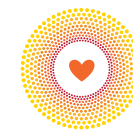


# Annual Report

Financial year ended  
30 June 2023



**Australian  
Childhood  
Foundation**

**childhood.org.au**

ACN: 057 044 514

# Acknowledgements

Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters across Australia in which we share. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to the children who are leaders of tomorrow. We acknowledge the histories and living cultures and the many thousands of years in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have raised their children to be safe and strong. We recognise and accept it is the oldest continuous living culture in the world and that their sovereignty has never been ceded.



We are an inclusive, safe and respectful organisation which celebrates diversity and actively supports the inclusion of children, young people and adults from LGBTIQ+ communities, people with disabilities, people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and people with diverse religious beliefs or affiliations.



# Contents

A message from the CEO .....	4	Therapeutic services: NT .....	25
Our impact for children and young people .....	6	Therapeutic services: TAS .....	27
Our impact through education, prevention and advocacy .....	7	Therapeutic services: VIC .....	28
Where the money goes .....	8	Therapeutic services: WA .....	32
Advocacy and media .....	9	Safeguarding Children Services .....	35
Research .....	10	Education services .....	36
Fourth Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference.....	11	Parenting and Early Years.....	37
On Us, joining forces to drive action on child safeguarding.....	12	Corporate Partnerships .....	39
Emma’s Project .....	13	Our heartfelt thank you .....	41
It’s never too late .....	14	Fundraising .....	43
Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care .....	15	Trek for Childhood .....	44
National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse .....	17	Infrastructure.....	45
Therapeutic services: ACT.....	18	Our people .....	47
Therapeutic services: NSW .....	21	Get involved .....	50
		Financial statements .....	51

\* Where stories feature children, young people and families, names and identifying details of have been changed and stock photography has been used to protect their privacy. Thank you for your understanding and support.

# Make an impact for children

**Love has the power to prevent and heal abuse**

At Australian Childhood Foundation love is an action, a daily effort to build positive relationships that keep children and young people safe and help them to heal.

We provide counselling to children and carers. We teach adults to understand how they can help children to heal from the trauma of abuse and violence. We stand up for children, and young people’s rights to safety. We act to ensure every child gets the love they need.

Donate today at [childhood.org.au](http://childhood.org.au) or by calling 1300 381 581.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

- **Australian Childhood Foundation**
- **PO Box 3335, Richmond VIC 3121**
- **Phone: 1300 381 581**
- **[childhood.org.au](http://childhood.org.au)**



## A message from the CEO

Each of these stories held other numbers that illustrate the ways in which child sexual abuse affects the lives of children over the course of their lifetime.

Victims and survivors of child sexual abuse can take over 20 years before they tell someone what happened to them. They may have tried to disclose earlier only to be met with disbelief which silenced them. This is even more real when the perpetrator who abused them held undue influence in their community – like a well-known football player, a church elder or a police officer.

All child abuse, and in particular sexual abuse, often thrives when numbers of people do not act. Brian Houston was reported to have told thousands in his congregation about his father's abusive behaviour, but not the police. During the trial of police officer, Mario Didulica, the Crown prosecutor had said that colleagues and manager at the time were aware he was in an "extramarital relationship with the girl", but it took 13 years before he was brought to justice. The language used to describe the sexual abuse of his victim as an "extramarital relationship" highlight how two weasel words perpetuate the myth that children are somehow complicit in their own victimisation, which of course they never are.

Most insidiously of all, the use of a mobile phone to overwhelm a child with 30,000 texts and calls provides a peek into the reality that an ever-increasing number of children are being manipulated using technology. In the online environment, children are being tricked by individuals who claim to be other children but are really adults grooming them to abuse and exploit them.

Sadly, these four stories, as evocative as they are, form a fraction of what we now know are the numbers of children and adults who have experienced childhood abuse and neglect.

In the first ever piece of research of its kind, the recently published Australian Child Maltreatment Study, led by Law Professor Ben Matthews from QUT and a group of highly qualified academics from multiple universities, found that almost two-in-three Australians over the age of 16 years have suffered at least one form of serious abuse or neglect when they were children.

Almost 3-in-10 (28.5%) had endured child sexual abuse. That equates to approximately 4.5 million individuals living today who have carried that experience with them for their whole adult life. Even more shocking is the reality that when child sexual abuse occurs, it rarely happens only once, with almost 2.5 million adults experiencing sexual abuse more than six times as children.

It is the same for other types of abuse. 32% of all Australians – or 5.8 million people - over the age of 16 years reported being hit, punched, or beaten as children. Of those, about 1.2 million experienced physical abuse more than fifty times each.

Seven million (39.6%) people have been forced to live with family and domestic violence when they were young.

Horribly, the study highlighted a significant proportion of individuals experienced more than one type of abuse concurrently. In fact, 4.8 million

Numbers can often reveal powerful truths that demand attention.

For example, there were four different stories about child sexual abuse. All in one day in one newspaper.

The AFL came under pressure to review footballer Barry Cable's membership of the Australian Hall of Fame because he was found guilty of sexually abusing a child when he was a player fifty years ago.

Liberal MP, Brigette Archer, a survivor of child sexual abuse herself, described the experiences in parliament which started with the leaked private text messages of Brittany Higgins, as "triggering" and "retraumatising".

Ex-policeman, Mario Didulica, was found guilty of sexual penetration of a child under 16 years in 2009 after having exchanged more than 30,000 calls and texts with the girl over a two-year period.

Former Hillsong Church leader, Brian Houston, was in court fighting charges for failing to report his father for child sexual abuse after he had learned about it in 1999.

Australians suffered between three and five types of abuse at the same time during their childhood.

The impact of such trauma reverberates across all ages. As Brigette Archer pointed to, the intensity of trauma from childhood abuse can come flooding back in response to events and experiences that occur in every day life.

The study found that many who had experienced emotional abuse, sexual abuse and multitype abuse suffered from major mental health problems in adulthood. Indeed, it was comparatively rare for anyone who is 45 years and older to experience a major mental health disorder if they had not been a victim of abuse or neglect as a child.

With these numbers so high, it might be appealing to dismiss them or not believe them. In Australian Childhood Foundation's own research, child abuse is consistently rated lower than roads and footpaths on a list of community concerns. It is as if there is a collective denial of the problem with a preference to believe that it is happening in some other family, some other neighbourhood, not our own.

But these numbers do not lie. And more than that, the government and community cannot afford to turn away from them.

The Albanese Government has shown strong support for all actions recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse originally set up by Julia Gillard when she was Prime Minister.

But it must do more. There is still not enough coordination of effort to prevent child abuse and neglect of all types. There are separate national strategies aiming to tackle child sexual abuse, improve the protection of children, stop violence against women and children, and address the rising numbers of young people being abused and exploited online. There are other national strategies that aim to improve children's mental health and early childhood development. But is this the best way to approach it? Children do not live in the world made up of distinct policy frameworks or government departments. They live in families and experience one reality where the risk of violation is commonplace.

Surely, a single independent permanent statutory national body is required to take responsibility for long term investment and policy development regardless of which government is in power and any shifts in political will. In fact, we had one of these exact bodies 30 years ago and it was disbanded. It was called the National Child Protection Council. It is time to resurrect it and give it the authority it needs.

Critically, numbers can sometimes expose a buried truth.

Since federation, Australia has had 27 Governors-General, 31 Prime Ministers, 19 Deputy Prime Ministers, 41 Treasurers – and only ever one Minister for Children. It is time to re-establish the role and give it a seat at the Cabinet Table.



If nothing changes and these rates of abuse continue, then of all those born over the past ten years, a million children will suffer at least one type of serious maltreatment by the time they are 16 years old.

This is not a number we can afford to tolerate.

**In 2022-23, we have worked hard across all of our activities to keep in mind just how critical it is for adults to stand up for children and protect them from abuse, exploitation and violence. As you read through our annual report, please keep in mind that we need your support now more than ever.**

**Dr Joe Tucci**  
**CEO**  
**Australian Childhood Foundation**

# Our impact for children and young people

**3,000**

children, young people, carers and families have received therapeutic support.



**82%**  
of children

have built a friendship network when they didn't have one before after receiving a service from us.



**84%**  
of children

have improved academically after receiving a service from us.



**72%**  
of children

have experienced the same placement for longer than 3-5 years in some of our programs. This is reversing the trend they experienced in the lead up to starting with our services.



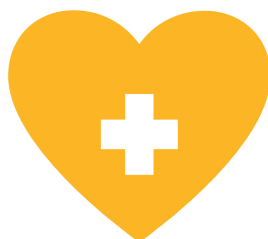
**84%**

of children and young people who were involved in criminal activity at the start of their involvement in some of our programs, showed a significant reduction in this behaviour which has led to a decrease in the number of children and young people involved with the youth justice system.



Children and young people have  
**3-5 times**

more positive relationships involved with them at the end of our involvement compared to when they started.



**84%**  
of children

experience a reduction in the severity of the pain they carry with them as a result of experiences of abuse and neglect.



**78%**  
of children and young people

had more consistent contact and positive interaction with their siblings by the end of their involvement in our programs.



# Our impact through education, prevention and advocacy

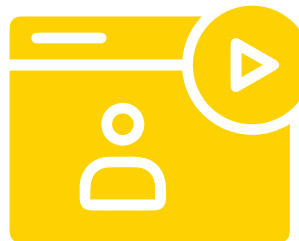
More than  
**40,000**

individuals participated in our online training about child safety.



Over  
**350,000**

downloads globally of our learning content, tools for working with children and young people and reports.



Made over **60**

submissions to State and Territory Government about ways to improve systems of protection and care for children and young people who have experienced the trauma of abuse and neglect.



More than  
**10,000**

professionals working with children have been reached by our training and resources to understand trauma and how to best support children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect.



Over  
**3,000**

health, education, law, child protection and out-of-home care professionals participated in our Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference.



Over  
**3,000**

foster carers and kinship carers were provided training and support to enable them to build their knowledge, confidence and skills to respond to the children in their care.



Engaged over  
**20,000**

people through the launch of *It's Never Too Late* - a new community education campaign focusing on supporting adults to know how to identify and respond to children and young people who have been abused and exploited through the online environment.



More than **95**

organisations were supported to review their safeguarding policies and systems. This is to ensure they are more effective in protecting children from abuse by their employees and volunteers.



# Where the money goes

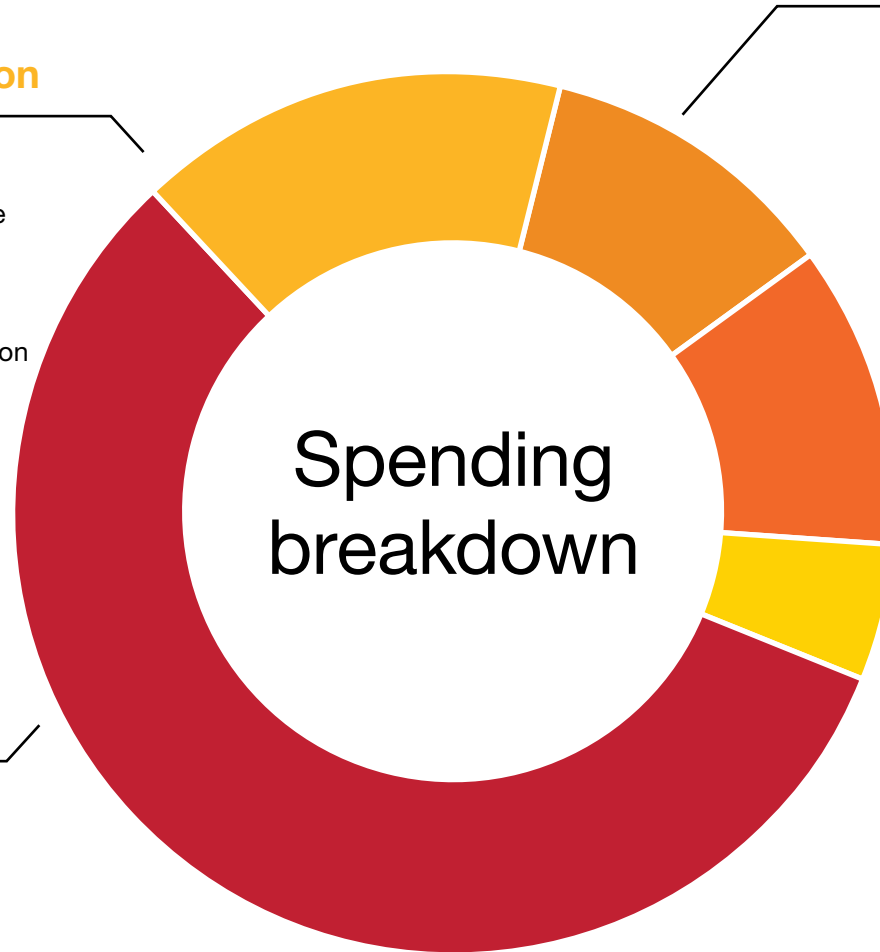
We are so grateful to all the donors, partners and funders that make our work possible.

## 16% Education and prevention

We share our knowledge and best practice through professional education, training, and resources. We help new parents build positive and nurturing relationships with their children. We engage with the Australian business community to help them safeguard children and young people through their services and on their premises.

## 57% Child trauma care

We deliver specialist therapeutic care for children and young people who have suffered the trauma of abuse, violence or neglect. Our care also extends support to the important people that form circles of care around them.



## 11% Fundraising

We are investing in fundraising and philanthropy to create future revenue streams to expand our services and reach more children and young people. Securing new grants and partnerships, and building our regular giving program, helps make our services sustainable in the long-term.

## 11% Administration

An essential part of operating responsibly and effectively is ensuring we have the right people, systems, processes, and equipment. This enables us to keep the data of donors, students, and families we work with private and secure. It enables us to provide the very best expert care for the children and families we work with.

## 5% Research and advocacy

We drive a research agenda that advances public and professional knowledge. We give voice to those with lived experience of childhood trauma. We raise public awareness of actions the community can take to protect children and young people.



# Advocacy and media

Over the past financial year, we have continued to amplify the voices of children and young people in media. We have featured pieces on community attitudes towards abuse, helping children heal from trauma, and driving systemic change. Our reach over the year has spanned from broadcast to print and online news publications.



## Foster carers in dark over vital details

**LAUREN NOVAK**  
FOSTER parents are not being told about the extent of abuse suffered by their foster children, or their "extreme" or "violent" behaviour, leading to over burnout and risks for other children in the family. A report has warned child protection authorities must be more transparent with carers about a child's background and provide more support, otherwise carers will abandon the system. Report author Dr Fiona Arney received more than 200 submissions, including many from carers who said they were not given "vital information" about a child's background which left them unaware of the potential risks, triggers or issues that may arise. Examples include carers: TOLD that children had no difficulties and asked curiously discovering that their behaviours... had been so extreme and violent they required in-patient support".

She added that "specialist therapeutic support from a team of allied health experts" was available to carers. The department has engaged the Australian Childhood Foundation to run new online training courses - like Julie Kozin (above) - better understand what is happening to young people without enough information or support was leaving carers feeling burnt out and exhausted, "relinquishing care of children or leaving the system. Carers are entitled to a right of redress a year but Dr Arney's report says it is either responsible to assess or very difficult to organise". While policies "provide for greater flexibility in response, it appears this is not playing out in reality," she wrote. Child Protection has spent \$800,000 to cover the cost of carers' support. Child Protection has spent \$800,000 to cover the cost of carers' support. Child Protection has spent \$800,000 to cover the cost of carers' support.

## Mum's the word for all

WA set for mother of all days

**CLAIRE SADLER**  
Mum has taken on a new definition for West Australians this Mother's Day with the celebration now about having the chance to recognise all of those who take on a motherly role in our lives. A new survey has revealed 87 per cent of West Australians think Mother's Day is to celebrate any motherly figure in their life - grandmas, mother-in-laws and, according to 55 per cent, even a supportive mate. For Luke and Daniel Mancuso it is an elderly next-door neighbour who gave them love and kept them fed after they

followers resonate with the idea of a motherly figure stepping in when needed. "Mother's Day is an important day for us to appreciate the important motherly figures in our lives, whether that's our mum or the woman who stepped in to raise and support us when she passed away. We will be popping in to see Yvaine later in the afternoon this way, the menu will include a glass of Baileys and chocolates." Nearly three-quarters of West Australians agree that making Mum or their mother figure feel special for the day is how we should celebrate. For WA mother Ragani Agache, daughter of a day full of surprises, is a lot to me because it surprises my mum and she, cook for her, and is that day of rest. "I just can't give her one day it's rest and enjoy it. Best of WA, mums thank their kids this Mother's Day. 46 per cent said they'd flowers and food. This is by a homemade pre-baked loaf.

## Australian Childhood Foundation calls for election commitment to fund counselling, in the Shoalhaven and beyond

**By Julia McFarlane**  
Updated March 21 2024 - 11:41am, first published 11:00am  
The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) has called on the incoming NSW Government to commit to funding counselling services for children and young people in the Shoalhaven region. ACF is currently providing counselling services to children and young people in the Shoalhaven region. ACF is currently providing counselling services to children and young people in the Shoalhaven region. ACF is currently providing counselling services to children and young people in the Shoalhaven region.



Dr Joe Tucci, CEO of the Australian Childhood Foundation, is calling for the major parties to commit more funding to specialist trauma counselling for kids in out-of-home care. Picture supplied.

Trauma counsellors who support Shoalhaven kids are calling for a political commitment to their service.

The Australian Childhood Foundation - which provides specialist trauma counselling to kids out of home care through its CareSPACE program - wants the major parties to commit vital funds at this election.

