

# Myee

1926 – 1977

**Other Names:**

- Myee Hostel
- Myee Babies' Home

## Details

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Myee, also known as Myee Babies' Home and Myee Hostel, was established in 1926 in Arncliffe and run by the Child Welfare Department. It was a home for babies and up to 16 young unmarried expectant mothers who had been committed by the Children's Court to state care. Some mothers retained their babies after they left Myee, but many babies were adopted. Myee stopped operating as a babies' and maternity home in 1977 and became a home for boys of secondary school age.

Myee was established by the Child Welfare Department to assist young unmarried mothers and to nurse 'illegitimate' babies. Whilst mothers were in Myee, they were taught how to care for and handle their babies. However, many babies born to women in Myee were adopted out.

The Child Welfare Department's Annual Reports reveal any young pregnant woman could be committed to Myee under the *Child Welfare Act 1939*. There was also a close relationship between Myee Hostel and the Parramatta Girls' Training School in the post-war period. In 1965, the Annual Report described the routine process in which young women and girls went from Parramatta to Myee:

*The majority of pregnant girls admitted to Myee Hostel are those transferred from the Parramatta Training School for Girls. These are transferred in the seventh month of pregnancy, attend Crown Street Hospital for ante-natal treatment, are confined in that Hospital and returned to Myee until their post-natal clearance usually after six weeks. However under Section 21C of the Child Welfare Act any girl who is an expectant or nursing mother may be admitted to Myee Hostel.*

The 1967 Annual Report described services to mothers at Myee that were formally integrated with social work going on at the Parramatta Training School.

*This year a special service was introduced for a particular group of unmarried mothers, namely pregnant girls at the Girls' Training School, Parramatta. A social worker has been allocated to work full-time with these girls, who are transferred from Parramatta to Myee Hostel in the last weeks of their pregnancies before their confinements at The Women's Hospital, Crown Street, Sydney. The social worker sees a girl at Parramatta then follows her through to Myee, the Hospital and later to her home or to wherever she is eventually placed. The support and intensive counselling given to the girls is helping them to become settled, to accept their situation, to be willing to co-operate in making plans for their future and later to carry them out. This service is also extended to pregnant girls who are committed to the Convent of the Good Samaritan at Arncliffe.*

It was clear, however, from the 1962 Annual Report that the Myee hostel was designed primarily for the care of the infant wards, rather than their mothers:

*This establishment cares for the youngest age group of wards – babies from birth up to the time they can walk. In addition, it has accommodation for 15 mothers during the final months of pregnancy and the early post-natal period. Myee also functions as a receiving home for babies on remand, particularly if the child is neglected and sickly, needing trained nursing not available in private remand homes.*

*Quite a number of the infants at Myee have been surrendered by their mothers for adoption, but cannot be placed with adopting parents because of some mental or physical defect, and have therefore been admitted to wardship.*

*Girls who are found to be pregnant when admitted to the Girls' Training School at Parramatta are normally transferred to Myee in their sixth month of pregnancy.*

In 1977, Myee ceased to be a maternity home, and was used instead by the Department of Youth and Community Services as a group home for boys of secondary school age who had intellectual disabilities.

## Gallery

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**Myee Babies Home, Arncliffe**



**Myee**

**Description:** This is a digital copy of a photograph from an album collected by Child Welfare Department officers in the late 1940s. From the collection of Leonie Knapman.



**In the nursery at "Myee"**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1962.

## More info

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### Chronology

- **Myee (1926 – 1977)**
  - Myee Home (1977 - 1980s)

### Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, State Government of New South Wales \(1970 - 1973\)](#)
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1973 - 1975\)](#)
- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1976 - 1988\)](#)

#### Related Legislation

- [Child Welfare Act 1939, New South Wales \(1939 - 1987\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Parragirls \(2006 - 2023\)](#)
- [Parramatta Girls Training School \(1946 - 1974\)](#)  
Girls from Parramatta Training School were sent to Myee
- [Kamballa \(1974 - 1983\)](#)  
Girls from Kamballa who were pregnant were sent to Myee
- [Crown Street Women's Hospital \(1893 - 1983\)](#)  
Pregnant women who were living at Myee were sent to Crown Street Women's Hospital to give birth

#### Related Concepts

- [Adoption in New South Wales \(c. 1923 - current\)](#)

## Resources

- [They'll All Enjoy Christmas Parties](#), The Australian Women's Weekly, 9 December 1933
- [Catholic Women's Association: Hospital Visitors' Activities](#), The Catholic Press, 10 September 1936

## Records

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

## Records

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
  - [Records of Girls' Industrial and Training Schools, State Archives NSW \(1867 - 1983\)](#)
  - [Myee Admission and Discharge Registers, State Archives NSW \(1929 - 1977\)](#)
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