SURVIVOR GUIDE

for

SOLE PARENTS

(Northern Beaches Area)

See also our Facebook page
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“There is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved.”
George Sand, 1804 – 1876

Who we are ...

We are a group of Diploma-level students studying community services who are or have been sole parents.

As a community development project, we recognised there was a need to compile this detailed Guide to help other sole parents at and after the point of separation, and to save them the trouble we went through at this traumatic time.

We hope you find our work a valuable tool to help you and your family. We wish you every success and happiness. Happy reading!

We take this opportunity to thank:

- Northern Beaches TAFE and, in particular, Merelyn Langley, the co-ordinator of the TAFE Single & Teenage Parents’ Program for her support and mentoring of the Sole Parents Project Team in making our Guide a reality; and

- Warringah Council who provided funding for 100 copies of this Guide to be printed for distribution to the community.

With our very best wishes,

❤ Sole Parents Project Team
Survival story – 'I'm not happy, you're not happy, we are separated'

My name is Bree. I became a sole parent in 2008 when my baby was ten months old. I got told ‘I'm not happy, you're not happy, we are separated’. I wasn't given any opportunity to work on it, or marriage counselling, or have another go. My ex-husband made the decision and I had to live by it. That day, I went into shock. All of my fears became realities. I came from a broken home and I never wanted that for my child. To this day (five years later), I can only guess what went wrong. I was never told exactly and that's very frustrating – I wasted a lot of time wondering 'why?'. Also, the term 'single mother' repulsed me. It conjured up images of living in a trailer park, having nine kids, fag hanging out the mouth, new boyfriend every night – I'm sure you get my drift.

Severe shock, anxiety and depression became my good friends. I would wake up in the morning and felt like my bum was on fire and I had to move fast. The baby got bundled into the pram and we roamed the streets of Sydney – rain, hail or shine – every day. This exercise assisted me greatly with my mental state which was manic/panic. I broke down in my GP's office and he saw that I had no coping skills for this 'adjustment' to sole parenthood. He referred me to a psychiatrist under the Medicare scheme as I qualified for five free consultations. We did psychotherapy (still don't know how this works but it's good stuff!) together and I grew stronger and developed stress coping skills. I also lost weight through stress and that was a bonus!

At separation time, I worked part-time, 15 hours per week and now had sole responsibility for a Sydney mortgage! With fear and shame, I went and talked to my employer about my new 'status'. That was a good move as my workplace supported me greatly with extra hours and offers of counselling. I didn't think I would qualify for Centrelink but I wrote a general letter and, to my absolute surprise, I did qualify and was supported by way of parenting payment single, family tax benefit – parts A and B, pensioner education supplement, JET assistance and the blue pensioner card.

I was too ashamed to tell my family and hid the news. They made a surprise visit one day when I was doing 'doona therapy' and not looking so good. My horrible secret came out and they supported me all the way – phone calls, cards and flowers on Mother's Day (which I never would have got), took me for restaurant meals for my birthday and special occasions, bought my child necessities (clothes, etc) when I had no money to and spoilt my child (toys, etc). They gave me courage to share my 'failure' with others and I formed other support networks (my child's playgroup, fellowship, other sole parents, TAFE friends, work colleagues, church, etc). These people sympathised with me, loved me, cared what happened to me and my child, and kept an eye on us.

I have not had another relationship since separation and this gave me an opportunity to discover myself and new things. I felt empowered when I could do the oil and water/pump the tyres/minor repairs to my car, change a light bulb and DIY little repairs to my home, bought a new lounge, etc. Because money is always tight, I follow religiously the Best Weekend section of the Daily Telegraph, the Noticeboard and What's On sections in the Manly Daily, Sydney's Child and AUSSIE Kids (free magazines) for free/cheap activities, and websites such as Kidspot Australia, Living Social Sydney, etc, network with everyone, am imaginative and creative with my child (we set up a vet hospital at home as he loves Bondi Vet), and enter every competition under the sun (and sometimes win – Easter Show tickets!). I have worked so hard to create a happy home environment where my child and I don't go without or feel less than others, and that requires thinking outside the box and ingenuity.

“I dreamed a thousand paths, I woke and walked my own.”
Chinese proverb

1 Name changed to protect identity.
The worst thing I did after separation was still have intimate relations with my ex-husband. Stupidly, it gave me hope that we might get back together. That's the only reason I did it. That act was desperate and so damaging to my self-esteem and confidence. Each time I realised I had been used again, I got really angry and would start fighting with my ex-husband. I don't recommend this to anyone at all.

I still have fear of the future and financial insecurity but it's not chronic these days. I take the attitude that whatever happens, I can deal with it. As hard as it has been, I wouldn't change a thing because of the person I am today. Most things aren't the end of the world and surviving this trauma has made me a stronger, more compassionate person. I like to help other sole parents at that horrendous separation point and pass on my knowledge. Now, I really enjoy being by myself with my child. We run our own ship. I hope this helps you and may God bless you always.

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
Crisis support

The Salvation Army, Manly

Address: 59 Pittwater Road, Manly
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-4.45pm
Tel: 137 258
1300 363 622 (24 hour counselling service)
9977 1304 (Manly Corps)
Email: manly.corps@au.e.salvationarmy.org
Web: www.salvos.org.au

What is it?
Offers practical and financial help and support in the following areas:
• refuge and accommodation (including domestic violence support)
• financial counselling
• drugs and alcohol
• suicide prevention and bereavement
• family and personal issues
• problem gambling
• legal services
• employment and training
• youth issues
• court and prison support
• telephone counselling
• female welfare officer available
• emergency relief
• crisis support
• art therapy
• self-development courses
• hot showers

Lifeline Northern Beaches

Address: 310 Sydney Road, Balgowlah
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 9949 5522
131 114 (24 hour crisis line)
Email: admin@lifelinenb.org.au
Web: www.lifeline.org.au/northernbeaches

What is it?
Offers 24 hour telephone crisis support and other support services including face-to-face counselling, financial counselling, a variety of support groups, suicide crisis support program, welfare assistance, stress management workshops and emergency relief.
Manly Community Centre

Address:  12 Wentworth Street, Manly
Hours:  Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm
Tel:  9977 1066
Email:  mcc1@bigpond.net.au
Web:  www.manlycommunitycentre.com.au

What is it?
This is a drop-in centre that offers:
- counselling: individuals, couples and families
- domestic violence support and advocacy including a six week ‘Building Blocks’ support group and ongoing women’s support group
- housing and accommodation: tenancy help and emergency accommodation
- legal and financial: free advice
- health and well-being: nurse visits

St Vincent de Paul Society

Address:  638 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours:  Monday-Friday, 9am-4.30pm (by appointment only)
Tel:  9905 0424
Email:  nb.manager@vinnies.org.au
Web:  www.vinnies.org.au

What is it?
Assists people in need and combat social injustice across Australia. People are often provided with furniture, clothing and household goods free of charge through the Society’s Vinnies Centres. Centres also offer affordable clothing and goods to the wider community. Services include:
- home visitation
- addiction services
- learning services
- family services
- mental health
- community support
- youth services
- Vinnies shops
- holiday accommodation
- no interest loans
- financial counselling service – assistance is given through financial assessment, negotiation with creditors, information, education and referrals. The aim is to offer options. Service is free and confidential and aims to assist people experiencing financial hardship.

Until you’ve counted little fingers, played with little toes, held a little hand, kissed a little nose, rubbed a little tummy, cleaned those little ears, changed a little bottom and wiped away little tears, you will never know the feeling of love between a parent and their child

I am sharing this because my children are the best thing that ever happened to me and I love them with all I am.
Survival story – 'My time of hell'

My name is Emily. Three months after giving birth to our first child, my husband decided to call it quits. He said he didn't love me anymore!

As we were living in his parents' holiday house until our house settled (we were intending to re-locate back to Sydney), he kicked me out in the street! Thankfully, I had my parents, brothers and really supportive friends to see me through 'my time of hell'.

My parents kindly took my son and me back with open arms into their home. Thank goodness! Initially, I felt embarrassed to tell people we had split as I was the only person I knew that had divorced. My parents, my brothers, my aunties and uncles still, to this day, are all happily married. Then came my self-doubt. What was wrong with me? What did I do wrong? I didn't have a cent to my name as I was not working so soon after giving birth, and I most definitely was not expecting this to happen to me. All our clothing, except for a few items we had in an overnight bag, were still in storage from the move. This was the worst time in my life!

After shedding many tears and some time had passed, I thought I needed to get myself sorted out, if not for me, for my son. I felt guilty and sad for my son that he was so young and was without his dad on a daily basis. I felt bad and embarrassed for my parents that I had failed. Now, it was time for action! I am a strong-minded and strong-willed person so I went to Centrelink and started receiving some single parent benefits. Next, I got a job during the weeknights whilst my son was sleeping so I wasn't missing out on him, and my parents were at home to mind him. I kept myself busy during the weekdays with my son, and did some things for myself (which I always put off) which took my mind off my husband and our situation. My best friends would always ask me to their house most weekends, even if they knew I wouldn't go sometimes, which really helped me. Really, I just keeping busy and time was my saviour.

