



FIRST IMPRESSIONS CLOTHING EXCHANGE

Friends of F.I.C.E Newsletter ~ Feb - Mar 2021

Welcome to 2021!

It's hard to believe that this month on February 12th we will be celebrating our "official" first year Birthday in our new shop, the time has certainly flown and we couldn't have done it without the support of our wonderful volunteers and the community who are so generous with their time and donations.

To celebrate this wonderful occasion we will be livening up the Terrace with a fashion Parade, all possible, thanks to Yarra Ranges Council and the women who volunteer here and who have worked tirelessly on this event.

On another note we are planning to bring you many events during the year in which we would love you to participate in and share, some of the events to look out for are our:

- Return to work workshop
- Ladies pamper day
- Kerrie Stanley Make - up tutorial
- Just to name a few.

We also now have a clothing rack at our Chirnside Park Community Hub which we update weekly, if you can't get into the store (cash or card sales). The Chirnside Park Hub is also a drop off point for donations as well.

Another piece of exciting news to share is that FICE will be going mobile. Thanks to a Yarra Ranges Council grant FICE will be taking the shop and program mobile, visiting four locations (Yarra Junction, Powelltown, Healesville and Yarra Glen) in Term 2 & 4.

Do you need some Bras?

Buying underwear is an expensive and sometimes daunting task! Here at FICE we have new and near new bras and assist you in the fitting process. This a free service and all clients walk away with two bras and a pack of brand new underwear. Bookings are essential.



9 signs it's time to replace your bra ASAP

1. The back is stretched out
2. Cups are stretched out or too big
3. Cups are too small
4. Strap are loose
5. Painful underwire
6. Fabric breakdown
7. Your bra has hair
8. The colour is faded or dingy
9. Your taste has changed



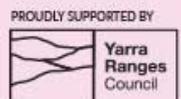
For our Friends of FICE members your voucher for the shop is on page 4



the terrace comes alive

Fashion Show

Friday 12th Feb



11am - 2pm Fri 12th Feb
Tickets \$10 - bookings will be limited so get in early and book by scanning here to save your seat close to the action



Interview with Happy

Happy came to Australia from Myanmar (Burma) in 2016 with her parents and six younger siblings. They left for a better life in Australia as in Myanmar they were very poor, the country experiences a lot of civil unrest and there is few opportunities for employment and safe futures.

Renee: How did you first become involved with Cire and First Impressions clothing exchange?

Happy: When I first came to Australia at 16 years old, I could not speak any English. I enrolled in English speaking classes at Swinburne so that I could learn to speak English. I was referred to First Impression Clothing Exchange through Salvation Army Employment Plus because at 20 I still hadn't managed to find work and didn't have a lot of confidence.



Happy and another young woman Dot were referred to First Impressions through our relationship with Employment plus services. The women were struggling to find employment and were still developing their confidence in English, apart from their course they have not had much interaction outside their community.

One of the trainers at First Impressions is a qualified TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) trainer and Cire has a support person who speaks Chin so that we were able to translate any understandings on the day of induction.

It is important to note that Happy and Dot had never had the opportunity of an interview, or job, let alone an induction into what a real life workplace induction may cover. Things we take for granted such as First Aid, Work Health and Safety, codes of conduct, privacy and discrimination policies were foreign concepts to them, we had to start from scratch and guide them through the understandings of what a work place looked like in Australia. Salvation Army employment Plus had previously struggled with work placement for members of the Chin community due to the barriers in English. We are so proud to be able to support this community and as a result of this initial placement, First Impressions went on to secure a Work For the Dole program which was exclusive to the Chin community in addition to our other program offerings.

Renee: What makes this program special?

Happy: I was very nervous but also excited to be able have this opportunity to have some work experience. It was helpful to have Sue (TESOL) and Peter (interrupter) there to make it easier for me to understand. My English is getting better but there is still things I have trouble with and I felt better having Peter here on my first day. Renee and Sue were so nice and we got a voucher to spend at the shop so we could dress the part and that was exciting. The program has been so good for my confidence and practicing my English which is getting better all the time. I have met lots of people and learnt lots of new things, like how to use a cash register, customer service, merchandising and more.

Renee: How has the program supported you in creating pathways?

Happy: Since I joined the program I have managed to get my learners and have started having lessons to get my license which I'm excited about. My dream is to be a childcare worker, but my studies have been put on hold so I am still studying online, practicing my English so I can prepared to resume my course. I am so grateful for all the help I received and the opportunities that Cire helped me with, so thank you very much.



