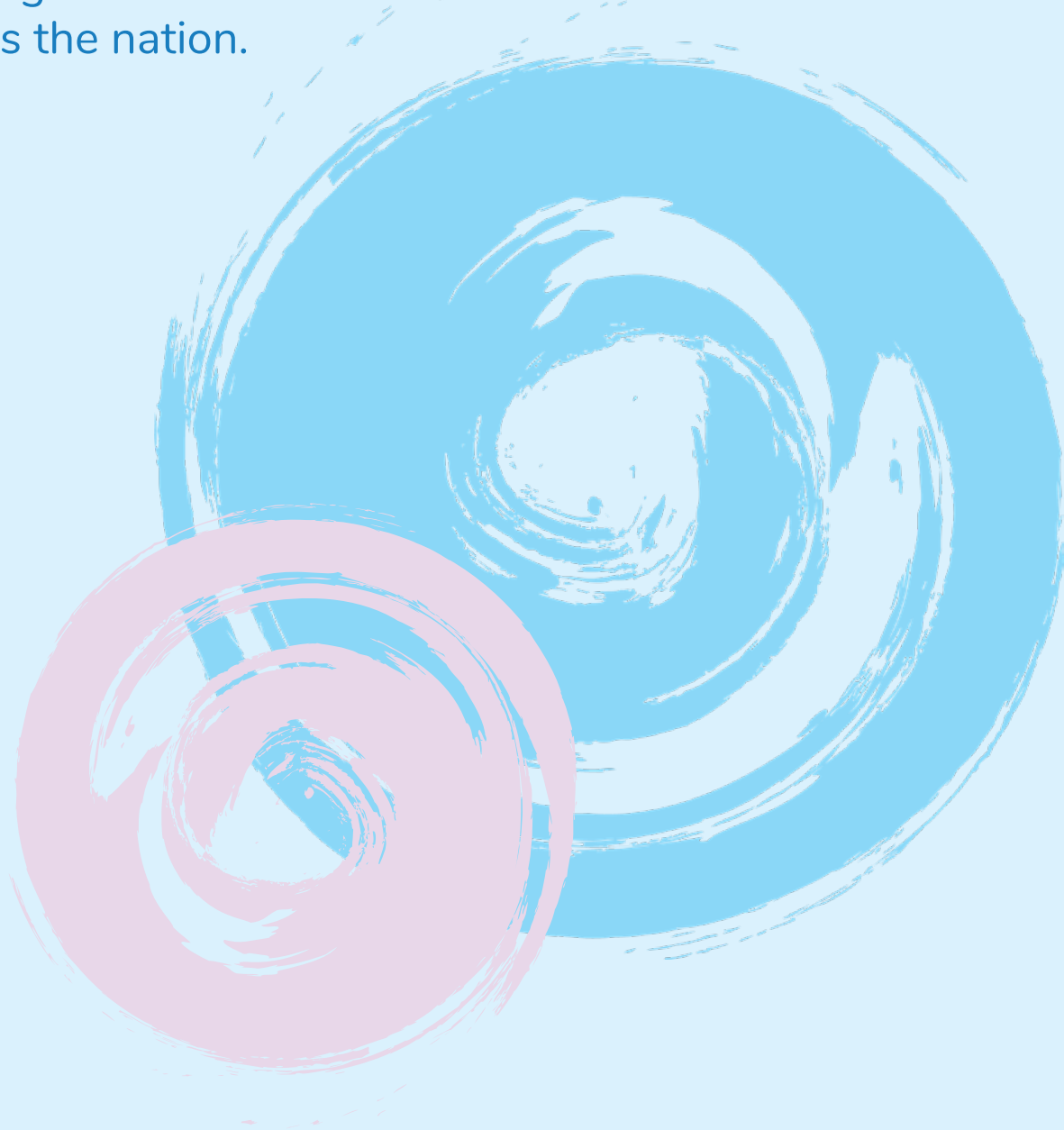


# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT





Child Australia acknowledges 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

In the face of persistent challenges of the past year, our exceptional teams stood resolute, ensuring the uninterrupted delivery of education and care services to the children and families we serve across Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Amidst a backdrop of persistent staff shortages, the unwavering dedication of our staff continued to shine.

