



New(town) Beginnings #4

Dear Neighbour,

On Monday we welcomed over 60 local women to the Centre for a morning of pampering, sharing and togetherness as part of International Women's Day. We celebrated in our decorated hall to the tunes of iconic female artists, and had a ball doing so.

It was the first event we have held in over a year and I can't help but feel that the gathering was symbolic of what's to come: post-pandemic it's going to be groups of women continuing to rise up together in strength and power, to repair our broken world. Just like our First Nations women have been doing for decades.

For Australian women, this year's theme of 'Choose to Challenge' was apt in many ways. For us at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, we commit to continue challenging the systemic barriers and societal issues confronting our most vulnerable women.

We also saw it as an opportunity for us to finally come together and gather safely in person. We chose to honour the women we know who have dealt with abuse, discrimination, poverty and faced enormous challenges throughout their lives.

It was especially important for these women who have struggled with extreme hardship and adversity to know that we are here to support them. To us they are the heroines and leaders of our community – individuals who continue to find the strength to conquer whatever is thrown at them.

The beautiful event was filled with love and warmth, and that would not have been possible without the generosity of local businesses and services, plus our incredible staff and volunteers. We were overwhelmed with in-kind donations, which allowed us to spoil our guests like never before.

The women were treated to free haircuts, professional bra-fittings with take-home bras, skincare consultations and facial massages, a delicious morning tea, plus an enormous array of giveaways. They left carrying bags loaded with gifts, hopefully a continual reminder that they are special, worthy and important.

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1 Bedford St/PO Box 19, Newtown NSW 2042 | ABN 96 884 462 833
E admin@newtowncentre.org | P +61 2 9564 7333 | F +61 2 9519 2509 | W newtowncentre.org

The feedback our staff heard was heart-warming:

"The last time I was fitted for a bra I was 15. That is over 20 years ago and I have been wearing the wrong size all this time. I feel so much better."

"I haven't been able to afford a professional haircut in years. I feel like a new woman."

"I can't believe I am able to get so many free items. Thank you so much."

"I feel amazing – I've been fitted for a bra, had a haircut and my skin is glowing. I can't wait for next year."

"I am just SO grateful, beyond grateful for this amazing gift."

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre would like to express our enormous gratitude to the following businesses. If you can, please support them as they do wonderful things for their community): Adora Chocolate, Aesop, Bourke Street Bakery, Brickfields, Bunnings Alexandria, Cognescenti, Oooby Sydney, MsG Skinlife, Paloma Salon, Support the Girls, Thread Together and Two Good Co.

We would also like to thank our partner services who provided conversation and free advice on the day: Marrickville Legal Centre, Moving Out Moving On, Older Women's Network and WISE Employment.

Mel
Community Strengthening Team

P.S. – If you are free we would love for you to join Newtown Neighbourhood Centre on Monday as we *March 4 Justice*. Learn more about the March [here](#).



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