First Impressions Clothing Exchange (FICE) aims to empower women by preparing them for employment. Our experienced trainers provide ongoing support and programs to instill confidence and develop the skills necessary to enter the paid workforce successfully.

For customers, the exchange offers a selection of quality and affordable pre-loved women's clothing and accessories suitable for interviews or more formal occasions.

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Goodbye 2020: Looking back on a tough year

Feel like 2020 has been the longest year on record? If so, you're not alone.

The past 12 months have come with challenges no one could have predicted and many people found their working lives were upended or altered entirely.

But, as we approach the end of a disruptive year, it's worth reflecting on the impact – and the lessons to take into 2021. What were your biggest challenges, and did you find any silver linings?

Here's a look at how others felt about 2020, plus advice and perspectives that could help heading into the new year.



Looking back on a tough year

For many Australians, 2020 has been a difficult year. Research conducted on behalf of SEEK shows that 23% of people say nothing good has happened to them over the past 12 months.

SEEK's Resident Psychologist, Sabina Read, says the impact of wide-scale disruption and uncertainty can't be underestimated, but she adds that opportunities may emerge from the challenges.

"I don't like to sugar coat, but I think there has been an opportunity to reflect on what has worked," she says. "What did we learn? What will we do differently? How did we help others? How would I like to reflect on this period in order to change direction?"

"If we dig deep and reflect on those kinds of questions, I believe we could all come up with some answers that don't equate with hopelessness but rather possibility and growth."

If you feel like you've learned something about the way you work best and want to make change in 2021, it's worth considering how to tell your boss you want to work differently now. Perhaps that means asking for more flexibility.

The new year could also be a good time to think about your values to help you find the work that suits you best.

Home truths about remote working

Working from home can have its downsides: 3 in 5 Australians who were working from home say it was their toughest challenge, and 27% feel being isolated from colleagues was their biggest obstacle.

"For some people working from home, there was a perception that the quality of their relationships had decreased because they need those regular touch points to feel like they belong," Read says.

If you're still working from home, there are things you can do to handle feeling lonely or isolated, including seeking out or setting up opportunities to connect, and drawing on your past experiences. Looking at ways to bring the social side work to life online can also help.

Worries about work and security

For those not working from home, almost 1 in 4 say their biggest challenge was having less work, while fear of losing their job was the top concern for 1 in 5.

If you're worried about losing your job, ways to cope with this can include setting aside time to worry, and focusing on the things you can control such as talking to your manager or assessing your transferable skills.

Looking at the silver linings

Despite the challenges, there were some positive experiences to emerge from 2020. This includes 2 in 3 Australians saying they gained a new perspective on life and 2 in 5 picking up new skills they wouldn't have learned if it wasn't for COVID 19.

For 1 in 5 Australians, greater work/life/family balance was part of 2020, while almost 60% say their company supported them the best they could in 2020.

At companies like Deloitte, employee support included virtual exercise and yoga classes, webinars, tools and resources on mental wellbeing and school holiday programs to help with entertaining children while parents worked from home. Tina McCreery, Talent Partner at Deloitte, says one of the toughest challenges for its people was the dual disruption to personal and professional lives. "In their personal lives, there were restrictions on how they interacted with their family and friends, the way they lived and how they went about their day-to-day lives," she says.

"Professionally, their home became their workplace, they did not get to interact with their team face-to-face and, depending on their home situation, they had to navigate caring for their children, noisy flat mates or, if they lived alone, having limited face-to-face interaction for days on end."

McCreery says the team "did a great job" in responding to the challenges. "Team members looked out for each other and took advantage of the support that the firm had put in place," she says. Working from home also helped many employees achieve a better balance and McCreery says the flexible option looks like it's here to stay. "We have always had a strong culture of flexibility, but I do think the pandemic has allowed us to reflect on how and where we work," she says. "We definitely see this changing for the long-term."

It's been a difficult year on all kinds of fronts, and many of us have faced challenges we could never have expected. But Read says positive experiences may be around the corner. "Humans are very capable of finding new ways of thinking," she says. "This requires challenging the status quo, questioning our fixed beliefs and coming up with new ways of doing things."

"By doing this, you can reflect and grow and adapt in your personal and professional life."