## New training for carers

FOSTER carers and extended family members caring for children in South Australia will soon be able to access a new online training program. Announced by Child Protection Minister Kaitiine Hilliard, Carers for Children and Young People with Trauma will be run by the Australian Childhood Foundation and also include specialist content for those caring for Aboriginal children. "Carers are a critical part of the child protection system and I am deeply committed to ensuring carers are well-supported in their vital role," Ms Hilliard said. "The course is designed to provide access for these carers to learn and that gives them confidence and support."

Child Protection will support 500 carers who are well-supported in their vital role. The course is designed to provide access for these carers to learn and that gives them confidence and support. Child Protection will support 500 carers who are well-supported in their vital role.



Young children are being turned away from mental health services because their needs are too complex, and the problem is worse for those waiting in line to receive specialist support.



Children need to be able to play in a safe and secure environment. Photo: iStockphoto.com

## Childhood traumas

"They've already got a lot going on and then this major catastrophic community trauma event is another layer of trauma for these children, and they just don't have the tools or the resources to be able to cope." The voices of children and young people, including those who are most vulnerable and marginalised, are not often reflected in the "evidence" that drives policy debates and programs intended to improve their lives. These Southern Cross University researchers are on a mission to change that. When Lynne McPherson brought her hat to a social network and extended to study at universities, she had a thirst for knowledge and decades of experience in child protection and family services. She's now leading one of the largest social work research grants awarded to a regional university in the past 20 years. Southern Cross University received nearly \$500,000 last year in an Australian Research Council linkage grant to investigate trajectories for young people in residential care, led by Associate Professor McPherson. The Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care, a division of the Australian Childhood Foundation, also contributed care and in-kind support for the project and it has attracted researchers from across the country and as far afield as Dublin, Ireland. It's a large project, but the problem they are tackling is enormous. About 46,000 Australian children are in some form of residential care. They face major challenges in forming positive relationships. Many have negative views of adults, seeing them as a threat rather than a source of safety. Turning those negative into positives can, ideally, change a life. "There are very substantial social benefits of an improved life trajectory for young people, many of whom are otherwise 'invisible' from residential care into the criminal justice or mental health systems and are dominated by homelessness, unemployment and substance addiction. We've seen that in our previous research, now we're looking at how to change that," Associate Professor McPherson said. The project is just one of 12 under way at the Centre for Children and Young People (CCYP) at Southern Cross University, which involves not only NQI project partners such as the Australian Childhood Foundation, but also government departments, statutory bodies and many Australian and overseas universities. Collaboration is not unusual at a university. What is more unusual is the level of collegiality among CCYP academics and the detective way they approach research, their research partners and the practical application of their research into outputs that can be used to help improve children's lives.

## Vital support through play



By James Edwards  
Therapy that allows young people to express their feelings through play is being used in a new program. The program is called 'Play for Peace' and is designed to help children and young people who have experienced trauma. The program is run by the Australian Childhood Foundation. The program is run by the Australian Childhood Foundation. The program is run by the Australian Childhood Foundation.

## Children must be protected



Joe Tucci  
Since the start of the year, the Herald Sun has published more than 30 reports on child abuse.

They ranged from a schoolteacher jailed for sexually abusing a student 30-40 times. There was a call for a full-scale parliamentary inquiry into child sexual abuse in Victorian public schools.

Former VFL player Barry Cable was ordered to pay more than \$800,000 in damages for sexually abusing a young girl. Sadly, these stories form a fraction of what we now know are the real numbers of children and adults who have experienced childhood abuse and neglect. The recently published Australian Child Maltreatment Study found that almost two in three Australians over the age of 16 have suffered at least one form of serious abuse or neglect when they were children. Almost three in 10 (28.5 per cent) have endured child sexual abuse.

That is 4.5 million people living today who have carried that experience with them for their whole adult life. Furthermore, 32 per cent of Australians over the age of 16 reported being hit, punched, or beaten as children. Of those, about 1.2 million were physically abused more than 50 times each during their childhoods.

About seven million (39.6 per cent) people have been forced to live with and been exposed to family and domestic violence when they were young. With these numbers so high, it might be easy to dismiss them or not believe them. But these numbers do not lie. That is why the Albanese government can and needs to do more. Since federation, Australia has had 27 governors-general, 31 prime ministers, 43 treasurers - but only one minister for children. It is time to re-establish the role and give it a seat at the cabinet table. Children deserve a minister to represent them. It also needs to resurrect the National Child Protection Council that was disbanded 30 years ago for no good reason. If nothing changes and these rates of abuse continue, then of all the children who have been born in the past 10 years, more than a million of them will suffer at least one type of serious abuse by the time they are 16. This is not a number we should be prepared to accept.

Dr Joe Tucci is Chief Executive of the Australian Childhood Foundation, a national charity that provides specialist trauma counselling to children and their families.

# Research

## Australian Childhood Foundation undertakes research into areas that affect the ways children and young people can be supported when they have experienced the trauma of abuse.

The research is often practical, aiming to generate useable knowledge that can improve responses to children and their carers in different settings. Through collaboration with Southern Cross University, the Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care has published multiple articles about the needs of children and young people living in foster, kinship and residential care. Our 20 years of work on community attitudes about child abuse and child protection continues to be the longest running study of its kind in the world. When knowledge is mobilised for purpose, it ensures that the evidence needed by practitioners and policy makers is available at the right time and in the right form for it to have impact.

Children and Youth Services Review 17(1) (2022) 35-50

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Children and Youth Services Review

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth)

**"The most challenging aspect of this journey has been dealing with child protection": Kinship carers' experiences in Australia**

Lyne McPherson<sup>a,b,c</sup>, Kathi Gatwin<sup>a,b,c</sup>, Kylie Day<sup>d</sup>, Natalie Parmenter<sup>a,b,c,e</sup>, Janise Mitchell<sup>a,b</sup>, Noel Maccanara<sup>a,b,c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care, Southern Cross University, Australia; <sup>b</sup> Australian Childhood Foundation, Australia; <sup>c</sup> Faculty of Health, Southern Cross University, Australia; <sup>d</sup> Faculty of Health, Southern Cross University, Australia; <sup>e</sup> Faculty of Health, Southern Cross University, Australia

**ARTICLE INFO**

**Keywords:** Kinship care; Child protection; Child welfare; Child abuse; Australia

**ABSTRACT**

While children cannot live at home with their parents, a placement with relatives or family friends has become a preferred first option to many foster care systems to avoid foster care. Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin. A mixed methods approach was adopted, including participants who had the full-time care of one or more kin children, with or without discrete child protection involvement. The size of the study was limited to kinship carers who were progressively selected to ensure diversity in cultural identity and geographical location across Australia. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis and quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study are discussed in terms of the challenges and opportunities for kinship care. The study highlights the need for kinship care to be supported by services designed to support them and their kin. The study found that kinship carers experience a range of challenges and opportunities. Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin. A mixed methods approach was adopted, including participants who had the full-time care of one or more kin children, with or without discrete child protection involvement. The size of the study was limited to kinship carers who were progressively selected to ensure diversity in cultural identity and geographical location across Australia. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis and quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study are discussed in terms of the challenges and opportunities for kinship care. The study highlights the need for kinship care to be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.

**Introduction**

Children with earlier research, kinship care is often reported as a preferred option to foster care, however, the experience of kinship care is often not well understood. Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin. A mixed methods approach was adopted, including participants who had the full-time care of one or more kin children, with or without discrete child protection involvement. The size of the study was limited to kinship carers who were progressively selected to ensure diversity in cultural identity and geographical location across Australia. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis and quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study are discussed in terms of the challenges and opportunities for kinship care. The study highlights the need for kinship care to be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.

**Based on these findings, further investigation into kinship care and other placement options is suggested to ensure that kinship care is supported by services designed to support them and their kin. The study highlights the need for kinship care to be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.**

**© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).**

Children and Youth Services Review 17(1) (2022) 35-50

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Children and Youth Services Review

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth)

**Care experienced LGBTQIA+ young people in out-of-home care in Australia: A case study**

Kathi Gatwin<sup>a,b</sup>, Nadine Cameron<sup>a</sup>, Lyne McPherson<sup>a</sup>, Janise Mitchell<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care, Australia; <sup>b</sup> Faculty of Health, Southern Cross University, Australia

**ARTICLE INFO**

**Keywords:** LGBTQIA+; Kinship care; Child protection; Child welfare; Australia

**ABSTRACT**

This paper presents a case study that documents the lived experiences of two LGBTQIA+ young people who have been in out-of-home care in Australia. Drawing particularly on the influence of relationships on their developing sense of identity, this study explores the experiences of these young people in out-of-home care. The findings suggest that care and safety may depend on the relational context in which it is received, and that work, living relationships may be just as significant for the development of positive gender and sexual identities as explicit support for identity formation. The findings from this case study provide an argument in favour of the view that care should be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.

**Introduction**

Despite the urgent need for LGBTQIA+ young people to receive better social support in a range of developing areas, there is a paucity of research on the lived experiences of these young people. This study aims to explore the lived experiences of two LGBTQIA+ young people in out-of-home care in Australia. Drawing particularly on the influence of relationships on their developing sense of identity, this study explores the experiences of these young people in out-of-home care. The findings suggest that care and safety may depend on the relational context in which it is received, and that work, living relationships may be just as significant for the development of positive gender and sexual identities as explicit support for identity formation. The findings from this case study provide an argument in favour of the view that care should be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.1. LGBTQIA+ young people in out-of-home care**

Research suggests that young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or queer (LGBTQIA+) are at a higher risk of experiencing mental health and social development issues compared to their peers. This is due to a range of factors, including discrimination, stigma, and lack of social support. The findings from this case study provide an argument in favour of the view that care should be supported by services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.2. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.3. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.4. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.5. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.6. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.7. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.8. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.9. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**2.10. Kinship care and LGBTQIA+ young people**

Kinship care is a form of care that is usually sought because it allows the child to remain connected to family and community. Studies suggest that kinship care results in positive outcomes for children's education, health, and wellbeing. There is a growing awareness of family care as a preferred option to foster care. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of kinship carers in caring for their kin children and engaging with services designed to support them and their kin.

**© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).**

Frontiers in Psychology 12 (2021) 731840

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

published: 22 September 2021

doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731840

**Still unseen and ignored: Tracking community knowledge and attitudes about child abuse and child protection in Australia**

Joseph Tucci<sup>a</sup> and Janise Mitchell<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Australian Childhood Foundation, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

**OPEN ACCESS**

EDITED BY: The Editors, Frontiers in Psychology

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey D. Hummer, University of North Carolina; Elizabeth A. Johnson, University of North Carolina; and Jeffrey D. Hummer, University of North Carolina

\*CORRESPONDENCE: Joseph Tucci, [j.tucci@acf.org.au](mailto:j.tucci@acf.org.au)

SPECIALTY SECTION: This article was submitted to Frontiers in Psychology, a specialty of the journal Frontiers in Psychology

RECEIVED: 02 January 2022

ACCEPTED: 05 June 2022

PUBLISHED: 22 September 2021

CITATION: Tucci J and Mitchell J (2021) Still unseen and ignored: Tracking community knowledge and attitudes about child abuse and child protection in Australia. *Front. Psychol.* 12:731840. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731840

COPYRIGHT: © 2021 Tucci and Mitchell. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License \(CC BY\)](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License \(CC BY\)](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License \(CC BY\)](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited.

**INTRODUCTION**

Aguably, child abuse does not remain an unexamined phenomenon for very long. As Tucci and Tucci (2019) noted that it took the publication of "The Hidden Child" by Kempe et al. (1963) to break a 100-year silence that followed the world's first LAMO study about child abuse by French Physicians—Aubain (1782). In his seminal work, Kempe et al. (1963) wrote that as a clinical condition in young children who experienced serious physical abuse that was ongoing,

"... it is a significant cause of childhood disability and death... further conditions on the part of young physicians to accept the radiologic signs as indications of repetitive trauma and possible abuse (p. 145-146)".

# Fourth Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference

Since 2014, Australian Childhood Foundation has been the proud hosts of the Biennial International Childhood Trauma Conference. We believe children benefit when the adults that support them are well resourced, and for this reason, as the only International Childhood Trauma Conference held in the Southern Hemisphere, the conference continues to be an important event.

**The 2022 Conference was our fourth conference. The event was a huge success and set the record as our largest conference held so far with 3,117 delegates in attendance from 27 different countries. A testament to all our staff involved in planning and execution.**

In a monumental planning feat, the 2022 program was the largest of any conference so far. The Foundation was able to bring 28 speakers from around the globe to the program. Speakers contributed their expertise in trauma and treatment to keynotes, panels, plenary presentations and masterclasses.

In partnership with Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson, we hosted a First Nations Masterclass featuring a panel of distinguished experts from around the world to share their work and expertise.

Mid-week we assembled a panel of 12 expert women in the field who shared their wisdom, compassion, knowledge, humour and insights to huge audience appreciation and acclaim.

We featured presentations from three experts on lived experience, book authors Bobby Hendry and Billy Black who both presented during plenary, and Emma Hakansson who was interviewed by Foundation CEO Dr Joe Tucci about Emma's Project.

In addition to the main program, the delegates experience was enriched by the performance of Foundation ambassador, Casey Burgess, daily walking groups hosted by the Foundation's staff, the presence of a book shop, an Australian Childhood Foundation store selling our own tools and merchandise, a special performance by the Djirri Djirri Dancers on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, and social functions organised on the Sunday afternoon and the Wednesday evening which included canapes, networking drinks and live music.

**97%**

described their overall impression of Australian Childhood Foundation as excellent or good.

“ Australian Childhood Foundation is a polished team of caring, responsive and creative professionals. Great hosts, excellent CEO, they have a heart!

Conference attendee



# On Us, joining forces to drive action on child safeguarding



**Australian Childhood Foundation and YMCA Australia (The Y) partnered in 2022 to establish On Us - Australian Business Coalition for Safeguarding Children, a coalition to drive action on child safeguarding across Australian businesses and improve outcomes for young people.**

In establishing the On Us Coalition, extensive research and market analysis has been conducted. In a recent report, it has been found that Australia is one of the fastest growing markets for child sex abuse material in the world and that the prevalence of child sexual abuse online is also growing.

Thanks to funding from Westpac Group's Safer Children, Safer Communities program, the On Us Coalition will work collaboratively to assess risks to children and young people, develop policies and practices and share resources to help enhance organisational child safeguarding within their businesses.

Leading Australian and international businesses have already committed their support of the On Us Coalition, by becoming founding members. These businesses include Westpac from the financial services sector, The GPT Group from the retail and property sector, IHG Hotels and Resorts from the travel and tourism sector, TikTok from the social media and technology sector, and TBWA from the advertising, marketing and communications sector.

These businesses have committed to working with Australian Childhood Foundation child safeguarding experts to undertake a series of workshops to become educated about the nature of child safeguarding as it relates to their business and industry. With this education, they will be empowered to use their influence to take action within their business, industry and across sectors to enable children and young people to be safe wherever they are.



“Child sex abuse and exploitation is an issue that demands everyone’s attention and action. For decades, our research has demonstrated that the community actively avoids the problem of child abuse. One in six respondents did nothing when faced with a child they believed was being abused.”

Dr Joe Tucci  
CEO, Australian Childhood Foundation

“We have a responsibility to children who are some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Supporting the Coalition means we can work with other organisations who share our interest and commitment to safeguarding children. If we get it right for our children today, we are setting up our communities to be safer into the future.”

Siobhan Toohill  
Chief Sustainability Officer, Westpac

# Emma's Project

In 2022, Australian Childhood Foundation launched Emma's Project alongside its namesake, Emma Hakansson. Emma is a child protection advocate and a survivor of child sexual abuse, who came to the Foundation over five years ago wanting to make a difference for children and young people today and in the future.

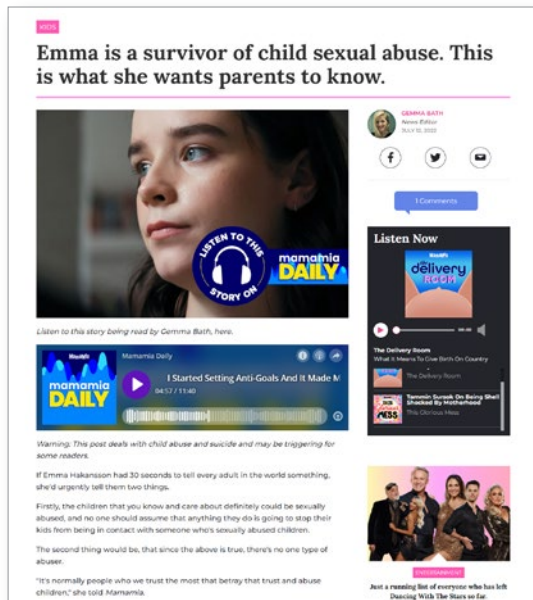
**Emma's story of survival was shared online, in media and at our 2022 conference. She spoke candidly about what she wished adults knew about how to keep her safe and invited adult survivors of sexual abuse during childhood to share their wisdom through a survey. Not to share what happened to them, but to share their insights that have come from surviving.**

Nearly 360 survivors and those who work with and support them took their time to share powerful, important insights into how children are being failed, and how they could be being protected and uplifted by the adults around them.

Since the survey closed, the responses have been analysed and have begun to inform the next stages of this project. This includes the development of a report detailing the findings from the survey and what we plan to do to address them.

What can be shared at this stage is that three core themes emerged from the 300+ responses: compliance, secrecy and isolation. Notably, compliance or obedience was mentioned by 52% of respondents.

In mid-March 2023, an internal steering committee was established to develop a strategy for what comes next and in May 2023, a Lived Experience Advisory Committee was formed to ensure survivors voices continued to drive action through this project.



“  
Anonymous quotes collected  
from survey responses

I was not raised in a way that it could be an adult's fault. It was not for me to blame an adult or suggest that an adult did the wrong thing.

.....  
I learnt very early that saying no to an adult was never allowed.

.....  
I wish I wasn't raised to be so obedient and that I was allowed to have a voice.