At the time of my break-up, I was in the worst situation of my life. I have proved to myself that I am strong and have learned from my past to help with my present. I am now a mother of two (almost three children) and am with a loving partner. Life does get better!

Free meal services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army Soup Kitchen</td>
<td>59 Pittwater Road, Manly</td>
<td>Monday-Thursday, 8.30am-9am (breakfast) Monday-Friday, 11am-12noon (lunch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Mission Cafe</td>
<td>Outside Uniting Church, Gilbert Park, Manly</td>
<td>Saturday, 6.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mathew's Church</td>
<td>The Corso, Manly</td>
<td>Monday, 6pm-8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manly Community Centre</td>
<td>12 Wentworth Street, Manly</td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm (drop-in coffee bar/refreshments) Wednesday, 11am-2pm (Oz Harvest delivery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John's Anglican Church</td>
<td>Oaks Avenue, Dee Why</td>
<td>Wednesday, 7pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name changed to protect identity.
Survival story – 'I wasn't drowning and I wasn't swimming, just treading water!'

My name is Eden and I often describe my first marriage as treading water. I explain it to people in the sense that 'I wasn't drowning and I wasn't swimming, just treading water!'

I feel I am a very loyal person and once I commit to something, I see it through and that's how I viewed my marriage.

Eleven years to the day, my ex-husband did me the enormous favour of leaving me. I never would have had the strength or courage to leave. I was uneducated, had been out of the workforce for seven years and was technologically unskilled. I remember feeling numb. Who was I without my partner? Was I capable of bringing up two children on my own? How financially was I going to do it?

Then came the guilt, yes he left me but I knew I had played a part in it. I was a failure at the one thing I had always wanted: marriage and a family. My parents and both siblings had divorced, I thought I might be the one to make it. I knew I had failed my boys and felt sad for the life they hoped for.

Then came the baby steps. With the support of friends, I put one foot in front of the other. I took myself into Centrelink and applied for the sole parent pension. I got friends to show me the way around a computer and I applied for a job and got it.

Soon my self-doubt turned into empowerment and I told myself I am loveable and I deserve to be loved. I stopped being a cynic and became optimistic again.

I enrolled in a TAFE course and started achieving things on my own. I sold my house and found a new place for my boys and me to live. Slowly my life came back on track and I was self-sufficient. This was a massive learning curve in my own development and I now believe we are all better off after the decision to divorce.

I am now re-married and am the happiest I have ever been. I learnt the life lesson of it's not what possessions we have, but the people in our lives that make us truly happy. I now have new inner strength and am a capable woman and honestly believe that without this 'life hurdle', I would be a different person today. What doesn’t kill us makes us stronger!

Name changed to protect identity.
Medical & dental services (all bulk-billed)

Specialist Medicare services available

If you suffer from a condition that has lasted, or is predicted to last, for six months or longer, you may be eligible for Medicare assistance under the Chronic Disease Management (CDM) scheme.

Chronic conditions covered include:
- asthma
- diabetes
- depression
- arthritis
- stroke
- cancer
- heart disease
- high blood pressure

Eligible patients must have a chronic (or terminal) medical condition, which requires complex care that is being managed by a GP under strategies known as GP Management Plans and Team Care Arrangements. These strategies allow most patients to be referred by their GP for up to five Medicare rebateable allied health services a year.

What can you claim?
- Exercise physiology
- Musculoskeletal treatments
- Podiatry
- Psychological treatment
- Dietetics
- Midwifery
- IVF
- Weight-loss surgery
- Occupational therapy

Dee Why Family Medical Centre

Address: Shop 9, 7 Howard Avenue, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 7am-7pm
Saturday, 9am-4pm, Sunday, 9am-1pm
Tel: 1300 333 949
Email: info@deewhymedical.com.au
Web: www.deewhymedical.com.au

What is it?
Bulk-billing medical centre with many doctors and other services under the one roof including:
- pharmacy
- physiotherapist
- social worker
- psychologist
- gynaecologist
- podiatrist
- dietician
- pathology
Queenscliff Community Health Centre

Address: Cnr Lakeside Crescent and Palm Avenue, North Manly  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm  
Tel: 9466 2500  
Web: www.nscchealth.nsw.gov.au

What is it?
• Child and family health
• Developmental and behavioural paediatrics
• Child speech pathology
• Child occupational therapy
• Child and adolescent mental health
• Drug and alcohol services
• Health information services

Mona Vale Hospital Adult Dental Clinic

Contact: Northern Sydney Local Health District Oral Health Services  
Address: In grounds of Mona Vale Hospital, Coronation Street, Mona Vale  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 7.30am-4.30pm  
Tel: 1300 789 404  

What is it?
Free public dental service for adults who hold a Centrelink concession card. The service provides routine dental treatment including examinations, x-rays, fillings, extractions, dentures and oral hygiene instruction.

Dee Why Child Dental Clinic

Contact: Northern Sydney Local Health District Oral Health Services  
Address: In grounds of Dee Why Public School, Fisher Road, Dee Why  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 7.30am-4.30pm  
Tel: 1300 789 404  

What is it?
Free public dental service available to all children under 18. The service provides routine dental treatment including examinations, x-rays, fillings, extractions and oral hygiene instruction.
Survival story – Candy’s Story

I first became a single mum in 1991. My son was ten months old and I was six weeks pregnant with my daughter. At the time, my application for permanent residency was with the Department of Immigration, which meant I was not entitled to any Centrelink assistance.

My ex-husband would give me $250 per week for my rent and I would have to go into his posh offices to pick up the money every week. I found this humiliating having to ask him for money.

My ex-husband had friends who were barristers, who would represent him in court at no cost, as my ex-husband would do work for them on an ongoing basis.

His lawyers drew up the divorce papers for me to sign and when I asked about the property we owned in Kangaroo Valley, they told me the bank had repossessed it. I then received divorce papers and the custody battle began. This lasted for about eight years. My ex-husband never paid any child support for the two children. When the divorce went through, part of the settlement stated that my ex-husband had to pay the medical bills for the birth of our son. My ex-husband told the Child Support Agency that he had paid these bills, so I was now in debt to him. I went to Legal Aid for advice, they told me they could help with the divorce and access but they couldn’t do anything in regards to settlement and child support. I never received any child support for the children as my ex-husband had his own business and would keep his income at a rate where he didn’t have to pay any child support. When our daughter turned 18, my ex-husband started to declare his earnings.

We lived on the poverty line for a couple of years, where I would have to get financial assistance from St Vinnie’s, Lifeline and the sole parents pension.

When I became a single parent, most of my friends that were in couples stopped including my children and me in their social circles. My husband had planted the seed in me that I was worthless and who else would have me.

I married again two years later and had another three children. This marriage was a happy marriage until my daughter was born and then my husband had the pressures of supporting three children and a wife, along with the custody fight that was happening with my ex-husband. This marriage was very rocky and the children and I suffered domestic violence. This went on for years with the Police being called on numerous occasions. The last fight we had ended with me having to receive hospital treatment for seven stiches to my face. Through meeting Sandra, the Domestic Violence Officer at Manly Police station, I was then given information on services available to my children and me. This started with me doing a domestic violence course at the women’s refuge in Dee Why, and my children receiving counselling. I wanted my children to grow up knowing that violence was not normal and that it was not their fault. The women’s refuge and St Vinnie’s gave me so much support and empathy, I was offered court support and help with getting onto the Housing list, which resulted in us being housed in government housing. When I look back on what we went through, I could not have survived without the support and payments from Centrelink and other non-government organisations.

Today, my eldest son is studying forensics at uni, my eldest daughter has just completed her hairdressing apprenticeship and has gone on a world trip, my next daughter has just started her own business and my two younger boys are still in school. I have been studying for the past three years and I am very proud of how far we have come as a family and how well adjusted my children are. None of the children are in contact with their fathers.

“The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803 – 1882

Name changed to protect identity.
Further education

TAFE Programs for Women

Contact: Northern Beaches TAFE
Address: 154 Old Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm
Tel: 131 674
Email: nsi.study@tafensw.edu.au
Web: www.nsi.tafensw.edu.au

What is it?
- **Work Opportunities for Women (WOW)** – WOW assists women who are entering the workforce for the first time or re-entering employment or study after many years. Students focus on the development of communication skills, along with skills and knowledge to access employment and further education.
- **Career Education and Employment for Women (CEEW)** – CEEW aims to help women develop new skills to enhance study, job and career options (Hornsby campus only).
- **Work Wise Women (WWW)** – WWW's initiative aims to increase women’s participation in information technology and address the barriers to this growing industry where participation by men is considerably higher.
- **Digi-Girls Program for Women (Digi-Girls)** – this program is for women to improve their technical skills for specific purposes in a supportive environment. Targeting home-based, micro and small business women operators to advise ways that technology can help build their business. Program recognises the need for short sessions which can fit in around family responsibilities. In general, programs are half-day, sometimes requiring more than one session.

