




2021 - 2022 ANNUAL REPORT





Child Australia acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land. We pay respects to Elders past and present for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation.

ABN: 61 986 879 146

* Child Australia follows the Australian Privacy Principles and respects the privacy of the children and families we work with. As a result, names or referring images used within this report may have been changed.

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Message from the Chairperson and the CEO

With continued pandemic disruptions and ensuing workforce crisis, the 2021-22 year was filled with significant challenges for the Education and Care sector across the country. While many services were forced to close due to the impacts of COVID, Child Australia successfully navigated the storm with minimal impact to children and their families.

Our exceptional teams worked diligently to ensure continuity of education and care services for children and families across our various settings in WA and the NT. While our staff were challenged on many levels from continued illness and staff shortages, their commitment was unwavering and for this we express sincere gratitude to each individual. Our people are incredibly passionate professionals that embody a selfless culture, delivering on our mission and championing our values every day.

Together with our teams, our senior leaders, and deeply committed Board Members, we're proud to deliver yet another solid year at Child Australia. The past financial year has seen several key initiatives from our Strategic Plan embedded with a clear focus on strengthening and supporting our people, amplifying our impact, and commencing our organisation's digital transformation. Following an extensive staff consultation process, several key strategic initiatives were implemented throughout the year including a clear focus on developing and promoting emerging leaders with formal career development pathways. With above award wages, the staff consultation process highlighted that our people were seeking opportunity to prioritise a healthy work life balance amid challenging times, and subsequently the organisation researched and implemented a flexible 9 day fortnight roster with many staff enjoying this opportunity.

Aligned to our mission of developing professionals within the sector, an exciting new element was added to our BHP funded workforce development initiative 'Thriving Futures'. The project is focused on addressing educator shortages in the regions and the subsequent limited access to high quality education and care for children. It includes the provision of scholarships, mentoring, alternative learning and career pathways, and places a firm spotlight on empowering educators in their critical role of supporting children in their most vulnerable years. Building on the success of this project throughout the year, we welcomed an expansion of the Thriving Futures project with a new Educator Recognition Program that provides educators with a wage supplement linked to their continued professional development pathways. Designed to be a catalyst for setting a new benchmark in professional recognition, this important partnership between Child Australia and BHP acknowledges the critical work of educators and highlights the importance of the sector as a core enabler to activate workforce across every other industry.

Throughout the financial year we welcomed new Board Member Mark Fitzpatrick, CEO of Telethon Speech and Hearing. Mark brings a wealth of knowledge to Child Australia with extensive leadership and board related experience. We also farewelled Board Members Nancy Jeffrey from the NT working for the Healing Foundation, WA based Rachel Beard Deputy Director of Health and Disability Services Complaints Office, and Helen Creed who served on our Board for an impressive 6 years. To each of these individuals we say "Thank-You"... your contribution, dedication and support has been instrumental in successfully steering our organisation.

With significant growth in the organisation's financial position this year, the Board and Senior Leaders were able to ensure a sustainable and robust foundation from which to develop several key initiatives supporting our children, families, and staff teams. Over the next 12 months we look forward to continuing to implement these initiatives and extending on our organisation's mission driven activities.

Finally, we thank our funders, strategic partners, collaborators, and friends of Child Australia. From our long standing relationships to the new, your support helps drive the core purpose of our organisation. Together we have helped to shape the trajectory of many children's lives, and so we sincerely thank-you for walking alongside us in this journey. We look forward to working with you all in the coming year as we embark on many new exciting initiatives.



Elaine Pavlos, Chairperson



Tina Holtom, Chief Executive Officer



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

A community where children grow, thrive and reach their potential.

Mission

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development by advocating for and developing the community of professionals working for them.

Values

- **Integrity**
We are honest, trustworthy and accountable. We take responsibility for our actions.
- **Respect**
We treat each person as we expect to be treated. We value diversity.
- **Collaboration**
We work together on common goals and look for opportunities to work collaboratively and in partnership with others. We appreciate the value of multiple perspectives and diverse expertise.
- **Innovation**
We look for the best solution. We think outside the box and challenge ourselves to do things differently.
- **Recognition**
We acknowledge and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our staff.
- **Commitment**
We follow through on decisions and promises – we do what we say.

Who We Are

Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia (Child Australia) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving outcomes for children.

With humble beginnings in 1987 (known then as the Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs or RUCSN) with an original objective to include children with disabilities into child care services, we have grown significantly and now offer a wide range of programs and services to improve outcomes for all children.

Our practice is guided by evidence-based research and provides innovative professional development and support to the sector. We aim to facilitate the development of nurturing and stimulating early childhood learning environments and support families in helping their children thrive.

Through professional education, the provision of early childhood services, community and family supports, and sector advocacy, we actively pursue opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders across Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Our programs and services span metropolitan, regional and remote locations and include:

- Early Learning Centre's
- Out of School Hours Care
- Bagot Community Program
- West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service
- HIPPY Geraldton and Hedland
- Community Support
- ECEC Sector Conferences and Awards
- Professional Practice Training and Support



Reconciliation Action Plan

Child Australia is committed to establishing a culturally aware and inclusive workplace. Our vision for reconciliation is a society built on mutual respect, that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners, Custodians and First Peoples of this nation.

Child Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) will enable our contribution towards a more equitable, just, and reconciled Australia. We understand that to build a diverse and inclusive work culture that respectfully works in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and peoples, it is important we have an awareness of our shared history and acknowledge the truths of our nation.

We believe that creating a sense of belonging for

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people starts with robust Cultural Awareness for all employees.

We aim to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in all our programs throughout WA and the NT. This means a connected community rich in culturally safe and inclusive environments for all stakeholders, equal care and education opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children and communities accessing our programs.

In addition, we recognise the significance of addressing the impacts of colonisation and how it affects the children, families and communities participating in our programs. We aim to build upon it, knowing that it brings value to our people, our clients, and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We work closely with Jolleen Hicks a Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Aboriginal woman, founder of Aboriginal Insights, to provide relevant Cultural Awareness, Understanding Reconciliation education to our workplace. Growth during our reconciliation journey has included:

- people feeling confident to challenge bias or stereotypes they see/hear;
- teams clearly identifying what they do and what they want to achieve through their own RAP;
- individuals unpacking their own personal bias and identifying gaps in their knowledge and seeking ways to fill them;
- seeking the truth and speaking the truth acknowledging that reconciliation is more than a word, it takes action;
- agreeing to creating culturally safe workplaces.

"When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish, they will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country."
- Uluru Statement of the Heart

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

We are dedicated to promoting, supporting and enhancing the quality of life and positive developmental outcomes of all children and families. In particular, those who are vulnerable and at risk, living with disability and those from Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our areas of focus:



Sector Development

We will support and develop the community of professionals working with children.



Quality Services

We will deliver the highest quality programs and services that improve outcomes for children, families, communities and the professionals working with them.



Advocacy and Leadership

We will actively promote the needs and rights of children, their families and the professionals working with them.

Exceptional People

We will be an employer of choice and empower our people with the skills, expertise and resources to deliver high-quality services in support of our mission.

Sustainability

We will be operationally effective and financially strong with the resources to support quality and growth.

A growing space in Belmont, Western Australia

Over the past 12 months the Child Australia head office team in Belmont have been undergoing a period of development and transformation. The growth supports our objectives to operate a sustainable business, capable of providing exceptional support to its employees in order to deliver quality services.