# It's never too late

In November 2022 It's never too late was publicly launched.

It's never too late is a microsite dedicated to helping adults better understand the issue of online child sexual abuse and exploitation, identify the signs and take actionable steps to support the children and young people in their lives.

Importantly, the site also explains the concept of safety circles and helps adults understand where they may sit in a child or young person's safety circles.

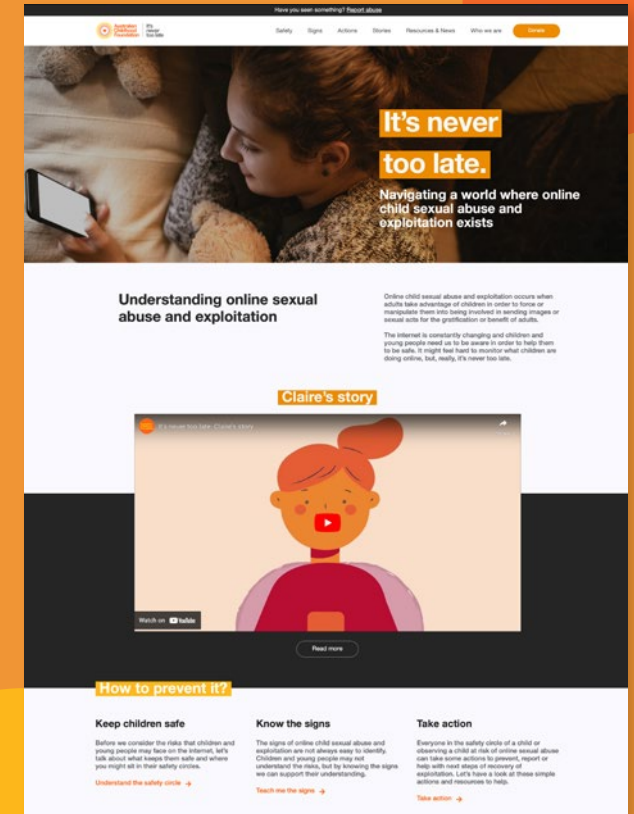
It's never too late also features resources and case studies, like Claire's Story which is narrated by Australian Childhood Foundation ambassador, Georgie Parker. This case study illustrates just how easily online child sexual abuse and exploitation can occur.

Online child sexual abuse and exploitation is a major threat to children and young people.

In our own recent research, 71% of children were found to spend more time on the internet on their own during the pandemic. As a result, more than a third of parents were worried about how to best protect them from being exploited. Without knowledge and awareness, adults are not confident about knowing how and when to act to protect children from online abuse and exploitation, leaving them vulnerable and unsafe.

Through this microsite, and all activities that continue to follow its establishment, the Foundation aims to empower adults with the knowledge and confidence to act to keep children and young people safe from abuse and exploitation in all the environments within which they interact.

**There are 2.88 million registered accounts on ten dark web communities sharing and trading child sexual abuse material. It is estimated that there are approximately 750,000 individuals looking to connect with children and young people with the intent to sexually abuse or exploit them online at any time.**



# Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care



There are generally over 55,000 children and young people placed in out of home care in Australia - in foster care, kinship care, residential care, and at times, secure care. On any given night, there are more than 45,000 children and young people living in out-of-home care.

Despite efforts by governments to intervene earlier with vulnerable families to support children to remain at home, the number of children and young people in out-of-home care has not reduced. Eight children out of every 1,000 in Australia cannot live with their biological family because of fears over their immediate safety.

Children and young people in out-of-home care services are particularly vulnerable. They increasingly have family backgrounds characterised by a high prevalence of domestic violence, parental substance abuse and mental illness. Research highlights they enter care with more complex needs and challenging behaviours including:

- **Poor school attendance and performance.**
- **Poor physical, mental and dental health.**
- **Sexualised behaviours.**
- **Challenging behaviours.**
- **Lack of social and age-appropriate living skills.**
- **Involvement or risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system.**

In the face of these enormous challenges, the out-of-home care system is ill-equipped to respond to the needs of the children and young people requiring their care.

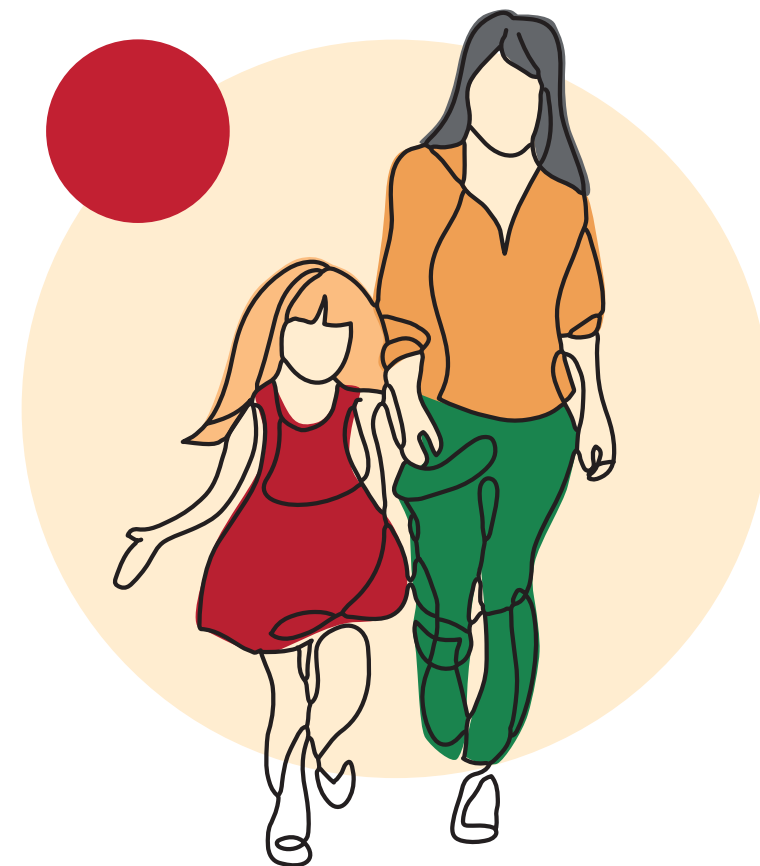
In 2018, Australian Childhood Foundation established the Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care (CETC) with the explicit vision of ensuring children and young people living in out-of-home care are provided with specialist support that is attuned, compassionate and responsive to their often complex and challenging needs. These needs arise from the impacts of trauma and significant disruption in their lives.

The focus of the CETC is to mobilise the right information at the right time in the right format to influence and shape practice, service delivery and policy.

The CETC uses a 'Knowledge to Action' framework to achieve its aims. Using an inclusive definition of knowledge that encompasses theory, research evidence, lived experience, procedural know-how, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise, and practice wisdom, the CETC develops and disseminates a shared body of usable knowledge.

In order to achieve its objective, the CETC aims to better resource and inform all of those who are in the sphere of influence over the future of children and young people in out of home care, whether carers, out of home care professionals, policy makers or other significant people in their lives.

The CETC is the only centre of its kind in Australia. It brings together the power of the research capacity at Southern Cross University with more than thirty years practice knowledge of Australian Childhood Foundation. It is an autonomous, respected, credible thought leader and system enabler in the out-of-home care sector.

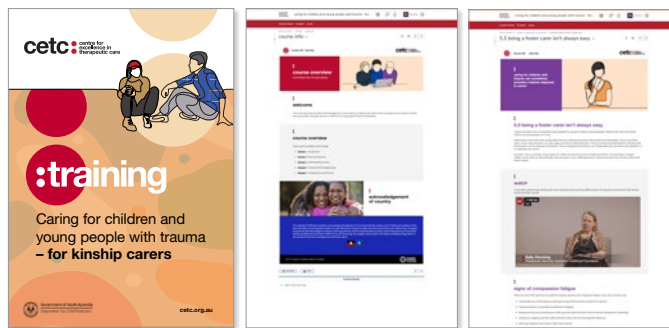
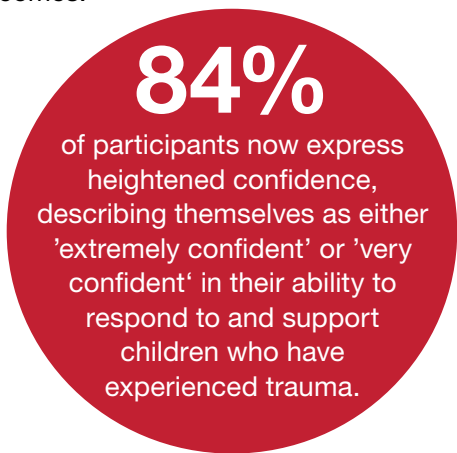


# Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care

## Learning program: caring for children with trauma, for foster and kinship carers

In 2023, CETC joined forces with the South Australian Department of Child Protection to pioneer an innovative initiative - the 'Caring for Children with Trauma' training package for foster and kinship carers. This comprehensive program featured two online courses, specialised training for Aboriginal caregivers, and a 'train-the-trainer' resource, empowering caregivers with knowledge and skills to effectively support trauma-affected children while fostering cultural sensitivity and knowledge mobilisation.

In just three months, the program reached over 400 foster and kinship carers, resulting in notable outcomes.



## Caregiver feedback

Caregivers shed a positive light on the program's impact. One individual shared their newfound comfort in seeking advice and help, while another gained a deeper understanding of trauma-related behaviours in children. A crucial takeaway highlighted the significance of creating a safe haven for children. This training stands as a source of support and knowledge, arming caregivers with the knowledge and tools to support children.

“  
Caregiver training participant feedback

The training gave me insights into better supporting young people. To listen more and respond in a manner that would be helpful to them. Children need to feel safe, and the course explained why this was important.

.....  
The training taught me that different behaviours have a reason, to always be aware of triggering situations and reflect back on my training when these situations arise.

.....  
It was one of the best sessions I have ever done. The post discussions were also fantastic. I can't recommend this highly enough. I just wish more carers would make the time to do it.

”



# National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse

The establishment of the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse (National Centre) to raise awareness and understanding of child sexual abuse, support help-seeking and guide best practice, was a key recommendation (9.9) of the 2017 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission identified that ongoing national leadership is necessary to improve outcomes for victims and survivors of past child sexual abuse and prevent future child sexual abuse.

Of the 136 Royal Commissions conducted since Federation, this was the first relating specifically to the sexual abuse of children and young people. It was a watershed inquiry that helped the nation to understand the real and enduring effects of the trauma stemming from child sexual abuse. It also made it clear that “the number of children who are sexually abused in familial or other circumstances far exceeds those who are abused in an institution.” As such, the National Centre will focus on child sexual abuse in all the contexts in which it occurs.

Founded in late 2021, the National Centre is a partnership between three respected organisations with strong histories of leadership in responding to child sexual abuse – Australian Childhood Foundation, Blue Knot Foundation, and the Healing Foundation. It has been funded by the Commonwealth Government Department of Social Services and Dr Joe Tucci is the inaugural Chairperson of the Board of the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse.

Throughout 2022, the National Centre consulted widely to produce and launch its five-year strategy – Here for Change. It has commissioned \$2.99M in Australian based research and has begun to deliver training and workforce capability building across a number of sectors important to changing our responses to victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. It also launched its refreshed brand and website.

The Foundation is very proud of our partnership and work to establish and shape the outcomes the National Centre is achieving for children and young people who have experienced, or are at risk of, experiencing sexual abuse.



[nationalcentre.org.au](https://nationalcentre.org.au)

# Therapeutic services: ACT

## Out-of-home care, as part of the ACT Together consortium

Therapeutic Services in Canberra continues to be part of ACT Together (ACTT), a large consortium of three agencies – Barnardos, OzChild and Australian Childhood Foundation.

**In the last financial year, the ACT Together (ACTT) Therapeutic Services Team provided therapeutic support and interventions to 108 children and young people.**

Of these children and young people, 40 lived in foster care, 34 in kinship care, 31 spent various periods of time in therapeutic residential care and 3 lived more independently in the Community Adolescent Program. In addition, we supported 34 children and young people through individual, dyadic or sibling therapy.

Our team of therapeutic specialists worked closely with children and young people's care teams which included foster carers, kinship carers, families, case managers, teachers and many other professionals. The care team model continued to be integral to our work within the out-of-home care system, in recognition that children and young people who have experienced developmental trauma have complex needs requiring a highly collaborative, holistic and attuned response from those involved in their care. Through monthly training and reflective practice, as well as weekly therapeutic consultations, we also supported ACTT staff in strengthening their capacity to integrate therapeutic principles and trauma-responsive practice into their work with children and young people.

## Case study: sibling work

The therapeutic specialists in our Canberra team work not only with individual children and young people but also with sibling groups and families.

Two clinicians might be working with siblings, both individually as well as together. There are many benefits to this way of working. It allows us to meet the often-complex needs of children and their families, repair and strengthen the sibling bond, while also providing the opportunity for our staff to learn from one another and strengthen their own practice, knowledge, and confidence. In the last 12 months, two of our therapeutic specialists have been working together to support a beautiful family, consisting of two young siblings, their foster brother and their foster mother.

Throughout their time of working with the family, our therapeutic specialists have discovered that school holidays were periods when it could be difficult to stay connected with the family and continue their therapeutic support. At the same time, they were also mindful that it is important for the siblings to have a break from therapy and enjoy their holidays.

So, they used their creativity to maintain a connection with the children and their carer during those times. One of their tools in achieving this has been the medium of filming themselves facilitating a



session and sending this to the carer to play with the children at a time that suited their schedules during the holidays. The filmed session included structured, play-based group activities based on relationally enriching practice and principles, and activities to enhance connection, support emotional regulation, and create opportunities for reciprocal enjoyment and delighting in one another.

The carer reported that the whole family enjoyed these activities, with even the foster grandmother getting involved in them while on a coastal holiday trip! The children themselves have also shared their enjoyment and requested more activities. It has been noted these activities provide much needed co-regulation and relationship strengthening opportunities for this family in what has been a challenging time.

**Being flexible and creative with the practice knowledge and skills we have as therapeutic specialists allows us to support families in a manner that is child-focused and balances therapeutic support with getting to enjoy other parts of their life.**

# Therapeutic services: ACT

## Domestic and family violence, delivering the Heartfelt Children's Program

In July 2022, the Foundation received funding from the ACT Government for a 12-month pilot program, the Heartfelt Children's Program, for children aged 5-12 years who have experienced domestic and family violence.

As a therapeutic experience for children, the Heartfelt Children's Program, is based on the Foundation's Big Tree Therapeutic Dolls' stories and themes. Stories in the Heartfelt Children's Program offer children opportunities for growth, imagination, fun expression and healing from the pain. This gentle method of therapeutic intervention stimulates reflection, conversation and play with children, helping them feel more connected to others in their own stories.

The first group commenced this year, with a commitment to offer the sessions to children and their mothers with a strong relational and healing focus. It included separate groups for mothers and children with a consistent exploration of the therapeutic themes utilising the therapeutic dolls in both groups. In the recent review, the Foundation has incorporated the relational healing element within the delivery of a children's program without a separate group for mothers. The therapeutic themes have been reviewed and streamlined to offer an eight-week program for children. The program includes joint sessions with mothers throughout for participation in attunement activities with their children.

## Case study: Ollie\* and the Heartfelt Children's Program

Ollie\* is a 7-year-old boy, referred to the Heartfelt Children's Program by his school counsellor.

Ollie had experienced an oppressive, controlling, and violent home environment before the family escaped his father five years earlier. Ollie's mother struggled to respond to Ollie's unique needs without fear of consequences for them both. She expressed a strong desire to be close to her children and a love of joy and laughter that had not been allowed while living with Ollie's father.

In each Heartfelt Children's Program session, as a story was read and a character explored, Ollie would show curiosity to explore what the character may be feeling and would often share with the other children times he had felt similarly and what he had done that had helped him. Ollie was able to use his own experiences to build a new narrative about himself in which he was resourced by his mother and had adapted with strengths and skills. When his mother joined the group for the attunement activity, they would take great joy in each activity they shared, often with a lot of laughter. In these times Ollie's mother took enormous joy in mirroring back to him special and unique things she knew about him. Through these activities, they were able to share in memories of connection and care.

While Ollie was often shy to engage with peers at school, within the group Ollie spoke easily with the others often sharing nonverbal simple connections through laughter, movement and play.

### Outcomes for Ollie and his mother

Through participation in the group Ollie experienced:

- The opportunity to share his unique experiences with other children.
- Space for making meaning of these experiences through storytelling and play.
- A stronger connection with his mother through play, storytelling and shared meaning making.

### Ollie's mother reported an increased:

- Understanding of the impact of Ollie's experience of his father's use of violence and abuse.
- Understanding of how Ollie had made meaning of these experiences.
- Confidence in how to respond to Ollie.

# Therapeutic services: ACT

## Our House Book resource

**In the last 12 months, the Therapeutic Services Team in Canberra has had the opportunity to welcome a social work student into the program during their study. During their placement with the Foundation, the student was involved in developing a resource to support children going through unplanned transitions from their home to a new placement or moving between placements.**

From the Foundation's work in transition support, we are aware that sudden loss when separations and subsequent transitions are not planned overwhelm a child's capacity to tolerate confusion and pain, making the child's experience unbearable. This project attempts to reduce the overwhelming uncertainty for children when entering a new placement by providing them with age-appropriate and child-friendly information about their new 'home'.

The Our House Book resource is an easy-to-follow template for crisis carers to create a printable booklet for children containing information about the adults who will care for them, the spaces they will inhabit and how this new family unit operates. The template guides carers to include pictures of the new carers and their home, while also teasing out the family culture through the introduction of information such as where food will be kept that is accessible to the children and where clothes can go when they need washing.

The resource was named Our House Book as the onus is on the adults to collate and synthesize the information that may feel obvious to an adult, but not to a child who, at a time of great stress, will face barriers in processing and retaining it.