Jobs, Education and Training Scheme (JET)

Contact: Department of Human Resources (formerly Centrelink)
Address: 660-664 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm
Tel: 136 150

What is it?
Child care fee assistance while studying. JET child care fee assistance’s current rate is a parental co-contribution of $1.00 per child per hour of care (up from 10 cents co-contribution).
TAFE Single & Teenage Parents’ Program

Contact: Northern Beaches TAFE
Address: 154 Old Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Tel: 9941 5246 or 131 674
Email: merelyn.langley@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.nsi.tafensw.edu.au

What is it?
Eligible students will receive mentoring, assistance with job seeking, plus workshops on topics such as job skills, personal presentation, parenting and life skills.

Student Assistance Scheme (SAS)

Contact: Contact your School Principal directly

What is it?
Provides funding to government schools to assist families in the payment of school-related expenses. SAS funds can be used for excursions and camps, sport, subject contributions, textbooks and stationery needs, clothing/uniforms and footwear, but not general school contributions. Parents/carers need to make application to the school principal for consideration. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and are treated with empathy and confidentiality.

“I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship.”
Louisa May Alcott, 1832 – 1888
Survival story – Angel in my corner

Hi my name is Ruby and I am a sole parent. Just saying that makes me feel as if I'm about to deliver my sob story at the weekly 'AA' meeting. Well, I can assure you I am not. I don't look at being a single parent as a shortcoming. In fact, I find it quite empowering. Sure, financially it is daunting and depressing, but some strong lessons in life have shown me it's not money that makes you happy.

I have had a fortunate life with plenty of highs and my fair share of lows. I am blessed with a very supportive family and friends who are there for me in the good times and the bad. Being a single parent was a better option for me as my ex-partner has always been employed as a casual labourer and loves his beer and horses, which basically meant he couldn't support us financially or emotionally. It wasn't the lack of money that finally broke the camel's back, it was not sharing the same responsibility I felt towards our son. Hey, I have my issues as well. I am far from perfect but after countless arguments and dramas, I finally realized we were not on the same page. This is not to say my ex-partner doesn't love our son as much as I do, it is just a fact that after fighting for a cause for so long, it somehow gets lost by the wayside of what you are fighting for: Love, Trust, Loyalty? Who knows in the end.

Two years ago I found myself homeless with a child and suitcase for six weeks over the Christmas period, not a long time in hindsight but felt like a life time, trust me. I was walking around the streets of Dee Why on a hot day and I just had nothing left. I walked into the Salvation Army in Fisher Road and broke down. They quickly explained they didn't help with accommodation and referred me on to Housing which they may as well have said 'Go and buy yourself a Lotto ticket.' I had already been to Housing and the guy there said 'Well, if you can't afford to live in the area, you will have to move somewhere you can.' I told him this is where my friends and family are, but that didn't seem to make an ounce of difference. Isolation, really? Is this what it had come down to?

Funny thing KARMA! Whilst I was in the Salvo's, I had remembered reading an article in the Manly Daily. On the front cover was a woman and her four children with their suitcases, this was shortly after I had my son. I read the article intently. It was pleading for the public to help find this mother, and similar cases, affordable or temporary accommodation. I empathised greatly with their situation and thought I could offer a mum with one child a room if it meant it could help a person get back on their feet. So I rang! Offering my spare room, I had a good chat with the lady on the phone, she took my details and that was the end of that.

Fast forward two years, I'm standing in the Salvo's broken, no avenues left and remembered I had spoken to a lady about helping parents find housing. I asked them if they knew of her and how I could get in contact. 'Oh, you mean Margret from Pregnancy Help?' Yes, they knew who I was talking about and gave me her phone number. I left feeling revitalized. There was a small chance this lady might be able to help. I rang and went to see Margret, it was like an angel had finally landed in my corner, what a woman and what a life's work of helping women who find themselves exactly in the position I was in. She knows the system and how it doesn't really work in your favour. She said to me 'Just get a place', we will source the money from various fundraisers we have done over Christmas and there was some petty cash in this organisation that she had access to. I left the meeting with Margret with a double bounce in my step.

Now this is where KARMA also comes into play. As I am leaving this meeting the phone rings. It is one of the many agents I had made enquiries and applications to. He had got my message about wanting to apply for a flat and said he could meet me there in about ten minutes. I know, I couldn't believe the timing myself either. I went straight to the viewing with my new found confidence and sheer desperation. Oh, and what do you know? This place could not have been more perfect. I basically spilled my guts to the nicest realtor I have ever met in my life, thought I was going to get down on hands and knees at one stage, but held my composure. He said the golden words 'If you want it, it's yours'.

Name changed to protect identity.
Hallelujah, it felt like Christmas all over again! I felt like I had won Lotto! That was on the Friday, I moved in the following Wednesday. Yeah for me! For doing it tough for so long and coming out the other end of the affordable housing crisis on the northern beaches and I did it on my own. Yes, I received assistance from a charity organisation, which reiterates how fortunate we are to live in a country that supports the most vulnerable.

I would just like to make a special thanks to **MARGRET** from Pregnancy Help at Brookvale Community Centre. She is an inspiration and made me feel as if I was just sitting down and having a chat with my old nan. That is what defines community service work and all those who contribute to the welfare of others. Mine is just one of many cases as a sole parent but sometimes, just sometimes, it is your turn for some good luck to come your way.

And to my dear beautiful grandmother who is missed every day, she used to have some good sayings, and this one is my favourites and goes out to the angel in my corner (Margret):

**Life is mostly froth and bubble**
**Two things stand like stone**
**Kindness in another's troubles**
**And courage in your own**

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes

The wise man should be prepared for everything that does not lie within his control.”
Pythagoras
Housing services

Homeless Persons Helpline

Tel: 1800 234 566

What is it?
Emergency accommodation.

Manly Warringah Women’s Resource Centre Ltd

Address: PO Box 556, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm
Tel: 9971 4499
Email: admin@mwwrc.org.au

What is it?
Provides services for women and children who have been affected by domestic violence. Provides crisis accommodation, early intervention and prevention, counselling and group work, medium-term supported accommodation, advice, information, referral and advocacy.

The Burdekin Association Inc

Address: Suites 6 & 7, 2 Victor Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 8976 1777
Email: burdekin.admin@burdekin.org.au
Web: www.burdekin.org.au

What is it?
Has an Early Intervention and Family Support program which provides support to families with young people at risk of homelessness. Burdekin work with young people between the ages of 12-21 and provide a range of accommodation and support options.

Housing NSW

Address: Unit 17A/18, Ground Floor, 818 Pittwater Road, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm
Tel: 9971 3600 (Dee Why)
1300 468 746 - general enquiries (24 hours/7 days)
1800 152 152 - after hours temporary accommodation (Monday-Friday, 4.30pm-10pm, weekends and public holidays, 10am-10pm)
Web: www.housing.nsw.gov.au

What is it?
Provides safe, affordable housing opportunities for low-income earners such as people receiving pensions so that they can live with dignity, find support if needed and achieve sustainable futures. Also offers emergency housing.

“Everything happens for a reason.”
American proverb
Survival story – 'You ain't going anywhere, you bloody bitch!'

Hello, my name is Jo. I am 25 years old and live in Mona Vale on the northern beaches. One night I went out with a group of friends to the local club and I met this man called Shane. We sat and talked for ages as I thought he was nice. Shane lived in a caravan in the caravan park in Vineyard. The caravan was small. It had two bunk beds at one end, a table in the middle with a lounge that wrapped around the table, a little stove and sink, a bar fridge and, at the other end, there was a double bed. It was a couple of months later we had met up again and I was looking for somewhere to live and Shane asked me if I would like to stay at his place and I said 'Thank you, if you are sure'. My friends Tony, Samantha and Shane helped me move all my belongings to his place. I finally set everything up so that it felt like home. However, it was a long way from my friends and family. There were two buses that took you into Windsor shopping centre, one bus in the morning and one in the afternoon. Once you are at Windsor, you could catch a train to Blacktown and then into the city.

One day I went for a walk down the road, and all you could see were farm houses and lots of paddocks with milking cows and sheep. I came to a fruit market that was cheap for your fruit, vegies and cold drinks. A couple of months later, things changed and we were arguing all the time as both of us did not have jobs and we were living on top of each other. Shane got very violent and started drinking and he regularly beat me.

One evening Shane was drunk as usual but seemed very aggressive. He started to hit me, screamed abuse, threw things at me and attacked me so badly I was black and blue and feared for my life. I ran to the phone box to ring my friends and as I was talking, he grabbed the phone and hung it up and said 'You ain't going anywhere, you bloody bitch!' He grabbed me and pushed me towards the caravan so I did what he said to keep the peace. He went down to his mate’s caravan and I was not happy sitting and looking around the van and I noticed a photo of a little girl aged about five years old. I didn’t say anything at first and then when I asked, he said it didn’t matter so I went to lay down as I was not feeling very well.