With a total of six new roles being filled, our office on Belgravia Street in Belmont had reached capacity. The mammoth task of moving during a COVID-19 lockdown began in March 2022 and included over 80 packing crates, IT technology and furniture being moved to the new office on Great Eastern Highway.

The team remained fully operational during the move, continuing to provide support to centre's and external clients, and settled in quickly to new training rooms, state-of-the-art technology and a lovely fresh view.



Our Early Learning Services

This past year has required our Educator staff teams to continue to demonstrate a level of professionalism that we are proud of at Child Australia. Our Educator staff teams have continued to demonstrate a commitment to ensuring children and families have access to Quality Education and Care.

Our ELC Directors and our OSHC Supervisors displayed effective leadership to ensure our staff teams were well-informed and supported as we continued to navigate through the pandemic. Our staff teams continued to implement quality practices and pedagogy to ensure every child enrolled at a Child Australia service received positive opportunities to develop and thrive.

All our services continue to provide a fun and safe environment for children to socialise and engage in activities that are challenging, developing lifelong skills and knowledge.

Our partnerships with schools are valued and each year provides new and exciting opportunities to work together to ensure children are supported to be successful in their everyday learning.



Partnerships in the Community

Our Early Learning Services and the people working within them play integral roles in their communities. By partnering with surrounding schools, businesses and other not-for-profit organisations, we can better utilise shared resources in order to deliver the best outcomes for children in our care.

At Anula OSHC, in addition to using the refurbished shared assembly area for activities, partnerships with Anula Primary School have strengthened, and the successful recruitment of some teaching staff from the school allows the service to have an effective collaborative platform. Children in the primary school's ESL English class are also supported to enroll in the OSHC, where their specific language needs are met in the service. We have seen children that have been enrolled since the start of the year come leaps and bounds and now have conversations in English with their peers, our Educators and families.

Partnerships between Lockridge Campus and Lockridge Primary School are also growing with a transition to school program. In Term 4 the children from both Kindy rooms interchange



between learning spaces to become familiar with the environment and start forming relationships with older children. Lockridge Campus also attends KindiLink with some Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander children to prepare them to transition to school the following year.

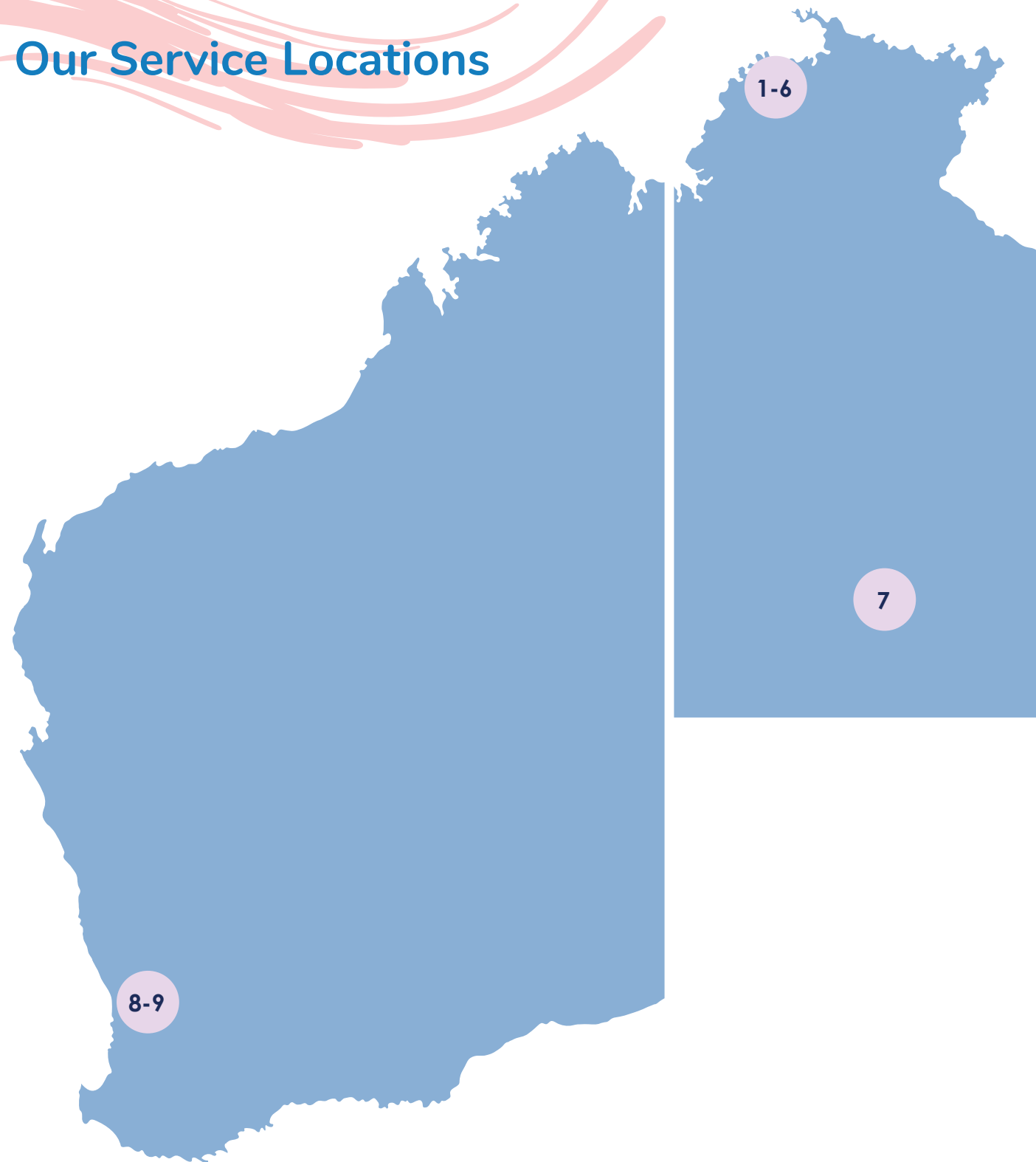
Interactions with other community groups, whether as incursions or excursions, are always a highlight for the children. The Fink Desert Race rolled into town and stopped by Larapinta ELC to show the children this year's cars. Bagot OSHC met again with the Gold Coast Suns as part of an ongoing relationship between AFL Northern Territory, Bagot Aboriginal Community, Gold Coast Suns and Child Australia's Bagot Community programs, which focuses on engaging children in sports and healthy lifestyles.

Bagot OSHC also began a collaborative partnership with Children's University Australasia in April 2022. The focus has been to support children's learning in out-of-school opportunities by rewarding them for taking their learning into their own hands to increase the likelihood of educational achievement. A highlight of this partnership was an excursion to Northern Territory Library to explore the exhibition "A Territory Story".

In Darwin, our Nightcliff Campus have been giving back to the community in a different way, starting the "No Meals Left Behind" initiative with Sunset Soup Kitchen. The service has been saving leftover meals to be distributed to members of the community who need extra support.