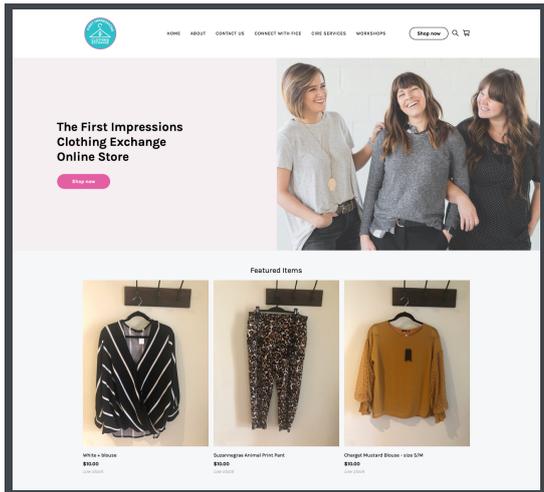
Source: Goodbye 2020: Looking back on a tough year - SEEK Career Advice

Independent research conducted by Nature of behalf of SEEK, interviewing 4800 Australians annually. Published December 2020.

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Have you shopped online?



**The FICE Online Shop is open & ready for business!
A great way to shop if you can't get to the store.**

Get the look to get the job in-store and online!
We have a wide range of affordable high-quality pre-loved women's clothing.
Feel confident when attending interviews, in the work place or in your every day life.

- ★ Free gift with every purchase
- ★ Click & Collect option (Mooroolbark location)
 - ★ \$10 flat postage fee
 - ★ New items loaded weekly

We will have EFTPOS online payments available.

Visit our brand new online store here:
<https://ficastore.square.site>

Thank you so much to everyone for your support and purchases since we launched FICE online!



Every Friday

Please join our Live Stream on Facebook every Friday. Sue and Renee present on a range of topics including:

- JobKeeper and JobSeeker information
- Help staying connect
- Sidekicker program
- Job Jumpstart program

Your Friends of FICE Discount Voucher



T&C's apply. Free item must be equal or lesser value.
Voucher is valid until June 2021
One use per voucher. One voucher per customer.



Thank you for your support!

This is your discount voucher for the shop. Also as a Friend of FICE member you are entitled to get 10% off your FICE purchases. You can use your code when shopping in the online store, to get your 10% discount.



We understand that it is a challenging period for all however, some may need to seek legal advice to assist them through these uncertain times.

Johnstone and Reimer Lawyers are based in Lilydale and are able to help you with a whole range of legal issues.

Specialising in family law, workplace injuries including transport accidents, Will and estate planning, they handle many types of claims and seek the best possible results to get you back on your feet again as quickly as possible or give you peace of mind.

For all your legal needs, please call Johnstone and Reimer Lawyers to set up a free initial consultation in-person, telephone, or video appointments on (03) 8658-0040

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Sustainable Fashion versus Fast Fashion

Sustainable fashion considers the environmental, social and health impact of the design, manufacture and disposal of clothing, footwear and accessories, with the aim to minimise any adverse effects of the industry. This approach encourages the purchase of fewer items of better quality, products made from recycled and environmentally-friendly materials, and appropriate recycling and disposal of fashion at the end of its useful life.

Fast fashion, on the other hand, focuses on quick manufacturing, with a view to producing inexpensive, current and short-lived fashion for sale by large retailers. The intention with fast fashion is that it can be affordably replaced by the next fashion trend as soon as it arises.

The impact of fast fashion is a huge amount of:

- **Raw materials** used to create textiles
- **Energy and water expenditure** in the production of fashion
- **Pollution** as a result of textile manufacturing, including dyeing and washing and associated residual microplastics in our waterways
- **Unfair conditions and wages** for foreign and local workers
- Clothing, footwear and accessories sent to **landfill** (73 million tons globally per year), often having barely been worn.

How to shop sustainably for fashion – 5 questions to ask:

1. Do you really need it?

Avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle. Better than recycling your clothing, shoes and accessories is minimising the amount that you buy in the first place. Do you need another black top, or skirt, or pair of trousers? Do you already have a similar piece of clothing at home? Do you like this new item better than an item you already own? If you're not sure, if you can't remember, then chances are you already have more clothing than you need. Often when we cannot find something to wear, it's because we have too many clothes to choose from rather than not enough. Simplify and minimise your wardrobe and your choices will be easier.

2. Was your clothing made by a brand with ethical accreditation?

Buy your clothes and footwear from accredited companies to support sustainable fashion and encourage other businesses to obtain ethical accreditation. There is even an ethical clothing app that allows you to check the rating of a brand, find more ethical brands, and deals on the best rated brands.

