



## **Gidget Goes East with Karitane**

### **THE GIDGET FOUNDATION OPENS GIDGET HOUSE EXTENSION AT KARITANE PARENTING CENTRE, RANDWICK**

Gidget Foundation Australia, in collaboration with the leaders in parenting services, Karitane, have today announced the opening of Gidget House, Randwick, facilitated by the two organisations to provide free psychological services to support new parents and their families.

Opening its doors on Wednesday 19 April, Gidget House Randwick provides expectant and new mums and dads who are experiencing perinatal anxiety and depression with GP-referred, free psychological sessions.

The service will initially open on Wednesdays and, subject to demand, will extend to 4 days per week thereafter.

Gidget House Randwick will be located within the Karitane Parenting Centre at 146 Avoca Street, Randwick.

Linda Jays, Clinical Psychologist, who will lead Gidget's extension service into the East, said: "For our clients, seeing someone to share the issues surrounding their emotional wellbeing early is vital. By addressing depressive symptoms at onset means not 'putting up' with anxiety or low moods. The reality is that both mothers and fathers experience issues around pregnancy and birth and working with the family unit as a whole is crucial to making a difference in our work."

Pregnancy brings joys along with challenges. The Gidget Foundation and Karitane recognise the importance of emotional wellbeing for new parents and the need to provide them with support and services. Previously known as postnatal depression, perinatal anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early parenthood (the perinatal period) affects almost 100,000 Australians each year.

Grainne O'Loughlin, CEO of Karitane said, "We are very excited to be partnering with our colleagues from the Gidget Foundation to further support parents with the very real and common issues of anxiety and depression in the antenatal and postnatal period. This partnership will enhance access to psychological support for parents in the Eastern suburbs. We know that 1 in 7 new mums and 1 in 10 new dads will be affected by perinatal anxiety or depression, so this new, free service will go some way to meeting the high demand for parental support."

Arabella Gibson, CEO Gidget Foundation Australia said, "I firmly believe that sharing our message with new mums and dads is absolutely vital as they try to balance high expectations with today's fast paced lifestyle. Our community needs to know that it's ok to feel anxious and low and that the Gidget Foundation can help them through free counselling and professional support at Gidget House in North Sydney and now at Randwick."

"We are delighted to partner with the Karitane team, a perfect synergy, together offering quality parenting services and emotional support," Gibson added.

Gidget was the nickname of a vibrant young mother who took her own life while suffering postnatal depression. She hid her suffering from even her loving family and friends. They created the Gidget Foundation determined that what happened to Gidget would not happen to others.



Today, the Gidget Foundation helps hundreds of expectant parents and their families each year through its free psychological services at Gidget House and the Emotional Wellbeing Program for pregnant women at North Shore Private Hospital and the Mater Hospital. The Foundation provides training for health professionals, supports research, develops resources and has established workplace awareness programs.

Karitane's purpose is to provide evidence based services and programs to support, inform and educate families throughout the childhood years and to build the capacity of the child and family health and the perinatal mental health workforce. Karitane are leaders in parenting services, with a multidisciplinary team of health professionals dedicated to improve parenting competence, maternal depressive symptoms, maternal anxiety, parenting stress and child behaviours.

Ends.

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### **About Gidget Foundation Australia**

The Gidget Foundation Australia is a not for profit organisation, chaired by Obstetrician Dr Vijay Roach. The Gidget Foundation exists to promote emotional wellbeing for expectant and new parents and to raise awareness of perinatal anxiety and depression amongst women and their families, their health providers and the wider community to ensure that those in need receive timely, appropriate and supportive care.

The organisation leverages its impact and strengthens its outcomes by working collaboratively with many professionals who support vulnerable parents. All funds raised are directed to its programs, which include:

- The Emotional Wellbeing Programs at North Shore Private Hospital and the Mater Hospital.
- Gidget House, providing free psychological support for families experiencing emotional distress during pregnancy and early parenthood.
- Education and awareness programs for health professionals and the community
- Advocacy and active memberships of professional networks
- Research and contribution to mainstream and professional publications
- Development and distribution of resources



### **About Karitane**

Karitane has been supporting parents since 1923 offering a range of education, prevention and early intervention with families with children 0-5 years of age. We are leaders in parenting services, with a multidisciplinary team of health professionals proven to improve parenting competence, maternal depressive symptoms maternal anxiety, parenting stress and child behaviours who develop, deliver and lead research and comprehensive evidence based parenting services with three key areas of focus:

#### **1. In-Centre Care**

Parent support programs delivered through parenting centres, residential stays, perinatal mental health service and specialised toddler clinics.

#### **2. Community Outreach Programmes**

Range of early intervention services delivered in community which include: courses for early parenting education (understanding the emotions of children's behaviour, emotional coaching for parents, positive parenting), supported playgroups and programs for young women in custody parenting, teenage pregnancy, young parent in home support and foster carer kinship and grandparent support program.

#### **3. Education Services**

Karitane provide comprehensive education to parents, healthcare professionals and non-government organisations with a formal collaboration between Karitane and Western Sydney University (post-graduate nursing – The Masters of Child and Family). Karitane is a registered charity, supported by the NSW Ministry of Health and Department of Family & Community Services. In addition to our government funding, much of the work is undertaken thanks to donations from individuals and companies.