Our Service Locations



Early Learning Centre (ELC)

- 1 Farrar ELC*
- 2 Palmerston ELC
- 7 Larapinta ELC*
- 9 Harrisdale ELC

Campus (combined ELC and OSHC)

- 3 Nightcliff Campus**
- 8 Lockridge Campus*

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

- 4 Anula OSHC
- 5 Bagot OSHC
- 6 Wanguri OSHC

*Centres rated
Exceeding NQS
**Nightcliff ELC rated
Exceeding NQS



Children in our care



392 children
enrolled in Outside
School Hours Care



501 children
enrolled in Early
Learning Centres

Feedback from our Families

"I just wanted to let you know the amazing work your staff do. This week alone Selina has ensured Archyer has been well looked after and kept me really informed with his medications; even been contacting me before going home to personally give me an update. This communication has been amazing and we feel so welcome every time we come in to the centre. Every single staff member knows Archyer and happily takes him in the morning, and he comes home so happy. So thank you to you and your amazing team for making our time feel so special."
- Parent at Palmerston ELC

"Our family have been with Farrar Early Learning for four years and loved every moment of it. The whole centre feels like a family community, always welcoming and approachable. If I ever have any concerns or queries, all of the Educators are onto the issue immediately without hesitation. I feel comfortable in knowing that my kids are happy, loved and safe there and looked after by the Educators as if they are their own children. The level of care and the Educators' love of their job is outstanding."
- Parent at Farrar ELC

"A big thank you for our amazing, kind and very patient Educators. Your efforts to make our kids feel welcome, supported and engaged is really appreciated. You play a big part in our children's lives and they love you very much."
- Parent at Nightcliff Campus



"To all the Educators and staff at Child Australia Lockridge - you are all the reason I chose to bring my child back to the centre; because most of you looked after his older sibling so well and really cared for our whole family. The work you do is tireless, the passion and dedication you all show is incredible and the atmosphere you create is warm, inviting, homely and joyous and I wouldn't want anyone else looking after my babies! We see you all as our extended family so please know we see you; we love you and thank you for everything you do and all that goes on behind the scenes. Keep up the astounding work, you all rock!"
- Parent at Lockridge ELC

Campus (combined ELC and OSHC) Lockridge Campus

Harrisdale Early Learning Centre and our Lockridge Campus in WA have maintained high utilisation rates throughout the year. The lifting of COVID-19 restrictions brought a comfortable flexibility back to the teams and enabled centres to return to the community, enjoying local excursions to parks and libraries. These learning opportunities open the door for children to build their sense of belonging in the world around them, as community members and as a protector of the natural environment.

It also meant a new initiative at our Lockridge campus could provide the opportunity for families to taste the delicious menus being enjoyed by the children, as well as take a night off from preparing dinner. "Dinner on Us" saw food coordinator Ayu sharing extra meals from the centre with

Early Learning Centre (ELC) Harrisdale ELC

five different families every fortnight. The 10wk program included vegetarian and gluten-free options and families loved being able to share what their children enjoy eating.

The priority for all Child Australia centres has been to continue to provide a safe, stable environment for families and their children. Continuing to build strong relationships with families by prioritising each child's individual needs has enabled children to transition through their own learning journeys at their own pace.

At Harrisdale, Centre Director Shonelle reflected on one of their new additions - Charles. "Charles' family had visited numerous centres to find the perfect fit," said Shonelle. "Their son had never been in a daycare setting before, so it was a new experience for

everyone. On Charles' first day at the service, he was extremely upset and naturally one of his favourite things was to be in the arms of someone consistently."

"In the first weeks, Charles was consistently upset at drop off and needed 1:1 support to help Charles to settle and provide wrap-around comfort. Our staff learned all about Charles' likes/dislikes, comforts, family interests and culture from his parents and included this information in the curriculum to provide an environment where Charles would have some familiarity and find comfort."

"Fast forward a couple of months and Charles began to develop a sense of belonging and we got to see his amazing personality! Charles is usually one of the first to greet anyone as they arrive and always has such a BIG smile on his face."

A familiar face begins a new role in WA

To focus on our continued commitment toward best practice, staff development and to ensure we deliver the highest possible quality of care for the children in our various settings, we announced a new role - Manager of Practice Improvement in WA.

It was a pleasure to fill the roll internally - Casey had been a Director at both our Lockridge and Harrisdale centres, so her knowledge and experience is second to none! and is looking forward to being able to spend more time with both teams.

"Once you have been at the [early learning centres]... every time you come back it just feels like coming home," said Casey.

Kindness in the community

Our Lockridge centre strives to support every child and family at the centre and their local community. In April 2022 we were privileged to invite refugee families from Ukraine to our Early Learning Centre in Lockridge to enjoy a day of song, dance, art and story time.

The Child Australia community came together with the Ukrainian Association of WA and donated items to help families transition into their new homes.

"Our new friends have arrived with nothing but a suitcase and some horrible memories," said Lockridge Educator Simone (Mona) Litwin. "We want to welcome them warmly and start connecting them with the surrounding community."



Lockridge Assistant Director Amanda said, "we are delighted to have the opportunity for the centre to be involved in such a meaningful



and important event in these families' lives. We know it is only a small humble difference that we can make but we are pleased to do so. Children are the next generation and kindness and understanding don't have an age but will stick for a lifetime".

CEO Tina Holtom stated, 'we can't even begin to imagine the atrocities suffered by millions of children, but as we welcome these families to our campus, we hope that the children will begin to experience kindness, gentleness, laughter and joy. We hope that their new home brings them safety, belonging, comfort, and peace in their hearts.'

The event was an opportunity to share some of our Australian culture but also for our children to learn a little bit more about Ukraine. The children took part in Ukrainian dancing workshops, tried on traditional Ukrainian clothing and shared some arts and crafts to make the Ukrainian flag.



NORTHERN TERRITORY

**Campus
(combined ELC and OSHC)**
Nightcliff Campus

Early Learning Centre (ELC)
Farrar ELC
Palmerston ELC
Larapinta ELC

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)
Anula OSHC
Bagot OSHC
Wanguri OSHC

Our seven Early Learning Services in the NT provide inspirational, nurturing learning environments for children. These safe spaces encourage children to become confident in their own abilities, and support each child's growth and development whilst working with families and the community.

With guidance and support from families, children like 8yr old Aaron* can come leaps and bounds in social settings. Aaron is being cared for by his extended family, who identified that he struggles with making friends and understanding and expressing his emotions. He started attending Wanguri OSHC to build his social and emotional needs, as well as understand what boundaries are within a group setting. Educators worked closely with his family and supported Aaron to understand how to make friends and express himself so that he can maintain healthy friendships. These progressions have also supported him to understand and manage his emotions positively.

Special events are frequently marked by each centre, with teams taking feedback from families on board to celebrate different national and cultural occasions - whether it's a smoking ceremony with visits from the Arrernte people at Larapinta ELC for NAIDOC Week or Jeans for Genes Day and Crazy Hair Day at Farrar ELC, each centre is unique.

Being a part of such tight-knit communities enables our teams to continue to form strong relationships with families, investing in each child's early learning journey as they continue into their school years.



Inclusive learning in the Territory

Palmerston ELC supports a program run by the Palmerston Child and Family centre for mums aged 25 and under - "Young mums, strong mums".

Alice* brings her twin boys Joel* and Joshua* to Palmerston ELC, where Educators work closely with the children to support their developmental delays. When they started, the brothers were mostly non-verbal and required specialised techniques and communication strategies such as basic sign language and pictures for communication. Through Government support and additional funding, Palmerston ELC was able to employ an Inclusion Support Educator.

In January 2022, the Educator began working closely with Joel and Joshua, and incorporated Alice and a speech therapist into their individual learning programs. By developing personalised programs for each boy with activities that focus on their own interests, the brothers grew to be less codependent, allowing other children to

interact with them and build their social skills and confidence.

Not only has their social confidence grown but their verbal communication has improved as well. Their vocabulary has increased to enable them to engage in conversation and as a result, their personalities have really begun to show. Both Joel and Joshua are such happy, cheeky boys and we can't wait to see what lies in store for them this year.