Together with our Board Members we extend our sincere gratitude to every individual in our organisation. It is the passion and dedication of our teams that lie at the heart of our mission, shaping our values daily. These dedicated professionals breathe life into our organisation's culture, embodying our mission and values in all that they do. Their tireless efforts are at the core of our success, ensuring that we can consistently deliver on our promises to children, families, sector practitioners, partners, and funders.

Collaborating closely with our teams, senior leaders and dedicated Board Members, we take great pride in yet another year of achievements at Child Australia. The past financial year marked the successful integration of several key initiatives from our Strategic Plan, all centred around our core goals of further supporting and empowering our staff, amplifying our impact, and transforming our operational efficiencies.

Throughout the year we successfully implemented a range of initiatives dedicated to nurturing emerging leaders through formal career development pathways. Additionally, we received an overwhelmingly positive response to a healthier work-life balance with strong proactive engagement in a flexible 9-day fortnight roster. This initiative has been warmly embraced by our staff with powerful feedback showing the immense benefits to our people.

This year saw significant progress with the formal endorsement of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) by Reconciliation Australia. The culmination of over 3 years of extensive engagement and listening, our RAP is testament to our genuine commitment to reconciliation and fostering trusted relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. Our Reflect RAP is designed as a framework to integrate reconciliation actions across all facets of our daily work, delivery, communications, policies, procedures and partnerships. We're incredibly proud that our First Nations staff feel represented and heard in our RAP and we look forward to building on this critical work.

Child Australia introduced our newest service, Wagaman Outside School Hours Care, on 1 January, 2023. The team at Wagaman OSHC has worked tirelessly to support families and establish a strong, trusted reputation, within the community. Positive feedback from both the school and families underscores the team's success. The service has fostered a partnership with Wagaman Primary School, ensuring seamless coordination and communication to benefit the children and families they serve.

With the Education and Care sector continuing to be significantly impacted by workforce shortages, our BHP-funded workforce development program Thriving Futures continued to reach new heights. With successful outcomes throughout the Pilbara (WA) and Roxby Downs (SA), the project was further expanded into the Goldfields (WA). This expansion facilitated the introduction of new educators into these regional towns, enhancing the capacity of participating services to accommodate more children within their settings.

This critical project continued to garner national attention particularly due to the demonstrated success of the improved wage conditions through the Educator Recognition Program (ERP) for participating educators in the Pilbara. Focused on attractive wage subsidies alongside a formal continuing professional development program, the ERP demonstrated significant success with participants reporting improvements in their job satisfaction and a key reason for their commitment to remain in the ECEC sector.

Continuing with our focus on supporting sector professionals, Child Australia proudly hosted a series of vibrant events including Sector Awards and Conferences held in both WA and the NT. These events garnered an exceptional response, with over 700 delegates attending the WA Early Childhood Learning & Development Conference hosted at Optus Stadium, and more than 400 delegates participating in the NT Little People Big Dreams Conference at Hilton Darwin. While Child Australia has successfully coordinated the Awards on behalf of Northern Territory Government for over a decade, the sector in WA welcomed this new opportunity thoughtfully developed in collaboration with valued partner organisations. Each of these events reignited passion, fuelled momentum, and served as a powerful reminder to attending delegates of their critical role in shaping the lives of children.

Throughout the year we welcomed a new Board Member Susan King who brings a wealth of experience in governance, public policy analysis, strategic planning and strategic resource management. Susan also joined Board Chair Elaine Pavlos in the Board People & Culture sub-committee to provide integral support to advancing Child Australia's range of staff initiatives and wellbeing programs.

Building on our achievements from the previous year, Child Australia continued its impressive financial growth throughout the 2021-22 financial year, resulting in a solid consolidated profit. Our revenue streams remained diversified, comprising a combination of State, Territory and Federal Government funding, as well as income generated from fee-for-service offerings. Our solid financial performance was further reinforced by significant corporate partnerships, establishing a robust foundation that enables us to fulfill our organisation's vision, mission and objectives.

Last but certainly not least, we express our heartfelt gratitude to our funders, strategic partners, collaborators and friends of Child Australia. Your support, whether stemming from long-standing relationships or more recent connections, plays an integral role in advancing on our organisation's mission. Together, we've made a profound impact on the lives of countless children, and we genuinely thank you for walking alongside us every step of the way. We eagerly look forward to collaborating with all of you in the upcoming year as we embark on a host of exciting new initiatives aimed at shaping the trajectory of children's lives in the communities we serve.



