

MICAH PROJECTS  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2013 - 2015

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**BREAKING SOCIAL ISOLATION BUILDING COMMUNITY**

MICAH PROJECTS INC



Breaking Social Isolation  
Building Community



MICAH PROJECTS  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2015  
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## BREAKING SOCIAL ISOLATION BUILDING COMMUNITY

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### Our vision

Our hope is to **create justice and respond to injustice** at the personal, social and structural levels in society, including government, church and business.

### Our mission

**To respond to people** who experience exclusion, poverty, injustice and social isolation so that they may experience inclusion, economic wellbeing, justice and connection within their community of choice.



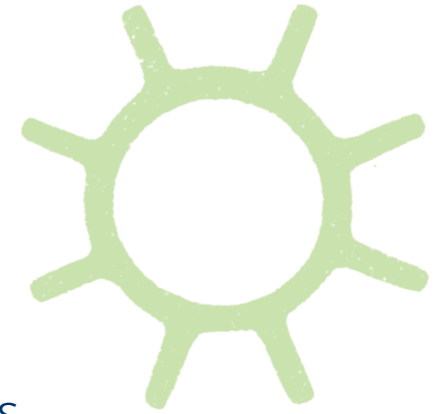
### Guiding principles

In responding to individuals, families, groups, communities and institutions, we believe that every adult and child has the right to:

- **a home, an income, healthcare, education, safety, dignity and connection with their community of choice**
- **access** to a broad range of personal, social, intellectual, economic and spiritual resources for personal and community wellbeing
- **forums** to participate in decisions which impact on their lives at an individual, social and structural level
- **equity**, acknowledging the impact of age, gender, economic status, disability, sexual orientation, culture and religious belief
- **opportunities** for processes that redress past and/or present experiences of neglect and abuse
- **resources** to enable restoration of relationships with self, family, community, social and religious institutions.

Micah Projects endorses the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

We acknowledge the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia** as the traditional owners of this land and support the right of Indigenous people to self determination and cultural expression.



## LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

Micah Projects was originally formed as a social justice initiative of the St Mary's Catholic community in South Brisbane (now an independent faith community). The community's vision to create a not-for-profit organisation was influenced by a desire to create a collective response to social justice.

Over a two year community consultation period many factors influenced the vision to create justice and respond to injustice including:

- Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were homeless on the streets of Brisbane
- The increase of rough sleepers around the church and parish home
- Requests for assistance by people seeking justice from abuse by clergy and religious organisations
- Issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and women's equality
- De-institutionalisation of people living with disability and mental illness.

It was from this position that Micah Projects first made its unswerving commitment to

social justice. We were named for the prophet Micah from the Jewish tradition, whose words represent our vision for a world in which we can support our efforts together to "act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly." We believe these three principles are in common with all people striving for a world that supports the dignity of each human being and a just society.

Micah Projects was incorporated in 1995, and we are now well established as an independent community organisation, which continues to grow as we provide services across the Brisbane metropolitan region. By the 2012/2013 financial year, we were providing support to 3530 adults and 1114 children, and recorded almost 52 000 casual contacts with people for information, referral, transport and financial assistance.

Our support and advocacy services to individuals and families remain underpinned by our steadfast dedication, focus and determination to deliver on our social justice mandate.



"Having people who care and someone who believes in me makes all the difference."

ANGUS. Photography: Embellysh.

### **We are committed to breaking social isolation and building community with the most vulnerable individuals, families and children in our community.**

While governments are providing more funding for community based service delivery, the community services sector is now providing essential frontline services which are more flexible. These services divert people from more expensive acute services such as law and order, healthcare and prisons.

We look to the future against a backdrop of rising poverty, increasing demand for our services, changing policy and regulatory environments, and greater competition for funding in the Community Services sector. These present both challenge and opportunity, and we must recognise and take

them on in equal measure if we are to stay true to our commitment.