Setting a lasting example

Bagot OSHC provides children with the opportunity to strengthen their life skills within secure and culturally safe environments. Darnell is one of the older children and is growing as a leader both within our OSHC community and the broader Bagot Community environment.

With the OSHC team, Darnell has grown and matured, supporting staff with their understanding of service and community protocols, engaging in the operation of day-to-day programs, and participating in the decision-making processes associated with program development and service operations.

He has also shown leadership skills beyond his years with other OSHC children, leading group projects, sharing his cultural knowledge and supporting others to share theirs. Darnell created a map of the NT so that children could share their families country, connections, and their culture.

On top of all of this, Darnell has a keen interest in cooking and has been a role model to other children around kitchen and food safety.

As Darnell transitions into secondary education, the OSHC program will continue to be a safe environment for him to explore his self-identity, practice skills, and strengthen his social and emotional wellbeing.



Grants and Donations

We are grateful for the support we receive from the local communities in which we work that allow us to evolve our spaces as a place of connection and learning for our children and families.

Palmerston ELC received a grant from the **NT Government** to install a new shade sail and upgrade their sandpit in the outdoor play areas.



Bagot OSHC would like to thank and acknowledge Easter donations received from **Steeline GRP Darwin, NT Fastens** and **Halikos Group** - the gifts made the children's day!

Nightcliff ELC received multiple grants from the **NT Government** and **Darwin City Council** to fund upgrades to the centre's outdoor play spaces; including new shade cloth and dry creek bed to enhance play areas for children, timber decking and a rock garden for the courtyard area. The service kitchen garden also benefitted from the grant, with two new greenhouses, irrigation and paving being replaced.



"Looking at my community and seeing so many changes and better outcomes being made from having these programs has made me very proud to be a part of this community and these programs."

"Thank you for always being so welcoming and encouraging my children to participate and have a go when they are a bit shy or unsure of what to do. We love the different art and crafts that you do. We LOVE the photos that you print of us at playgroup, they go on the fridge and we look at them all the time. We have made some really nice friends and look forward to seeing them every week. It's nice to talk to other Mums too."

Our Community Programs

"We look forward to playgroup every week. There's always lots of fun things to do and my daughter especially likes the collating/ counting and art activities. We have learnt to pack extra clothes for the water play which is great for those hot summer days. We even made ice at home and froze some of our toys like you do!"

"When you mob turn up it gets the kids moving! They know they have to have a wash and be clean before they can come. It's cool to sit with the kids and do drawing and painting."

Bagot Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

Collective Impact

In the last year, the partnership between Child Australia and the Bagot Community Aboriginal Corporation (BCAC) has been going from strength to strength. We have been working together on building capacity and skills in understanding and having the knowledge of the day-to-day running of the 4 programs funded by the IAS, the financial components and the delivery of the services. BCAC also works determinedly alongside the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory and Community First Development to put in place further developments for the future.

Engagement and networking with the community has risen 100% with programs such as AMITY delivering Youth services and Auskick with a children's footy program. After consultation with community members, the Community Safety meetings are now being held under a shady tree in the community as opposed to in the Community Hall. The increased visibility to residents raised awareness and created a more welcoming environment, resulting in more people attending to be involved in the decisions of the safety of the community.

Families for School Attendance (FFSA)

The FFSA Program has remained consistent in the delivery of family support, school attendance and participation. We have continued our engagement with the Ludmilla School Principal and this year saw the start of a cultural group with school staff and community leaders so that families feel more welcome and able to share their culture.

To date approximately 85% of our 35 primary school students have a school attendance rate of 85% and above and we have a consistent group of children with a 100% attendance rate.

Discussions with the school about issues, better outcomes, and good news stories for the students has led to families engaging in sports day, book week, "Kids as Teachers" night, school concerts and circus night.

Mums and Bubs

This weekly playgroup for children aged 0-5 and their families aims to build parents' self-esteem, confidence and ability to support their children's development. As families connect with one another, it is also an opportunity to increase children's social, emotional and behavioural development.

We love seeing the changes in the children and their family members after being actively engaged in singing, reading, creating, and interacting positively with their children. The families have also enjoyed excursions to the beach and museum.

We have also welcomed some new services to coordinate some cultural activities as well as support with nutrition, healthy cooking and healthy babies.

- DanilaDilba Dietitian
- NTG Health Dietitian (Babies)
- Ludmilla pre-school FAFT cultural activities and healthy cooking for mums
- Bagot women's group



Walking Bus

Our Walking Bus continues to be a success factor in achieving better attendance outcomes for community children and continues to be very popular with the children and families.

When the morning begins, facilitators provide creams, brushes and face washes to freshen up the children in preparation for their day, starting them off feeling happy and positive. Facilitators then ensure children arrive at school early enough to eat breakfast and organise their uniforms and lunches for the day. The team also attends the school assemblies and events that follow after the drop-off at the school.



Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)

HIPPY is a two-year home based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children. It provides parents and carers with the confidence and tools to support their child's education and helps them create a home learning environment that improves their child's school readiness and the parent-child relationship.

We deliver HIPPY in Hedland and Geraldton and are committed to fostering a fun learning environment to promote a positive transition to school and are passionate about supporting and empowering families to be their child's first educators.

Over two years (the years before and after starting full-time school), HIPPY children work through weekly or fortnightly packs of play-

based, educational activities with their parents and family.

HIPPY helps parents lay the foundations for success at school by teaching their child literacy, numeracy and language skills as well as physical skills, so they develop a love of learning that lasts throughout their lives.

2022 was a year of combined learnings and engagement between HIPPY sites. In May, our coordinators attended the 2022 National Hippy Gathering on the Gold Coast, connecting 100 sites from across Australia. HIPPY Hedland also travelled to HIPPY Geraldton for joint Tutor Training. This was a great opportunity for tutors to learn about different sites and exchange ideas. Both sites also participated in Trauma-informed training presented by Child Australia.



**Children
Enrolled**

46 Geraldton

30 Hedland

HIPPY FACTS



**Families
Graduated**

25 Geraldton

12 Hedland

**Families Attended
Regular Meetings**

8 Geraldton

10 Hedland

20



Lisa* and her son Dylan* joined the HIPPY Geraldton program this year after being additionally engaged with other support services. As a single parent, Lisa wanted to make sure her son had the best opportunity to reach his full potential. The HIPPY mentors have been working in collaboration with Lisa to make sure the activities suit Dylan's interests and abilities, with plenty of practical strategies to support him along the way. With the support of the school, allied health services and HIPPY, Dylan's learning has made huge progress; he has become more verbal and is even writing his own name. Dylan has loved many of the HIPPY activities and Lisa is very proud of his achievements. The HIPPY Geraldton team endeavours to continue to support Lisa as her child's first teacher, including acknowledging all she is already doing with her son.

"HIPPY has been a big help for Nicole (my child). She started not interested in school and I didn't have any idea how to start teaching her. The HIPPY activities helped me to teach Nicole at home and she became more interested in school as she became more confident. The activities were in line with school curriculum, and we have had lots of positive feedback from her teachers. Her teacher has mentioned how well she is doing with reading this year. Nicole looks forward to getting her HIPPY packs each time and we have enjoyed doing HIPPY."



West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service (WPMCS)

Delivering a play-based learning program built around the Early Year's Learning Framework, WPMCS continues to be the only mobile service for young families in the West Pilbara region who are socially and geographically isolated with limited access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care programs.



Over the past year the service has reached over 107 children providing them with opportunities to explore, learn and problem solve using culturally appropriate resources and develop competent skills that will assist them to develop a greater readiness when transitioning into their formal years of education.

