



A legacy

# Foreword

When I think back to the founding years of Breakaway and the many people who gave of their time to turn our dream into a reality, I am so very humbled.

Day after day for four years, a core group of parents from Woody Point Special School along with a number of other volunteers, gave their time, effort and passion to create an organisation that would provide wholistic and respectful care, support and opportunities to children with disability in the Moreton Bay area.

From the very beginning it was a collective venture.

There were bus trips to Brisbane to look at existing models of care. There were community surveys to find out what families wanted and needed. We taught ourselves how to apply for (and win) grants and lobby governments - local, state and federal. We drew on every bit of experience from our own careers and called on help from others when needed.

It was hard work. But when Breakaway opened the doors to its first respite home in Margate, we knew it had all been worth it. To see the joy on the faces of the children who came to stay and feel the gratitude from the parents who needed support inspired us to keep going. In no time, we had a second location from which we could operate the organisation and run day activities for clients.

And over the years, as the children grew older and their needs changed, the organisation changed. And it grew into something none of us could have envisaged.



Across its 30-year history, Breakaway has had a truly wonderful community of supportive people and we were blessed with amazing staff with the right skills and attitude - people who had their heart in the right place. In particular, the two main coordinators/ service managers acted as amazing conduits of values and enactment of those core beliefs. Rosemary Attfield as the inaugural manager who was in service for the best part of 10 years and Annette Vivian who then worked at Breakaway for 20 years guiding the organisation into new areas of care. Without their integrity and commitment to us, Breakaway would not have prospered.

Our focus was to always provide safe, respectful, warm and inviting support, and I hope our families would say that we achieved that. Families were always invited to have input into their service to make sure it grew with the needs.

It's been a wonderful journey, and I am so grateful that through Multicap, that legacy can continue for our families for many years to come.

**Janet Holmes**  
Co-Founder and Inaugural President

# Introduction

**Breakaway Inc had been supporting people with disability in Moreton Bay for more than three decades.**

Formed in 1989 by a group of women, most of whom were parents of a child with disability who were unable to find quality respite for their family members, Breakaway opened its doors in 1993 offering short term/respite accommodation from its first home in Margate.

With Janet Holmes as inaugural President, supported by the founding committee, and Rosemary Atfield as service coordinator, the organisation went from strength to strength.

“We wanted to create something that was wholistically respectful to revolve around the needs of the clients, not the organisation,” Janet said.

More than 30 years later, Breakaway was a leading disability support provider for the Bay area offering people with disability life-long and permanent housing opportunities, supported independent living, in-home

support, short-term and emergency accommodation, respite and access to the community.

In January 2021, Breakaway and Multicap came together to offer greater choice for people with disability in Moreton Bay.

Multicap and Breakaway shared similarities - both have humble beginnings and a mission to support people with high needs disability to live meaningful lives filled with opportunity.

The partnership is one based on aligned values and similar foundation stories, having both been formed by families wanting support for their children with disabilities.

This booklet serves to honour the legacy of Breakaway and record the significant impact its services have had on the lives of people with disability since its establishment in 1983 until the merger with Multicap in 2021.

Founding members: Janet Holmes, Margaret Kilbride, Debra Cook, Rosemary Atfield, Lindy Boschler and Kay Hoskings.



*Janet and Madeleine*



# Breakaway

*Find a way. Make a way. There is a way.*

Providing flexible and respectful quality care that supports people with disability and their families in warm, safe environments.

**Our Vision** is to be a highly respected provider of vibrant services that embrace opportunities for people with disability to grow, develop and engage in the pursuit of a meaningful life.