Our Strategic Plan 2013-2015 has been developed for that very purpose. Through extensive consultation with our Board, staff and other stakeholders, the Strategic Plan will be the reference point against which all of our activities will be developed. It will empower us to keep our mission and guiding principles ahead of us at all times, and to build on the strength of our united vision to improve the lives of people experiencing poverty, homelessness and social exclusion.

Michael Kelly  
Chairperson

Karyn Walsh  
Coordinator

## OUR GOALS



The Strategic Plan describes the **desired outcomes** we strive to achieve with the people we work with.

**01**

Children, families and vulnerable adults have a home which is safe, secure and affordable.

**02**

Children, women, and vulnerable adults live free from violence in their intimate relationships, homes and the community.

**03**

Children, families and vulnerable adults have enhanced access to appropriate healthcare.

**04**

Vulnerable adults are supported in sustaining their personal recovery and stability.

**05**

Infants and toddlers have their developmental needs met within the family and community, and children and young people are engaged in school and/or training.

**06**

Families are supported in healthy, safe and secure family environments through initiatives that strengthen them.

**07**

Children, families and vulnerable adults are supported to access financial assistance and economic opportunities.

**08**

Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants who were in out-of-home care receive justice and have the opportunity for a positive future for themselves and their families.

**09**

Children, families and vulnerable adults have connections to resources, services and opportunities in the community.

**10**

Micah Projects is a sustainable, responsive and efficient organisation, and supports an engaged and responsive workforce to achieve our goals.

We have a committed and supportive Board, passionate, skilled and knowledgeable staff, and inspiring volunteers and supporters.

We have ongoing dialogue with the people we support, and we continue to develop strong partnerships which unite us all in a common mission.

## OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

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Use a proactive approach to reach people where they are on the streets and in their homes

At Micah Projects we believe that it is as important to prevent homelessness as it is to manage its effects. By proactively supporting those who are vulnerable, supporting them to access housing and sustain a tenancy, and to stabilise their health, we know we will be supporting people to a position of strength in their lives which will reduce their risk of homelessness.

Create partnerships and opportunities for collaboration

We believe that by working in partnership and collaboration with other organisations, the people with whom we are engaged will have greater access to services, resources and opportunity in the community. Whether by pooling resources, addressing service gaps, adopting a multi-disciplinary approach to an issue, or providing integrated support to vulnerable people through a single service, we will continue to enhance our existing partnerships and identify opportunities for new collaborations.

Establish accessible hubs which connect people to services and resources

By working together with a range of organisations and services in one place, Micah Projects believes we can provide a more integrated and effective response to the needs of vulnerable people. Over the next two years we will build on the service hubs already in place, to further co-locate services at the Brisbane Homelessness Service Centre, the Wellspring Hub for Families and Children, Brisbane Common Ground, Trinity Place and Caterpillar House.

Evaluate, innovate and adapt

At Micah Projects, we believe that we should always be confident that what we're doing is making a difference, and that we should always seek to improve the services we deliver. Our programs and services will continue to be based on evidence and best practice in the field; we will continue to develop and advocate for new initiatives across our services; and we will continue to evaluate all of our activities.

Consumer, citizen and community engagement

Micah Projects seeks to break social isolation by cultivating a culture of acceptance, integration and shared endeavour, and by allowing people the opportunity for their voice to be heard. We aim to broaden the participation of interested people from the community, by providing a context for them to learn about and make connections to our work, to contribute to what we do or to advocate for change. We know that by establishing networks of people with shared experiences and seeking feedback from users of our services, we can better respond to the needs and expectations of those with whom we engage.



## OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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Micah Projects is committed to breaking social isolation and building community with the most vulnerable individuals, families and children in our communities. We will do this by working with children, their families, and vulnerable adults to ensure:

### 01

**Children, families and vulnerable adults have a home which is safe, secure and affordable.**

To achieve this we will:

- **Prevent homelessness** among individuals, families and children by enabling access to resources and services to ensure safety in their home and a sustainable tenancy in affordable housing
- Provide **assertive outreach** to individuals, families and children who are living in cars, on the street and in parks, to end homelessness, one person, one family at a time
- Provide **triage and diversion** services to individuals and families who are homeless, by assessment and referral to

- best housing options, healthcare and community services
- Provide **outreach family support** to children and families to connect to services for children and adults to move from homelessness to home
- Provide **outreach support** to individuals, families and their children to **sustain tenancy** through coordination with housing providers, connection and referral to services to improve their **quality of life**
- Promote **supportive housing** for individuals and families who need it
- Promote **community-based supported accommodation** for people living with disability.

### 02

**Children, families and vulnerable adults live free from violence in their intimate relationships, homes and the community.**

To achieve this we will:

- Provide outreach and **specialist domestic violence** services through the Brisbane Domestic Violence Service to women and children in their home and community, as well as to others who are experiencing domestic and family violence
- **Coordinate an interagency response** to focus on protecting the highest risk victims and their children by early identification and support to safety
- Provide **community education**, events and services to communicate that domestic and family violence is never okay.

### 03

Children, families and vulnerable adults have enhanced access to appropriate healthcare.

To achieve this we will:


- Deliver services through **partnerships**, and create **multi-disciplinary teams** for an integrated response to housing, healthcare and community services with people who are vulnerable and/or homeless, living with disability and or mental illness
- Provide **integrated, multi-disciplinary services** to young pregnant and parenting women and their children, at the **Early Years Hub**, Caterpillar Place
- Create a community-based **Health Centre** through partnerships with St Vincent's Private Hospital, Brisbane, Mater Health Services, Greater Metro South Brisbane Medicare Local, Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local and the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health. The Centre will focus on integrating primary healthcare, mental health and addiction care, coordination and discharge planning with vulnerable people, chronic disease management, preventive health and treatment of acute disease.

Right: Dane with his Mum Melissa and Dr Hope at Young Mothers for Young Women's 4th Trimester group.

Photography: Embellysh.







“Given where I’ve come from, I want to help other people. To show them that it’s not all down and out.”

HERB. Photography: Embellysh.

## 04

Vulnerable adults are supported to sustain their personal recovery, stability and community connections.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with individuals living in level 3 supported accommodation facilities seeking assistance with their **personal goals and plans** to support their wellbeing
- Provide **information and access to resources** supporting individual wellbeing and understanding of their personal journey
- **Enhance services** to people who have persistent and chronic mental illness by working together with the **Partners in Recovery Consortium** led by Greater Metro South Brisbane Medicare Local
- Ensure the workforce is trained to support people within a **recovery and trauma informed practice** framework
- Provide opportunities for **peer support and education** with people experiencing mental illness
- Assist people in the **management of their personal healthcare** activities
- Sustain **community connections** and a home with people living with disability.

## 05

Infants and toddlers have their developmental needs met within the family and community, and children and young people are engaged in school and/or training.

To achieve this we will:

- Deliver **early childhood programs** that ease the impact on children’s wellbeing of adversity and trauma
- Engage with young pregnant and parenting women early to **promote stability** and to **prevent removal of children** to out-of-home care at birth
- Work in partnership with parents to **achieve their aspirations** with their children
- Ensure **child aware practices**, risk assessment and appropriate child services are provided within the organisation, the family and community.

## 06

Family functioning, safety and stability is strengthened in order to support family preservation in healthy, safe and secure family environments.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with parents to care for and protect their children in **safe and healthy relationships** through improved parenting skills, confidence and capacities
- Mitigate the impacts of **poverty, adversity and trauma** through practical support, referral, planned support and advocacy in accessing services, resources and opportunity in the community
- Provide services to **prevent removal of children and support reunification** when removal occurs.

## 07

Children, families and vulnerable adults have access to financial assistance and economic opportunities.

