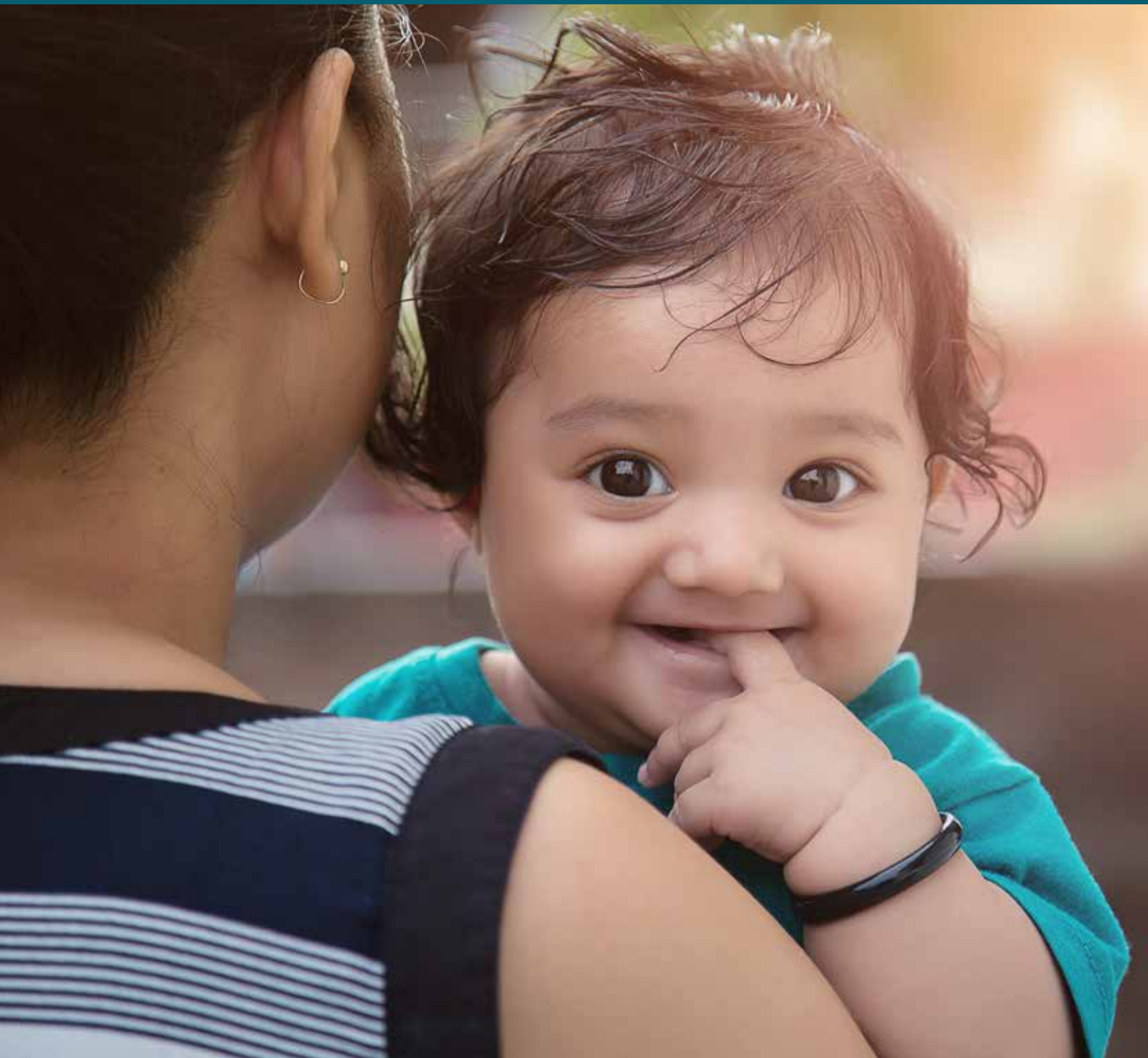




Believing In
Children,
Young People,
Families &
Their Future.

Client Service Charter

Our commitment to you



We believe children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful.

Our Service Charter

This service charter outlines the Berry Street service commitment to you, our clients. We are committed to providing high quality services without discrimination. We seek to work together with you to achieve good outcomes. From you we can learn what we do well and where we need to improve. We welcome suggestions and feedback and take any complaints seriously.

Our History – where we've come from

Established in 1877 as the Victorian Infant Asylum, Berry Street's core activity has always been protecting children in need, and strengthening families so they can provide better care for their children. In the early days, our greatest challenges were high infant mortality and poverty. Our primary aims were to support unwed, isolated or rejected mothers and their babies and finding new homes for babies and children who were abandoned.

We acknowledge that we were part of a broader child welfare system that sought to break up Aboriginal families and communities by removing their children and a system of institutional care in which many children suffered further abuse and deprivation. Our Board made formal apologies in 2006 for these past practices and places the interests of children above all other considerations in its governance of the organisation.

Our Present – where we are today

Today, Berry Street is the largest independent child and family welfare organisation in Victoria. We provide an extensive range of services to children, young people, women and families across metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria. In the context of increased pressures on childhood our greatest challenges today are:

- to help children and young people recover from the devastating impact of abuse, neglect and violence
- to help women keep themselves and their children safe from family violence
- to help struggling mothers and fathers to be the parents they want to be
- to contribute to, and advocate for, a fairer and more inclusive community.