Highlights from the year include a collaboration with Foodbank WA to bring healthy eating and cooking activities to children and their families at our playgroups.

Royal Life Saving WA also supported our remote community children at their swimming lessons with supervision and assistance, purchased goggles and towels for everyone and provided healthy morning tea. The group then accepted an invitation to attend an On Country trip with community at a local water hole to promote water safety awareness and cultural significance.



Professional Practice Training and Support

We are committed to lifting quality education and care practices and enabling educators to receive supportive and engaging professional development through in-person and online learning opportunities so that they can meet the ever-changing needs of the sector and deliver the best possible early learning experiences to all children. All of our professional development and support activities continue to link theory and frameworks to practice, establishing sustainable learning and quality outcomes.

Our team of Professional Practice Consultants focus on building sector capacity to provide children with the support they need to thrive.



Building additional support during COVID-19

In early 2022 our Professional Practice Consultants were in regular contact with services and service leaders who continued to express their uncertainty around Government guidelines and other repeatedly changing factors. To support the sector, Child Australia developed a series of COVID-19 webinars.

There were four webinars in total, all aimed to alleviate some of the anxieties of the time. The first webinar was aimed at service leaders within the sector, the second webinar was aimed at families and the community, the third and fourth were for all Educators and sector leaders. We also heard from some services and service leaders who were navigating the changes very well and so invited them to speak to our live audience, which was very well received.

In addition to the webinars, our Consultants worked closely with the Thriving Futures centres and heard that many were feeling overwhelmed with the changing requirements of COVID-19 in terms of up-to-date documentation and knowing the best approach to take. Consultants took the time to meet with the services and run through current COVID-19 mitigation practices including current policies, action plans and strategies adopted by the service. They then developed individual content for the service by providing unique COVID-19 action plans that included a clear concise management plan, and a compilation of communication templates to be sent to families and staff. A step-by-step traffic light system was implemented to identify where the services would be sitting and the steps to take should the service move to an amber or red alert.

Seeing how helpful the work was and having the methods in place allowed our Consultants to offer this COVID-19 Management Package to other services outside of Thriving Futures - expanding the support available to the sector.





Online Learning Centre

10 new courses developed

8478 students enrolled

2929 new students

HIGHLIGHTS



70+ flights taken to deliver training



162 hours of professional development completed by Child Australia staff



228 hours of Consultancy and Mentoring with **27** different services



6 two day leadership workshops

Teaching sustainability regionally

After successfully rolling out workshops with Regional Early Education & Development Inc (REED), Child Australia was asked to facilitate a combined presentation and workshop at the second annual REED Educator Conference in January 2022. The theme of the conference was "Sustaining Little Futures"; Child Australia facilitated the workshops based on teaching sustainability within the Early Childhood Education and Care sector and OSHC.

Having built a strong rapport with many of the Educators from REED, Amanda and Connie were met with excited and familiar faces. The speakers due to talk prior to Child Australia, were not able to attend on the day and minutes before their presentation was due to start, Amanda and Connie were approached to see if they would be happy to extend their presentation to help fill the time gaps. This worked beautifully and allowed more time for the practical components of the workshop.

Educators were met with their tables being filled with a range of recycled products, bits and bobs and children's literature on display to support the workshop. Amanda and Connie explored concepts such as environmental responsibility, sustainable practices within an early childhood setting, reflecting upon the requirements of the NQF as well as supporting Educators to generate a range of activities, resource list and plan to help support their sustainability journey within their services.

One of the key activities within the workshop was for teams to use some or all the resources on their tables to come up with an inquiry-based project to conduct within their service. This project had specific requirements that ensured reflection upon how the service would use this activity to include service families and community, as well as support children within their sustainability learning. The tables were then requested to present their project idea to everyone at the conference, with a prize being supplied by REED to be presented to the team(s) they felt covered all requirements. It was incredible to see the confidence lift of all those within the room, especially of those who were nominated to present their project to conference participants.

The conference participation was a huge success with Child Australia being invited to present again in 2023.

Circle of Security with our registered facilitator

Kaya!

I'm Connie and have been working in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector for the past 30yrs. I have been with Child Australia since 2018 and am very appreciative of the opportunities I have had to build such amazing relationships as a mentor and consultant.

I have always had a passion for working with children; have a Master of Infant Mental Health and I specialise in early childhood trauma, positive interactions and Circle of Security.



Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) is an internationally recognised relationship program and is delivered by registered facilitators such as myself. The program is designed to increase and build awareness of the importance of attachment for children with their educators.

The program is based on decades of attachment research and offers a new way of understanding, responding to and managing difficult behaviours rooted in how safe or secure a child feels. It focuses on behaviours as the communication of a need and a need within a relationship, with the understanding that people of all ages have attachment needs. As caregivers, we want to do our best to develop secure relationships by supporting children to organise their emotions with the knowledge that we are there to comfort, protect and understand their needs at the end of their daily adventures.

When put into the context of relationships with Educators, COSP helps build an understanding of how important relationships in the lives of children, in addition to parents, contribute to a child's overall wellbeing and future success.

This training program runs over five 2hr long sessions. It's something I have worked on with numerous services, including our own Child Australia centres.

When completing the training at Nido Belmont, the team at Nido engaged with the material at a deep level, sharing personal stories of realisation, change and growth. During each session, the Educators openly shared their learning journey and the way it positively impacted their relationships with children and the way in which they view children's needs.

One Educator spoke of a child whom nobody in the room was successful at building a relationship with until they started learning about COSP. COSP assisted them to tune into the child's needs, stop blaming the child for his behaviour and notice their own responses to him. In turn, the child learnt to trust the Educators and lean into them for support.

Babies start to explore their world from their safe place, you are their safe place.

When your baby is ready to go out and explore, they need to have someone there to share the joy and wonder of discovering their world.

When babies come back from exploring, they need to feel safe and secure.



Thriving Futures was established in July 2020 in response to the shortage of available places and high staff turnover within Early Childhood Education and Care centres in Newman and Port Hedland; the program then expanded Roxby Downs in South Australia.

A key cause of the placement shortages and high staff turnover is the lack of ongoing workforce development initiatives within the Early Childhood Education and Care sector – something that Child Australia recognises is a complex issue, particularly in the regions. Thriving Futures works to improve outcomes for children by recruiting, training and retaining a quality, sustainable Early Childhood Education and Care workforce and strengthening professional practices so that children have access to high quality early learning.

Funded by BHP, Thriving Futures works collaboratively with the participating Early Learning Centres and stakeholders such as local schools and job provider networks to successfully deliver the program

Thriving Futures is focused on:

- Recruitment support – providing new opportunities for children to be engaged in high-quality early learning.



- Building the capacity of the sector by supporting Educators and leaders to participate in high-quality professional development and mentoring.
- Supporting the participating Early Learning Centres to embed sustainable practices that contribute to workforce stability, reduce the impact of staff turnover and ensure operational efficiencies.
- Supporting the local workforce to obtain skills and qualifications for a career pathway in early learning.
- Promoting the Early Childhood Education and Care sector as an attractive, purposeful career choice.

In 2021, we found a need to fast-track the Educator's qualification process through guided learning opportunities. As such, the "Academy" was developed – a free pre employment training program implemented within Newman and Port Hedland. The Academy provides financial incentives for unqualified students to work alongside Thriving Futures consultants to upskill, leading to work within the participating Early Learning Centres. Upon successful completion of the Academy, a students' learning is recognised, and they become Thriving Futures candidates - completing their final qualification in a shorter amount of time.

