

New Murray Bridge service expands specialised perinatal mental health support to regional South Australia

- **With an estimated 552 parents across South Australia's South East region experiencing perinatal depression and anxiety each year, a new free* specialised perinatal mental health service opens in Murray Bridge**
- **Senator Marielle Smith will officially open South Australia's second Gidget House, at Murray Bridge Community Centre**
- **The new perinatal mental health service addresses a critical gap in support for families across the South East region, ensuring parents can access timely and specialised mental health care closer to home**

EMBARGO: 14 August 2026 – Following the launch of Gidget House Elizabeth at United Way South Australia earlier this year, Gidget Foundation Australia is expanding its South Australian footprint with the opening of Gidget House Murray Bridge at Murray Bridge Community Centre.

The opening comes as data from Gidget Foundation Australia reveals that 27% of parents in South Australia didn't think their symptoms were severe enough to seek help, and less than a quarter (24%) were able to speak to a psychologist or counsellor in person during the perinatal period.

Parents across South Australia's South East region can now access free* face-to-face and telehealth psychological therapy services closer to home through Gidget House Murray Bridge at Murray Bridge Community Centre. The new service will support regional families living in the South East region, where an estimated 552¹ parents will experience perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) each year.

The data from Gidget Foundation Australia reveals over half (57%) of regional parents across Australia said they relied on bulk billed support during their perinatal period and almost a third of parents (31%) in South Australia report they are unsure how to access perinatal mental health support.

With approximately 100,000 parents experiencing perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) annually in Australia, one in five mothers and one in ten fathers are impacted, underscoring the need for increased access to specialised perinatal mental health services across the country.

As Gidget Foundation Australia marks its 25th anniversary, it has supported more than 18,000 families through over 138,000 free* psychological therapy appointments nationally. Gidget House Murray Bridge at Murray Bridge Community Centre is one of 47 Gidget Houses across Australia and builds on Gidget Foundation Australia's commitment to expanding services to ensure parents have access to timely and specialised perinatal mental health care.

Senator Marielle Smith welcomes the new service, "Becoming a parent for the first time is a wondrous, incredible, life-changing experience. But it can also be bloody tough.

"Each year, hundreds of parents across South Australia's Southeast region will experience perinatal depression and anxiety.

"We cannot leave them to face it alone.

** The cost of services provided through Gidget House are funded through Medicare bulk billing. There are no out of pocket costs for up to 10 individual psychological therapy sessions per calendar year. A referral from a GP and a mental health treatment plan are required.*

¹ Based on 1,657 births pa in South Australia, South East region (ABS, Births Australia 2024)

"I have long advocated for greater investment in mental health services in Murray Bridge and am deeply proud of the Albanese Labor Government's investment in this service.

"I have no doubt that the support that will be provided by Gidget House Murray Bridge at Murray Bridge Community Centre will not only strengthen families, but save precious lives."

CEO of Gidget Foundation Australia, Arabella Gibson, says, "No parent should miss out on specialised perinatal mental health support because of where they live. Expanding into Murray Bridge means more families in South Australia can access timely, evidence-based care closer to home.

"In Gidget Foundation Australia's 25th year, the opening of our second Gidget House in South Australia is a significant milestone. Following the launch of our first South Australian Gidget House in Elizabeth earlier this year, this latest opening builds on that momentum by extending access to specialised perinatal mental health care for more families across regional South Australia."

Gidget House Murray Bridge operates in collaboration with the Murray Bridge Community Centre. Its central location in the South East of the state will make it easier for regional parents to access vital perinatal mental health support close to home.

Sarah Smith, Centre Manager at Murray Bridge Community Centre, welcomes the addition of Gidget Foundation Australia services to the regional family-focused centre.

"We are delighted to partner with Gidget Foundation Australia to provide a dedicated space for parents seeking perinatal mental health support. This partnership strengthens the network of support for the local and rural community, ensuring parents in Murray Bridge and surrounding communities can access specialised support without needing to travel to Adelaide."

Gidget Foundation Australia and its partners acknowledge the significant challenges faced by families, including barriers to access, stigma and the pressures of early parenthood, and remain committed to ensuring parents receive accessible and timely perinatal mental health care when they need it most.

For more information about Gidget Foundation Australia, Gidget House and the services the organisation provides, visit gidgetfoundation.org.au.

- Ends -

Media Call

Date: Friday, 14 August

Time: 10:30am to 12:00pm

Address: Gidget House Murray Bridge at Murray Bridge Community Centre
2 South Terrace, Murray Bridge SA 5253

Contact: MediaCast | Vinh Tran | 0402 361 266

About Gidget Foundation Australia

2026 marks Gidget Foundation Australia's 25-year anniversary. Gidget Foundation Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that exists to support the mental health of families, from pre-conception through to early infancy, to ensure they receive accessible, timely and specialised care.

As the leading national provider of perinatal mental health services, Gidget Foundation Australia provides, free* individual and group perinatal mental health psychological services delivered in-person and via telehealth. Gidget Foundation Australia also invests in its 200+ clinicians through innovative training, mentoring and supervision to meet growing service demand.

To access perinatal mental health support – those affected need to speak to a GP about a referral and a Mental Health Treatment Plan or contact Gidget Foundation Australia's Client Experience Team on 1300 GIDGET to discuss support options specific to their needs.

Although there have been incredible advances in perinatal mental health awareness, education and support since 2001, there is still so much more to do. Gidget Foundation Australia's key focus for the next 25 years is to transform perinatal mental health for the next generation.

For further information and helpful resources visit gidgetfoundation.org.au.

About Gidget

Gidget was the nickname of a vibrant young mother who tragically died by suicide while experiencing postnatal depression, a diagnosis she kept close to her heart.

Together, her loving family and friends created Gidget Foundation Australia determined that what happened to Gidget would not happen to others.

About the Citations

The data by Gidget Foundation Australia was carried out on a sample of 1,069 Australians in November 2025. Methodology: The data sample was weighted against ABS data for age, gender and location using an online survey that is independently conducted and verified PureProfile.