That evening he was drunk and abusive so I waited until he went back to his mates and I grabbed the keys to his car. I jumped into the car, started it and smashed through the boom gate terrified, shaking uncontrollably and totally in a panic and fearful for my life. I made it to the train station but I was so desperate that I jumped out of the car as it was moving and the car rolled backwards. I just made it onto the train as it left Windsor station and when I finally got to Blacktown station, with no money and no ticket, I then had to 'jump' trains to Central station. Finally, I found that I was safe so I called my friends and told them where I was and they came and picked me up. They were totally horrified to see the state that I was in.

I was so traumatised and afraid that neither my friends nor I reported it to the Police. He was so violent, manipulative and often under the influence of both alcohol and drugs that I couldn’t trust that he wouldn’t seek revenge and kill me.

Later, my sickness was telling me that I was pregnant and I knew that he wouldn’t want anything to do with it. My feelings were right as he was already married and had three children. So I found somewhere to live and he has never had anything to do with his son, Matthew, who is now twenty-one and he does not want anything to do with him.

Despite still experiencing fear going out alone at night, I have moved on in life. I am now more assertive and confident and won’t tolerate abuse. I’ve had two more children whom I love and protect as life is getting better.

Name changed to protect identity.
Legal services

Legal Aid NSW

Address: 323 Castlereagh Street, Haymarket (head office)
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 9219 5000 or 1300 888 529 (LawAccess NSW)
Web: www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

What is it?
Provides legal services to socially and economically disadvantaged people across New South Wales. Delivers legal services in most areas of criminal, family and civil law.

Legal Aid NSW, Manly

Address: Manly Community Centre, 12 Wentworth Street, Manly
Hours: Family law clinic – every Tuesday
       Civil law clinic – every Thursday
Tel: 9219 5000

What is it?
• Free weekly advice clinics on civil law and family law
• Advice on unpaid fines, credit card debt, employment disputes, tenancy matters and issues with Centrelink
• Advice on family law including separations, domestic violence, child support and spouse maintenance

Law Society of NSW

Contact: Solicitor Referral Service
Address: 170 Phillip Street, Sydney
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-12noon and 1pm-4pm
Tel: 9926 0300 or 1800 422 713
Email: erereferral@lawsociety.com.au or crs@lawsociety.com.au

What is it?
Can provide you with details of lawyers in your area that are approved by Legal Aid NSW from their database. Can include other criteria in your search, such as firms with solicitors who:
• make legal aid applications
• make home, hospital or prison visits
• are prepared to take calls after hours in criminal matters
• are fluent in languages other than English
• are female
• are Accredited Specialists (for more information visit the Specialist Accreditation Scheme at http://www.lawsociety.com.au/community/findingalawyer/SpecialistAccreditationScheme/index.htm)

“To have joy one must share it.”
Lord George Byron, 1788 – 1824
Women's Legal Services NSW

Address: PO Box 206, Lidcombe
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm and 2pm-4.30pm
Tel: 8745 6900 (administration)
Email: reception@wlsnsw.org.au
Web: www.womenslegalnsw.asn.au

What is it?
Administration
Community legal centre providing women with a range of free community legal services including legal advice and information, education, training and resources across metropolitan and regional areas of New South Wales. Provides a free service for all women in the community, particularly for those who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

Women’s Legal Contact Line
Hours: Monday, 9.30am-12.30pm, Tuesday, 1.30pm-4.30pm, Thursday, 9.30pm-12.30pm
Tel: 8745 6988 or 1800 801 501

What is it?
Provides free confidential legal information and referrals for women in New South Wales with a focus on family law, domestic violence, sexual assault and discrimination. Advice may be given by appointment.

Domestic Violence Legal Service
Hours: Monday, 1.30pm-4.30pm, Tuesday, 9.30am-12.30pm, Thursday, 1.30pm-4.30pm, Friday, 9.30am-12.30pm
Tel: 8745 6999 or 1800 810 784

What is it?
Provides free confidential legal information, advice and referrals for women in New South Wales with a focus on domestic violence and Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs).

Indigenous Women’s Legal Contact Line
Hours: Monday, 10am-12.30pm, Tuesday, 10am-12.30pm, Thursday, 10am-12.30pm
Tel: 8745 6977 or 1800 639 784

What is it?
Provides free confidential legal information, advice and referrals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in New South Wales with focus on domestic violence, sexual assault, parenting issues, family law, discrimination and victim's compensation.

Warringah Community Legal Service

Address: Dee Why Community Centre, Easy Transport House, 30 Howard Avenue, Dee Why
Hours: Thursday, 6pm-8pm, second Saturday of each month (except January), 10am-12noon
Tel: 9938 4006 (Peter) or 0414 793 473 (Esther)
Email: warringahlegal@gmail.com
Web: www.legaladviceservice.com.au

What is it?
Free legal advice and referral service provided by volunteer local solicitors and barristers, open to all, not means-tested, no appointment necessary, and a walk-in service.

“The world breaks everyone and afterwards many are strong at the broken places.”
Ernest Hemingway, 1899 – 1961
Women’s Family Law Support Service

Address: Level 5, Sydney Family Law Registry, 97-99 Goulburn Street, Sydney
Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm
Tel: 9217 7389
Web: www.wrrc.org.au

What is it?
Provides women with free and confidential support which can include the provision of information about court processes and the role of court staff, referrals to other agencies, accompaniment to court appointments, assistance with arranging legal representation and assistance in arranging appropriate court security measures.

Domestic Violence Line

Hours: 24 hours/7days
Tel: 1800 656 463 or TTY 1800 671 442

What is it?
Provides telephone counselling, information and referrals for women and same-sex partners who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence. Trained female caseworkers are sensitive to the needs of people who have experienced domestic violence. Domestic Violence Line staff are aware of the special needs of Aboriginal women and women from other cultures, as well as those living in rural and remote areas. Interpreters and TTY can be arranged where necessary to ensure that all people, regardless of their language or disability, can use the service. The service has an extensive list of contacts, people and services across New South Wales who can help.

Dee Why Police

Address: Cnr St David Avenue & Fisher Road, Dee Why
Hours: Open 24 hours
Tel: 9971 3399

What is it?
All Police are trained to take reports in domestic matters. Additionally, Dee Why has a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) who is a specialist Police officer, trained in the dynamics of domestic and family violence, child protection procedures, victim support and court Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs) processes required for the protection of victims of family violence. The role of the DVLO is:
• to provide advice to Police and victims
• assist in referral to appropriate support agencies
• maintain close working relationships with all support agencies
• review and oversee all domestic and family violence reports and cases
• assist victims through the court process for AVOs
• monitor repeat victims and perpetrators

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
Survival story – A Father’s Story

When my son was six years, I split with my wife, as we couldn’t stand each other any more. It was the hardest decision of my life to walk away from his happy smiling face.

I didn’t realise that was just the beginning of my nightmare. Within a month, I received a letter from her ‘solicitor’ telling me she was entitled to half my savings and 75% of my superannuation. I gave this freely, as I was the one who had deserted the family. All I took from the house was a bag of clothes and my bike.

Then I received another letter from her ‘solicitor’, informing me of my limited visiting rights to my son. She was a solicitor so she must be within the law. Soon I was living in a one-bedroom flat, paying $1,600 per month in child support.

My ex-wife poisoned my son’s mind, telling him I was a bad person who had deserted him. There is no support for single fathers so I got what I thought I deserved and started drinking and taking drugs heavily and daily, to kill the pain.

Birthdays and Christmas were extremely difficult as she would mostly make me stay away. I still hate Christmas to this day because of the mental torture of spending the day mostly alone and drinking.

I quickly became an alcoholic/addict, and lost the capacity to love anyone or anything. I couldn’t even end my life properly, and would awake on a floor somewhere in my apartment and start again.

In 2010, through the help of many rehabs and Alcoholics Anonymous, I got sober and realised that I was a sick person and not a bad person. I got to spend my son’s 18th birthday with him and his friends, we went paintballing, ate pizza, and he and his mates drank Coronas. It was one of best days of my life, as I realised that my son loved me.

After getting sober, I discovered groups like Lifeline, Beyond Blue and Suicide Prevention Australia. They told me if I had ended my life, I would have killed the wrong person!

To any dads out there who find themselves in my situation, seek help, immediately. It is too late when you’re dead. The pubs and parks are full of dads who have just lost all direction in life.

