

Wanslea Children's Home

c. 1946 – 1980s

Other Names:

- Wanslea Emergency Children's Hostel
- Wanslea Incorporated Emergency Home for Children

Details

Wanslea Children's Home was established by the Women's Australian National Services (the WANS) in Payneham in 1946. It operated as a Home for children whose mothers could not care for them due to illness and took in between 18 and 30 children. Wanslea also trained Wanslea Aids to care for children in their own homes in times of emergency. Wanslea Children's Home moved to Kingswood in 1958. By the 1980s Wanslea had phased out residential care and became a day care centre.

The Wanslea Children's Home was the vision of members of the Women's Australian National Services (WANS), an organisation established in Adelaide in 1941. At that time the organisation was formed to train young women to take up work which would support the war effort. The motto of WANS was 'Pledged to Unity and Service'.

After World War II the women turned their efforts to another service project, the establishment of a Home for children. Their particular aim was to provide a Home for children whose mothers were ill or had to go into hospital. The Home was also to operate as a training school for Wanslea Aids. These trainees worked in the Home caring for the children accommodated there and at the same time learned skills such as child care, first aid and cooking. During family crises or to provide respite care, the trained Wanslea Aids were sent to take care of children in their own homes.

The WANS found and purchased a property on 222 Payneham Road, Payneham. The building was formerly a private hospital. With the help of public support and donations the building was substantially renovated and opened on 22 March 1947.

Wanslea provided short-term emergency residential care for children whose parents were temporarily unable to care for them. During the first month of opening 66 children, aged between 14 months and 12 years, were accommodated at Wanslea. At any one time during that year there were at least 18 children living at the home. In 1952, a newspaper article noted that often children returned to the Home more than once and when they did, they claimed the same bed they had slept in during their previous visit. The article also noted that the Home had taken in a number of children whose parents had recently migrated to Australia. By the late 1950s more than 30 children lived at Wanslea under the care of six full-time staff members and up to 16 aids and trainee aids.

Funding for the Home was always tight. Nominal fees were charged for children placed in the Home, but no child in need was turned away because parents could not afford the cost. In those cases fees were reduced or waived. Businesses and the general public donated money to the Home to assist with renovations and maintenance. The WANS also held regular badge days.

During the late 1950s the WANS realised that if the Payneham property was to continue as a Home for children, it would require extensive renovation. The alternative was to find another property. New premises at 51 Cross Road, Kingswood, were purchased and Wanslea Children's Home moved there in 1958.

By 1962, Wanslea was also operating a day care service. In the early 1970s there was a great increase in the number of working parents wishing to leave children at Wanslea for day care.

During 1976-1977 residential care was gradually phased out. However, Wanslea continued to offer an emergency service in cases where no other suitable means of care was available for a number of years. The home aid service ceased in 1985, after which time Wanslea operated solely as a daycare centre.

In 1990 Wanslea Children's Home came into the fold of Anglican Community Services, the social welfare operation of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide. In 1992, ownership of Wanslea was transferred to Anglican Community Services, who then the day care centre.

The Women's Australian National Services Association ceased to operate in 1997.

In 1998 Anglican Community Services changed its name to Anglicare and in 2000 Anglicare was separately incorporated as AnglicareSA. In 2017 AnglicareSA was still running Wanslea as a child care centre.

Gallery



Wanslea Children's Home

Description: This image was included in the Finding Your Own Way guide, section 9.



Wanslea gets first guests

Description: This is a copy of an image illustrating an article in The News, 'Wanslea Gets First Guests' on 27 March 1947, on page 3.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Women's Australian National Services \(1940 - 1997\)](#)
Date: 1947 - 1980

Related Organisations

- [Anglican Diocese of Adelaide \(1847 - current\)](#)

Resources

- Angas, A S, *History of the Women's Australian National Services, South Australia*, 1981
- [Hostel for Children of Sick Mothers](#), The Advertiser, 10 June 1946

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records held by other organisations

- [Records of Wanslea Children's Home \(1946 - 1995\)](#)
 - [Records of the Women's Australian National Services \(1941 - 1997\)](#)
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