Our Values - what drives us

Berry Street's five core **Values** are Courage, Integrity, Respect, Accountability and Working Together. These Values guide everything we do:

- **Courage:** To never give up, maintain hope and advocate for a 'fair go'
- **Integrity:** To be true to our word
- **Respect:** To acknowledge each person's culture, traditions, identity, rights, needs and aspirations
- **Accountability:** To constantly look at how we can improve, using knowledge and experience of what works, and ensure that all our resources and assets are used in the best possible way
- **Working Together:** To work with our clients, each other and our colleagues to share knowledge, ideas, resources and skills.



Privacy

Your participation in a Berry Street program is voluntary. The more relevant information we know about your circumstances, the better we will be able to match our service and support to your needs. However, it is always your right to decide what you want to tell us.

The information you provide may also be used to assist with referring you to other services. Non-identifying information may also be used for reporting to funding bodies on the number of clients we are working with, and for quality assurance, research and evaluation purposes.

Accessing Information

The Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014) enables you to see any information that Berry Street holds about you. You can request your Berry Street records by contacting the staff member you are working with. If you are no longer working with the service you can contact the Senior Manager of the program that provided support to you. Alternatively, you can contact the Berry Street Privacy Officer by telephoning **03 9429 9266**.

Information Sharing Provisions*

Under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS), approved organisations (such as Berry Street) are able to share information without consent with other approved organisations, if the information promotes child wellbeing and safety, or relates to the assessment and management of family violence risk for a child. Consent is required from adult victim survivors of family violence, unless the information relates to assessing or managing a risk to a child victim survivor.

We will seek your consent prior to sharing information whenever possible, however in instances of urgency and high risk this may not always be possible.

When can information be discussed with other people without my consent?

- Where there are serious concerns about your safety, or the safety of your children;
- When we are mandated to provide information for court proceedings;
- If we believe there is a serious threat to public health and safety.

We will do our best to keep you informed about what information we have shared and the organisation that we have shared information with.

*Please also refer to "Consent to share information with other service providers form, for further information

Past clients and their families

The Heritage Information and Support Service is available to help past clients of Berry Street, Sutherland Homes or Lisa Lodge to locate and access their personal records. Contact Heritage Client Information and Support on **(03) 9429 9266** or email heritage@berrystreet.org.au

Our commitment to you

- ✓ We are committed to providing the highest quality professional services to our clients
- ✓ We seek to understand our clients' needs and what is important to them
- ✓ We will provide services that are responsive to client needs and build on their strengths

What can I expect from Berry Street

My Rights	What this means
Safety I have the right to be and feel safe in Berry Street Services	You should receive services from us that are safe and do no harm
Respect I have the right to be shown and be treated with respect, dignity and consideration	You should be treated fairly and with respect (no matter who you are or where you come from)
Communication I have the right to be informed about services and options available to me	You should be provided with information about the service you receive and what choices you have will be explained to you in a way that you understand
Participation I have the right to be involved in decisions Berry Street makes to support me	You should be included in discussions before decisions are made that will affect you
Privacy I have the right to privacy and confidentiality of my personal information	Your information will only be used for things you have agreed to and will be kept private
Be heard I have the right to raise any concerns and to have them addressed. I have the right to an advocate and an interpreter present if I choose	You will have your concerns responded to in a respectful and timely manner

As a client of Berry Street we ask that you:

- Keep us informed and work with us to provide you with the best possible care, support and assistance
- Respect other clients and Berry Street staff because we all have a right to be respected
- Provide us with feedback so we know what we are doing well and what we can improve.

Doing these things helps us to meet our commitment to you.

Feedback – Your thoughts about Berry Street

Your feedback will help us better understand how to work well with people in the future. You can fill the feedback form out online: www.berrystreet.org.au/feedbackform



Tell us what you think

You have the right to give feedback or complain about any matters regarding the service we provide. You can give feedback by letting us know what is going well, or what isn't, by giving us a suggestion, compliment or complaint.

Your feedback helps us to know where we are performing well. Feedback on issues and problems you may experience helps us improve the quality of our support and services.

It is safe to complain or provide negative feedback and it will not impact on your eligibility to access a service or negatively impact on the service we are currently providing.

You can provide us with a complaint, suggestion or feedback by:

- Speaking with your Berry Street worker
- Calling and asking to speak with the Team Leader or Senior Manager of the service
- Completing the feedback and complaints form and leaving it at any Berry Street office
- Completing the feedback form on our website www.berrystreet.org.au/feedbackform
- E-mailing us at feedback@berrystreet.org.au
- Writing or speaking to your nearest Regional Director

Complaints:

We will endeavour to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. We will contact you within two working days to provide an initial response and outline how we are dealing with the complaint. If you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been dealt with or the outcome, you have the right to appeal.

Models appear in our photographs to protect the identity of our clients. Berry Street is committed to the principles of social justice. We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands and waters of Australia.



How to contact us

For more information on Berry Street please visit our website www.berrystreet.org.au

Central Office

Building 9, 588 Swan Street
Richmond VIC 3121
T (03) 9429 9266

Northern Region

266 Raglan Street
Preston VIC 3072
T (03) 9450 4700

Gippsland Region

37 Elgin Street
Morwell VIC 3840
T (03) 5134 5971

South Eastern Region

Level 1, 500 Princes Hwy
Noble Park VIC 3174
T (03) 9239 1400

Hume Region

110 Wyndham Street
Shepparton VIC 3630
T (03) 5822 8100

Western Region

23 Wetlands Drive
Mt Helen VIC 3350
T (03) 5330 5000