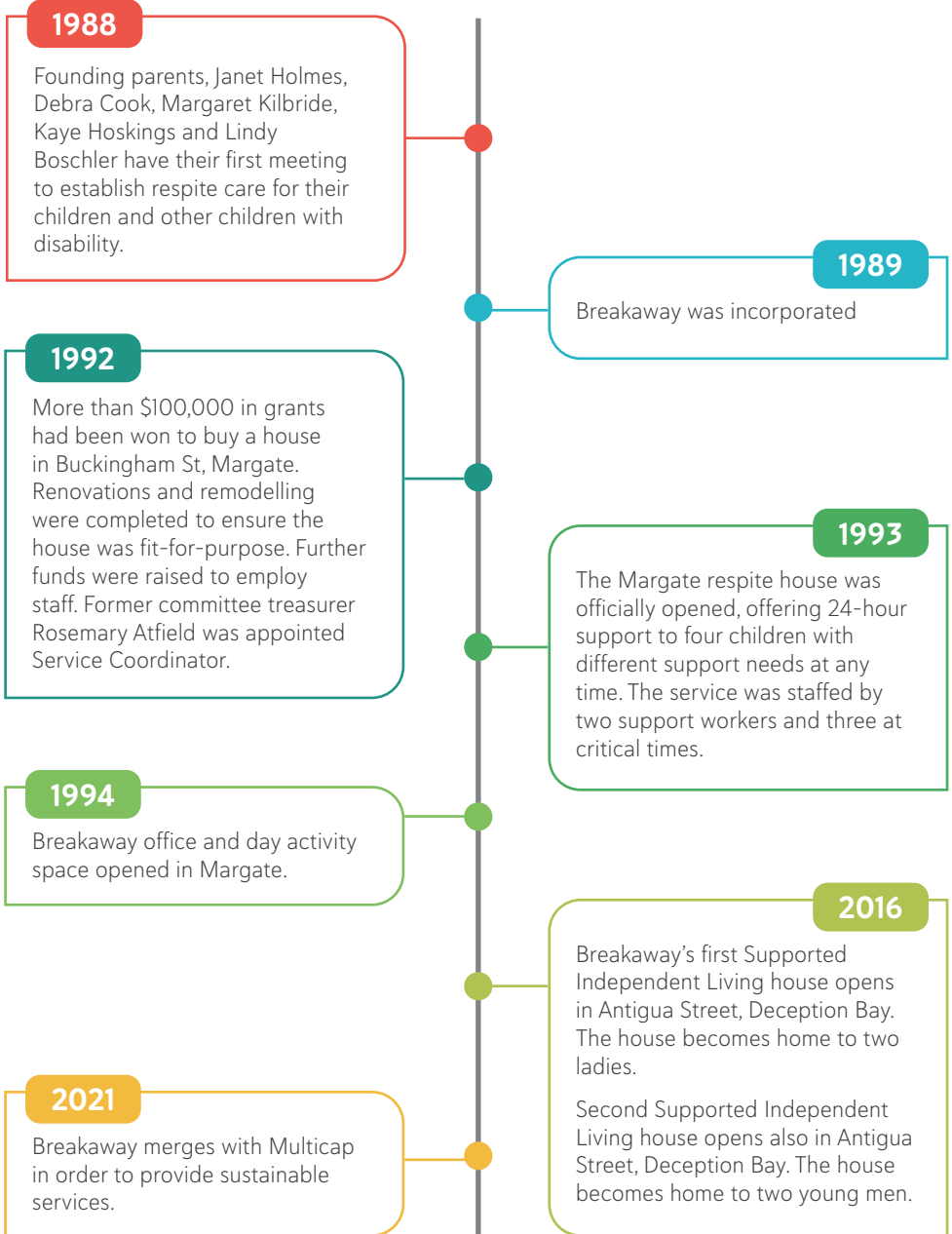
**Our mission** is to provide flexible and respectful quality care that supports people with disability in a caring, safe and stimulating environment.

## Supports include:

- Respite
- Independent Living
- Community Access - learning and living skills
- In Home Support
- Emergency Support



# Breakaway timeline



# Client stories



Madeleine and Janet

# Making life rich for her children

## **Janet Holmes did whatever it took for her children to live as rich a life as possible.**

Born with a very rare genetic condition, causing profound intellectual disability, Madeleine and Chris needed full-time care and constant medical support.