The student also created guides for both professionals and carers to use in the creation of their own Our House Book. This resource weaves in psychoeducation around how a child who experienced early life abuse or neglect may interpret the information, as well as what they might need in navigating the experience of an unplanned transition.



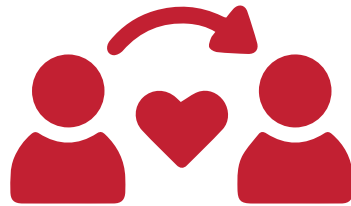
# Therapeutic services: NSW

## OurSPACE NSW

OurSPACE is a trauma therapeutic service provided to children and young people in foster and kinship care. The service recognises placement stability and relationships as the most significant factors leading to positive developmental, education and health outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care.



## OurSPACE since inception



**1,596**

referrals for direct outreach therapeutic support.



**21,457**

total sessions.



**97%**

of referrals accepted.



**278**

children (cases) currently in the program.



**32,784**

hours of therapeutic support.



**98**

children on waitlist.

# Therapeutic services: NSW

## Case study: Layla\* and OurSPACE

Layla\* is 5 years old. She lives with her grandmother Sarah\*, uncle Rob\*, and adult sister Emily\*. Layla has lived with Sarah for most of her life.

Layla came into care when she was 3 days old. Her parents could not care for her due to their mental health and substance abuse, with her mother making the difficult decision that Layla would be better off living with Sarah to have more consistent support and care. Layla has had many questions about why she is unable to live with her parents and sees them inconsistently.

Layla is a very energetic, curious, loving, and caring young girl who enjoys the outdoors and being creative. She finds it easy to make friends, however maintaining these friendships can be difficult. Layla often experiences strong feelings of shame and rejection because of her history. She has a lot of big feelings which she externalises which can be hard for adults in her life to understand and leaves them confused regarding how to respond in a way that acknowledges her underlying needs.

When OurSPACE received the referral, there were worries the placement was going to become more unstable as Layla started school. There was a focus on managing her behaviour, rather than responding to the underlying feelings and needs she was trying

to express. Her grandmother, Sarah, was ageing and found it hard to keep up. Layla found it difficult to feel safe in her body when expressing her big feelings and often felt sick and had symptoms of anxiety. Sometimes she hid her worries from adults, as she feared rejection if she was to share them. Layla has expressed this by moving between fight and flight expressions which were often met with behavioural focused strategies by the adults, which unintentionally caused further distance and shame that exacerbated her trauma expressions.

The OurSPACE therapeutic specialist was able to speak with the carer and other family members in the home about what was happening for Layla and how her past experiences of trauma might have impacted her brain and body. We started by learning Layla's trauma expressions and worked together with Layla and Sarah to create more meaningful connections, predictable environments, and nurturing responses. Sarah became more playful with Layla and participated in activities that supported Layla to express her feelings, and recognised emotions and activities that supported her to feel calmer within her body when she experienced big feelings. Sarah also became more reflective in her therapeutic parenting and began to role-model the principles and strategies she was hoping to see Layla do.



As the care team of all the adults and services that supported Layla began to work and collaborate together, Sarah's worries decreased, and she felt more supported and assured in her confidence. The care team was able to establish a strong level of communication where worries and strengths could be shared openly. As a result, Layla began to experience a consistent and predictable response from the adults at home, school, and community.

As OurSPACE's intervention concluded, Sarah expressed that she was feeling more confident and equipped in supporting Layla's needs and feelings. She began to reframe the way she viewed Layla's needs, practised curiosity and playfulness, and promoted relational repair after big ruptures, which decreased Layla's sense of rejection and shame. Sarah also felt prepared for any challenges ahead, and was seeing them as something that she, Layla, and the care team can get through together, rather than feeling like all the responsibility was solely on her.

# Therapeutic services: NSW

## Flood Support Program

Over the past financial year, Australian Childhood Foundation provided critical support in flood-affected communities in the Northern Rivers area of NSW thanks to funding from the Department of Communities and Justice.

The Foundation engaged with local communities, sharing information about our services and after community consultation, we established a therapeutic response addressing the deep complexity for the whole community. By listening to individuals and the broader community, the Foundation adapted our existing outreach face-to-face model to a range of environments to ensure those in need could easily engage and receive the most suitable responsive and flexible support.

Our response was flexible and included phone counselling, presentations and workshops to various organisations and offering individual and family counselling services.

The outreach nature of our service worked well for those who could not visit a location-based counselling service. Our referrals for children and young people primarily connect to the persistence of trauma-induced behaviours due to the ongoing stress. A significant number of them were housed in transitional accommodation and exhibited symptoms resembling those of post-traumatic stress disorder stemming from their experiences during the flood.

We extended therapeutic support to broader networks, particularly schools and early childhood settings. We offered training to staff who were unsure how to respond to the behavioural presentations of chronic stress. This included attending 'Mums n Bubs' groups to provide psychoeducation around trauma presentations and developmentally appropriate strategies for challenging behaviours which was received with gratitude. We regularly consulted with services that offered practical support and, at times, provided therapeutic counselling to those who were chronically stressed and activated but found attending traditional counselling difficult.

Our Flood Support Program was approached to provide psychoeducation on trauma to the community. This was done with a range of presentations on the effects of trauma on the developing brain, and how to recognise and respond appropriately to symptoms.

We organised training sessions on the Trauma Expression and Connection Assessment, which were well-received by diverse community stakeholders, including preschool educators, primary and high school teachers, and community support organisations. Feedback was positive, with attendees expressing enthusiasm about utilising the assessment in their workplaces. Many were eager to share the newfound knowledge with colleagues and were excited to commence working with the children, equipped with this valuable practical tool to drive positive change. The Foundation's Flood Support program has been instrumental in aiding children and their families in resolving the trauma resulting from the floods. It has been our privilege to contribute to their healing journey.

“  
You have helped me  
heal from the trauma of  
losing everything.

Client

“  
I have been back to school  
for six weeks now. Thank  
you for helping me.

Client

# Therapeutic services: NSW

## Case study: Abbey\* and the Flood Support Program

Abbey\* is 9 years old and was referred to the Flood Support Program by her mother. Abbey was unable to separate from her mother, especially at night. She was having nightmares and became isolated from her friends and peers, preferring to stay home rather than play with her friends or go to school. Her mother noticed Abbey's confidence being impacted, as she saw her withdrawing from all the interests and hobbies she enjoyed before the floods.

The floods reached Abbey's back door, and her entire community was devastated. Her family home became a refuge for neighbours and other community members whose homes had been destroyed.

Abbey's mum met with the Foundation. In her first session, a Trauma Expression and Connection Assessment (TECA) was conducted to understand their flood experience and family dynamic.

The Foundation supported Abbey's mum in gaining a deeper understanding of Abbey's trauma responses by explaining fundamental neurobiology concepts. This knowledge was utilised to demonstrate how TECA exercises could assist and guide the prescription of targeted intervention strategies. The TECA results indicated a high-stress response in the flight and freeze states.

The Foundation connected with Abbey and her mother, fostering a comfortable environment for

Abbey to share her story, supported by her mum when needed. Abbey struggled to articulate her feelings, primarily identifying being 'nervous' without pinpointing the sensations in her body. Over the course of 10 subsequent sessions, we engaged in outdoor activities focusing on body movements and guided meditations to help Abbey recognise and understand her emotions and bodily sensations. Despite initial challenges, Abbey found solace in somatic and creative activities, selecting arts and crafts as her favourite. By integrating physical exercises and creative arts, Abbey began to regulate her emotions and rediscover her confidence.

In our concluding session, Abbey showcased remarkable progress. She adeptly completed a guided meditation, articulating and illustrating the 'spikey ball' of worry within her chest. With visualisation and focused bodywork, Abbey addressed and transformed her distress, portraying its evolution through art, symbolising her newfound resilience and healing.

Abbey, Mum, and the Foundation have devised a plan for how Abbey's mum could help her go through this visualisation and art process. Abbey showed significant trauma resolution with her mum reporting that she feels more equipped to support her, resulting in reduced nightmares and that Abbey could now sleep in her own bed.



**9** community group sessions.



**3** Department of Communities and Justice forums attended.



**470** children directly benefited from consultation and training given to those supporting them.



**All children and young people** at local schools have been provided information about the program and opportunities to access support.



# Therapeutic Services: NT

## Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)

In providing clinical services across the NT, we recognised access to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) assessments were limited to one provider in the Darwin region.

FASD assessments being conducted in the Darwin region were not trauma-informed and were created primarily to obtain NDIS funding. Assessments were not written in an accessible format for families or care teams to easily understand. This resulted in many children being undiagnosed and not receiving the support they needed.

Recognising this gap, Australian Childhood Foundation employed consultant and FASD expert, Prue Walker, to support the design and set up of our FASD service and to support our journey of understanding a child's presentation through a trauma-informed and neurodevelopmental lens.

Assessments are conducted through a trauma-informed lens. The Foundation takes the time needed to engage children and their families and provide support to ensure they understand the assessment process and purpose and are able to attend appointments. Post engagement, we write clear, concise and individualised assessment reports to inform families and care teams of results and making meaning of the what the results show for the child.

Many referrals the Foundation receives are for young people aged up to 17 years old that missed the opportunity for assessment during their early childhood. Support is crucial to encourage this specific cohort to attend assessment sessions, given their tendency to easily disengage. An effective approach involves focusing on providing timely support, establishing strong relational connections, and being trauma and culturally informed to enhance their engagement and sense of safety during the process. Our assessment style enables us to comprehensively understand the strengths of the young person and helps us tailor recommendations for environmental changes that will empower them to lead their best life. This approach ensures that the young person, their family, and their care team can grasp their strengths and implement necessary adjustments in their environment.

This is a new area of expertise for the Foundation but an important one. We are making a significant impact on the lives of children and young people whose families and care teams cannot fit a standard assessment clinic.



6  
assessments are  
conducted at  
any one time.

# Therapeutic services: NT

## Clinical services and safe connections

The Foundation has expanded to provide services in Nhulunbuy two days a week and intermittently offers services in other remote Aboriginal communities.

A harmful sexual behaviours clinic called Safe Connections, funded by the Department of Health, has been newly established. This program has First Nations identified positions aimed at growing our First Nations knowledge and practices, in particular for children aged 8-12 and their families, who can be referred to our program. Safe Connections is facilitated in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.

The clinical service program, Medical and Allied Health Specialist Services (MAHSS), has diversified its presence by expanding into other locations with travelling therapists attending areas like Katherine for two days a week providing psychology, play therapy, and parent and carer support.

Responding to the increasing demand for therapeutic services, particularly among our clients who are of First Nations or from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, our clinicians have honed their therapeutic skills in predominantly non-verbal mediums of service provision. This includes specialised approaches like play therapy and sand tray therapy

## Strongways, Back on TRACK

Australian Childhood Foundation provides therapeutic case management and clinical support through the Strong Ways program in the NT.

Strong Ways supports young people who are at risk or who are involved with the youth justice system. This year in the remote community of Tennant Creek, Australian Childhood Foundation partnered with the First People's Disability Network, to develop regular Yarning Circles that focus on conversations about alcohol and other drugs.

The Strong Ways team take a group of young people out bush where they prepare food such as cooking kangaroo tail. This setting is a comfortable, safe environment for the young people, where they can relax and yarn together. Being on country means they are in control of their space and are the knowledge holder and leader in that environment. The Foundation provides a safe connection, exploring themes such as self-identity, strengths and skills, sense of future, and mental health.

## The impact

Young people are actively engaging in conversations about drug and alcohol use and are discussing harm minimisation. It has also been noted that young people in the program are ceasing drug use. Positively, young people are able to describe the impact drug and alcohol use has had in the community, in their lives and in their motivations to do well at school.

Over **150**

children and young people, and parents and carers have received direct therapy services.

**Assessments conducted**

**20** psychological  
**9** harmful sexual behaviours  
**3** parent capacity assessments



# Therapeutic services: TAS

## Ashley Youth Detention Centre in Northern Tasmania

This year Australian Childhood Foundation has provided a part-time therapeutic specialist into Ashley Youth Detention Centre. Our Tasmanian therapeutic specialist works closely alongside a senior manager from the Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care (CETC) to support staff and young people and ensure the service provided is trauma-informed and therapeutic.

Working with young people in Ashley Youth Detention Centre on a one-on-one basis, we have been able to provide a positive, safe and trusting therapeutic relationship experience. Additionally, we have provided young people with an opportunity to speak up about their personal experiences and develop new ways of connecting and managing distress.

Individual therapeutic assessment reports and plans are completed to better understand the life experiences of young people, their developmental trauma and analyse their unmet needs. Ongoing support and psychoeducation are provided to build on therapeutic practices and promote a felt sense of safety for young people whilst in detention.

### Looking forward

The work with young people and staff in Ashley Youth Detention Centre will continue. The support being offered to the young people has been well received. Many regularly attend sessions and provide positive feedback on how helpful the process has been leading to an increase in the amount of time our therapeutic specialist spends at the detention facility.



# Therapeutic services: VIC

## Finding the Path Forward group program

Groupwork interventions are extremely powerful for adolescents, producing excellent outcomes in pro-social development into adulthood. Group programs engage young people in intentional, productive, and constructive ways to promote positive outcomes by providing opportunities, promoting positive relationships, and offering the support they need to develop young people's strengths and capacities whilst reducing risky and harmful behaviours.

**Finding the Path Forward adolescent group is an eight-week group program developed for young people engaging in relational violence in the home and school environments. This program is an initiative developed alongside therapeutic programs run across the state of Victoria providing specialist outreach support for young people and their families with relationship violence occurring.**

As the name suggests, the Finding the Path Forward group program has a focus on supporting young people to develop new ways to be and connect in their relationships that are safe and in which coercion and violence are not utilised in seeking to have needs met. The program is designed as a non-gendered group so the program and content can be readily adapted to gender diverse young people as needed.

The eight-week group program is based on a developmental framework. It combines psychoeducation, storytelling, sensory exercises, and interactive discussions to explore topics such as safety, managing emotions and behaviour, effective communication, personal boundaries, identity, and life choices. These discussions are tailored to address the experiences of young people who have been affected by family violence.

## Finding the Path Forward group program impact

The program has been successfully executed and recently conducted with a year seven high school student cohort in the southern region of Melbourne. The majority of participants demonstrated either internalising or externalising behaviours and struggled with emotion regulation skills. These young individuals experienced significant conflicts with both peers and family members. Additionally, many engaged in high-risk behaviours, such as criminal activities, substance use, and self-harm. A prevalent theme in this cohort was limited access to food, with disordered eating patterns also noticeable among the participants in the adolescent program.

Key outcomes after completing the group program for these young people included:

- Enhanced understanding of emotions and improved body awareness.
- Developed ability to track and identify dysregulation using activities.
- Recognition and support of each other's dysregulation, promoting self-regulation.
- Improved sense of safety within the group and in relationships with peers.
- Progression from secret eating to openly sharing meals, symbolising acceptance of nurturance and care.
- Desire for continuation of the group, expressing increased connection with peers.
- Demonstrated need for a safe space to develop essential skills like communication, relationship safety, and emotion regulation.



# Therapeutic services: VIC

## Child Trauma Service (CTS)

Child Trauma Service (CTS) is a counselling program providing individual, dyadic, family and group support to children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse, family violence or engaged in harmful sexual behaviour.

Children are supported, along with their parents and caregivers, to heal and recover from their experiences of trauma. A significant amount of support and guidance is offered to the child's care system to ensure healing can occur beyond the work within the counselling room. The intention of CTS is to create opportunities outside of counselling sessions for further healing and recovery, with safe and attuned adults. A child's home or school is a wonderful place to help hold and support a child's recovery. We see the impact of this work when children can share how they are feeling with others, explore their interests and engage in safe social opportunities.

## Stepping Up

The CTS team have delivered several groups over the past 12 months, one of which was Stepping Up, a group developed after identifying a growing need to support young people on our extensive waitlist who had engaged in harmful sexual behaviours.

The group introduces therapeutic work for young people, alongside the provision of psychoeducation on themes such as consent, neurobiology, emotions, sexting, pornography, and boundaries.

Young people, parents and counsellors explore various topics in a safe therapeutic space providing young people an opportunity to explore the themes without feeling shame. The robust and energetic presentation of the young people created an opportunity for them to learn from each other, start to develop new ways of engaging with others, and engage in the material in a manner that met their needs.

Pre and post group questionnaires highlighted a shift in confidence of the themes discussed for young people attending the group. There was also an increased confidence in the ability to reach out for help if needed, and for young people to understand their own emotions better. Parents also shared noticing a change in their child's response to siblings, being able to put in boundaries and express emotions in a way that they could be heard and understood.

**When exploring safety and where young people felt safe, one young person asked if they could put the Foundation down as a place of safety. The young person shared that coming to the group and being with the Foundation was the only place they had felt safe.**



Over **480** calls received during the financial year.



**57%** of referrals are for children who have experienced family violence.



**18%** of referrals are for sexual abuse.



Over **35%** of calls proceeded to direct counselling referrals for children.



**17%** of referrals are for harmful sexual behaviour.



**25%** of the referrals come from parents, as they seek to access support for their children following their experiences of trauma.



**40%** of referrals come from community service organisations, education settings and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

# Therapeutic services: VIC

## Circle therapeutic foster care

Circle is a therapeutic foster care program that the Foundation delivers in partnership with other community service organisations across Victoria including the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

In Circle, therapeutic specialists walk alongside carers in their caring journey. They provide regular support to the carers and other professionals within the child's care system. Therapeutic specialists hold a space for deep reflection and thinking about the needs of the children and young people within the program. Support is provided to those around the children and young people within the program to make meaning of what is happening for all.