3. Is the fashion made from recycled or environmentally friendly materials?

Wherever possible, choose clothing that's made from recycled or environmentally friendly materials. These products will have less negative impact on our waterways, air and soil once you have finished using them. Even better, buy second-hand clothing from charity shops and second-hand stores.

4. How are your fashion purchases packaged?

Do your fashion purchases have excess packaging? This can be particularly relevant when buying online. Choose products with less packaging, and remember to take reusable shopping bags from home rather than use single-use plastic bags.

5. Could you recycle some of your clothes?

If your wardrobe truly needs a refresh and shopping is unavoidable, is it time to recycle your older clothes? Clothing in good condition can be given to friends and family, taken to your local charity or second-hand stores, or sold through online forums.

SOURCE: <https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/You-and-your-home/Live-sustainably/Sustainable-shopping/Fashion-shopping>

THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

20%
OF INDUSTRIAL
WATER POLLUTION
COMES FROM TREATING
AND DYEING TEXTILES

IT TAKES
700 GALLONS
OF WATER

TO PRODUCE ENOUGH
COTTON FOR ONE T-SHIRT 

THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY
IS THE **SECOND-MOST**
POLLUTER OF
CLEAN WATER

MORE THAN 90%
OF COTTON 
IS NOW GENETICALLY MODIFIED

PRODUCTION OF FIBER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR

18% & **25%**
OF PESTICIDE
USED WORLDWIDE OF INSECTICIDE
USED WORLDWIDE

SOURCES
THE INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNICATION, WORLD WILDLIFE FUND, "THE TRUE COST" DOCUMENTARY



Our mission is to help empower women in our community to look and feel great.

We need your generous donations to make this possible!

We accept good-quality, clean and free-from-damage, women's clothing and accessories.

Simply leave your generous donations in the FICE baskets and contribute to our sustainable mission, knowing that your pre-loved goods are supporting your local community.

Donation Locations:

Yarra Junction Community Hub
Seville Community House

Chirnside Park Community Hub
FICE Store, Mooroolbark

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Would you like to become a sponsor of FICE?

By purchasing a sponsorship package you will directly contribute to the success and longevity of the First Impression Clothing Exchange.



Our exclusive Gold Sponsorship Package includes:

- Recognition and advertisement across our Facebook and Instagram profiles 3 times/year.
- Recognition on in store sponsorship board.
- Display of goods in store, business cards or other promotional material in store.
- 2 x sessions for the use of our in-store training space to promote services and products.



Our exclusive Silver Sponsorship Package includes:

- Recognition and advertisement across our Facebook and Instagram profiles.
- Recognition on in store sponsorship board.
- Display of business cards in store.



Our exclusive Bronze Sponsorship Package includes:

- Recognition and advertisement across our Facebook and Instagram profiles.
- Recognition on in store sponsorship board.

Our Supporters

First Impressions supporters include:

Yarra Ranges Shire Council, Voices of Women (VoW), a not-for-profit organisation based in the Yarra Valley that provides advocacy for women in the region, The Australian Women Donors Network, Selby and Seville Community Houses, Healesville Living and Learning Centre, The Rotary Club of Wandin and Good360 and its network of partners including L'Oreal, Big W and Yarra Trail.



The Friends of F.I.C.E membership has been created for our loyal customers, so you can receive information on our promotions, special discounts and our newsletter to keep you up to date with our work.

What's included?

- A Bi-monthly newsletter
- First access to all sales, promotions and events
- Member-only sales
- \$10 Birthday voucher
- 10% off all purchases on presentation of your membership card
- Membership annual fee (Tax deductible) \$25 or \$15 for concession cardholders

To register:

email us at firstImpressions@cire.org.au or call the FICE line on 0499 221 150 or Pop in to the store: Wed - Fri 10am - 3pm

Local Job Opportunities

Please get in touch if you or a loved one need assistance refining your resume, applying for jobs or practising for an interview.

The FICE Team

Contact Us

Open: Wed - Fri 10am - 3pm
 Shop 7 Mooroolbark Terrace Shopping Centre
 66/74 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark
 Call Cire 1300 835 235
 Email: firstimpressions@cire.org.au
Stay connected:
 On instagram: @firstimpressionsclothes
 On Facebook: @cirefirstimpressions
 Cire Website: www.cire.org.au

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