*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.

### Commitment

We follow through on decisions and promises – we do what we say.

### 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.

## 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 Programs and Support
- ECEC Sector Conferences and Awards
- Professional Practice Training and Support





# Reflect

## Reconciliation Action Plan

Child Australia has chosen to begin with a Reflect RAP as we recognise the broad role we play in the lives of young children, families, employees with their understanding of and contribution to reconciliation.

Consistent with our values, Child Australia has been committed to developing trusted relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses, providing real opportunities and collaborative working environments for all. The commitment is to continue building a culturally aware and engaged workplace that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees; continuing to embed actions within our organisations that continuously contribute to reconciliation daily in program design and delivery, communications, policies, procedures and partnerships.

The goal has been building internal awareness, understanding and cultural awareness for all Child Australia employees, allowing us to lead by example within the early and middle childhood community.

Our RAP has been formally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and we began our journey of launching this to our broader organisation. Through our extended networks, we were lucky enough to find and commission Rosie Paine to design a visual testament to Child Australia's dedication to advancing the journey towards Reconciliation and creating a truly inclusive and culturally aware workplace. Child Australia's Reflect RAP provided us with a shared vision of reconciliation and enabling accountability as we work toward embedding the five dimensions of reconciliation into our organisation: unity, race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, and historical acceptance.

Our Reflect RAP has been a framework that allows us to build on our existing relationships this year and laid strong foundations for the development of future RAPs, to advance to the Innovate level with our next iteration.

### "Koorlang" by Rosie Paine

"Koorlang", meaning 'Child' in Noongar language, is a visual testament to Child Australia's dedication in advancing the journey towards Reconciliation and creating a truly inclusive and culturally aware workplace. At the centre of the artwork is the child, surrounded by a community where they grow, thrive and reach their potential. This growth, potential and ability to thrive is represented by the dotted pathway that runs through the child from the top to the bottom of the artwork.

Around the Child Australia logo are six U shapes representing the organisation's core values: Integrity, Respect, Recognition, Collaboration, Commitment and Innovation. The smaller U shapes represent children, while the larger U shapes represent the adults within a child's community.

The small dotted circles throughout the artwork serve as an Acknowledgement of Country to the many lands that Child Australia operates on.



# 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.





# Sector Advocacy

CEO, Tina Holtom, has been a passionate and dedicated advocate for the sector throughout the year. Her advocacy extends from sharing reflections on days of significance like Australia Day and Early Childhood Educators Day to addressing critical national issues, such as the shortage of childcare educators.

## Engaging in crucial discussions

Tina Holtom actively participated in discussions that hold the potential to shape the future of the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector.

The ECEC Sector Workforce Roundtable with Minister for Early Childhood Education, Dr. Anne Aly, provided an opportunity to delve into essential topics, such as the recognition of educators, career pathways and the adequate funding of the childcare sector as a core enabler to unlock the workforce more broadly.

Child Australia organised a roundtable to discuss childcare supply issues in the Pilbara region. The event was attended by industry leaders, stakeholders and government officials, who came together to deliberate on a collaborative approach to ensure adequate childcare provision in the region. The roundtable had a particular focus on the critical success factor of the childcare workforce, which is widely recognised as a core enabler for unlocking workforce potential.

## Collective feedback

Child Australia worked in collaboration with other prominent Early Childhood Education and Care providers and organisations operating within the state to collectively provide constructive feedback on significant matters.

### a. 2022 Skills Summit Submission

Child Australia has engaged in a collaborative effort to prepare a joint submission for the WA government, focusing on the workforce issues, gaps and solutions in the Education and Care sector.

### c. The Draft National Care and Support Economy Strategy 2023

Child Australia is pleased to have spearheaded a collaborative effort alongside sector peaks, advocates and leading Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) providers. The goal of this effort was to provide a response to the Commonwealth Government's Draft National Care and Support Economy Strategy 2023.

### b. The Early Years strategy Discussion Paper

Child Australia had the privilege of collaborating with nine other leading Early Years organisations in the State to provide valuable feedback on the Early Years Strategy Discussion paper released by the Commonwealth Government. Child Australia appreciated the opportunity to contribute towards the development of policies that will enhance the early years' sector and positively impact the lives of children and families.