“For us to survive every day, we would have six or seven services come to the house to help. You have no privacy,” Janet said. “But you get this life, so you live it and we wanted to give our children as normal and rich a life as possible.”

While going out with two wheelchairs wasn't easy, Janet made it happen.

“Madeleine loved it when we went out,” Janet said. “She would put her legs out and squeal. She was a party animal. Chris was the opposite - he would be ‘cuddle me but don't take me out.’”

A former art teacher, Janet says her children gave her the courage to speak out for them.

“Having a child with disability gives you a fair bit of courage to speak up for them and give them dignity and respect that any child could expect,” she said.

It was from this courage and unconditional love for her children, that Janet became the driving force behind Breakaway.

“The children went to Woody Point Special School from when they were about two, but there was no respite for them or any of the families in our community. A group of us mums from the school got together and founded Breakaway. These women were a wonderful body of support.

“The first night Chris and Madeleine went to respite, we went to the movies and actually saw ‘Rain Man’ which was quite confronting being that we were in that difficult place of having to ask others for assistance to cope in a life of vast needs,” Janet said.

“I knew Chris and Madeleine were safe and cared for. You come to rely on those times when you can have a break and have some time with my eldest daughter.”

Janet said Breakaway gave her children the chance to do things with other children their own age and have experiences she couldn't provide while giving the family some breathing space.

“We can't be in control of everything as parents, and other people give your children different experiences. And you want your child's life to be as rich as it can possibly be and part of that is meeting new people and having different experiences away from your family.”

When Madeleine passed away at age 17, Janet and her family celebrated her life.

“She was cheeky, loved music and going out,” Janet said. “And she mattered. Her life mattered.”

In 2020, Chris moved out of home into care and Janet now sees him every Saturday as his mother, rather than his carer.

“I take him for picnics, and he has music sessions online with his musician sister who lives in Montreal,” she said. “He's happy and safe and living his young life as other young men do in independent living. That's all I can ask for.”



Chris and Kevin Kilbride

## Breakaway a lifeline for Chris and his family

**Margaret and Kevin Kilbride will forever be grateful for Breakaway.**

“I don’t think I could have survived without it,” Margaret said.

Margaret and Kevin’s youngest son Christopher, or Chrissy as the family affectionately knows him, was just nine weeks old when he contracted bacterial meningitis. The infection was so severe it caused damage to Chris’ brain.

“He nearly died,” Kevin said. “We’re just so grateful they saved him.”

Over the years, the young family found support from a number of organisations but the opportunity for respite was minimal.

“There was one place on the peninsula that wasn’t really appropriate for him and he didn’t go very often but there wasn’t much else,” Margaret said.

Through Chris’s school, Woody Point Special School, Margaret met a group of mums who were starting Breakaway and began attending committee meetings.

“Your child doesn’t come with an instruction manual, so meeting people in a similar

situation is so helpful,” Kevin said.

“You share information and stories and don’t feel so isolated.”

When the first Breakaway respite house opened in 1993, Chris was one of the first on the list.

“Chris seemed to really like it, so knowing he was safe and happy gave us the opportunity to go away and it was great,” Margaret said.

Chris, now 44, has been a customer ever since and in 2017, moved out of his family home into a Breakaway Supported Independent Living house in Deception Bay - around the corner from the family’s home.

“He’d been living at home for 37 years and we wanted to get him set up while we can, as we’re getting older,” the couple said. “He has 24-hour support and is really happy in his new home.

“We have peace of mind knowing he’s cared for and out enjoying life going to the movies, bowling, the park, swimming and other water activities. He loves it.”

“Breakaway has carried us right through and we’re very thankful.”



## A dream come true

Lorraine has many good memories from Breakaway, but her favourite is seeing the dream for a respite home become a reality.

“We had no family to help us,” said Lorraine. “So, things would have been very difficult if Breakaway wasn’t established. Having seen our dream ‘Breakaway Respite Home’ become a reality, is my favourite memory from over the years.”

Lorraine’s son Reece was one of the first guests at the respite home.

“The respite house gave us time-out to have a break and catch up on getting jobs done without interruption,” she said.