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
Social activities

Harbord Diggers

Address: 80 Evans Street, Freshwater
Hours: Friday & Saturday, 9am-4am, Sunday-Thursday, 9am-2am
Tel: 9938 1444
Email: harbordinfo@mountiesgroup.com.au
Web: www.harborddiggers.com.au
Cost: Membership costs approximately $6 per year

What is it?
- Diggers Cove playground
- Family fun days
- Creative arts program at Waves Youth Centre
- Sports Fundamentals program
- Mother’s groups friendly (stroller friendly atmosphere – you can gain easy access to the club via the eastern outdoor car park, children can play, catering staff will assist you with warming baby bottles and food, and baby changing facilities located in the toilets close to the deck)
- Kid’s meals at Madigan’s and coffee shop for mums
- Also, during school holidays, kid’s entertainment including shows, exhibits, etc usually for $5 per ticket
- Kids family disco (for the under 12s), 6pm-8pm on the first Friday of each month, free entry

Dee Why RSL

Address: 932 Pittwater Road, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 10am-4am, Saturday & Sunday, 9am-6am
Tel: 9454 4000
Email: info@dyrsrl.com.au
Web: www.deewhyrsrl.com.au
Cost: Membership costs approximately $5 per year

What is it?
- Kids disco held on selected Fridays at 4.30pm, $5 per ticket
- Also, during school holidays, kid’s entertainment including shows, exhibits, etc for a small fee

Water Skills for Life Inc (Collaroy Turtles Water Safety Swim Program)

Contact: Water Skills for Life
Address: Collaroy Rockpool
Tel: Tanya Carmont 0438 828 725 or David Lorimer 9972 7131
Email: tanya.carmont@gmail.com
Web: www.waterskillsforlife.org.au
Cost: $25 registration fee and gold coin donation per week

What is it?
Children over three years and adults learn to swim program available to disadvantaged families held at the Collaroy Rockpool in summer (December to April).

“It is best to learn wisdom by the experience of others.”
Latin Proverb
Warringah Mall Library

Address: 2nd Floor, Warringah Mall, Old Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 9am-5pm  
        Thursday, 9am-9pm  
        Friday-Saturday, 9am-5pm  
        Sunday, 10am-4pm
Tel: 9942 7999
Email: library@wls.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.wls.nsw.gov.au
Cost: Free

What is it?
• Membership also includes membership to Dee Why Library (tel: 9942 2449), Belrose Library (tel: 9452 3211) and Forestville Library (tel: 9452 5706) and resources can be borrowed for three weeks, returned to any of these libraries, and up to thirty items at a time
• Books, CDs, DVDs, children's books, magazines and X-Box (to play at library)
• Free Babies Into Books, Toddler Time and Pre-School Storytime programs, special events (eg, lego group, chess competition, sand art, cupcake creations, author talks, etc)
• Special activities for children in the school holidays for a small fee (usually $5)
• Free public access to computers with Internet and Microsoft Office software
• Photocopying, printing and faxing services for a small fee

Warringah Mall

Address: Old Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 9am-5.30pm  
        Thursday, 9am-9pm  
        Saturday, 9am-5pm  
        Sunday, 10am-4pm
Tel: 9905 0633
Cost: Usually free, sometimes small fee of $5

What is it?
Lots of activities during the school holidays. Watch the Manly Daily and noticeboards within the Mall for details (eg, shows such as Dora, Wot Wots, etc on the stage near the Food Court, an annual Christmas pantomime, Christmas carols which are free with complimentary services for parents such as free hand massages, manicures, glass of champagne, etc).

Mainly Music

Contact: Salvation Army, Dee Why
Address: 1 Fisher Road, Dee Why
Hours: Tuesday, 10am-11.45am
Tel: 9971 8378
Email: brian-smith@ave.salvationarmy.org
Web: www.salvos.org.au/deewhy
Cost: $10 per family

What is it?
Mainly music is a fun music group for parents or primary care givers to enjoy together with their young child(ren). Children are introduced to music, creativity and more. Morning tea supplied for parents and children, BYO drink for child.

“If you do not hope, you will not find what is beyond your hopes.”
St. Clement of Alexandra
Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre and Eco House and Garden

Address: Kimbriki Road (off Mona Vale Road), Ingleside/Terrey Hills
Tel: 9486 3512 or 9486 3542
Email: kimbriki@kimbriki.com
Web: www.kimbriki.com or www.ecohouseandgarden.com.au
Cost: Free workshops

What is it?
Adult and children's workshops to provide you with the knowledge, skills and confidence to live a more sustainable lifestyle. Workshops are generally held on Thursdays and Sundays from 10am-1pm. Our introductory level workshops include:
- ecological living and gardening
- the art of composting and worms
- beginners organic vegetable garden
- advanced organic vegetable gardening

Drop-in time
Most Thursdays 2pm-4pm - Peter Rutherford is in the eco garden for you to drop-in with questions about composting, worm-farming and organic gardening. Otherwise, you are welcome to enjoy the garden anytime.

Re-Use Shop
Open 8am-4.30pm daily. An interesting place to browse for cheap pre-loved furniture, etc.

David Jones, City Store – Christmas festivities

Contact: Advertised on David Jones' website and in the Daily Telegraph newspaper
Address: Level 7, Elizabeth Street Store, 86-118 Castlereagh Street, Sydney
Web: www.davidjones.com.au
Cost: Free

What is it?
- Free pantomime for children at Christmas time
- Christmas windows on street level
- Magic Cave on Level 6 for puppet displays, activities and Christmas photos with Santa

If you want your children to turn out well, spend twice as much time with them, and half as much money on them.  
- Abigail Van Buren

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
My Name is Kat\(^7\) and I’m 23, my daughter is four and a half and I am a single mother.

When I was 16, I was naive and vulnerable. I met a man who was what I thought would be my protector and would look after me. Little did I know that this relationship was never going to be a walk in the park. Drugs and alcohol were a big part of our lives back then and affected our personalities, more so his. He was very abusive and controlling and, being so young, I didn’t know how or that I could stick up for myself so I let him walk all over me.

When I was 17, I fell pregnant with my daughter. We were living with his parents at the time and the arrival of the new part of our lives pushed me to grow up and pushed him to get a job and want to be more responsible. I quit drinking and the drugs like any responsible mother-to-be would do and he kept on drinking. We moved out and I started to realise just how isolated I was. He was always at work and when he got home, he’d fall asleep on the couch after a few long necks of beer and always brought his friends over. I felt so lonely, I’d spend all day by myself, cleaning, cooking and nesting, looking forward to seeing him and every afternoon was a let down.

We were living in a granny flat, I had no friends and not much family around me. I only had his family and him, and his family were never nice to me. I had support from Royal North Shore Hospital which is what I think got me through and stopped me from falling into depression. Seeing the midwives, doctors and counsellors was my highlight of the fortnight.

When I was in hospital after having my daughter, her dad came in for a visit and told me he had quit his job. We had just moved out of the granny flat and into another unit and all I could think was what the hell are we going to do. The rent in the new unit was a lot more than the granny flat. He promised me he’d get another job and he never did.

I had no control over my money as he’d always take my bank card, the baby bonus was spent mostly on drugs and the rest on crap. There were weeks there where he’d go to the pub and spend all his money on the pokies and we’d have to use services like St Vincent’s de Paul to buy food, nappies and baby wipes. It was to the point where I couldn’t take it anymore and we started to fight all the time. These fights started to escalate and they ended up violent. One time he threw me around my bedroom and I hit the post of my bed, I had marks all over me and the Police were called. An AVO was put in place but the fights didn’t stop. There was another incident where I pushed him off me and he hit a picture on the wall which fell and smashed on the ground. He pushed me into the broken glass and every time I got back up, he repeatedly pushed me back into it. I was stupid enough to stay with him but it was only because I came from a broken family, my parents split up before I was born and I didn’t want the same thing for my baby. I wanted the happy family that I never had and I held some hope that her father would change his abusive ways and everything would work out like I wanted it.

Not long after this, I caught him cheating on me with a friend of ours, any feelings for him were pretty much eradicated now, and the sole reason for us being together was our daughter in my eyes. By this time, my daughter was one and a half. I stayed in this abusive relationship for another year. We had moved again and the fights had become less intense because we both stopped drinking. He still had no job and as much as he said he wanted one, he just wouldn’t get one. I was living in Burdekin housing and he was staying with me. He wasn’t supposed to be staying with me and when Burdekin caught wind of what was going on, they started the push to get me out and I ended up with him back at his parents place. I hated living there! They were very mean to me and they all fight a lot. The environment became toxic again and all I wanted to do was get out of there. We were applying for places left, right and centre but no one would accept our applications. One afternoon I got a phone call from a community housing place telling me they had a unit for me. It was the best gift the universe could have given me. Stability!

"Our greatest experiences are our quietest moments.”

Friedrich Neitzche, 1844 – 1900

\(^7\) Name changed to protect identity.
We moved in there and the lease was put in my name. This was my place, it gave me a sense of control over my life, something so simple as a lease in my name. This empowerment cast some kind of what seemed like a spell of confidence. The ability to say no, to tell him to leave, became so much easier to get out of my mouth. I wasn’t scared anymore.

A few months after moving in, I broke up with my daughter’s father. Being alone was the hardest part but I knew I was doing the right thing not just for me but more for my daughter, because in the end this toxic relationship was affecting her more than anyone else. Staying with him was never going to benefit her like I thought it was, it was worse for her to stay with him. I am happy being alone now, I used to think that I always needed someone to be there, but now I know and understand if you can’t be happy being alone then you’ll never truly be happy in a relationship.