# 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 implementing quality practices to ensure all 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. Our staff teams have continued to provide a fun and safe environment for children to socialise and engage in activities that are challenging to develop lifelong skills and knowledge.

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

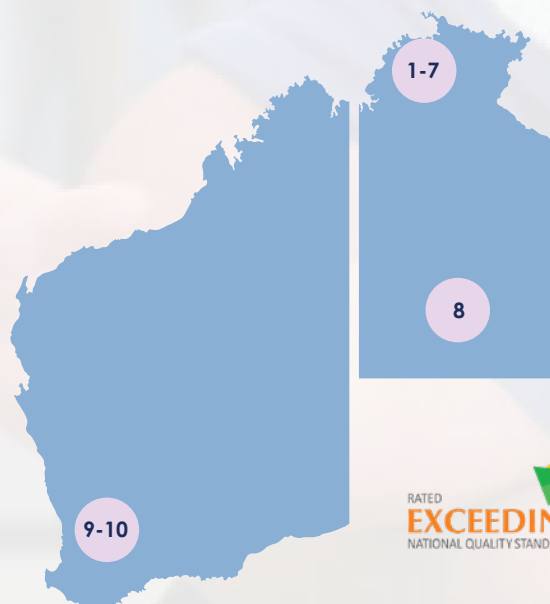
## Children in our care



**482** children  
enrolled in Outside  
School Hours Care



**527** children  
enrolled in Early  
Learning Centres



### Early Learning Centre (ELC)

- 1 Farrar ELC (Exceeding)
- 2 Palmerston ELC
- 8 Larapinta ELC
- 10 Harrisdale ELC (Exceeding)

### Campus (combined ELC and OSHC)

- 3 Nightcliff Campus (ELC Exceeding)
- 9 Lockridge Campus (ELC & OSHC Exceeding)

### Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

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





# Western Australia

**Campus (ELC and OSHC)**  
Lockridge Campus

**Early Learning Centre (ELC)**  
Harrisdale ELC

## Families at the forefront

The Harrisdale Early Learning Centre and Lockridge Campus in WA have continued to create an environment where children feel safe, secure and are supported to grow and discover their full potential as independent, life-long learners. Our services remain committed to going the extra mile to support our families.

At Lockridge Campus, the Centre Director reflected on a recent experience with one of their newly enrolled children, Zola. When Zola first started in the nursery room a few months ago, she was noticeably reserved and quiet, and was not comfortable seeking comfort with her educators. However, the staff demonstrated their commitment and dedication to connect with her. A breakthrough occurred when Zola's educator had to step away momentarily, and Zola called out for her. The response was heartwarming as Zola gave her educator a warm embrace, instantly calming down and warmly receiving her educator's affection. Since then, Zola's confidence has grown significantly. She feels safe, secure and supported, and has been able to communicate with her educators

when she wants or needs to. Zola now engages in play with enthusiasm and eagerness, seeing it as a means of learning and discovery, and looks forward to each day's adventures.

At Lockridge Campus, we are committed to providing additional support to our families. To that end, we have introduced a "Pay it Forward Shelf" that is stocked with essential food items such as canned goods and pasta. This special shelf is accessible to families in need, who are welcome to take items from it whenever they require. In addition, families are encouraged to contribute to the shelf whenever they are able. Our goal is to build a strong and supportive community where everyone can rely on each other during challenging times.

In March 2023, Harrisdale Early Learning Centre acknowledged the importance of addressing the needs of working parents, recognising the need for greater flexibility and convenience. In response, the Centre extended its operating hours, now accommodating children as early as 6:30AM to better meet the demands of busy schedules.

## Upgrades

The Lockridge Campus kitchen underwent a renovation this past February, with the installation of stainless steel benchtops, cupboards and flooring. These upgrades have contributed to the creation of healthier and more nutritious meals for the children. Food Coordinator, Ayu, is delighted to be operating in this enhanced space, ensuring that the children receive meals that are both nutritious and appealing.



“When you walk in the door at the Lockridge Campus it feels like walking into a home not a centre. The educators there are absolutely amazing! They go above and beyond for each child there and all of their individual needs. I honestly can't recommend their centre enough, since we have returned I have seen such a big change in my 3 children. They are so much more confident and have learnt so many new things. Thank you so much to all of the staff at the Lockridge Centre for making it a home away from home for my babies and all of the children there, it's such a relief to know our little ones are in such safe and loving hands!”