“For Reece, it has helped him to be independent when the need arises and learn how to work with carers other than Mum.”

Lorraine said Breakaway has helped Reece become more confident.

“He has had the continuity of Breakaway carers work in the home and for community access as well as in respite and he is more confident when away from his parents and home.”

Lorraine became involved with the running of Breakaway and over the years, has held every role from President to Secretary.

“I became involved as it gave me a chance to have a say as a mother and primary carer,” she said.

As for the future for her son: “All I can hope for is that he has a safe, enjoyable life with the best supports.”

*“Accessing breakaway has meant everything to us. To find a place that is so understanding and that looks after your son or your daughter so well is just magic. The way I would describe Breakaway in three words is safe, secure and dependable.”*

**Parent**

Reece and Lorraine



# Staff stories



## Breakaway Inc

Empowering positive pathways for people with disability

We Offer: Respite, Community Participation, Music & Movement, Independent Living, In Home Support, Emergency Support and Your Life Your Choice Hosting



Reece with his carer Russell



Jodie Kermode

## Jodie's leap of faith paid off

**Jodie Kermode took a leap of faith leaving the career she knew to become a disability support worker with Breakaway. And it paid off.**

"I was quite nervous but from my first day with Breakaway I knew 100 per cent that I had made the right move," Jodie said. "I love it and I can't imagine being anywhere else. I just wish I'd done it years ago."

The former payroll and rostering officer joined Breakaway in 2014 as one of the first DSW's at the organisation's first Supported Independent Living house.

"We were supporting two young ladies and it was such a lovely environment to work in," Jodie said. "To be part of a team that was enhancing these ladies' lives was such a privilege."

Over the years, Jodie said Breakaway became like family, and not just because her partner, Tim, was also employed by the organisation.

"Because we were a small service it was like one big happy family - there is so much togetherness," she said. "There were so many

activities where we would bring families together for a bbq. One of the customers was a DJ and we'd end up with everyone up dancing. We still do that now."

And Jodie says she's made the best of friends.

"When I first started and not having worked in disability before, I had a lot to learn," she said. "Sam Lovett worked alongside me, and I learnt so much from Sam. She's become one of my best friends. There are so many great people in the organisation."

Jodie has continued with the organisation following the merger with Multicap and is now a service manager looking after three supported independent living homes and 25 staff.

"I am still very hands on with what's happening at the houses and with all of the customers," she said. "I like to know what's happening on the ground and making sure our customers' voices are heard. I have a very good rapport with all of the families and keep in touch with them all, so they know their child is safe and well supported. It gives parents peace of mind."



## Breakaway like one big family

**Samantha Lovett's connection with Breakaway started well before she was first employed by the organisation in 2004.**

Through her family day care 'mum', a very young Samantha had gotten to know Breakaway founder, Janet Holmes and two of her children (and Breakaway clients) Chris and Madeleine.

And later, as a teenager, Sam would often drop into the Breakaway respite house in Margate to see her mum, Lynn, who worked there as a disability support worker (DSW).

So, when Sam decided to follow in her mum's footsteps and pursue a career as a disability support worker, she knew exactly where she wanted to work.

Sam started as a DSW with Breakaway fresh out of high school at just 17 and loved it from day one.

"I just loved helping people to have the best life they could and wanted them to have the same experiences as other people their own age," she said.

"I'd had friends with disability and seeing how their life wasn't the same as mine, I wanted to be able to help them have the same typical

life that I had including age-appropriate experiences."

Sam recalls taking some of the older respite clients to the local Leagues Club on a Saturday night to see the band and then through the McDonalds drive through on the way home.

"They had so much fun - we all did," she said.

When Sam's mum started Breakaway's post school community access program, Sam would often work alongside her mum taking clients out for the day to horse riding, sailing and the beach.

"I really loved those days," Sam said. "We had lots of laughs with the clients, and I learnt a lot from mum, particularly around management, which was really helpful as my career progressed. Mum was pretty tough on me though - there were no free rides just because I was her daughter."