New Educator Recognition Program (ERP) announced

In April 2022, BHP and Child Australia announced a pilot program to complement the Thriving Futures program in the Pilbara. BHP's commitment to the project totals \$2.5million over a 3-year period, giving Early Childhood Education and Care professionals access to generous wage subsidies, professional development, scholarship opportunities, supported mentoring, career pathways and more. The ERP aims to address the realities and requirements of the Educator role, while ensuring professionals are adequately compensated and supported toward a journey of continuous improvement and upskilling.

CEO of Child Australia, Tina Holtom stated, "More than a third of candidates applying to be part of the Thriving Futures program identified the cost of living in the region as a significant barrier to considering the Education and Care sector as a career choice. It was important to address this while simultaneously recognising the critical importance of sector professionals more broadly."

"These professionals make a real difference in the lives of not only children, but their families."



BHP Head of Corporate Affairs WA Meath Hammond said, "It is vital we support our Educators – we know that by doing so, it has positive flow-on effects for all working families in our communities. These professionals make a real difference in the lives of not only children, but their families. We are looking forward to continuing our partnership with Child Australia for the benefit of the entire Pilbara community."

"We hope that by building these foundations, we will see broader Government and corporate investment enabling expansion of the Educator Recognition Program into other regional or metropolitan locations. Ultimately, we hope to see a positive shift for all Educators," said Tina Holtom.



Opening doors in the Pilbara

Living with her family in Newman since childhood, Kelly is a long term local to the town. After leaving school, Kelly spent a time working in the hospitality industry, but soon decided she was ready for a change.

With a natural affinity for children, and having enjoyed looking after children her whole life, a career in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector seemed like the obvious choice.

Kelly started in the Thriving Futures Academy program by attending the series of free Early Childhood Education and Care workshops held in Newman.



"I just wasn't interested in hospitality, and I wanted to do something with my life."

"I met Trina (Thriving Futures Consultant) at the workshops, which were really helpful. I learned a lot of things about early childhood and childcare that I wouldn't have normally".

After attending the workshops, Kelly started seeking employment in one of Newman's Early Learning Centres.

"Thriving Futures contacted both of the Newman Early

Learning Centres for me, and the YMCA offered me an interview. I accepted the role of a casual Early Childhood Educator, and I started a few months ago. The Y has been fantastic, they've been really helpful and taught me lots already. The kids are wonderful and being in a small town, I know a lot of them anyway!"

Kelly's goals for her future are to continue working towards her Certificate 3 and to keep growing in her role as an Educator in Newman with mentorship and guidance from Thriving Futures.

Little People, Big Dreams Conference

Over 400 delegates were inspired at the 2021 Little People, Big Dreams Conference in Darwin. With three keynote presentations by Catharine Hydon, Louise Dorrat and Maggie Dent - Educators, Directors and Policy Makers were able to come together to network and learn after a challenging year.

Delegates were able to meet with industry leaders and service providers at The Market Place to find out all about the latest technology and were informed on current best practices on a range of topics during the 15 concurrent presentations.

The Conference is hosted by Child Australia with support from the Northern Territory Government.



"Fantastic conference - great balance of theory and practical information."



"Loved attending with other people from their different settings and backgrounds."



THRIVING FUTURES FACTS



6
Early Learning
Centres involved



132
hours of
consultancy



27
candidates



64
hours of professional
development workshops



64
relationships established
with organisations

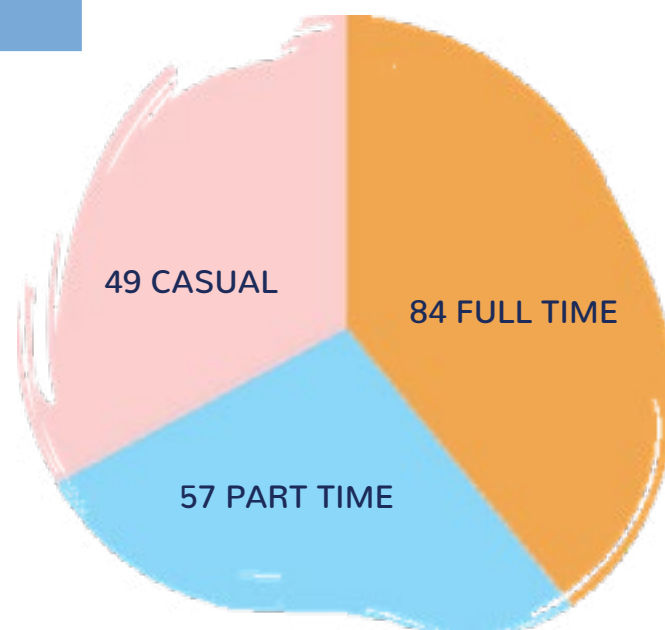
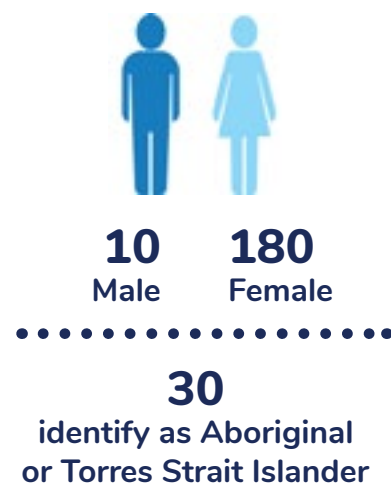
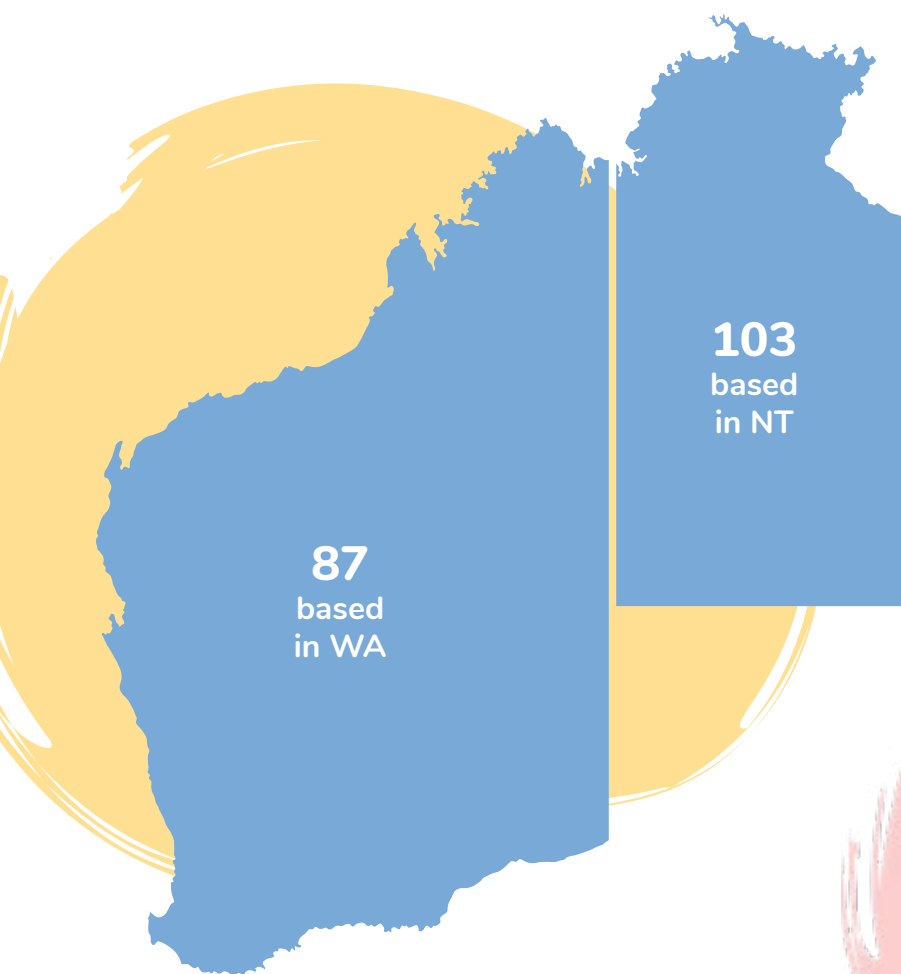


