

## The Story of The Salvation Army Eden Park Boys' Home, Mt. Barker. S.A.

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Set in an ideal location on a one hundred and thirty three acre property in the Adelaide Hills, <sup>26 miles from Adelaide</sup> this Home has accommodation for thirty six boys whose ages range from eight to seventeen years. The situation of the Home with its open spaces, trees, garden, farm and its animals provides a healthy atmosphere for emotionally and socially disturbed boys for whom this Home particularly caters.

### REFERRALS

Most of the boys are referred from Child Guidance Clinics in the City, or placed by parents unable to cope with the boy and his problems. Often these parents have been advised by the Child Guidance Clinics to place their son in our care.

### REASONS FOR ADMISSION:

- i. Breakdown of family relationships in the boy's own home, or sometimes in a foster home.
- ii. Truancy and inability to cope at school.
- iii. Lack of availability of another suitable Institution.

### PROGRAMME:

The programme for each boy is carried out in co-operation with the Department of Mental Health where Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Social Workers have been working with the boys and their families prior to their admission to the Home. Throughout the period the boys are in our care a Social Worker from the Clinic keeps in contact with the Home, the School and the parents. and tests, re-assessments and counselling is carried out as needed

The objective of the programme is to train the boys, through character training, in the art of living.

This is done by helping him to understand he belongs to a family and must therefore learn to "give and take" in the family situation. He learns to accept some responsibility in the running of the Home by being allocated some work tasks in the area where he lives. By involving the boy in this activity he can sometimes be helped to face his problem, particularly if it stems from trouble within the context of his own family home.

We believe there is therapeutic value and <sup>that</sup> growth towards good emotional health can be assisted by <sup>living close to</sup> nature itself and in working with the animals on the farm. Boys bring their own pets with whom they already have a relationship which can help in the initial adjustment to a new environment.

The open countryside often gives the feeling of being free, but also provides an opportunity for <sup>boys</sup> ~~him~~ to learn how to use freedom responsibly.

Boys are involved in sporting activities on the Home grounds and in the community. The art of working in a team, which involves a sense of sharing, an appreciation of the other persons skill, and an ability to handle frustration, are important lessons a boy <sup>can</sup> often learn~~s~~ on the sports field.

The school, which is situated on the property, is recognised by the Psychology Branch of the Education Department as a "Special School". This caters for boys of Primary School age and has proved successful for boys who previously 'opted' out of the school situation where they have <sup>experienced</sup> only frustration and failure from which they have run away. With teaching geared to a boy's attainment level, motivation is in time achieved through success. The older boys who achieve High School standard are students of the Mt. Barker High School.

### OUR OBJECTIVE:

OBR AIM: The Salvation Army has been involved in caring for boys at Mt. Barker ~~for~~ over seventy years. Today we are as deeply involved as ever, but are very much aware that we need people in the community to help us achieve our objective for those in our care at "Eden Park Boys' Home".