In 2019 Sam became Breakaway's Key Coordinator and continued with the organisation after the merger with Multicap in 2021.

"I'm so proud to have worked with Breakaway - it was like a big family," Sam said.

## Contribution from Mrs Barbara Adams, Chair (2021-2022)

"The first inspiration for Breakaway Inc was from Janet Holmes, a parent of two disabled children at Woody Point Special School. Janet worked very hard at making it a reality.

A respite house was purchased in Margate Street giving many parents and their children happiness.

Regular family BBQs in the back yard, picnic days and Christmas parties were also favourites. Many raffles were held to support these functions and to fund the purchase of special equipment needs (... and now we have NDIS). Over the years there have been many dedicated and wonderful committee members, many compassionate volunteers and many wonderful staff at Breakaway Inc.

However, as workloads and conforming costs grew for the final small, dedicated committee volunteers - many with children with disabilities and families to care for as well and others with the demands of weekday jobs, it was considered how to continue this wonderful support service for Breakaway Inc clients and staff. A merger with a larger group was considered.

The final transitioning to Multicap committee, consisting of the below, appreciate Multicap management for a smooth, supportive merger and their continued support for the Breakaway Inc clients and staff."

**Barbara Adams** - Chair  
**Stephen Brake** - Treasurer  
**Colin Tysoe** - Vice Chair  
**Lorraine Lockrey**  
**Kevin Kilbride**  
**Leonie Suetin**

*"Breakaway made an impact on all stakeholders from families to staff and external services that worked alongside the service. It was a pleasure to be part of the history and be a part of a community that continually upheld the values that it was created from. Breakaway was a place with long standing staff and was led by coordinators that were passionate about our community and contributed along with the families to make it a sought after provider. Breakaway created a lifetime of memories for all involved."*

**Naomie Macquarie, DSW  
and Manager - 15 years with  
Breakaway**

*"Breakaway was the perfect family orientated service and staff. We had the best service manager in Annette Vivian who was there for 20 years. She was responsible for upholding the values in all areas of function as she was invested in the belief and core values of the organisation."*

**Debra Cook, Co-founder**

*"Breakaway started because we knew as mothers that we weren't going to be able to provide all that our children needed. That we weren't going to be able to let go of our children to be looked after by someone else unless we could assure that they were safe, that they were respected."*

**Janet Holmes, co-founder and  
inaugural President**

# Office Bearers

Year	President	Vice president	Treasurer	Secretary	Service Manager
1989/1993	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Rosemary Atfield	Lindy Boshler	
1993 /1994	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1994/1995	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1995/1996	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1996/1997	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1997/1998	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1998/1999	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
1999/2000	Janet Holmes	Kay Hoskings	Margaret Kilbride	Lindy Boshler	Rosemary Atfield
2000/2001	Janet Holmes	David Oswald		Lorraine Lockrey	Rosemary Atfield
2001/2002	Janet Holmes	David Oswald		Lorraine Lockrey	Rosemary Atfield
2002/2003	Janet Holmes	David Oswald		Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2003/2004	Janet Holmes	Sandra Connolly		Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2004/2005	David Oswald	Sandra Connolly		Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2005/2006	David Oswald	Sandra Connolly		Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2006/2007	David Oswald	Sandra Connolly		Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian

<b>Year</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Vice president</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Service Manager</b>
2007/2008	David Oswald	Julie Crawford			Annette Vivian
2008/2009					Annette Vivian
2009/2010					Annette Vivian
2010/2011					Annette Vivian
2011/2012					Annette Vivian
2012/2013					Annette Vivian
2013/2014					Annette Vivian
2014/2015					Annette Vivian
2015/2016					Annette Vivian
2016/2017					Annette Vivian
2017/2018					Annette Vivian
2018/2019	Linda Hartman		Ken Manning	Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2019/2020	Linda Hartman	Vicki Saezza	Ken Manning	Lorraine Lockrey	Annette Vivian
2020/2021	Barbara Adams	Colin Tysoe	Stephen Brake	Lorraine Lockrey	Frank Estevao



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