177
hours of mentoring



Our People

190 Employees



45
Corporate and
Community
Services
employees



145
Early Learning
Services employees



Our Executive Team



Tina Holtom
Chief Executive Officer

Tina joined Child Australia in 2014 as Executive Manager and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2017. With an extensive background in the Education and Child Development sectors, she is a strategic leader dedicated to innovation, continuous improvement and growth. Tina brings in-depth expertise to Child Australia's service delivery model and has consulted widely on best practice models throughout the Education and Care sector, in Schools, and various agencies. Tina has also worked extensively with children and their families in various therapy settings and has held senior business management roles, teaching, and lecturing positions. Tina is a ferocious advocate for the education and well-being of children of all ages, and strives to nurture and support the parent-child relationship.



Sara Hinchley
Executive Director, Programs & Services

Sara joined Child Australia in 2006 with an extensive background in the Education and Care Sector.

In her role, she is responsible for Executive Management oversight of all Child Australia Programs and Services located throughout Western Australia and the Northern Territory. She has extensive experience working across various roles within the Early Childhood Sector including overseas experience.



Maria Miller,
Executive Director, Corporate Services

Maria is a highly experienced finance manager with expertise in the not-for-profit and childcare sectors. In her role, she is responsible for providing oversight and direction on all areas of financial management. She is a Certified Practicing Accountant and a strategic thinker with a 'big picture' focus who can question the status quo, generate new ideas and always strives to achieve best practice. Maria has been with Child Australia since 2017 and is passionate about contributing towards improving outcomes for children.

Our Board



**Elaine Pavlos,
Chairperson**

Elaine is a Registered Nurse and Midwife with a wealth of experience working in senior executive and academic positions within the Western Australian Healthcare sector. She is currently a sitting member at the State Administrative Tribunal, a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Member of the College of Nursing Australia.



**Julia Millar,
Vice Chairperson**

Julia practices in the areas of competition and commercial litigation for Clayton Utz. She acts for a number of large Australian and overseas clients in complex disputes. She has over 10 years of experience in all facets of litigation and has a specific focus on co-ordinating applications across international jurisdictions.



Partha Nag

Partha joined the Board in 2011 and is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Strategic Business Alliance. He has extensive experience in accounting, finance, IT, corporate strategy, governance and risk management.



Steph Shorter

Steph has a diverse range of experience in early childhood development, youth justice, out of home care, mental health, Indigenous disadvantage and affordable housing. She previously managed a fund with the Department of Communities to provide more housing options for Aboriginal families supporting them to achieve social and economic independence.



Nick Warth

Nick is a Director at KPMG and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. He has over 15 years' experience providing tax advice to multinational companies and assisting in determining and defending the pricing of their cross border.



Mark Fitzpatrick

Mark Fitzpatrick has been the Chief Executive Officer of Telethon Speech and Hearing since February 2017. Prior to this role, Mark was the CEO of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Western Australia for five years. After graduating from Curtin University with a Commerce degree, Mark has worked in a variety of roles in a range of not-for-profit, education, and government organisations.

Child Australia continues to go from strength to strength with operating results over the 2021-22 financial year ending with a consolidated profit of \$890k for 2022. The organisation's revenue streams were derived from State, Territory and Federal Government funded programs and fee-for-service in the provision of a range of services within the early to middle childhood sector.

While maintaining a firm focus on financial stability in uncertain times, Child Australia has placed a spotlight on ensuring the wellbeing of our workforce. We have remained agile and responsive to shifting landscapes and have navigated new challenges amid a global workforce shortage crisis.

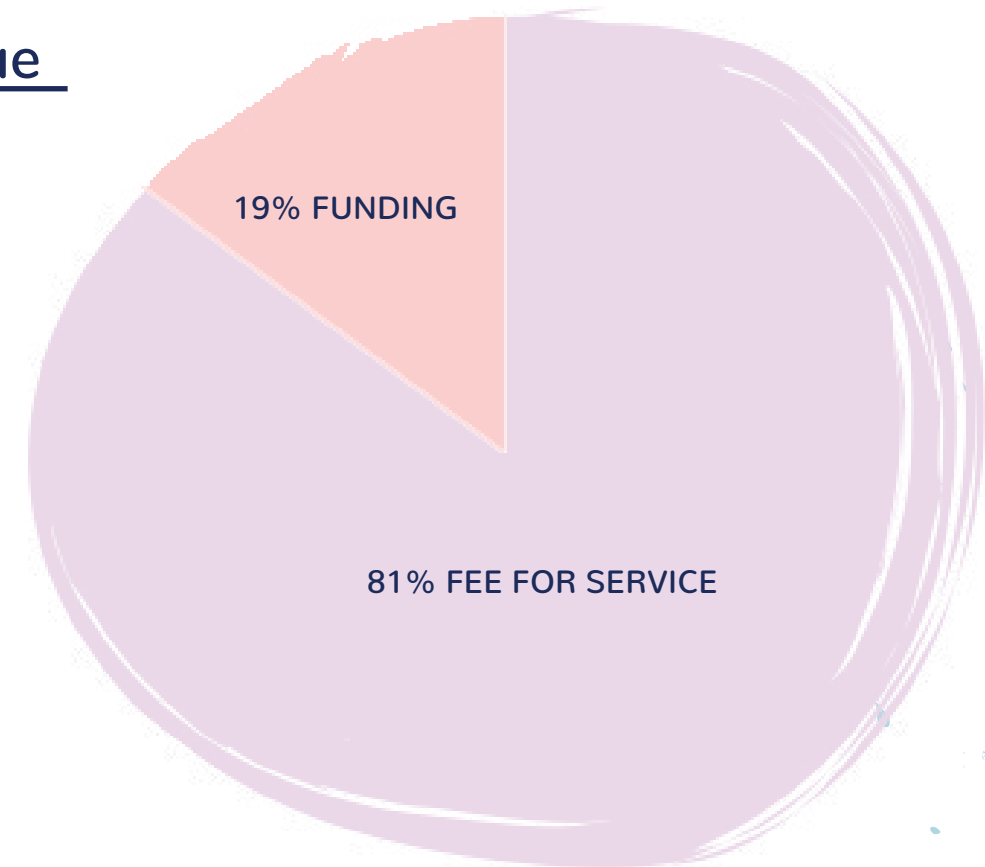
Staffing costs remain the largest expenditure item and accounts for almost 70% of the organisation's total expenditure. The focus on ensuring a high-quality workforce is paramount to our organisation's success and evidenced by our continued commitment to employee well-being, above-award wages, staff recognition programs and ongoing professional development opportunities across the organisation.

Looking toward 2023, the executive team will continue to maintain a strong emphasis on investment in strategic initiatives that support our exceptional people and our continuous improvement journey.

