

Media Release

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MacKillop at Fair Day to talk about diversity within foster care

Carer couple Hayley and Laura encourage dropping by at the MacKillop Family Services stall at this Sunday's Mardi Gras *Fair Day* in Sydney.

The NSW carers want everyone to explore foster care and not to rule themselves out unnecessarily. "The MacKillop team will support and work with you regardless of your gender or relationship status," says Hayley. "So long as you have a safe, loving home environment for children from vulnerable circumstances, that's a start."

MacKillop welcomes carers from diverse backgrounds. "We need all kinds of carers because we have all kinds of children – from urban and rural areas, varied cultural backgrounds, different home environments and life experiences, those who identify as LGBTIQ+, and of course, every child has their own unique personality," says Patricia Maher, MacKillop's NSW Carer & Recruitment Manager.

"You will absolutely see diversity reflected among MacKillop's foster carers," adds Ms. Maher. "What they have in common is the desire to provide safe and nurturing homes for children and young people who are unable to live in their own homes."

Laura's journey as a foster carer began as she started a relationship with Hayley. "I knew from the outset that Hayley was fostering, and welcomed it," she says. "Children are a gift whether they're yours or someone else's."

Everyone has a learning journey, and for Hayley, that was all around unconditional support. "I learned to listen to the young people and identify with them in the way that they saw themselves," she said.

"Visitors to our Fair Day stall will have the opportunity to talk to our team about the experiences of LGBTIQ+ foster carers with MacKillop," urges Ms Maher. "They can find out about the different types of foster care, the comprehensive training and 24-hour support we provide and hear firsthand about the process of becoming a foster carer."

Meet the MacKillop team at their stall this Fair Day, Sunday 15 February, at Victoria Park in the Sydney CBD. Chat with them about the organisation's commitment to inclusive services, and about the *MacKillop LGBTIQ+ Foster Carer Guide*, developed for use by all MacKillop foster carers.

Anyone interested in learning more about becoming a foster carer can also do so at mackillop.org.au/fostercare

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About

[MacKillop Family Services](#) is a national child and family welfare organisation with extensive experience delivering therapeutic and trauma-informed services. We operate residential care, foster care, family support, disability support, youth homelessness and education programs across NSW, VIC, WA, the ACT and the NT.

Photo: MacKillop foster carers Hayley (L) and Laura (R)

