

The Homes for Children and Family Counselling Service

1968 – c. 1975

Other Names: • Brighton Family Centre
• Brighton Children's Home

Details

The Homes for Children and Family Counselling Service (also known as the Brighton Family Centre) was the new name given in 1968 to the Mission to the Streets and Lanes' children's homes in Wilson Street, Brighton. It accommodated children and young people in 'family group home' units, and delivered preventive services including family counselling. In 1975, the services at Brighton were renamed Unit 64 (at 64 Wilson Street) and St. Faith's (at 62 Wilson Street).

The new name 'Homes for Children and Family Counselling Service' (also known as the Brighton Family Centre) reflected the Mission's transition away from the institutional model of care.

It accommodated children and young people in 'family group home' units, and delivered preventive services including family counselling, family and support and rehabilitation housing services.

In 1968, the Mission to the Streets and Lanes reported on recent changes at Brighton in its annual report:

The most important aspect of change is the development of the preventive approach, the provision of an intensive social case-work service designed to help families at the point of crisis so that instead of splitting up, the family can be assisted to remain together and so avoid the emotional deprivation and disturbance consequent on institutional placement.

The Homes had employed their first social worker in 1962 (before that, staff were largely members of the Community of the Holy Name). By 1968, it was employing more 'professional' social work staff. It had established a short term foster care program to accompany the new family counselling service. The Homes at Brighton included a house in Male Street, Brighton, providing emergency accommodation for families. The Mission to the Streets and Lanes purchased land in 1968 in the suburb of Bentleigh, which was to house another hostel for older girls on probation.

In 1970, the Mission reported that each flat at Brighton accommodated an average of 7 children at a time (the former children's home had been converted into flats in the 1960s). The annual report demonstrated the benefits of the smaller, 'family' units by sharing the case of one boy:

Last year we also took a two-year-old boy who was available for adoption, but suspected of being mentally retarded. He was living in a large group and did not have the opportunity of receiving individual care. After several weeks in our care he literally blossomed out – began to speak, laugh and smile and take an interest in things around him. It became obvious that he was very deprived emotionally but not mentally deficient. After several months he became a normal, bright, happy child and ready for adoption. He is now settled into a new home.

In 1971, school age boys at the Homes in Brighton spent a week at the school camp with boys from Brighton Grammar. The camp also included boys from St John's Home in Canterbury.

In 1974, the Mission established 'Unit 64' at Brighton, an experimental residential treatment centre for 'emotionally disturbed' adolescent girls. Unit 64 also provided emergency accommodation. By 1975, all services delivered at the Homes in Brighton were renamed Unit 64. The Mission's annual report stated its hope that this name change would mean children at Brighton would no longer perceive themselves as 'home kids'.

Gallery



Church of England Home for Children



Church of England Children's Home

Description: This image shows the property where the Church of England Children's Home was located.



Church of England Home for Children

Description: This image shows the property where the Church of England Home for Children was located.

More info

Chronology

- Church of England Homes for Children (1894 - c. 1968)
 - **The Homes for Children and Family Counselling Service (1968 – c. 1975)**
 - Unit 64 (1975 - c. 1984)
 - St Faith's (1975 - c. 1984)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Mission to the Streets and Lanes \(1886 - 1997\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Community of the Holy Name \(1888 - current\)](#)

The Homes had long been staffed by members of the Community of the Holy Name, but from the late 1960s, more and more staff were 'seculars'.

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records held by other organisations

- [Anglicare Victoria Records \(1886 - current\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/the-homes-for-children-and-family-counselling-service/>