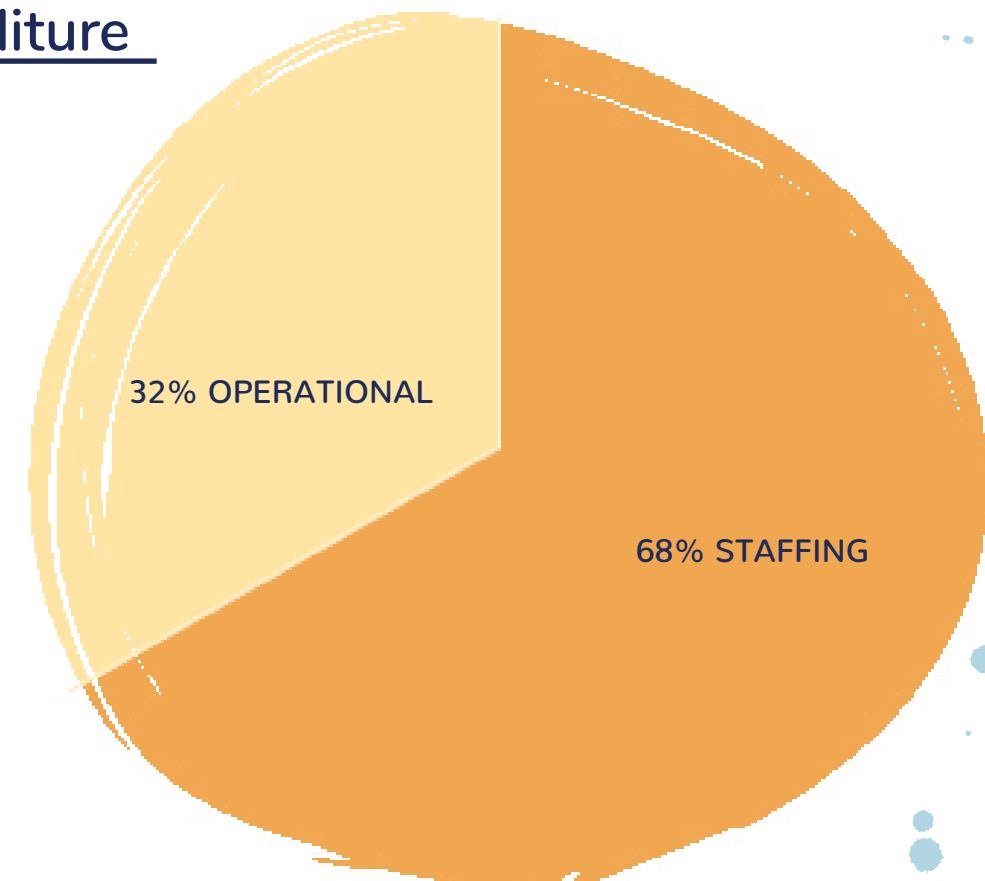
Another exciting year lies ahead for the organisation as we look to growth opportunities with the goal to broaden our revenue streams and asset base to deliver on our strategic initiatives. Overall Child Australia's financial position is a solid foundation to cope with a changing economic backdrop and is well positioned for mission-driven opportunities

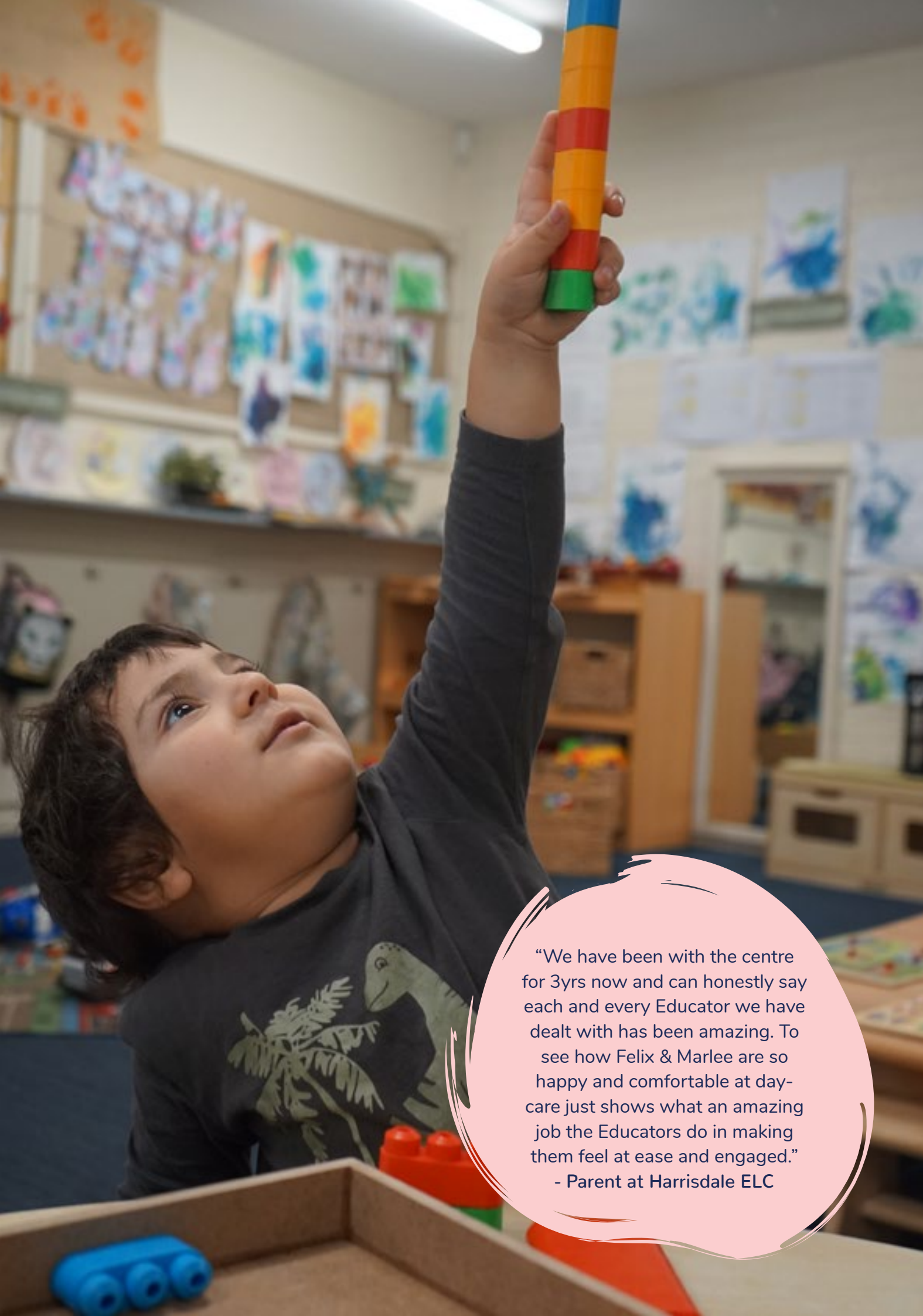


Revenue



Expenditure





"We have been with the centre for 3yrs now and can honestly say each and every Educator we have dealt with has been amazing. To see how Felix & Marlee are so happy and comfortable at day-care just shows what an amazing job the Educators do in making them feel at ease and engaged."
- Parent at Harrisdale ELC

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS



Department of
Education



Australian Government



Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities

BHP



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Curtin University

reed

Regional Early Education
and Development Inc



Brotherhood
of St Laurence

the **Y**



Playgroup
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