The Circle program requires a significant commitment of carers. Not only in caring for the child(ren) placed in their care, but in the time required to actively meet and engage with heart fortnightly with Australian Childhood Foundation and partner agency Therapeutic Foster Care. At times, therapeutic meetings are more regular as carers seek additional support to make meaning of the children's presenting behaviour and respond in attuned and responsive ways.

The resilience and commitment of carers to create stable, predictable and safe homes for children in out-of-home care is commendable. They open their homes and hearts and provide the opportunity for children and young people to receive the love and care they deserve.

**Over the past twelve months across our various Circle partnership programs, we have seen a number of children be placed permanently in the care of their Circle family, and for a small number of children, the Circle program has supported their return to their biological family.**

## Heart for healing, empowerment and recovery from family violence

Heart is a therapeutic program for children and their families who have experienced family violence. Australian Childhood Foundation delivers the Heart program in partnership with South Western Centre Against Sexual Assault (SW CASA), Brophy Family and Youth Services, Emma House, and Winda-Mara. The program provides individual, dyadic, family and group therapeutic support to aid the healing and recovery for children and families who have experienced family violence.

The Foundation and SW CASA collaborated to deliver a Bringing Up Great Kids - After Family Violence group. This program was tailored for a select group of women affected by family violence, as an integral part of the Heart suite of services. These groups can be quite confronting for some people, particularly those that have experienced family violence and find it difficult to engage socially with other victim-survivors.

The groups were held over an eight-week period to support women in building their understanding of the impacts of family violence on their children. Women in the group were also taught ways they could attune to create a healing, relational connection for themselves and their child. Whilst the women were initially quiet and somewhat reserved in the first couple of sessions, the facilitators came to hold space where the women felt held, listened to, and their experiences validated. They were able to deeply share their experiences and the challenges of parenting in the context of family violence and hold hope for themselves and their children. The women expressed sadness when the facilitated group came to an end, however they had forged new friendships and developed a sense of hope and positivity about their role as a parent.



# Therapeutic services: VIC

## The Wrap Around Program

The Wrap Around Care Program is a 14-year partnership between Australian Childhood Foundation and the Gippsland East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative. The program aims to provide a holistic, dependable, predictable, and culturally safe therapeutic living environment for children and young people who have experienced abuse and trauma. This is achieved by therapeutic specialists collaborating with carers and the broader care team, aiding their comprehension of the young person's needs. This support is crucial for healing and involves imparting knowledge on trauma, attachment, and therapeutic parenting approaches. The partner agency highlighted that the advice received from the therapeutic specialist enhances all they do and is an invaluable resource.

Over the past 12 months support has been provided to 16 young people and their carers. Some support is provided for short periods, but most involve long-term support over years as the young people often have complex and challenging situations. Whilst the program usually focuses on working with carers, it can also include direct counselling with young people, particularly as counselling services are limited in outer Gippsland.

## The approach

During counselling with one young person, the therapeutic specialist incorporated chess games to help the young person grasp life's complexities. The strategic moves in chess can mirror life decisions, emphasising unpredictability. This analogy helped the young person navigate the uncontrollable aspects of his life. The specialists also employ analogies to enlighten carers about the impact of trauma, stressing proactive approaches for positive outcomes. One guiding principle is, 'everything you don't do, won't work', urging proactive efforts for potential success.



## TrACK

The TrACK Program (Treatment and Care for Kids) is a joint initiative between the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, Anglicare Victoria and Australian Childhood Foundation. It is a program grounded in the neuroscience of trauma, attachment and child development, and meaningfully centralises and resources relationships as the site of healing and empowerment.

Bella, aged 11 years, is being supported through the TrACK therapeutic foster care program and has been since the age of six. Bella has experienced placement instability following the breakdown of a long-term care environment. Through TrACK, Bella is now settled in a therapeutic foster care environment and feels unconditionally loved, cared for, seen, understood, and claimed. She shared how she now experiences relationships in her world.

In speaking with Bella and exploring her experiences, Bella answered:

- I have learnt that I can talk about stuff!
- I have learnt that I can fix problems instead of getting mad.
- I have learnt that my family, friends and Nat/Kate (Therapeutic Specialist and Anglicare Case Manager) are important to me.
- I have learnt that getting off my medication and learning to control my anger is important to me.

# Therapeutic services: WA

## OurSPACE

Australian Childhood Foundation delivers state-wide counselling, therapeutic consultation and support service for the Department of Communities family and foster carers through the OurSPACE program. This program was initially funded as a pilot in late 2020 and was recently extended for a further 2 years, until June 2025 due to its success.

With almost three years' experience delivering the service, the OurSPACE team has developed an integrated model of therapeutic counselling and specialised carer support. This model responds to the unique and interrelated challenges and needs of carers.

Care arrangements for children and the relationships surrounding them, are a major source of healing. When we support and empower caregivers with resources, knowledge, and care, it positively impacts the well-being, life trajectory, and overall outcomes for children and young people.

At the heart of the OurSPACE program is the Foundation's relational approach. We know it is important for carers to feel heard, understood, valued, and for them to experience care and compassion. OurSPACE provides carers with a safe and trusting relationship where they can explore caregiving, the child's story, system's challenges, and their personal story. This creates a space where carers can reflect and connect with their strengths, knowledge, and wisdom. We offer carers knowledge about the impact of trauma, attachment, culture, and child development,

which can reinforce their approach or support them to learn and develop. This easy to access support is helping empower carers, so they can provide stable homes and strong relationships for the children in their care.

Many family and foster carers across WA say they are less stressed and have an increased confidence in their ability to support the complex needs of the children in their care thanks to the program.



“  
They gave me a lot of ideas about how to look at life from her [child] perspective and to try to understand what she's going through. They helped me in listening out for the little words she was saying, to be more attentive to what she was saying to me with her actions.

Family Carer

.....  
You explained where they [young person] could be coming from because we didn't understand. You allowed us to talk. Whenever we finished meeting with you, there was a feeling of quiet, the trauma was gone. It was helpful to have someone we felt was on our side, knowing you were there if we needed you and not worried about feeling judged.

Family carer

.....  
OurSPACE allowed us to discuss predicaments with great openness and no judgment. We have a deeper understanding of the issues driving his behaviour and an improved ability to communicate and empathise with our foster son. We feel less stressed and more able to cope with our daily lives.

Foster carer



# Therapeutic services: WA

## Naala Djookan Healing Centre

Naala Djookan Healing Centre is the family and domestic violence hub providing safe and healing services to the Perth metropolitan area. The Foundation works with ten other organisations sharing a unified vision to create a culturally rich and strong community, safe and free from violence.

Since late 2020, the Foundation has provided evidence-based, culturally and trauma-informed practice direction through staff supervision and practice development as well as trauma-responsive counselling for mothers who have experienced family violence.

In addition to creating safety within the Naala Djookan Healing Centre community, the centre aims to strengthen the safety of the community by building collaborative relationships with services, such as police, child protective services and schools.



Over 2022-2023, the Naala Djookan Healing Centre has:

Supported  
**100**



individual women and their children through one-on-one case management.

Held  
**170**



different workshops and sessions, attended by over 1,000 participants.

Received **519** referrals



Supported  
**517**



new individuals through a range of case management, workshops or one-off practical support.

# Therapeutic services: WA

## Off and Racing Youth Support Service

The Off and Racing Youth Support Service delivers a unique program for at risk young people in Perth who are interested in horses and may be at risk of offending and disengaging from education.

The program takes young people through equine-assisted learning with a focus on leadership skills and safe horse handling. It also provides a supportive learning environment concentrating on emotional regulation and life skills.

Throughout the program, young people are given an inside look at potential job opportunities for working with horses. They are encouraged to return to education and are supported to achieve their goals. Participants have access to trainers, educators, and mentors within the equestrian industry to show them career options that many believed was unattainable. They can also participate in work experience, with the prospect of real jobs at the end.

Most of the young people who have participated in the program have increased school attendance, improved emotional regulation skills, developed a greater understanding of their mental health and increased knowledge of available supports and job opportunities. Participants have grown in confidence and developed skills and connections that will positively impact their future.

“  
I have really enjoyed this program. It opens up so many opportunities and is a good way to make friends. My respect for horses has grown from this program and I can't wait to see how much of an impact this will have on my future.”

Child participant  
Maddy 14



# Safeguarding Children Services

The goal of the Foundation's Safeguarding Children Services is to support organisations working with children and young people to build a safeguarding culture that keeps children safe from abuse and prevents trauma.

## New partnership

In 2023, Child Wise officially became a social enterprise of Australian Childhood Foundation. This exciting development brought together two of Australia's leading organisations, long committed to advocating for the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people – the Foundation operating since 1986 and Child Wise operating since 1991. Now, as part of the Foundation, Child Wise will have an even greater capacity to continue its vital work in preventing child abuse and trauma, and both organisations will further expand their reach across Australia.

**Safeguarding Children Services continued to provide consulting to more than 60 organisations to support them to meet best practice through the Foundation's Safeguarding Accreditation program, the only Australian Competition and Consumer Commission endorsed child safety program in the country.**



## New research

'Understanding the Social Impact of Safeguarding Services for Children and Young People: An evaluation,' provided an overview of the Foundation's impact with its partners in keeping children and young people safe. Conducted by the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia, this was a unique study launched in 2023, grounded in qualitative research with organisations who have worked with the Foundation. Insights from the report demonstrated that the Foundation and its partners are helping shape an Australian and global story of the evolution of safeguarding practice and impact. These insights are paving the way to an even deeper understanding of best practice in building a strong and lasting safeguarding culture in organisations, equipping leaders and practitioners to ensure the children and young people in their care are safe and valued.



**The Foundation's foundational safeguarding training for professionals, Safeguarding Children Online Training, was delivered to over 100,000 users from over 125 organisations in the past year.**

## Accreditation client quotes:

[The Foundation] were really easy to work with. The amount of information that was available once we had access to their portal was really good. It was also good to have access to anything else we needed leading up to self-assessment and the gap analysis process.

Having this relationship with the Foundation has completely transformed our organisation in terms of our cultural and our compliance-based approach to keeping kids safe.

The biggest difference for us is that we are communicating more with the children themselves now than ever before. We still have more improvements to make in engaging children in the service, co-designing and delivering the services, but we're doing much more of the important communication now.

# Education services

The goal of the Foundation's education services is to support professionals to better meet the needs of the children and young people they are working with.

## New partnership for trauma-responsive schools

In 2022, Australian Childhood Foundation partnered with the Department for Education, Children and Young People in Tasmania, to develop an innovative approach to support schools to meet the learning needs of all children and young people. The collaboration implemented a consistent 'whole-of-system' professional learning strategy for trauma-informed practice in government schools. Almost 3,000 staff participated in an online self-paced foundational course and 1,000 staff have attended in-person professional learning to support improved practice.

## Action Feedback with Children online course launch

More than 2,500 people registered for the new on-demand course, Action Feedback with Children: Ideas and Tools to Listen Better. Accompanying the Foundation's popular Action Feedback Kit, developed to support the ideas introduced in the training, this course introduced core concepts of engaging children in feedback and evaluation processes, taking a rights-based approach to help practitioners listen better more often, while also supporting improved service design. The course is one of a number of new online options developed by the Foundation to support more affordable and accessible learning for professionals.

## Service redesign of an at-risk youth service

On behalf of the Government of Western Australia's Department of Communities, the Foundation, in partnership with Karla Kuliny Aboriginal Corporation and the Youth Affairs Council of WA, led the redesign of key elements of an Inner-City At-Risk Youth service model. Our design used a multi-layered approach, drawing from pillars of wisdom including research evidence, insights from young people with lived experiences of being at-risk and street present, extensive conversations with specialist practitioners, and cultural wisdom working alongside Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. Multiple stakeholders were consulted and contributed to an innovative service model that was rich in safety, relationships and supports and could act as a circuit breaker for vulnerable young people and their families.



I have been actively using the Action Feedback Kit to gauge what children think of my service. This helps me better plan future steps with my service provision and achieve better outcomes. I find the kit invaluable to my practice.

Uniting Vic Tas Staff Member

The Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma reached **206** new professionals and had **179** continuing their studies from last year's enrolments. The unique nationally accredited qualification offered students across Australia and internationally the knowledge and skills to respond to the needs of children and young people affected by the cumulative developmental and neurobiological harms caused by abuse and violence.

Our ongoing partnership with Territory Families saw us help **27** new students start their Certificate IV in Youth Justice, with another **172** students continuing from last year.

More than **1,500** sector professionals joined the Trauma Professionals Online Learning Community over the past year, an exclusive forum for curated content on childhood trauma, neuroscience and healing, as well as opportunities to engage and learn with other members.

More than **2,000** professionals engaged in the Foundation's new Family Violence Learning Series in 2023, accessing a suite of webinars and resources to support effective, evidence-informed, trauma-responsive services for children and young people affected by family violence.

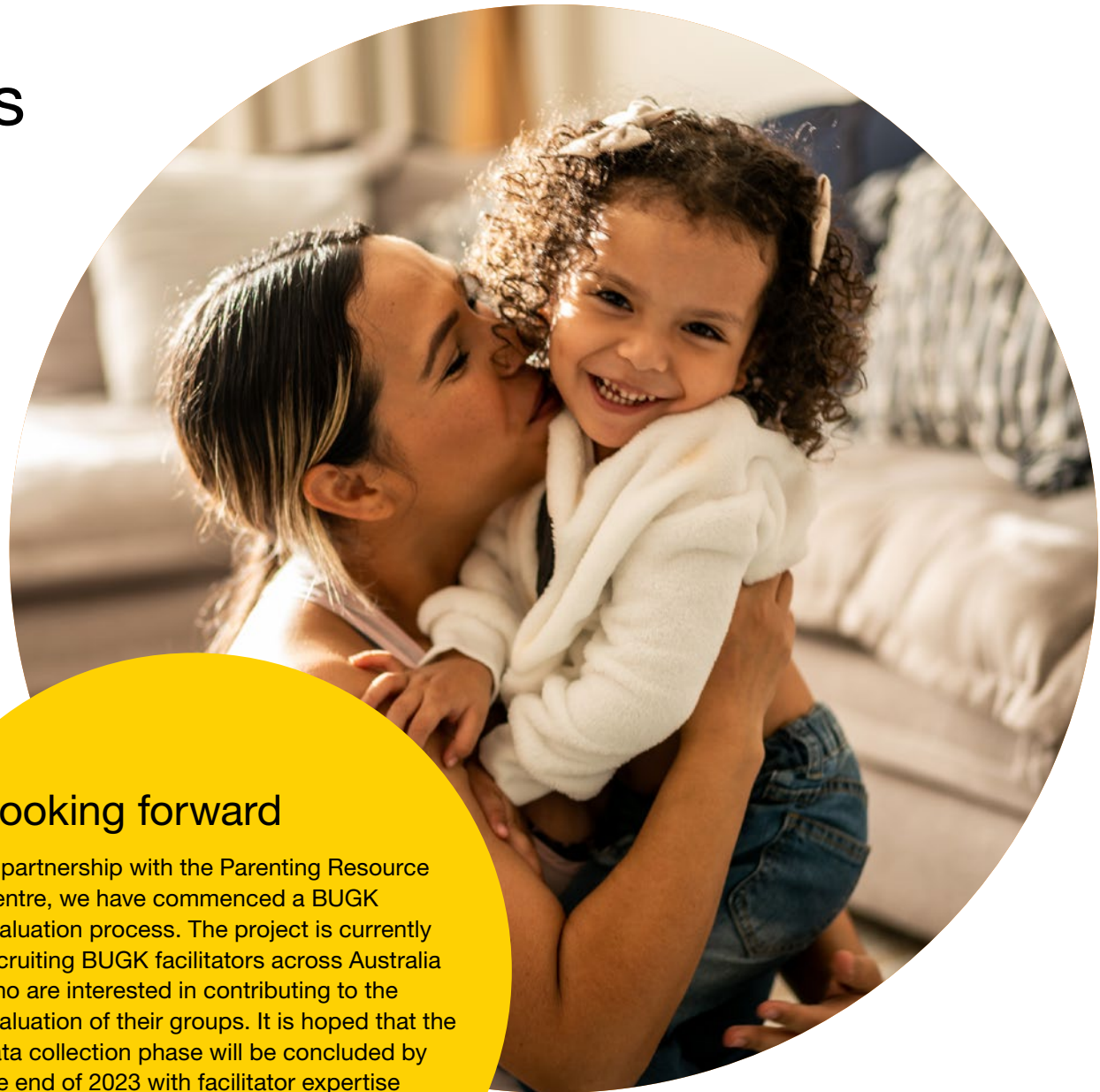
# Parenting and Early Years

## A productive year of Bringing Up Great Kids

Throughout the year, we continued to deliver Bringing Up Great Kids (BUGK) foundation and variation training through both online and face-to-face platforms. In the 2022-2023 period, we successfully launched a forum for BUGK facilitators in Western Australia, promoting enhanced engagement and collaboration. We also continued to uphold our commitment to facilitating peer support sessions, providing a valuable space for BUGK facilitators to connect, engage in meaningful conversations, seek guidance, and gain insights.

To ensure facilitators had the latest training, we initiated BUGK Refresher sessions, allowing individuals to update their understanding and expertise in BUGK. This initiative has been especially beneficial for those who were utilising the original training CD-ROMs. Additionally, we organised four trauma training sessions, complementing the BUGK training, as part of the DET school readiness funding menu. These sessions received positive feedback and substantial participation. The Parenting and Early Years program has also been involved in numerous projects and has compiled valuable resources to support early childhood educators in their education and caregiving roles.

One notable instance is our participation in a 25-hour mentoring session for a kindergarten, assisting educators working with a child who has complex PTSD. This engagement helped raise awareness of Australian Childhood Foundation in the early years sector for trauma mentoring.



