

Corelli Hospital for Women

1919 – c. 1945

Other Names:

- Corelli Hostel
- Corelli

Details

Corelli Hospital for Women (known as 'Corelli') was opened in Marrickville as a home for mothers with babies and expectant mothers by the State Children's Relief Board in September 1919. In its first year it housed 41 mothers with 39 children, for an average of four months. By the 1930s it seems to have served as a hostel for girls. After World War II Corelli was converted to a Child Welfare Department nursing home for preschool-aged children, called Corelli State Ward Home.

Corelli was located on Marrickville Road, near the corner of Livingstone Road.

Corelli was one of a number of homes established by the State Children's Relief Board under the *Infant Life Protection Act* 1904 to assist young unmarried mothers and to nurse 'illegitimate' babies. The State Children's Relief Board hoped that keeping babies together with their mothers would help the mothers breastfeed and get the babies through the first months and years of life. Babies whose mothers could not nurse them were extremely vulnerable, leading to high rates of infant mortality. The mothers in the home could also help care for infants who had been separated from their own mothers and were in state care.

It is not clear how long Corelli served as a home for unmarried mothers. In 1936 the Catholic Women's Association reported in the *Catholic Weekly* on its regular visit to the state home at Corelli. The Association said it helped girls obtain employment and said Corelli was a 'hostel, where the honour system prevails, and girls can be employed by the day. They go to Mass and the sacraments regularly.' It is not clear whether there were other women or children living at the home, or whether the hostel girls lived alongside the unmarried mothers, or were themselves unmarried mothers.

More info

Chronology

- **Corelli Hospital for Women (1919 – c. 1945)**
 - Corelli Babies' Home (c. 1945 - c. 1970)
 - Corelli (1970 - 1991)

Related Entries

Run by

- [State Children's Relief Board \(1881 - 1923\)](#)
- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)

Related Legislation

- [Infant Protection Act 1904, New South Wales \(1904 - 1923\)](#)

Resources

- [They'll All Enjoy Christmas Parties](#), The Australian Women's Weekly, 9 December 1933
- Davey, J. Michael, *Journey of Hope: a remarkable true story*, 2011

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