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes

Don't be upset and get caught up with things or people that you cannot change. Instead, move on, let go and focus on what you are able to change. The things that enhance your life. You deserve to be happy.

http://www.LovesOfWisdom.com
Support networks

SMS Lighthouse

Contact: Josie Parata
Address: Howard Avenue, Dee Why
Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 9.30am-5pm
Tel: 0431 936 031 or 9972 8675
Email: smslighthouse@gmail.com
Web: www.smslighthousesinglemumssupport.vpweb.com.au

What is it?
- Administration assistance with paperwork for Centrelink, Dept of Housing, Legal Aid, etc
- Mediation and advocacy
- Hand-in-hand support for Court attendance, Tribunals, Housing, Relationships Australia, etc
- Practical needs:
  - clothing and household bric-a-brac donated by Big W, Bella Vista
  - fresh bread on a Tuesday, donated from Bakers Delight, Dee Why
  - second-hand furniture donated from the community
- ‘Moving Forward’ – a community support group, held each fortnight on a Tuesday
- Runs workshops with guest speakers

Northern Beaches Family Relationship Centre

Address: Level 1, 651 Pittwater Road, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 9981 9799
Email: northernbeachesfrc@ransw.org.au
Web: www.nsw.relationships.com.au

What is it?
Mediation and family dispute resolution including specific services for separating families.

Relationships Australia

Address: Level 1, 651 Pittwater Road, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm (with some after hours sessions available)
Tel: 1300 364 277
Email: northernbeachesfrc@ransw.org.au
Web: www.relationships.org.au

What is it?
- Counselling for individuals and couples
- Family therapy including child inclusive practice where appropriate
- Family and relationship education and skills training
- Specialised family safety programs

“Doubt whom you will, but never yourself.”
Christian Nestell Bovee, 1820 – 1904
Pregnancy Help Manly Warringah Inc

Contact: Margret
Address: Brookvale Community Centre, Rear 2 Alfred Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday & Thursday, 9.30am-4.30pm, Friday, 10am-4pm
Tel: 9905 1974

What is it?
Offers support services for women in need during or after pregnancy, information and referral, emotional support, practical assistance, advocacy and home visits.

The Link Community Food Care Program

Address: Cromer Community Centre, 150 Fisher Road North, Dee Why
Hours: Friday, 10am-1pm
Tel: 9999 0475
Email: info@link.org.au
Web: www.link.org.au
Cost: Registration fee of $2

What is it?
Provides affordable groceries, fruit and vegetables at cheap prices. For example, if you spend $5 on dry goods, all your fruit and vegetables are free. Also hosts community events (eg, Eggs by the Lake, an Easter egg hunt for children).

“Hundreds of dewdrops to greet the dawn,
Hundreds of bees in the clover,
Hundreds of butterflies on the lawn,
But only one mother the wide world over.”
George Cooper, 1838 – 1927
Manly Warringah Pittwater Family Support Service

Address: PO Box 556, Dee Why
Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am-4.30pm
Tel: 9982 9875

What is it?
Provides free assistance to families with children with a range of issues including relationship or family conflict, parenting skills, budgeting and legal issues, stress from housing or health problems and social support. Also, has a Young Mother’s Support Service, an outreach worker provides free emotional support and practical assistance to young pregnant women and mothers (aged 12-24 years) living in the northern Sydney area and experiencing difficulties due to isolation, financial hardship, lack of accommodation and/or health issues.

Bump

Address: PO Box 534, Spit Junction
Tel: 0419 633 881
Email: vicki.condon@raise.org.au
Web: www.raise.org.au

What is it?
Mentoring and workshops for pregnant and parenting young mums.

Dalwood Children's Services

Address: 21 Dalwood Avenue, Seaforth
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-3pm (by appointment, referral required from your doctor)
Tel: 9951 0300 (main switchboard)
Email: sjgrace@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au

What is it?
Child and family health services including:
- Spilstead Centre Early Intervention Service (including Brighter Futures) – assistance for vulnerable families where there are complex family issues and children with social, emotional or developmental needs
- Family Care Centre
- Parenting support service
- STEPS (Statewide Eyesight Preschooler Screening program)

Dial-A-Mum

Address: PO Box 419, Lindfield
Hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 8am-11pm
Tel: 9477 6777
Web: www.dialamum.com.au

What is it?
Confidential telephone support service run by caring mums who listen to any issues that are causing you concern on any subject including relationship difficulties, conflict with friends/family/children/work, even if you are feeling lonely, worried, anxious or unsure of something.

“Dream big and dare to fail.”
Norman Vaughan, 1923 – 2002
Brookvale Family Centre

Contact: CatholicCare Broken Bay (formerly Centacare)
Address: Unit 9B, 44 Wattle Street, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 8968 5100
Email: brookvalefamilycentre@dbb.org.au
Web: www.centacarebrokenbay.org.au

What is it?
Provides flexible, secular (spiritual) centre-based and in-home assistance to families with a range of issues including parenting concerns, relationship or financial issues, disability, separation and family conflict. Services include:
• family support service
• youth support service
• parenting and relationship education
• Triple P, Circle of Security, Tuning In to Kids and other parenting courses
• relationship counselling
• financial counselling
• family dispute resolution/mediation
• women’s domestic violence court advocacy service
• emergency relief

KYDS

Address: Rear 265 Pacific Highway, Lindfield
Hours: Monday-Friday, 10am-6pm
Tel: 9416 9824
Email: kyds@bigpond.com
Web: www.kyds.org.au

What is it?
KYDS is a free counselling service for 12-18 year olds and their families living on the north shore of Sydney. Counsellors and psychologists use cognitive behaviour therapy and solution-focused therapy to help young people with:
• depression, anxiety, drug and alcohol problems, school problems, family problems, bullying, anger management, self-esteem issues, body image, sexuality issues, relationship problems and exam anxiety or HSC stress
• psychologists can also see clients under the Access to Allied Psychological Services scheme (ATAPS). You just need a referral from your GP.

Dads in Distress Support Service

Address: Numerous locations in Sydney – see website
Tel: 1300 853 437
Email: enquiries@dadsindistress.asn.au
Web: http://www.dadsindistress.asn.au/www/home/#photo03

What is it?
Supporting men through separation from their partner and/or children including helpline, support groups, one-on-one support and advocacy.

“With will one can do anything.”
Samuel Smiles, 1812 – 1904
Be Centre

Address: Unit 3, 9 Apollo Street, Warriewood
Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm
Tel: 9986 0955
Email: info@becentre.org.au
Web: www.becentre.org.au

What is it?
A special place supporting children and families whose lives have been affected by trauma such as domestic violence, divorce and separation, bereavement, parental drug and alcohol or mental health issues, bullying, anxiety or illness. Has unique Play & Creative Therapy programs which offer a safe environment for children to tell their stories, helping them to make a sense of what is happening on the inside to restore their trust and build self-confidence and resilience.

Manly Council Adolescent & Family Counselling Service

Address: Manly Child Care & Youth Centre, Kangaroo Street, Manly
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 9976 1486
Email: records@manly.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.manly.nsw.gov.au

What is it?
Provides individual and family counselling, group work programs and information and referrals to other agencies for young people aged 12-21 years and their families. Addressing issues such as family relationships, school or work, mental health, drugs and alcohol, violence and sexual identity and a wide range of other issues. Are able to work with young people alone, with parents alone, or with parents and young people together.

Community Builders Pittwater – Relationships Australia

Address: c/- MWP Community Aid, 3 Gondola Road, North Narrabeen
Hours: Tuesday-Friday, by appointment
Tel: 1300 734 120
Email: cbpittwater@ransw.org.au
Web: www.nsw.relationships.org.au

What is it?
Provides community information and can connect you with local services and groups. Programs include parenting courses, social support groups including walking groups for women, intergenerational programs connecting seniors with families, youth programs and community events.
I've made a pitch to Beyoncé for her next single: 'All the Single Parents'.

'All the single parents ... all the single parents ... now put your hands up'.

There'd be a lotta hands. And they'd probably be tired.

These days, single parenthood is frequently an outcome of divorce, but it can also be a result of widowhood, choice, or an absentee parent. Regardless of how some arrived at single parenthood, it's important to remember that it often isn't by choice, and the reality (no matter the cause) is that the person shoulders double the burden in raising a child.

In celebration of Single Parents' Day, I decided to offer advice on what I find critical to the role of being a single primary caregiver, something it took me a while to learn myself: How to take care of yourself. Because a single parent doesn't have a partner, there is usually no other person highly involved in your daily life looking out for your health and well-being. Guess who has to be that person? That's right, you.

For me, single parenthood is not something I ever envisioned or desired for myself, to put it mildly. But in the interest of self-respect and self-preservation, circumstances in my marriage made it impossible for me to stay in it. So, I have raised my son on my own since he was about four months old.

I learned the hard way that if I took on too much (easy to do as a single parent), I would burn out. I learned the hard way that no one was going to look out for me but me. My son was too young to tell me to take it easy. My friends and family weren't in my daily life enough to tell me to put down the laundry basket or put away the computer and take a nap.

But I am convinced now more than ever that taking care of yourself is a critical thing to learn as a single parent – as important as taking care of your child. Because we're the ones steering the ship. Without us, it all falls apart. It's like the airplane oxygen mask analogy – you must put on your own before you can help someone else with his or hers.