### Looking forward

In partnership with the Parenting Resource Centre, we have commenced a BUGK evaluation process. The project is currently recruiting BUGK facilitators across Australia who are interested in contributing to the evaluation of their groups. It is hoped that the data collection phase will be concluded by the end of 2023 with facilitator expertise helping us refine and enhance BUGK for even greater impact.



# Parenting and Early Years

## BUGK philosophy on spotlight at the Australian Fatherhood Research Symposium conference

At the Australian Fatherhood Research Symposium conference, the Parenting and Early Years team from the Foundation presented a paper that underscored the significance of communication between expectant fathers and babies, starting from conception.

The team shared experiences from BUGK to support expectant dads. The presentation highlighted how the fetus actively responds to environmental changes and cues from the father's physical and mental state. We introduced empirical ideas and activities from BUGK's work during the first 1000 days to enhance communication between expectant dads and carers, and their babies, therefore promoting health and wellbeing outcomes for the child later in life.

Among all the papers presented at the conference, which predominantly originated from academic backgrounds, our empirical paper stood out. It garnered significant attention from the audience and became the highlight of the first day's sessions. From the Foundation's session, new opportunities for collaboration with individuals and groups working for fathers in Australia emerged.

## Selina's story of becoming a BUGK facilitator

My story starts when I was separated from my mother and was adopted as a young child into a dysfunctional family in rural China. I ended up living with various relatives until adolescence when I dropped out of school and left home to live with other troubled teens. I survived through sheer luck and was reunited with my mother who sent me to boarding school where I managed to complete an undergraduate degree.

When I came to Australia, where I met my same-sex partner 16 years ago, it was life-changing. Our journey into parenthood (through IVF) was a rocky one as my partner's family took years to accept our relationship. Our son's birth heralded a reconciliation of sorts. Because of my traumatic childhood background, I was constantly in fear of not being a good enough mum and my son's toddler years caused me to reach burnout where my health deteriorated to the point where I was unable to work and meet daily household responsibilities.

**It took a year of rehabilitation and treatment before I was physically able to work, but psychologically, I continued to struggle daily with our son until I enrolled in the BUGK parenting course.**

Through the support of other fellow parents and a very nurturing facilitator, I started to realise how my past influenced my behaviour and relationships. I learnt about feelings and needs and enjoyed therapeutic sessions where parents connected through shared struggles and mutual support. The reflective journey of BUGK enabled me to explore my past and seek professional help. I was subsequently diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress disorder and started psychotherapy treatment with Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing. During this period, our son was diagnosed with a reactive attachment disorder, and we started our healing journey by embracing the concepts within BUGK, PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy), mindfulness, self-compassion, and deep listening.

This journey of awakening and healing inspired me to become a BUGK facilitator and reach out to other parents in our local community. I feel humbled to support others in building fulfilling and lasting connections with themselves and their families. As a professional Mandarin interpreter, I'm also keen to deliver the program to the Chinese community.



# Corporate Partnerships



## Victoria Racing Club

Australian Childhood Foundation was selected by Victoria Racing Club (VRC) as the Pin & Win charity partner for 2022 and 2023.

The Foundation is VRC's 16th Pin & Win partner, an initiative which was established in 1995 to give charities the platform to raise funds through the sale of souvenir pins. The Pin & Win partnership is supported by VRC's corporate partners like Lexus and Kennedy who generously donate grand prizes for the campaign.

The partnership has proven instrumental to raising awareness about the Foundation's work in prioritising the protection and recovery of children impacted by the trauma of abuse, neglect, and family violence. Through face-to-face selling and engagement with racegoers, to ambassador involvement and media features, the Foundation successfully extended reach within the community to people who may not otherwise be aware of our work.

Thanks to the partnership's collaborative efforts we raised an incredible \$493K in 2022. Funds raised are helping change the lives of children hurt from trauma through the National Trauma Recovery Program. This program supports children and young people through specialist care and extends support to the important people that form circles of care around them throughout Australia, including remote and regional areas.



“ We are proud to announce almost half a million dollars was raised in 2022 for Australian Childhood Foundation through the generosity of Flemington members, racegoers, VRC sponsors and partners, including Lexus Australia, and the community more broadly. We look forward to continuing this important partnership with the Foundation in 2023 to support their important work helping children.

Steve Rosich  
Chief Executive Officer  
Victoria Racing Club

## Ambassador involvement

The 2022-23 Pin & Win campaign was strengthened by the support of Australian Childhood Foundation ambassadors, Stefan Dennis, Olivia Molly Rogers, Rachel Watts, and Lorinska Merrington. In 2022, these dedicated ambassadors lent their platforms to the Foundation by speaking to media about the partnership and the Foundation's work. The team also actively participated in pin selling alongside the Foundation's devoted volunteers.

## Community engagement

Through the Pin & Win partnership, the Foundation has been able to engage the community with volunteering opportunities for the first time since the pandemic. The partnership was supported by over 100 volunteers from staff to corporate partners including GPT and Target Australia, and our community of dedicated donors.

# Corporate Partnerships

## Target Australia

Target Australia has been a partner of Australian Childhood Foundation for over 12 months and in that time have not only provided much needed funds but have ensured that they amplify the work our teams do on the ground to support children and young people heal from trauma.

Throughout this financial year, three campaigns were launched including matching family pyjamas for Christmas and Easter, and tote bags for Mother's Day. This year's Mother's Day campaign featured our incredible ambassadors Daniel and Luke Mancuso from Yiayia Next Door and focused on celebrating all mother-figures that may be present in the lives of children and young people.

In February, Target Australia undertook a makeover of our Darwin counselling spaces. Team members from their support office and local Darwin store came together to provide a makeover using 30 pallets worth of furniture, toys, and materials to help the Foundation create an inviting, safe and comfortable space for the children, young people and families we work with.

These counselling spaces see 60 families of children and young people at any given time and help over 300 per year. These families will now have warm, comfortable, safe and most of all fun spaces to help meet the needs of the children and young people accessing our services thanks to Target Australia.

**The Foundation would like to extend a big thank you to Target Australia for another impactful year.**





# Our heartfelt thank you

Australian Childhood Foundation is deeply appreciative of all our partners and donors for their support of our work throughout 2022-2023. Together, we are building a community willing to take a stand to protect and defend childhood.

## Thank you to our corporate partners:



## Thank you to our key supporters in 2022-2023

### Government funders

- Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants (Commonwealth Government)
- Department of Child Protection (SA)
- Department of Child Protection (WA)
- Department of Education (QLD)
- Department of Education (WA)
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (VIC)
- Department of Health (NT)
- Department of Social Services (Commonwealth Government)
- Department of Communities and Justice (NSW)
- Department of Community Services (ACT)
- Department of Education (SA)

- Department of Education, Children and Young People (TAS)
- Territory Families, Housing and Communities (NT)

### Major supporters

- TIG Freight Management Pty Ltd
- Mrs Z Holt
- Mr J Burns
- Mrs S Gregg
- Mrs F Althaus
- Mr D & Mrs A Walsh
- Ms K Holland
- Mrs M Park
- Mrs R Bueker
- Dr F Schlagenhauser
- The David Mactaggart Foundation
- Rellim Foundation Pty Limited

- Annie Rose and Andrew Lazar Foundation
- Goldsmith Family Foundation
- Susan Blackley Trust
- Harold Mitchell Foundation
- Pethard Tarax Charitable Trust
- Brian M Davis Charitable Foundation
- Estate of Ms Susanne Edelgard Dedner

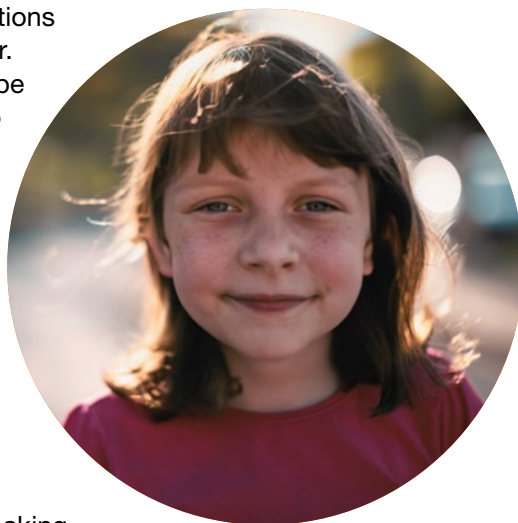
### Bequestors

- Ms M Poole-Johnson
- Mrs M Trench
- Mrs J Muster
- Mrs J Hornsey
- Mr C Davies
- Mr L Ashlin

# Our heartfelt thank you

## Thank you to our wonderful supporters

We are so grateful for the generous donations we received from our supporters this year. Whether it was sending a message of hope with a Christmas donation, committing to regular giving or creating a community fundraising event, every precious dollar helped fund vital programs for Australian children and young people.



## Breaking the cycle

The economic climate made it very difficult for families this year, especially those who were already challenged by trauma and neglect. Thank you to our donors who managed to support our 'breaking the cycle' appeal in such tough times.

We cannot hope to eliminate family violence unless we have the resources to give specialist

therapeutic care to every child who has experienced abuse. We need to help them understand their trauma and learn to accept love again so they can grow into healthy, confident and hopeful adults.

**By donating to our work, supporters are helping to break the cycle of family trauma.**

“ Supporting Australian Childhood Foundation gives me the gratification that I am helping the vulnerable children who have been abused and neglected. These children need counselling and support to bring healing into their lives. I want to help these vulnerable children have a wonderful bright future.

Elizabeth Vorrath, Donor

## Going behind the scenes

This year we had the pleasure to take some of the Foundation's most supportive donors on an exclusive 'behind the scenes' event after hours at our Child Trauma Centre in Mitcham.

Our therapeutic staff were joined by CEO, Dr. Joe Tucci, to demonstrate the tools used in our counselling rooms, and tell first-hand accounts of the harrowing work performed with families at our Mitcham site.

### “ Behind the scenes event attendee feedback

I thought the content was relevant, respectful of the privacy of individual cases but with sufficient information so that attendees came away with a good understanding of what Australian Childhood Foundation does.

.....  
I appreciated the discussion and learning more about the fabulous work the team at the Foundation are doing.



# Fundraising

## Young people making a local impact

Rotaract is an international service club that brings together students and young professionals between the ages of 18 and 35 years, to develop leadership skills. They have a special focus on giving back to the local community and this year we were the fortunate recipient of their efforts.

Matthew Gibney, Rotaract Club President of Whitehorse, spoke to us about the importance of community fundraising, “Rotaract, has helped me grow a lot as a person, develop my leadership skills, and do my part to make a difference in other’s lives. Raising money and seeing the impact first-hand has been absolutely amazing.”

Some of their fundraising activities included a giant monopoly night, murder mystery party, and movie themed dress up events.

## Gifts to the future

Every gift is precious, but bequests are truly something special as they allow supporters to continue their passion for our work beyond their lifetimes. Bequests enable the Foundation to plan with confidence for future work, new projects, research, and development of new therapeutic techniques.

This year we were honoured to accept two bequests totalling \$201,089. We sincerely thank the families and loved ones of these remarkable supporters.

“  
Matthew’s advice for community fundraisers is to:  
find likeminded people, whether they be friends, Rotarians or co-workers. Build those connections to get you in the right direction, with the resources you need, and work together to have a greater impact!  
”



# Trek for Childhood

In October 2022, Australian Childhood Foundation patron, Rosie Batty, and eight other passionate supporters, took part in a journey to help provide life-changing healing and support for children and young people across Australia.

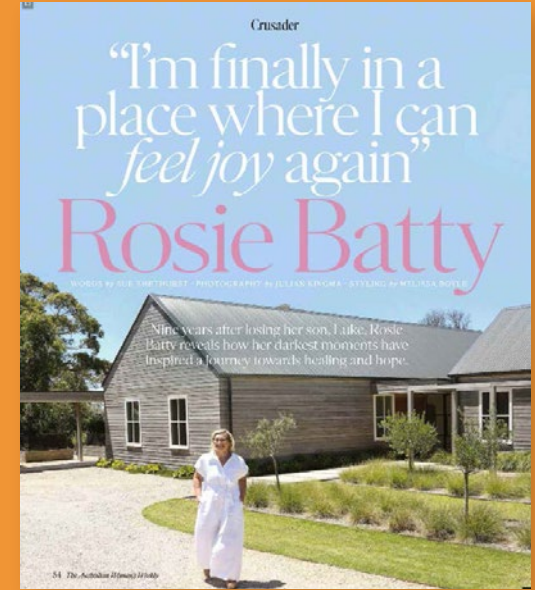
In the Trek for Childhood fundraising event, this team challenged themselves on a 6-day 63km+ trek across the iconic Overland Track in Tasmania. They explored the highest places in Tasmania, across rugged and stunning terrain, and shared the track with like-minded adventurers knowing they were doing their bit to raise vital funds and awareness.

The participants all reached and exceeded their fundraising targets, with the final tally exceeding \$35,000.

Rosie was interviewed before the event by The Mercury, and afterwards by Australian Women's Weekly, further spreading the word about how important the work of the Foundation is to Rosie.

Being a Patron of Australian Childhood Foundation gives me immense pride. The Foundation does such critical work, and the teams are so qualified and skilled in the work that they do. Being able to contribute in this way makes me feel very privileged, that this is my contribution, something that I can bring to help you with this critical work.

Rosie Batty AO  
Ambassador  
Australian Childhood Foundation



Credit: The Australian Women's Weekly, words by Sue Smethurst, photography by Julian Kingma and styling by Melissa Boyle

# Infrastructure

## Capability and Operations

The Foundation is focused on supporting our people and equipping them with the tools they need to heal, support and protect children and young people. This led to the creation of a new internal function dedicated to enhancing organisational capability and operations through development and innovation in the areas of systems and technology, data and information management, governance and business processes, infrastructure, organisational performance, and operations.

The first year has focused on supporting the development and implementation of the Toward 2030 strategy, reviewing existing technology infrastructure and identifying the future data and technology road map, enhancing our cyber security, and reviewing infrastructure processes.

## Clinical records management

Through 2023, we have been working to implement a new best practice electronic clinical records database. This will provide greater information and records access to staff and assist with regular contract and outcomes reporting. The project is underway, and the team are working toward Victoria as the pilot implementation site, with national rollout next year.

## Data and Technology Strategy (DaTS)

**Our Data and Technology Strategy is designed to continue to transform us into a child-centred organisation. With data at the core of our decision making, we are dedicated to leveraging technology to deliver responsive, innovative, and effective services that meet the unique needs of children and empower their wellbeing.**

The DaTS articulates the vision for the Foundation's technology future landscape and outlines the key focus areas and associated initiatives. We were fortunate to have Ernst & Young (EY) pro bono support us to develop our 3-year timeline and roadmap.

Our data and technology design principles will underpin our technology approach and values.

- Value driven: Focused on maximising benefits and delivering meaningful outcomes.
- Scalable, sustainable and flexible: Adaptable, enduring, and expandable to meet evolving needs and challenges.
- Data-driven decision support: Utilising insights from data to inform and guide strategic decision-making processes.

- Simplified and standardised: Streamlined and uniform for improved efficiency and consistency in operations and processes.
- Accessible, reliable and secure: Ensuring availability, dependability, and protection to enable trusted and convenient access.
- Governed and accountable: Establishing clear authority and responsibility while ensuring transparency and compliance.

## A centralised IT Hub

It is a goal of the Foundation's to move towards a centralised digital hub. This hub would incorporate technical and IT project support, and as it matures, a centralised data and analytics capability overseen by an integrated IT governance structure.

This is an exciting time for the Foundation to build data and technology capability to support the work we do with children and families, meet our strategic goals and to simplify and enhance our work process using technological tools.



# Infrastructure

## Cyber security

Cyber security is a high priority area for the Board and Executives of the Foundation for the protection of our clients, staff, donors and customers. Data security and the enhancement of cyber security controls has been an initial area of focus for systems and technology.

Over the past 12 months the following key initiatives have been achieved:

- Implemented the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) Essential Eight cyber security controls to enhance our cyber security measures, achieve industry standard requirements and protect our digital environment and data.
- Development of a disaster recovery plan and testing of our disaster recovery process with a simulation.
- Staff online training in cyber security to include simulated phishing attacks as part of the learning experience.
- Conducted an external cyber security audit with vendor selection and planning complete for a full cyber security compliance audit and penetration testing of our environment.

## Accredited programs learning management solution

A learning management solution was required to support the delivery of our accredited training courses. Cloud Assess was selected as the platform to host our Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care (CETC) accredited programs to ensure compliance with assessment requirements and standards from the national regulator.

The implementation of these solutions is well underway with the first course, Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma, being delivered in July 2023. The system selected brings a host of benefits for students, trainers and assessors. It has built-in workflows that keep track of student's progress and alerts to ensure early intervention is prioritised to help students who may be struggling. In addition, for assessors, it brings together four different paper-based documents into a single page when they are assessing. This is a huge time saver and strengthens compliance.

Much of the work was instigated from feedback about the paper-based assessment process from a various internal and external stakeholder. The result of this new platform is an improved experience, significant time savings and an uplift in compliance for the RTO. Assessors have started to use the platform and are already seeing the advantages. Internal teams within the Foundation positively praise functionality to help track and manage students. While the project is a behind-the-scenes activity, the impact on children, families and/or communities comes from improved accredited training to better prepare students with their practice.

## Infrastructure enhancements

The Foundation has focused on improvements within our infrastructure management that has led to maximising efficiencies and improved processes.

Initiatives have included a review of existing suppliers and contracted services to strengthen our partnerships and deliver greater returns and efficiencies for the Foundation. The team has also supported the Foundation's acquisition of Child Wise and the establishment of infrastructure operations on behalf of the Karla Kuliny Aboriginal Corporation.

