you work with in this field."

[Read about Fiona's journey here](#)

A thank you for making Christmas so special



Thanks to the generosity of people like you, local businesses and partners of Launch Housing, over 2,000 toys were donated to Launch Housing in the weeks leading up to Christmas, ensuring that the children at our housing sites had the opportunity to receive special gifts.

A special thanks to Melbourne Convention Centre for hosting a space for Santa's little helpers, and to Rotary for putting on their best reindeer act and getting the toys under the Christmas tree!

Foyer artwork a reminder of new beginnings



Chrissy Weetra is a proud Warumungu Arrente woman, a talented artist, and an Education First Youth Foyer alumni.

"The Foyer was the first place that kind of gave me a home. It gave me a roof over my head, it gave me a place where I knew that I could actually relax... it was safe."

Chrissy recently completed a mural at the Glen Waverley Youth Foyer, which will serve as a source of inspiration for the students who call it home.

"[It symbolises] your past, trying to find your way through life, getting up when you get knocked down, the journey and embracing yourself."

[Watch Chrissy's story here](#)

It's back to school time - and Malik is excited!



Kids around the country are about to start packing their backpacks, putting on their new uniforms, and making their first journey to school in 2024.

The Education Pathways Program (EPP) is one of the only programs in the state that provides targeted educational support to ensure children who have experienced homelessness stay connected to school and kinder.

Like Malik, who is supported through EPP. He shared his drawing above, showing his excitement about going back to school, with a bright smile on his face each step of the way.

The EPP is entirely philanthropically funded. Thanks to our kind donors, children like Malik can thrive at school, breaking the cycle of homelessness and disadvantage.

[See the impact EPP made last year here](#)

Want to join a grassroots community action workshop?



Launch Housing is proud to power the [Melbourne Zero](#) campaign, building a movement to end homelessness in Melbourne, starting with ending rough sleeping. Have you added your voice to the call for change yet?

Next month, Melbourne Zero will run its first grassroots workshop for people passionate about creating meaningful, local change.

We need people across our city to champion change in their local community.

Covering everything from small, day-to-day actions and social meetups, to advocating for homelessness policies at local council meetings, this workshop is your starting point for creating change in your local community.

Register your place today – and join the free workshop on Wednesday, February 28th, from 6-7:30pm in Melbourne CBD.

[Register here](#)