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MEDIA RELEASE

Barnardos South Coast Centre to host 'Open Day' on Thursday 30 March at 10am

On the Thursday 30 March 2023, Barnardos South Coast Children's Family Centre in Warrawong will be holding an Open Day for the local community to come along and meet the staff, learn about programs and services at the Centre and enjoy morning tea.

Member for Wollongong, **Paul Scully MP** and Member for Shellharbour **Anna Watson MP** will be attending along with Lord Mayor of Wollongong **Gordon Bradbery** and Mayor of Shellharbour **Chris Homer**.

Barnardos vital child and family programs available at the Centre will be showcased including HIPPY, Supported Playgroups, Family Support, Communities for Children and Bundaleer Community Centre. The Barnardos foster care recruitment team will also be present with a focus on how foster carers work with parents towards restoration of children and respite care which gives foster carers a well-earned break.

The Open Day will also include the official opening of the children's outdoor garden which was completed after an extensive planning and consultation process with local families and children who access the Centre.

There will also be an unveiling of the official names of the Centre's meeting rooms which are named after the six daughters in the Dreaming story of Five Islands as told by the Thurrawal (Dharawal) people.

Barnardos South Coast Centre Manager Maria Corsiglia explains. "Late last year, Barnardos South Coast managers were privileged to attend an art workshop with well respected and much loved local Elders from Coomaditchie. Aunty Lorraine Brown and Aunty Narelle Thomas. They told us the story of how the five islands off Port Kembla were formed when Oola-boola-woo, the West Wind, blew five of his daughters (Mimosa, Wilga, Lilli Pilli, Wattle, Clematis) off the mountain and out to sea on a piece of rock. Geera was the only daughter who remained on the mountain. The five daughters turned into mermaids and Geera was so lonely she turned to stone. Geera is now Mount Keira and her sisters are the Five Islands." -ends -

For more information, interviews with spokespeople or to attend on the day contact Irene Saunders on isaunders@barnardos.org.au or 0410 503 232

- What:** Barnardos South Coast Open Day
- Where:** Barnardos Children's Room
13 Green St, Warrawong
- When:** Thursday 30 March, 10am – 12pm
- Who:** Barnardos staff, local children and families and VIPs
- Photo opp:** Official opening of the children's garden
- Spokesperson:** Deirdre Cheers, CEO Barnardos Australia
Maria Corsiglia, Barnardos South Coast Centre Manager

About Barnardos Australia barnardos.org.au

Barnardos Australia is here because every child needs a champion. We listen, we act, and we advocate for the safety of children at risk of abuse and neglect, providing family support programs and services that empower children to reach their full potential. When it comes to protecting vulnerable children from abuse, we never give up. We are dedicated to the prevention of trauma in children, and support families to be the best parents they can be. We help children to recover and thrive, and we find safe homes for them through foster care and open adoption.