Key activities that resulted in improved outcomes and cost savings include:

- A review of existing suppliers and membership with Supply Nation to support the procurement of indigenous owned and operated services.
- Recontracting internet services resulting in the Foundation being able to access a Technology Fund for the purchase of necessary equipment.
- A review of our fleet agreement terms to extend the life of vehicles for staff.
- A review of our hardware resulting in cost savings and improved performance with new devices.
- Improvements in our procurement process leading to better outcomes.
- Enhanced safety and facilities incident management practices and audits.

# Our people

## Patrons

**Chris Hemsworth, AM**  
Actor

**Rosie Batty, AO**  
Domestic Violence Advocate  
and Australian of the Year (2015)

## Ambassadors

**Liam Hemsworth**  
Actor

**Nadine Garner**  
Actress

**Stefan Dennis**  
Actor

**Matt Johnson**  
Radio and Television Personality

**Daniel and Luke Mancuso**  
Yiayia Next Door

**Casey Burgess**  
Entertainer

**Clint Newton**  
Rugby League Players'  
Association President

**John Xintavelonis**  
Actor and Entertainer

**Vanessa Low**  
Athlete

**Georgie Parker**  
Actress

**Olivia Molly Rogers**  
Author, Artist and Mental  
Health Advocate

**Rachel Watts**  
Television Personality

**Lorinska Merrington**  
Television Personality

## Board

### President

**Mr Mark Thomas**  
Communications

### Honorary Treasurer

**Mr Rod Naismith**  
Accounting

### Directors

**Mr Justin Smith**  
Media

**Mr Nick Pelham**  
Infrastructure

**Dr Ciara Earley**  
Paediatrics

**Mr Rod Lamplugh**  
Law

**Mr Cliff Weeks**  
Aboriginal Affairs

**Ms Claire Boussioutas**  
Consultancy

## Life Governors

**Mr Jamie Perrott**  
Communications

**Ms Susan Halliday**  
Business

**Mr David Rosback, AM**  
Retail and former Rotary  
District Governor

**Mr Laurie Wilson**  
Commerce

**Dr Anne Small**  
Medicine

**Mr Ted Garland**  
Accounting



# Our people

Thank you to the wonderful people who were involved with us this year

## National Executive Team

### Dr Joe Tucci

Chief Executive Officer

### Janise Mitchell

Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
Director, Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care

### Craig McMillan

National Executive Manager – Partnerships, Fundraising and Marketing

### Frank Borg

Executive Manager - Organisational Capability and Operations

### Lyn Millett

Executive Manager - Education and Safeguarding Services

### Noel MacNamara

Executive Manager  
Research and Policy and Deputy Director of Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care

### Trevor Irwin

Chief Financial Officer

## Senior Management Team

### Angela Weller

Manager – Training and Development

### Blythe McAuley

Senior Manager – Therapeutic Services NT

### Brigette McGuire

National Executive Manager – Australian Business Coalition for Safeguarding Children

### Chris Byrne

Manager - Business Development and Strategy. Education and Safeguarding Services

### Chris Cussen

Lead - Product Development, Content Creation, and Projects

### Cyra Fernandes

Senior Specialist - Therapeutic Care

### Dan Howell

Program Manager - Service Development and Projects

### Donna Richards

RTO Coordination and Business Development Manager

### Edward Murphy

Marketing Manager

### Felicity O'Meara

Account Manager - Corporate Partnerships

### Georgia Pattison

Human Resources Program Manager

### Glenda Kickett

Manager - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Partnership

### Glenys Bristow

Senior Specialist - Therapeutic Care

### Jana Sarnovski

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services ACT

### Jenny Wing

General Manager – Therapeutic Services VIC/TAS

### Jessica Carter

Lead - Knowledge Mobilisation

### Dr Joanne Wicks

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services NT

### Karen Kipling

Manager - Accredited Training

### Kate Sanders

Internal Systems Support Manager

### Kathryn Lenton

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services TAS

### Kelly Royds

Head of Knowledge Mobilisation and Innovation, Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care

### Lauren Thomas

Senior Project Lead

### Lydia Kali

Program Manager – Quality Unit

### Mary Ann Delaney

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services VIC

### Milon Islam

General Manager – Financial Services

### Monica Robertson

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services VIC

### Nicole Balfour

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services VIC

### Pat Jewell

Program Manager – Parenting and Early Years

### Renee Smart

Internal Systems Support Manager

### Robyn Rice

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services TAS

### Shaun Chandran

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services WA

### Shelley Calopa

Fundraising Manager

### Susan Buratti

Program Manager – Therapeutic Services NSW

## Safeguarding Children Accreditation Panel

### Susan Halliday

Former Chair of the Victorian Institute of Teachers

### Superintendent Andrew Allen

Victoria Police (Retired)

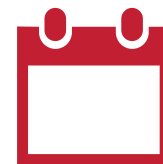


# Our people

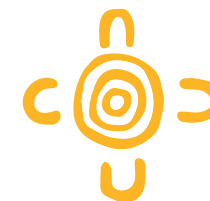
Our teams at Australian Childhood Foundation are committed to making an impact to support children and young people through the trauma of abuse, family violence and neglect around Australia. We're built of like-minded, talented individuals who aspire to be the best and do their best.



**69**  
**new starters**  
in the last 12 months.



**11%**  
**of employees**  
have been a part of the  
Foundation for over 10 years.



**5%**  
**of our team**  
are proud Aboriginal or Torres  
Strait Islander people.



**87%**  
**of our workforce**  
identify as female.



**94%**  
**of staff**  
are actively engaged in helping  
the Foundation achieve its  
purpose and goals.



**7%**  
**of our workforce**  
speak English as a second  
language. **8%** of our team being  
fluent in two or more languages.



**98%**  
**of employees**  
recognise that the Foundation  
fosters an environment of  
inclusiveness, where individual  
differences are celebrated.



**92%**  
**of employees**  
feel health, safety and wellbeing  
are viewed as a priority.



**92%**  
**of employees**  
have accessed flexible  
working arrangements over  
the past 12 months.

# Get involved

Australian Childhood Foundation relies on the support of the community to continue to provide counselling services for children to help them heal from the devastating impact of violence, abuse and neglect.

You can help transform the lives of children, and assist the Foundation in running prevention programs that help stop violence and abuse before it happens, by making a donation at [childhood.org.au](https://childhood.org.au).

**Contact us today to talk about how you can support children:**

- **Australian Childhood Foundation**
- **PO Box 3335, Richmond VIC 3121**
- **Phone: 1300 381 581**
- **Email: [support@childhood.org.au](mailto:support@childhood.org.au)**
- **[childhood.org.au](https://childhood.org.au)**

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.



# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Directors' Report 30 June 2023

The directors present their report on Australian Childhood Foundation for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

#### General information

#### Directors

The names of the directors in office at any time during, or since the end of, the year are:

Names	Position
Mark Thomas	Corporate Affairs Consultant
Justin Smith	Media
Nick Pelham	Infrastructure Manager
Ciara Earley	General Paediatric Consultant
Rod Lamplugh	Solicitor
Claire Boussioutas	Consultant
Rod Naismith	Accountant
Cliff Weeks	Public Servant

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

#### Information on directors

The names of each person who has been a director during the year and to the date of this report are:

Mark Thomas	is currently the Chairperson of the Foundation having joined as a Director in 2005. He has been a political adviser to a range of government Ministers. He has senior community and corporate communications experience.
Justin Smith	is a senior producer and broadcaster with Fairfax Media. He brings significant media and communications experience to the Board. He joined as a Director in 2011.
Nick Pelham	joined as a Director in 2011. He has worked in infrastructure management for government and corporate sectors. He is a member of the Finance and Governance subcommittee of the Board.
Ciara Earley	joined as Director in 2014. She is a qualified Paediatrician and works as a Consultant at Monash Medical Centre. Ciara holds Masters in Forensic Medicine from Monash University and The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine.
Rod Lamplugh	joined as a Director in 2015. He is a commercial lawyer and company director. He has over 25 years experience assisting organisations with legal and media related matters particularly in the areas of acquisitions, contractual matters and compliance issues.
Claire Boussioutas	joined as a Director in 2018. Claire has been working with global and Australian organisations over 25 years as they undergo business transformation enabled by technology. Claire is a Partner at Ernst & Young Australia.
Rod Naismith	joined as a Director in 2018. Rod is a Chartered Accountant and a Graduate of the Institute of Australian Company Directors. Rod has worked in public practice for over 17 years and is a Partner at the global firm, BDO. He advises on a range of business, accounting and taxation issues for start-up, private and family owned businesses and not for profit organisations. He is a member of the Finance and Governance subcommittee of the Board.

1

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Directors' Report 30 June 2023

#### General information

#### Information on directors

Cliff Weeks	joined as a Director in 2016. He is currently working for the Department of the Chief Minister as a senior executive based in Alice Springs. A former member of the Western Australia Police Service, Cliff has over 15 years of experience in the public sector and was Director General of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in Western Australia from 2011 until 2016.
-------------	--

#### Principal activities

The principal activities of Australian Childhood Foundation during the financial year was to provide services which effectively reduced the incidence of child abuse and the harm it causes children, families and the community. It provided direct services to children who have suffered or were at risk of abuse and neglect and their families in the form of counselling, practical assistance, emotional support or material aid. It also conducted research, prevention and education programs aimed to raise public awareness about the problem of child abuse and family violence.

#### Objectives and Strategy

The Australian Childhood Foundation's objectives are to:

- prevent child abuse in Australia;
  - support children to recover from the trauma arising from experiences of abuse and neglect; and
  - build the confidence and capacity of parents.
- The Foundation's strategy for achieving these objectives includes:
- establishment of specialist therapeutic programs throughout Australia;
  - provision of parenting education activities;
  - undertaking research into child abuse and child protection;
  - delivery of training to health, welfare, education and legal professionals;
  - implementation of programs that build the capacity of organisations to protect children from harm and exploitation by volunteers and employees.

#### Performance Measure

The Foundation measures its performance through the number of children and families supported by its specialist programs, the amount of income funds raised and the number of projects delivered to the community.

2

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Directors' Report 30 June 2023

#### General information

#### Members' guarantee

Australian Childhood Foundation is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to the winding up, is limited to \$ 100 for members, subject to the provisions of the company's constitution.

At 30 June 2023 the collective liability of members was \$ 2,000 (2022: \$ 2,000).

#### Operating results

The operating surplus of the company amounted to \$584,176 (2022: \$709,304). No provision for income tax is necessary, as the company is endorsed as an income tax exempt charitable entity under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

#### Significant changes in state of affairs

There have been no significant changes in the state of affairs of the Company during the year.

#### Events after the reporting date

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

#### Meetings of directors

During the financial year, 5 meetings of directors were held. Attendances by each director during the year were as follows:

	Directors' Meetings	
	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Mark Thomas	5	5
Justin Smith	5	2
Nick Pelham	5	5
Ciara Earley	5	4
Rod Lamplugh	5	5
Claire Boussioutas	5	3
Rod Naismith	5	5
Cliff Weeks	5	5

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Directors' Report 30 June 2023

#### Indemnification and insurance of officers and auditors

The company has insurance to indemnify the directors and executives of the company for costs incurred, in their capacity as a director or executive, for which they may be held personally liable, except where there is a lack of good faith. During the financial year, the company paid a premium in respect of this contract to insure the directors and executives of the company against a liability to the extent permitted by the Corporations Act 2001. The contract of insurance prohibits disclosure of the nature of the liability and the amount of the premium.

The company has not, during or since the end of the financial year, indemnified or agreed to indemnify the auditor of the company or any related entity against a liability incurred by the auditor. During the financial year, the company has not paid a premium in respect of a contract to insure the auditor of the company or any related entity.

#### Proceedings on behalf of company

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the company or intervened in any proceedings to which the company is a party for the purposes of taking responsibility on behalf of the company for all or any part of those proceedings.

#### Auditor's independence declaration

The auditor's independence declaration in accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* for the year ended 30 June 2023 has been received and can be found on page 5 of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

*A. Mark Thomas*

Director: .....  
Mark Thomas

Dated this ..... 11th ..... day of ..... October ..... 2023

# Financial statements



Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd  
Level 35, 600 Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
E: info@nexiamelbourne.com.au  
P: +61 3 8613 8888  
F: +61 3 8613 8800

nexia.com.au

## Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Directors of Australian Childhood Foundation

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as lead auditor for the audit of Australian Childhood Foundation for the year ended 30 June 2023, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Nexia

Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd  
Melbourne

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023

Chapman Wan  
Director

## Advisory. Tax. Audit.

Registered Audit Company 291969

Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd (ABN 86 005 105 975) is a firm of Chartered Accountants. It is affiliated with, but independent from Nexia Australia Pty Ltd. Nexia Australia Pty Ltd is a member of Nexia International, a leading, global network of independent accounting and consulting firms. For more information please see [www.nexia.com.au/legal](http://www.nexia.com.au/legal). Neither Nexia International nor Nexia Australia Pty Ltd provide services to clients.

Liability limited under a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Fundraising and Donations	4,403,245	3,275,752
Interest income	74,988	17,012
Other income	236,977	189,275
Professional education services	2,838,395	2,526,597
Research	106,250	99,813
Safeguarding children services	1,514,862	1,011,083
Therapeutic Services	24,417,008	20,688,087
	<b>33,591,725</b>	<b>27,807,619</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Amortisation of right-of-use assets	(1,465,717)	(1,593,638)
Depreciation	(779,870)	(588,221)
Employee benefits expense	(24,222,392)	(19,972,639)
Finance costs	-	(393)
Foreign exchange gain	327	106
IT expenses	(844,560)	(703,167)
Lease interest	(107,320)	(105,211)
Motor vehicle expenses	(126,319)	(103,585)
Offices and Facilities	(679,723)	(586,344)
Organisational expenses	(961,826)	(1,028,515)
Program expenses	(2,546,200)	(1,606,257)
Telecommunications	(278,341)	(241,861)
Travel expenses	(995,608)	(568,590)
	<b>(33,007,549)</b>	<b>(27,098,315)</b>
<b>Surplus before income tax</b>	<b>584,176</b>	<b>709,304</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>584,176</b>	<b>709,304</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
<b>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss</b>		
Revaluation changes for property, plant and equipment	-	-
<b>Items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss</b>		
Gain/(loss) arising from revaluation of financial assets at fair value	5,515	(5,374)
<b>Other comprehensive income/(loss) for the year, net of tax</b>	<b>5,515</b>	<b>(5,374)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>589,691</b>	<b>703,930</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

6

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Statement of Financial Position As At 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	4,082,617	2,572,248
Trade and other receivables	5	1,962,132	1,909,917
Inventories	6	233,707	204,643
Financial assets	7	2,135,224	2,084,622
Other assets	8	645,880	719,115
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>9,059,560</b>	<b>7,490,545</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	9	4,525,154	4,415,179
Right-of-use assets	10	1,470,079	1,653,532
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>5,995,233</b>	<b>6,068,711</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>15,054,793</b>	<b>13,559,256</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	11	2,092,143	1,347,420
Employee benefits	13	2,115,727	1,840,082
Lease liabilities	10	837,220	1,277,186
Other liabilities	12	2,194,252	2,066,271
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>7,239,342</b>	<b>6,530,959</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee benefits	13	86,724	103,092
Lease liabilities	10	670,913	457,082
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>757,637</b>	<b>560,174</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>7,996,979</b>	<b>7,091,133</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>7,057,814</b>	<b>6,468,123</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Reserves	14	2,138,230	2,132,715
Retained earnings		4,919,584	4,335,408
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>7,057,814</b>	<b>6,468,123</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

7

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Statement of Changes in Equity For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2023	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Financial Asset Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2022	4,335,408	2,118,314	14,401	6,468,123
Surplus for the year	584,176	-	-	584,176
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	5,515	5,515
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>	<b>4,919,584</b>	<b>2,118,314</b>	<b>19,916</b>	<b>7,057,814</b>
<b>2022</b>				
	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Financial Asset Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2021	3,626,104	2,118,314	19,775	5,764,193
Surplus for the year	709,304	-	-	709,304
Other comprehensive loss for the year	-	-	(5,374)	(5,374)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2022</b>	<b>4,335,408</b>	<b>2,118,314</b>	<b>14,401</b>	<b>6,468,123</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

8

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
Note	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Cash receipts in the course of operations	33,592,299	27,771,925
Payments to suppliers and employees	(29,606,471)	(24,597,700)
Dividends received	731	341
Interest received	74,461	17,012
Finance costs	(107,320)	(110,597)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	<u>3,953,700</u>	<u>3,080,981</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(889,845)	(1,244,456)
Purchase of financial assets	(45,087)	(10,189)
Net cash provided (used in) investing activities	<u>(934,932)</u>	<u>(1,254,645)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Repayment of lease liabilities (principal)	(1,508,399)	(1,763,415)
Net cash provided (used in) financing activities	<u>(1,508,399)</u>	<u>(1,763,415)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held	1,510,369	62,921
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	2,572,248	2,509,327
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	4	<u>4,082,617</u>
		<u>2,572,248</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

9

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

The financial report covers Australian Childhood Foundation as an individual entity, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Australian Childhood Foundation is a company limited by guarantee.

The principal activities of Australian Childhood Foundation during the financial year was to provide services which effectively reduced the incidence of child abuse and the harm it causes children, families and the community. It provided direct services to children who have suffered or were at risk of abuse and neglect and their families in the form of counselling, practical assistance, emotional support or material aid. It also conducted research, prevention and education programs aimed to raise public awareness about the problem of child abuse and family violence.

The functional and presentation currency of Australian Childhood Foundation is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

The financial report was authorised for issue by the Directors on 11 October 2023.

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

#### 1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The Company is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (a) Revenue and other income

Revenue recognised under AASB 15 is measured at the amount which the Company expects to receive in consideration for satisfying performance obligations to a customer. A performance obligation is the distinct good or service defined within the contract with a customer. The transaction price is allocated to one or more performance obligations contained within the contract, with revenue being recognised as or when the performance obligation is satisfied.