To achieve this we will:

- Resolve homelessness by providing **financial assistance** to access housing and establish a home
- Provide financial assistance to **ensure safety, sustain tenancy and access services** in the community
- Provide integrated, planned support for **employment and training** through the Jobs Network and Family Support Teams



“It didn’t matter what obstacle we were faced with, the Family Support and Advocacy Team seemed to find a way to get around it.”

ELIZAH, AMENDA, AND ELLIDON WITH THEIR MOTHER ELISA.

Photography: Embellysh.

- Use a dual generational approach, focusing on **early childhood development** with preschool aged children, and **workforce development** with families
- Facilitate access to **education and training opportunities** in a supportive and flexible environment
- Develop **social enterprises** to promote community participation and economic opportunity
- Develop and implement **young women's pathways** to employment and education programs.

## 08

**Justice is achieved and a positive future created for individuals and their families who as children were in out-of-home care: Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants.**

To achieve this we will:

- **Work with Forgotten Australians** in the provision of services, advocacy and community awareness
- Deliver **Find and Connect services** to help Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants access records and reconnect with family
- Support people to engage with the **Royal Commission** into Institutional Responses to Childhood Sexual Abuse
- **Create awareness** in the community about the realities of life as children and young people experienced by Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants
- Work with others to enhance the **capacity of the**

**community** to understand and respond to survivors of childhood abuse (including sexual abuse)

- Advocate for **social and legislative change** with survivors in seeking redress, accountability and justice for crimes of the past, including engagement with the Royal Commission.

## 09

**Children, families and vulnerable adults have connections to resources, services and opportunities in the community.**

To achieve this we will:

- Link people with **social and recreational opportunities** in the community
- Support people living with disability and/or mental illness to engage in **activities and services that are meaningful** for them personally
- Work in **partnership with Supported Accommodation providers** to link residents to healthcare and community networks
- Continue to create pathways and opportunities to reduce social isolation including the **Annual Moonlight Magic Dinner Dance**
- Provide **advocacy** to support people to navigate systems and services
- Identify opportunities for partnership with other organisations so that people can receive support through a **single, integrated service**
- **Connect people** living with disability with family, friends, services, communities and supportive housing.



“As a registered volunteer with Micah Projects I make a weekly investment in the community and myself.”

MICHAEL. Photography: Embellysh.

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## 10

**Micah Projects is a sustainable, responsive and efficient organisation.**

To achieve this we will:

- **Build the capacity of our workforce** to meet current and future needs, train and support staff in their technical and career development, and develop our leaders through a Sustainable Leadership Model
- Enhance our **volunteer program** and value our volunteers through coordinated information and communication systems
- Enhance our mobile information technology systems so we can **access and collect information in an outreach environment**
- Ensure our business is able to continue supporting families to be financially, socially and environmentally sustainable
- Further develop our **partnership programs** and continue to **work collaboratively** with all key stakeholders
- Enhance the **environmental sustainability** of our workplaces
- Review organisational practices regularly to ensure the sustainability of the organisation
- Provide the Board of Micah Projects Inc with support to fulfill its governance role consistent with best practice in this area
- Prepare the organisation to be **engaged with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**.

## SIX STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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01

**500 Lives 500 Homes campaign** to end rough sleeping, and children and families in cars, motels and overcrowding.

02

Develop and implement the **Homeless to Home Healthcare Partnership Strategy** for integrated and enhanced health services to vulnerable children, adults and families in Brisbane.

03

Develop processes toward a **social enterprise** with people who are economically excluded and socially isolated.

04

**Early intervention family support and early childhood programs** to support family preservation and early reunification of children with their families and culture.

05

**Support people** to engage with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

06

Develop a **supportive housing/multi-functional facility** to realign our existing services for children and families to build strong and resilient families, and reduce the number of children entering out-of-home care.



Eva, Homeless to Home Healthcare Clinical Nurse on duty with Shelley from the Street to Home team.

Photography: Erin Ebert.

# MICAH PROJECTS INC



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Building Community

## MICAH PROJECTS INC

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