

The Gateway Gazette

Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities

Spring 2026



Soup, pom poms, ukuleles, one tiny chihuahua, and the best volunteers around – it was the perfect recipe for a wonderful National Volunteer Week celebration!

Our volunteers play a vital role across so many areas of Gateway – quite simply, we wouldn't be the same without them. It was great to be able to get together, break bread, share homemade soup, make pom poms, eat cake and enjoy each others company for the afternoon.

A special thank you to **Accidental Ukes** for filling the room with music, laughter and plenty of smiles, making the celebration even more memorable.



We acknowledge and respect the Traditional knowledge holders & custodians of the land on which we work, the Darug & Gundungurra people.



Thriving Together - Celebrating neurodivergent teens through art

This year we ran Thriving Together, our neuro-affirming art therapy groups for neurodivergent young people aged 12–16.

These small, creative, sensory-aware groups offered young people a safe space to explore identity, express themselves, and connect with peers who “get it.”

To celebrate their work, we hosted the **Under the Same Umbrella Art Exhibition** at Penrith Library in July. Families, community members and supporters joined us to view the thoughtful, bold and expressive artworks created throughout the program.

We were pleased to welcome **State Member for Penrith, Karen McKeown**, who attended the launch. The art therapy groups and exhibition were made possible through the **Strong and Resilient Communities** federal grant, supporting programs that build connection, wellbeing and inclusion.

We're grateful for this support and proud to showcase the creativity of young people.

In partnership with:



Strengthening the Sector We Love

Gateway is proud to support staff involvement in advocacy that strengthens the social and community services sector.

Our Intake Counsellor and Family Support Worker, Emma, is also Gateway's Australian Services Union (ASU) delegate. Through her involvement with the ASU, Emma advocates for better conditions for community sector workers across NSW and the ACT.

Over recent years, the ASU has achieved significant wins, including:

- introduction of 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave
- paid placements for social work students
- introduction of portable long service leave for community services workers.

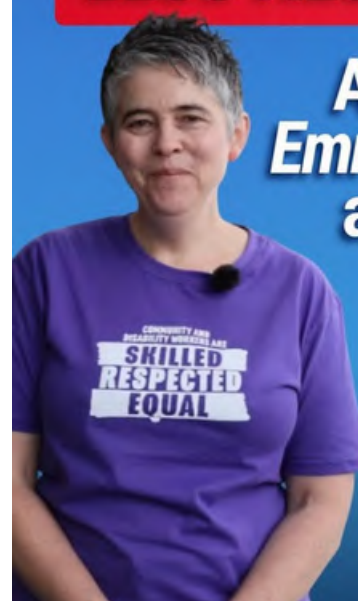
These achievements closely align with Gateway's commitment to supporting both our workforce and the families we serve.

Most recently, Emma has been involved in the ASU's campaign to ensure a fair and contemporary Award structure for the sector, including speaking at a large worker rally in Parramatta. The campaign contributed to the Fair Work Commission reconsidering proposed changes that could have disadvantaged thousands of workers.

By contributing to sector-wide improvements, we help strengthen not only our own organisation but the broader community services sector.



**MORE STRESSED,
LESS RESOURCES**



**ASU member
Emma has been
a community
worker for
18 years.**

Why she's
supporting our
campaign for a
decent pay rise



Our campaign to make teens feel seen this Christmas



When people think about Christmas, it's often the youngest children who come to mind. But for vulnerable teens, Christmas can be a time when they feel overlooked.

This year, we're running a **Teen Gift Card Campaign** as part of our Christmas Appeal.

By including **\$30 TEEN Gift Cards** in our Christmas hampers, we're giving young people the opportunity to choose something that's meaningful to them. Whether it's a new hoodie, favourite book or a small treat, having choice makes all the difference.

If you'd like to support the campaign, you can donate a **\$30 TEEN Gift Card** or make a financial contribution:

Purchase TEEN Gift Cards

Purchase \$30 TEEN Gift Cards and donate them to Gateway by posting or dropping off at 70 Old Bathurst Road, East Blaxland

Donate online or by EFT

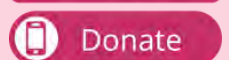
www.gatewayfamilyservices.org.au/page/donations

Account: Gateway Family Services – Gift Fund

BSB: 062 640

Acct Number: 1027 8910

Reference: TEEN cards



What's going on at Gateway?



We joined thousands of children across Australia to celebrate **National Simultaneous Storytime** at our North St Marys Playgroup, with special guests.



Our **Trivia Night Committee** has been hard at work preparing for our fundraiser on August 29th, hoping to repeat the success of last years' event.



Thank you to the amazing **Blaxland East Public School** community, who collected toiletries and hygiene items for our emergency relief pantry.



Our recent **End of Financial Year Winter Appeal** raised a whopping \$15,730.85 smashing our \$10,000 goal. Thanks to everyone who donated!



Our emergency relief pantry got a very special upgrade thanks to a local gentleman – preferring to remain anonymous – who handcrafted a work bench for our volunteers.

What's going on at Gateway?



A warm "thank you" to all of the local businesses and organisations who collected donations for our **Winter Warmers Food Drive**.



We said "farewell" to **social work student Emily**, and wish her all the best for the future. We know she'll go on to do amazing things in our sector.



Our playgroup team brought the classic story "**We're Going on a Bear Hunt**" to life with props and costumes – a full sensory experience.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



thank you

A massive thanks to **McGrath Real Estate Lower Blue Mountains** for their **incredible \$1000 donation** to our Essentials Program!



Donate

SUPPORT CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN NEED

Your kind donation provides food for local families who are doing it tough.

Follow us on social media



www.gatewayfamilyservices.org.au