Where consideration comprises variable components, the amount recognised as revenue is constrained to that amount that would not result in a significant reversal of the cumulative revenue recognised when that uncertainty is resolved.

##### Timing of Revenue Recognition

Revenue is recognised either at a point in time or over time, when (or as) the Company satisfies performance obligations by transferring the promised goods or services to its customers.

If the Company satisfies a performance obligation before it receives the consideration, the Company recognises either a contract asset or a receivable in its statement of financial position, depending on whether something other than the passage of time is required before the consideration is due.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

10

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (a) Revenue and other income

###### Specific revenue streams

The revenue recognition policies for the principal revenue streams of the Company are:

###### Fundraising and donations

Donations collected including cash and goods for resale, are recognised as revenue when the Company gains control of the asset.

###### Grant revenue

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income when the entity obtains control of the grant and it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before it is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

When grant revenue is received whereby the entity incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue is recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant is recognised as income on receipt.

###### Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument.

###### Education programs

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers i.e. when the performance obligation has been satisfied.

###### Government assistance

Government assistance has been received during the year under the Cash Flow Boost program and Jobkeeper payments. Payments under this program are recognised as revenue once the Company is entitled to receive the payments. A receivable is recognised at year end for any payments that the Company is entitled to that have not been received. Payments received are included as part of 'Government assistance' in the statement of comprehensive income.

###### Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Company is entitled to it.

11

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (a) Revenue and other income

###### Rendering of services

Revenue in relation to rendering of services is recognised depending on whether the outcome of the services can be estimated reliably. If the outcome can be estimated reliably then the stage of completion of the services is used to determine the appropriate level of revenue to be recognised in the period.

If the outcome cannot be reliably estimated then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

##### (b) Income Tax

The Company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

##### (c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

##### (d) Inventories

Inventories acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration are valued at the current replacement cost as at the date of acquisition, which is the deemed cost.

##### (e) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

###### Property

Freehold land and buildings are shown at their fair value based on periodic valuations by external independent valuers, less subsequent depreciation of buildings. This is reviewed every three years. Last revaluation date was 25 May 2021 by Charter Keck Cramer.

Fair value is determined by reference to market-based evidence, which is the amount for which the assets could be exchanged between a knowledgeable willing buyer and a knowledgeable willing seller in an arm's length transaction as at the valuation date. Fair values are confirmed by independent valuations which are obtained with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amounts do not differ materially from the asset's fair values at the balance sheet date.

12



# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (e) Property, plant and equipment

In periods when the freehold land and buildings are not subject to an independent valuation, the directors conduct directors' valuations to ensure the carrying amount for the land and buildings is not materially different to the fair value.

Increases in the carrying amount arising on revaluation of land and buildings are recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in the revaluation reserve in equity. Revaluation decreases that offset previous increases of the same class of assets shall be recognised in other comprehensive income under the heading of revaluation surplus. All other decreases are charged to the statement of profit or loss and comprehensive income except where a credit balance exists in the revaluation reserve, in which case it is debited to that reserve.

As the revalued buildings are depreciated the difference between depreciation recognised in the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income, which is based on the revalued carrying amount of the asset, and the depreciation based on the asset's original cost is transferred from the revaluation surplus to retained earnings.

Any accumulated depreciation at the date of the revaluation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount is restated to the revalued amount of the asset.

##### Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount of these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the asset's employment and subsequent disposal.

##### Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets in excess of \$1,000 including buildings and capitalised lease assets, but excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the entity commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the unexpired period of the lease.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Buildings	2 - 4%
Office Furniture and Equipment	10 - 25%
Computer Software	20%
Leasehold improvements	20 - 33%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

13

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (f) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

##### Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

##### Classification

On initial recognition, the Company classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through other comprehensive income - equity instrument (FVOCI - equity)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition unless the Company changes its business model for managing financial assets.

##### Amortised cost

Assets measured at amortised cost are financial assets where:

- the business model is to hold assets to collect contractual cash flows; and
- the contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding.

The Company's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment. Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

##### Fair value through other comprehensive income

##### Equity instruments

The Company has a number of strategic investments in listed and unlisted entities over which they do not have significant influence nor control. The Company has made an irrevocable election to classify these equity investments as fair value through other comprehensive income as they are not held for trading purposes.

14

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (f) Financial Instruments

###### Financial assets

These investments are carried at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in other comprehensive income (financial asset reserve). On disposal any balance in the financial asset reserve is transferred to retained earnings and is not reclassified to profit or loss.

Dividends are recognised as income in profit or loss unless the dividend clearly represents a recovery of part of the cost of the investment. Other net gains and losses are recognised in OCI.

###### Impairment of financial assets

Impairment of financial assets is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis for the following assets:

- financial assets measured at amortised cost
- debt investments measured at FVOCI

When determining whether the credit risk of a financial assets has increased significant since initial recognition and when estimating ECL, the Company considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on the Company's historical experience and informed credit assessment and including forward looking information.

The Company uses the presumption that an asset which is more than 30 days past due has seen a significant increase in credit risk.

The Company uses the presumption that a financial asset is in default when:

- the other party is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Company in full, without recourse to the Company to actions such as realising security (if any is held); or
- the financial assets is more than 90 days past due.

Credit losses are measured as the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the Company in accordance with the contract and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

###### Trade receivables

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Company has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

15

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (f) Financial Instruments

###### Financial assets

Where the Company renegotiates the terms of trade receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

###### Other financial assets measured at amortised cost

Impairment of other financial assets measured at amortised cost are determined using the expected credit loss model in AASB 9. On initial recognition of the asset, an estimate of the expected credit losses for the next 12 months is recognised. Where the asset has experienced significant increase in credit risk then the lifetime losses are estimated and recognised.

###### Financial liabilities

The Company measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Company comprise trade payables, bank and other loans and lease liabilities.

##### (g) Impairment of non-financial assets

At the end of each reporting period the Company determines whether there is an evidence of an impairment indicator for non-financial assets.

Where an indicator exists and regardless for indefinite life intangible assets and intangible assets not yet available for use, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated.

Where assets do not operate independently of other assets, the recoverable amount of the relevant cash-generating unit (CGU) is estimated.

The recoverable amount of an asset or CGU is the higher of the fair value less costs of disposal and the value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from an asset or cash-generating unit.

Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.

Reversal indicators are considered in subsequent periods for all assets which have suffered an impairment loss.

16

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (h) Intangibles

###### Software development

Software development costs are capitalised and recorded at cost until such time the project is complete and costs can be measured reliably. Once completed it is transferred to computer software. Software has a finite life and is carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and impairment losses. It has an estimated useful life of five years. It is assessed annually for impairment.

##### (i) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

##### (j) Leases

At inception of a contract, the Company assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is considered to contain a lease if it allows the Company the right to control the use of an identified asset over a period of time in return for consideration.

Where a contract or arrangement contains a lease, the Company recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the commencement date of the lease.

A right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost, which is the present value of future lease payments adjusted for any lease payments made at or before the commencement date, plus any make-good obligations and initial direct costs incurred. Lease assets are depreciated using the straight-line method over the shorter of their useful life and the lease term. Periodic adjustments are made for any re-measurements of the lease liabilities and for impairment losses.

Lease liabilities are initially measured at the present value of future minimum lease payments, discounted using the Company's incremental borrowing rate if the rate implicit in the lease cannot be readily determined, and are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate.

Minimum lease payments include fixed payments, amounts expected to be paid under a residual value guarantee, the exercise price of purchase options for which the Company is reasonably certain to exercise and incorporate the Company's expectations of lease extension options.

The lease liability is remeasured when there are changes in future lease payments arising from a change in rates, index or lease terms from exercising an extension or termination option. A corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the lease assets.

Short term leases (lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets (\$10,000 or less) are recognised as incurred as an expense in the statement comprehensive income.

17

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

##### (k) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Those Cashflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bond rates incorporating bonds, with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows.

###### On Costs

Employee benefit on-costs are recognised and included in employee benefit liabilities and costs when the employee benefits to which relate are recognised as liabilities.

###### Superannuation

Contributions are made by the Company to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

##### (l) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

##### (m) Foreign currency translation

Transactions in foreign currencies are initially recorded by applying the exchange rates ruling at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Foreign currency differences arising on retranslation are recognised in profit or loss.

Foreign exchange gains and losses that relate to borrowings are presented in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, within finance costs. All other foreign exchange gains and losses are presented on a net basis within other income or other expenses.

18

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 3 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other various factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Significant accounting judgements The company has entered into leases of premises, motor vehicles and office equipment as disclosed in Note 10. Management has determined that all of the risks and rewards of ownership of these premises, motor vehicles and equipment remain with the lessor and has therefore classified the leases as operating leases.

Significant accounting estimates and assumptions The key estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing material adjustment to the carrying amounts of certain assets and liabilities within the next annual reporting period are:

Property The freehold land and building at Mitcham was independently valued on 25 May 2021 by Charter Keck Cramer. The valuation was based on the market value.

Provisions for employee benefits payable after 12 months from the reporting date are based on future wage and salary levels, attrition rate and periods of service. The amount of these provisions would change should any of these factors change in the next 12 months.

19

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 4 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	4,082,617	2,572,248
	<u>4,082,617</u>	<u>2,572,248</u>

#### 5 Trade and other receivables

	2023	2022
CURRENT		
Trade receivables	1,508,544	1,621,149
Other receivables	453,588	288,768
	<u>1,962,132</u>	<u>1,909,917</u>

The carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the fair value of each class of receivable in the financial statements.

#### 6 Inventories

	2023	2022
CURRENT		
At cost:		
Finished goods	233,707	204,643
	<u>233,707</u>	<u>204,643</u>

#### 7 Financial Assets

	2023	2022
CURRENT		
Term deposits	2,058,901	2,013,815
Shares in listed companies - fair value through other comprehensive income	76,323	70,808
	<u>2,135,224</u>	<u>2,084,623</u>

#### 8 Other Assets

	2023	2022
CURRENT		
Prepayments	305,719	393,458
Security deposits	340,161	325,657
	<u>645,880</u>	<u>719,115</u>

20

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 9 Property, plant and equipment

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Land		
At cost	2,255,029	2,255,029
Buildings		
At fair value	521,933	521,933
Accumulated depreciation	(297,267)	(283,830)
	224,666	238,103
Furniture, fixtures and fittings		
At cost	1,123,791	1,056,165
Accumulated depreciation	(964,475)	(848,962)
	159,316	207,203
Computer software		
At cost	3,088,592	2,268,961
Accumulated depreciation	(1,724,441)	(1,124,501)
	1,364,151	1,144,460
Leasehold Improvements		
At cost	400,138	359,172
Accumulated depreciation	(343,328)	(292,348)
	56,810	66,824
Work in progress		
At cost	465,182	503,560
	4,525,154	4,415,179

#### Movements in Carrying Amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year.

	Land \$	Buildings \$	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipments \$	Computer Software \$	Leasehold Improvements \$	Work in progress \$	Total \$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2023</b>							
Balance at the beginning of year	2,255,029	238,103	207,204	1,144,459	66,824	503,560	4,415,179
Additions	-	-	57,114	69,195	-	763,536	889,845
Transfers	-	-	10,511	750,437	40,966	(801,914)	-
Depreciation expense	-	(13,437)	(115,513)	(599,940)	(50,980)	-	(779,870)
Revaluation increase	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at the end of the year</b>	<b>2,255,029</b>	<b>224,666</b>	<b>159,316</b>	<b>1,364,151</b>	<b>56,810</b>	<b>465,182</b>	<b>4,525,154</b>

21

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 10 Leases

##### Company as a lessee

The Company has leases over a range of assets including buildings and motor vehicles.

##### Terms and conditions of leases

##### Buildings

The Company leases land and buildings for their corporate offices and other buildings, the leases are generally between 1 - 6 years and some of the leases include a renewal option to allow the Company to renew for up to twice the non-cancellable lease term.

The corporate office lease contains an annual pricing mechanism based on CPI movements at each anniversary of the lease inception.

##### Motor Vehicles

The Company leases vehicles and equipment with lease terms varying from 2 - 5 years, the lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

##### Right-of-use assets

	Buildings \$	Motor Vehicles \$	Total \$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2023</b>			
Balance at beginning of year	1,035,832	617,700	1,653,532
Additions and reassessments	786,109	496,155	1,282,264
Depreciation charge	(846,649)	(619,068)	(1,465,717)
<b>Balance at end of year</b>	<b>975,292</b>	<b>494,787</b>	<b>1,470,079</b>

##### Lease liabilities

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

	< 1 year \$	1 - 5 years \$	> 5 years \$	Total undiscounted lease liabilities \$	Lease liabilities included in this Statement Of Financial Position \$
<b>2023</b>					
Lease liabilities	898,500	720,159	-	1,618,659	1,508,133
<b>2022</b>					
Lease liabilities	1,175,210	654,165	-	1,829,375	1,734,268

22

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 10 Leases

##### Extension options

A number of the building leases contain extension options which allow the Company to extend the lease term by up to twice the original non-cancellable period of the lease.

The Company includes options in the leases to provide flexibility and certainty to the Company operations and reduce costs of moving premises and the extension options are at the Company's discretion.

At commencement date and each subsequent reporting date, the Company assesses where it is reasonably certain that the extension options will be exercised.

##### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income relating to leases where the Company is a lessee are shown below:

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	107,320	105,211
Depreciation of right-of-use assets	1,465,717	1,593,638
	<u>1,573,037</u>	<u>1,698,849</u>

#### 11 Trade and Other Payables

##### CURRENT

Trade payables	456,051	346,450
GST payable	155,820	125,162
Sundry payables and accrued expenses	1,480,272	875,808
	<u>2,092,143</u>	<u>1,347,420</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

#### 12 Other Liabilities

##### CURRENT

Income in advance	2,194,252	2,066,271
	<u>2,194,252</u>	<u>2,066,271</u>

23

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 13 Employee Benefits

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Annual leave and long service leave	2,115,727	1,840,082
	<u>2,115,727</u>	<u>1,840,082</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT</b>		
Long service leave	86,724	103,092
	<u>86,724</u>	<u>103,092</u>

#### 14 Reserves

Asset revaluation reserve	2,118,314	2,118,314
Financial assets reserve	19,916	14,401
	<u>2,138,230</u>	<u>2,132,715</u>

The asset revaluation reserve records the revaluation of freehold property at Mitcham.

The financial assets reserve records the revaluation of financial assets classified as fair value through other comprehensive income.

#### 15 Financial Risk Management

##### Financial assets

Held at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,082,617	2,572,248
Trade and other receivables	1,962,132	1,909,917
Term deposits	2,058,902	2,013,815
Fair value through Other Comprehensive Income (OCI)		
Shares in listed companies	76,323	70,808
	<u>8,179,974</u>	<u>6,566,788</u>

##### Total financial assets

Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	5,794,528	5,147,960
	<u>5,794,528</u>	<u>5,147,960</u>

##### Total financial liabilities

#### 16 Members' Guarantee

In the event of the company being wound up, ordinary members are required to contribute a maximum of \$100 each. The total amount that members of the company are liable to contribute if the company is wound up \$2,000, based on 20 current ordinary members (2022: 20 members).

The Company is incorporated under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and is a Company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$100 each towards meeting any outstandings and obligations of the Company. At 30 June 2023 the number of members was 20 (2022: 20).

24

# Financial statements



## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

#### 17 Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The total remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Company is \$ 1,820,065 (2022: \$ 1,384,681).

#### 18 Auditors' Remuneration

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Remuneration of the auditor Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd, for:		
- auditing the financial statements	22,500	20,100
- other services	15,700	14,200
	<u>38,200</u>	<u>34,300</u>

Other services includes assistance with the preparation of the financial statements and audit of acquittal statements.

#### 19 Contingencies

In the opinion of the Directors, the Company did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2023 (30 June 2022:None).

#### 20 Related Parties

Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

The following transaction occurred with related parties:

Board member Rod Naismith is a Partner at BDO. In the course of the financial year, BDO provided accounting services to the value of \$15,000 (2022: \$16,170).

#### 21 Events after the end of the Reporting Period

The financial report was authorised for issue on 11 October 2023 by the Directors.

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

#### 22 Statutory Information

The registered office and principal place of business of the is:  
Australian Childhood Foundation  
Level 1  
675 Victoria Stret  
Abbotsford Victoria 3067

## Australian Childhood Foundation

ACN: 057 044 514

### Directors' Declaration

The directors declare that in the responsible persons' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulations 2022*.

Director ..... *A. Mark Thomas* .....  
Mark Thomas

Dated this 11th day of October 2023

# Financial statements



Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd  
Level 35, 600 Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
E: info@nexiamelbourne.com.au  
P: +61 3 8613 8888  
F: +61 3 8613 8800

nexia.com.au

## Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Australian Childhood Foundation

### Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Australian Childhood Foundation, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Australian Childhood Foundation, is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information in Australian Childhood Foundation's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023, but does not include the financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information we are required to report that fact. The annual report is expected to be made available to us after the date of this independent auditor's report.

#### Advisory. Tax. Audit.

Registered Audit Company 291969

Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd (ABN 86 005 105 975) is a firm of Chartered Accountants. It is affiliated with, but independent from Nexia Australia Pty Ltd. Nexia Australia Pty Ltd is a member of Nexia International, a leading, global network of independent accounting and consulting firms. For more information please see [www.nexia.com.au/legal](http://www.nexia.com.au/legal). Neither Nexia International nor Nexia Australia Pty Ltd provide services to clients.

Liability limited under a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.



### Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Australian Childhood Foundation are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for overseeing the entity's financial reporting process.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Nexia

Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd  
Melbourne

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of October 2023

Chapman Wan  
Director





1300 381 581  
support@childhood.org.au

[childhood.org.au](http://childhood.org.au)

