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## **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in Australia stands beside Greek youth struggling with drug addiction**



Archbishop Makarios is making good on his promise of casting the church's focus on youth.

A rehabilitation centre for drug abuse will open in Melbourne with the support of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Australia Makarios announced during his recent visit to Victoria.

The reason behind this decision is that 38 per cent of Melbourne's youth are using illegal and addictive substances, something that has a great impact on their personal, their family, and school life.

“To this day the Church has put its focus on the elderly. ‘Vasiliada’ our aged care provider is known throughout Australia with another five facilities in Perth, Adelaide, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Millions of dollars have been allocated in funding but we need to also look at our youth,” Archbishop Makarios said. At the moment there is a ‘chemical war’ against Australia and we haven’t, unfortunately, realised the graveness of the situation”.

The Patriarch himself came up with the idea to build a rehabilitation centre after being briefed about the issue by Archbishop Makarios.

Archiepiscopal Reverend Father of Northcote, Archmandrite Evmenios Vasilopoulos, will be responsible for the project management as the new rehabilitation centre will be housed at the ‘Axion Esti’ facilities.

Melbourne’s Greek Orthodox priests were excited by initiative and expressed their gratitude to the Church and Patriarch Bartholomew.

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