Think of it this way: You have a choice between two caregivers to hire to watch your child. One appears stressed, irritable, doesn't look healthy, and seems unhappy with life. The other appears well rested, healthy, calm and fulfilled. Which would you hire?

That caregiver is you. Both you and your child will benefit from a parent who looks more like the latter picture. Once I started learning to take care of myself, my life did a 180 and I turned from something like the former picture to the latter.

This post is dedicated not only to the single parents out there, but also to the mums and caregivers who need to take better care of themselves (I suspect there are a few!).

1. **Know Your Limit**
   You are human. That means you have limits. You are not limitless in your capacity, although some days it can feel like life needs you to be that way. Identify your limit or warning sign that indicates you need to stop, get help, or change something. Mine was when I was miserable and in tears sobbing at the end of a day, barely able to look at my son because I was so tired and frustrated. Yours might be constantly blowing up and yelling, or feeling depressed and apathetic, or not having time to see your friends or have fun. Just get familiar with the concept of a 'limit' and be aware of when you have reached it.

2. **Get Help**
   We need to get better about asking for help. Ask for help whenever you can. Ask friends, family, church and community members. Heck, ask a stranger to help you hold a bag as you're struggling with your child and the stroller. If you wait around for someone to offer to help, you may be waiting a long time (and get angry in the process). Identify the things you need most help with (laundry, watching your child, driving to appointments) and ask for specific and concrete assistance. If you can
afford it, hire help. You are a better and wiser, not lesser, mother for getting help. And you may not always get it when you ask, or it may not come exactly the way you wanted, but it will get easier and better with time. That's right, help-getting is an art, one that every single parent needs to practice.

3. Forget What Everyone Else is Doing
This is really important. This piece of advice saved me. One of the reasons I almost had a breakdown during the early years of raising my son is because I was worried what other people would think if I had all this hired help. I also compared myself to my friends who were mums. I seemed to forget that none of them were single mums. I also forgot that none of them had children with major medical and developmental needs. And that I had no break since my son's father did not see him regularly. And that I had no family nearby. Insanity of all insanities, I even worried what my friends without kids would think of me. It wasn't until I had too many breakdowns like in #1 that I realised it was self-preservation time. I stopped caring what others thought. I got some help every single day of the week. It saved me. My life went from misery to feeling manageable and then even joyful (at first I had to get over the guilt of leaving my son so I would linger around the house even when someone was there – until the sitter finally told me to get out of the house!).

The thing is, even if there was another single mum with a similar situation, it wouldn't be exactly mine, because no situation is exactly alike, and we'd be different people. Our needs and buttons and switches would be different. She might not need help every day (I really need my space to have energy) but maybe would have wanted every meal cooked for her, or a getaway once a month. The bottom line is that you have a responsibility to you and your child to carve out a situation that works best for your family – and that starts with closing your ears to outside voices, and listening to your own.

4. Don’t Neglect Your Health
My son has special needs, so it's easy to put his health needs first. There are countless doctors' appointments, medical procedures, supplements. My health and my routine visits can seem less important or secondary. But they're really primary, because if something happened to me, and I wasn't able to care for him, he would be in a tough situation. Your eating well, sleeping, exercising, and being emotionally healthy are some of the best investments you can make in your child's future. Value your own health and well-being as much as you do your child's.

5. Be as Proactive About Your Joy as You are About Your Child's
Your child loves ice cream, or balloons, or Elmo. How much time goes by before you give her/him something that delights her/him? How much time goes by before you treat yourself to something that delights you? Sure, we’re not children, we have responsibilities, and we don’t need to be attending a 24/7 birthday party. But if you are not proactive about your own joy, only looking out for your child’s, one day you will look up and it will be hard to find again. You may have forgotten how to be happy. Do one thing each day that gives you joy – and tell your kids why you do it, and why it makes you happy. Children pick up on their caregiver’s emotions more than we realize – and your happiness will do double duty for your child.

6. Hold on to Your Dreams
Finally, I wanted to say this: You matter. Your children may be the centre of your universe, but it doesn’t mean that you have to disappear to give them everything they need. In fact, I would argue that your having an identity is a gift that they need. As a single parent, you are modelling to your child how to be an individual in this world. While you may make sacrifices for your child, it’s important to still hold on to the things that delight you, inspire you, and make you who you are. Make time for hobbies. Spend money on yourself, not just your kids. And don’t give up on the big dreams either, of a career that was stalled to raise your kids, or a vacation or lifestyle you’ve always wanted. You can raise your child and pursue your dreams at the same time. Those dreams make us who we are... and I venture to say, you may one day have them.

“I am a woman in progress. I’m just trying like everyone else. I try to take every conflict and experience and learn from it.”

Oprah Winfrey
Financial help

CentrePay

Contact: Department of Human Resources (formerly Centrelink)
Address: 660-664 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm
Tel: 136 150

What is it?
A free service for customers to pay bills as regular deductions from their Centrelink payments.

Advance Payment Scheme

Contact: Department of Human Resources (formerly Centrelink)
Address: 660-664 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm
Tel: 136 150

What is it?
Provides lump sum payments in advance from future Centrelink payments. The advance must be repaid, as it is essentially an interest-free loan. The advance amount varies depending on the type of payment you receive. The advance is repaid through fortnightly deductions from the pension or allowance. To be eligible, the beneficiary must demonstrate that they can repay the advance and still have enough money for day-to-day expenses.

No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)

Contact: St Vincent de Paul, Brookvale
Address: 638 Pittwater Road, Brookvale
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-4.30pm
Tel: 9905 0424
Email: nb.manager@vinnies.org.au or sue.boek@vinnies.org.au
Web: www.nilsnsw.org.au

What is it?
May lend up to $1,000 for essential goods and services. This may include, but is not limited to, household white goods, medical bills, car expenses and other household appliances. Repayments are generally around $30 per fortnight.

About ME...
Am I Perfect? Hell No
Do I make Mistakes? Hell Yeah
My Share Of Blunders & Bloopers? Indeed
A Work In Progress? Absolutely

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
Dress for Success Sydney

Address: 132 Marrickville Road, Marrickville
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9.30am-4.30pm
        Saturday, 10am-1pm
Tel: 1800 773 456
Email: info@dfs sydney.org
Web: www.dressforsuccess.org

What is it?
Outfits disadvantaged women, free of charge, in high-quality professional attire and provides practical advice in preparation for job interviews. Dress for Success improves the employability of disadvantaged women by increasing confidence and restoring dignity. Also, offers practical and financial help and support.

WorkVentures Ltd

Address: Level 13, 80 Mount Street, North Sydney
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
Tel: 8907 3300 or 1800 112 205 (sales centre)
Web: www.workventures.com.au

What is it?
Sells quality refurbished computers and laptops to people receiving Centrelink benefits or holding a Centrelink Concession Card.

I never pulled over the car just to stare at horses,
I never was willing to give someone else my last bite,
I never planned on handling someone else's boogers,
I never listened to a song 50 times in a row,
I never found rocks in my dryer,
I never had the power to heal a wound with my kiss..... until you.

http://www.ivillage.ca/parenting/divorce-single-parents/single-mom-quotes
TAFE success story

This year, 2013, the TAFE Northern Beaches Campus implemented a program for single and teenage parents. The aim of the program was to improve the job readiness of single and teenage parents who receive the Single Parenting Payment or those who have been switched to Newstart Allowance. The Northern Sydney Institute has been funded to provide guaranteed places in training courses and extra educational support for all eligible single parents who meet course requirements. As part of the program, students receive mentoring, assistance with job seeking, plus a series of workshops on job skills, personal presentation, parenting and life skills.

The students are enrolled in a range of courses from full-time diplomas to a Year 10 equivalent. Free tuition is available in the Learning Centre and free tuition is also available in spelling, maths, job skills and basic computing for eligible students. TAFE provides the opportunity for these students to study flexibly or full-time and offers support throughout. This allows students, who are juggling single parenting and work/study, with a chance to improve their skills and provide a better life for themselves and their children.

As the single parent coordinator, I have found the program to be a resounding success. Regular meetings where we shared sandwiches and coffee, swapped ideas on workshops and coping skills, shared stories and experiences culminated in friendships and input and sponsorship of this Guide to assist other sole parents.

The students were an inspiration to me. They empathised and supported other group members and in sharing their often difficult experiences, felt less alone and more determined to move on. I was inspired by the way they juggled parenting, work and study and their fierce love of their children and determination to do the best for them. However, like all of us who have been through difficult life experiences, the students were eager to re-establish their self-esteem and to find a stronger identity. As a single parent, many faced new life skills that they had to master such as finance, home and car repairs, etc.

According to their suggestions, I organised these workshops:

- work skills
- resumes (delivered by Careers Connect)
- interview skills
- SMS Lighthouse – Single Mums Support (delivered by Josie Parata)
- self-esteem, assertiveness and communication skills (delivered by Relationships Australia)
- professional advice on image, grooming and presentation in the workplace (delivered by Maria Cuci)
- hair workshop (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)
- beauty workshop (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)
- basic car maintenance (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)
- basic home maintenance (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)
- healthy eating-tips for time-poor mums with kids (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)
- tips from career counsellors and TAFE work placement officer (delivered by Northern Beaches TAFE)

Thus, I believe that TAFE not only provides a fantastic range of courses, with a range of delivery options, but it can be a catalyst for a whole new outlook.

For further information about courses offered at Northern Beaches TAFE, please ring 131 674 or visit the website www.nsi.tafensw.edu.au. Appointments can be made with the career counsellors, Kim Whyte and Verena Rawling on 9941 5521.

Merelyn Langley
Co-ordinator
TAFE Teenage & Single Parents’ Program
## Benefits available from Department of Human Resources (formerly Centrelink)

**Address:** 660-664 Pittwater Road, Brookvale  
**Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm  
**Tel:** 136 150  

### Types of payments (as at March 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment type</th>
<th>How much?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Baby Bonus**        | • You can be paid $5,000 per eligible child in thirteen fortnightly instalments (you will receive a higher first instalment of $846.20 and twelve fortnightly instalments of $346.15); or  
                        • If your baby has died or was stillborn, you may ask for your Baby Bonus to be paid in a lump sum instead of fortnightly instalments. |
| **Parenting Payment** | • If you are partnered, the maximum fortnightly payment is $444.70.  
                        • If you are partnered, but separated because of illness, respite care, or prison, the maximum fortnightly payment is $533.  
                        • If you are single, the maximum fortnightly payment is $663.70, which includes the Pension Supplement basic amount. |
| **Newstart Allowance**| **If you are:**                                                                                                                                   | **Your maximum fortnightly payment is:**                                                                                                                        |
|                       | Single, no children                                                                                                                              | $492.60                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | Single, with a dependant child or children                                                                                                     | $533.00                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | Single, aged 60 or over, after nine continuous months on payment                                                                               | $533.00                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | Partnered (each)                                                                                                                              | $444.70                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | Single principal carer granted exemption for foster caring/relative (non-parent)/caring under a court order/home schooling/distance education/large family | $663.70                                                                                                                                                         |
| **Family Tax Benefit**| (Part A)                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                            |
|                       | **For each child**                                                                                                                              | **Per fortnight**                                                                                                                                                |
|                       | 0-12                                                                                                                                          | $169.68                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | 13-15                                                                                                                                         | $220.64                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | 16-19, secondary student                                                                                                                       | $220.64                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | 16-17, having completed secondary study                                                                                                         | $54.32                                                                                                                                                          |
|                       | **In an approved care organisation**                                                                                                            |                                                                                                            |
|                       | 0-19                                                                                                                                          | $54.32                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | Approved care organisations provide residential care for young people - for example, for young people who are homeless, are refugees, or have a disability. |                                                                                                            |
| **Family Tax Benefit**| (Part B)                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                            |
|                       | **Age of youngest child**                                                                                                                      | **Each fortnight**                                                                                                                                                |
|                       | Under 5                                                                                                                                       | $144.34                                                                                                                                                         |
|                       | 5-18                                                                                                                                          | $100.66                                                                                                                                                         |
| **Schoolkids Bonus**  | Eligible families will receive:                                                                                                                 | **Each year**                                                                                                                                                    |
|                       | • two instalments of $205 for each child in primary school - a total of $410 each year                                                       | $4,117.20                                                                                                                                                       |
|                       | • two instalments of $410 for each child in secondary school - a total of $820 each year                                                       | $2,978.40                                                                                                                                                       |
| **Rent assistance**   | **If you have dependent children**                                                                                                             |                                                                                                            |
|                       | Family situation                                                                                                                              | Max. payment per fortnight | No payment if fortnightly rent is less than | Max. payment if fortnightly rent is more than |
|                       | Single, 1 or 2 children                                                                                                                      | $141.82                                                             | $141.40                                                             | $330.49                                                             |
|                       | Single, 3 or more children                                                                                                                   | $160.44                                                             | $141.40                                                             | $355.32                                                             |
|                       | Couple, 1 or 2 children                                                                                                                      | $141.82                                                             | $209.30                                                             | $398.39                                                             |
|                       | Couple, 3 or more children                                                                                                                   | $160.44                                                             | $209.30                                                             | $423.22                                                             |
| **Child Care Rebate** | The maximum amount of Child Care Rebate you may receive per child per financial year depends on the year you are eligible for and on your out-of-pocket expenses. Out-of-pocket expenses are total childcare fees less the amount of any Child Care Benefit and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance that you may be eligible for. The amount of Child Care Rebate is based on 50% of your out-of-pocket expenses. |
|                       | **Financial year**                                                                                                                            | **Maximum rebate**                                                                                                                                                |
|                       | 2011-12                                                                                                                                       | $7,500                                                             |
|                       | 2010-11                                                                                                                                       | $7,941                                                             |
|                       | 2009-10                                                                                                                                       | $7,778                                                             |
### Pensioner Concession Card

A Pensioner Concession Card entitles you to reduced-cost medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) (usually they cost about $5). You may also be entitled to various concessions from the Australian Government. These could include:

- bulk-billing for doctor's appointments (this is your doctor's decision)
- more refunds for medical expenses through the Medicare Safety Net
- assistance with hearing services through the Office of Hearing Services
- discounted mail redirection through Australia Post

**Note:** You may get some of these Australian Government concessions for a dependent child.

You may also be entitled to various concessions from State and Territory governments and local councils - these could include:

- reductions on property and water rates
- reductions on phone bills
- reductions on energy bills
- reduced fares on public transport
- reductions on motor vehicle registration
- free rail journeys
- discounted entry to certain events

**Note:** Pensioner Concession Card concessions are different in each State and Territory and vary between local councils.

### Pensioner Education Supplement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment type</th>
<th>How much?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>An approved student who is:</strong></td>
<td>$62.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>studying full time or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>studying at least a 25% study load and receiving:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disability Support Pension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Invalidity Service Pension or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- War Widow/er Pension and Invalidity Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support Supplement (and has a dependent child under 16) or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>studying at least a 50% study load and is:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a single parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a carer or a person with a substantial disability (not receiving a payment listed above) or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- an eligible student receiving Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| An approved student who is: | $31.20 |
| studying full time or | |
| studying at least a 25% study load and receiving: | |
| - Disability Support Pension | |
| - Invalidity Service Pension or | |
| - War Widow/er Pension and Invalidity Income | |
| - Support Supplement (and has a dependent child under 16) or | |
| studying at least a 50% study load and is: | |
| - a single parent | |
| - a carer or a person with a substantial disability (not receiving a payment listed above) or | |
| - an eligible student receiving Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance | |

### Carer Allowance

**Carer Allowance (caring for a person 16 years or over)**

- The payment rate of Carer Allowance (caring for a person 16 years or over) is $115.40 per fortnight.
- If you are receiving a Carer Allowance payment on 1 July each year, you will also receive an annual Carer Supplement of up to $600 for each person in your care who qualifies you for Carer Allowance.

**Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years)**

The payment rate of Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years) is either:

- a fortnightly payment of $115.40 and a Health Care Card for the child or
- a Health Care Card for the child.

Which of these you receive depends on the child’s care needs.

If you are receiving a Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years) payment on 1 July each year, you are also paid an annual:

- Child Disability Assistance Payment of up to $1,000 to help you with the costs of caring for a child with a disability and
- Carer Supplement of up to $600 for each child in your care who qualifies you for Carer Allowance.

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**Don't be upset and get caught up with things or people that you cannot change.**  
**Instead, move on, let go and focus on what you are able to change.**  
**The things that enhance your life.**  
**You deserve to be happy.**
References


Dave’s Words of Wisdom, 2013, Daveswordsofwisdom, viewed 10 April 2013, http://daves-words-of-wisdom.blogspot.co.uk/.

Suggested reading

The Singe Parent Bible
Web: www.singleparentbible.com.au

What is it?
On-line magazine with valuable articles on every aspect of being a sole parent.

Manly Daily newspaper

What is it?
Has two special sections on Saturday called Noticeboard and What’s On where you can find out what activities are running in the local area for the coming week.

Saturday Daily Telegraph newspaper
Web: www.dailytelegraph.com.au

What is it?
Has a special lift-out section called Best Weekend where you can find out what activities are running in Sydney for the coming week.

Sydney’s Child magazine
Web: www.webchild.com

What is it?
Community stories, resources, information on schools, party guide, performing arts, and also dealing with issues on pregnancy, health, family needs, what's on, shopping, competitions, forums and other magazines.

Best for Kids
Web: www.bestforkids.org.au

What is it?
Provides information and resources on family law in Australia for children, parents and anyone else who wants or needs to know about it, including grandparents.

“Magic is believing in yourself. If you can do that, you can make anything happen.”
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749 – 1832
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Coming soon ...

Our website [http://soleparentsurvivorguide.weebly.com](http://soleparentsurvivorguide.weebly.com)

“A house is made of walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams.”

Dr. William A Ward, 1921 – 1994