– Parent at Lockridge Campus

## Harrisdale rated Exceeding National Quality Standards

Harrisdale Early Learning Centre has achieved an “Exceeding” rating on the National Quality Standards (NQS) assessment. This is a significant achievement for the centre and a testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff and educators who have worked tirelessly to provide high-quality care and education to children.

“We are super proud of achieving an Exceeding rating”, said Sara Hinchley, Executive Director Services & Programs. “This was the first time our Harrisdale ELC participated in an Assessment and Rating process, which makes this an even more significant achievement. We have an exceptional staff team and a wonderful supporting community.”



Casey Girdlestone, Practice Improvement Manager said, “Harrisdale’s Exceeding Rating is a reflection of all the hard work and dedication that has gone into the service over the last 4 years. It is a reflection of the amazing Leadership Teams we have had and currently have and all the Educators who have supported us in this journey. We are looking forward to being able to provide High Quality Education and Care to the children and families in our community for years to come.”

“What I love most is how excited the educators get to tell us when the kids have learnt or done something new, funny or silly during the day and they show so much support to our families’ life outside of daycare.”

– Parent at Harrisdale ELC

“We have been with the centre for 3 years now and can honestly say each and every educator we have dealt with has been amazing! Everyone is so caring and friendly.

– Parent at Harrisdale ELC

“Kodey has been attending Lockridge Campus since he was 4 months. Being a single mum, the staff have assisted and helped me in so many ways. The staff are amazing and get to know your circumstances. It is amazing that the staff are loyal to the area. They will go out of their way to assist families in need. Without their support and love, I don’t know where I would be.”

– Parent at Lockridge Campus

## Minister Dr. Anne Aly visits Lockridge Campus

Lockridge Campus was privileged to host a distinguished guest, Minister for Early Childhood Education, Dr. Anne Aly. The minister’s visit was a delightful opportunity to engage in activities with the children and the occasion of the visit was to share exciting news about the significant initiative that aims to make early childhood education more affordable for all.





# Northern Territory

**Campus (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  
Wagaman OSHC

The addition of Wagaman OSHC is a source of great delight for our Out of School Hours Service this year in the Northern Territory. With this expansion, our Early Learning Services have proudly grown to eight in number, each dedicated to providing inspiring and nurturing learning environments for children.



Our Early Learning Services create safe spaces where children become confident in their own abilities and support each child's growth and development. The programs have collaborated closely with families and the community to achieve these goals, ensuring each child's unique needs are met.

Guided by family input, educators at Palmerston ELC worked closely with the family of 3-year-old Charlie and his 1-year-old brother, Liam, to help them adapt to their new surroundings after relocating from Melbourne to the NT. Charlie initially struggled with adapting to the NT's heat and developed heat rashes. Through family input and collaboration, the centre found a solution that ensured his comfort and wellbeing. Charlie has been spending his afternoons playing with Liam in the babies' room, a decision that ensures he stays cool and comfortable while having

quality playtime. As a result, Charlie has been confidently communicating his needs to the educators.

At Larapinta ELC, educators welcomed 8-month-old baby Lucas to the service. After initially taking some time to adjust to being at the centre and becoming familiar with the educators, space, routine, and foods, the team created safety, security and structure to support Lucas to settle in. As a result, Lucas has blossomed into a spirited toddler, eagerly exploring the world around him. From walking and running with confidence to practising his fine motor and independent skills such as self-feeding, his growth has been remarkable.

His budding social skills shine as he has been entertaining newer and younger babies and has been engaging in dance and sing-song activities.





Child Australia took over the management of Wagaman OSHC from another provider and started operations on 1 January, 2023. The team at Wagaman OSHC has been working tirelessly to rebuild trust with families and establish a strong, positive reputation in the community.

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Wagaman OSHC has fostered a collaborative partnership with Wagaman Primary School, ensuring seamless coordination and communication to benefit the children and families they serve.





## Making a difference

The Nightcliff campus, in partnership with Sunset Soup Kitchen, has launched an initiative called “No meals left behind” to ensure that no one in the local community goes to bed hungry. The initiative preserves leftover servings of nutritious food from the campus and redirects them towards a meaningful cause, preventing wastage and promoting community generosity. The kind-hearted donation of boxes of clothes from local residents has further extended the initiative’s reach beyond food.

Bagot OSHC has been actively promoting children’s wellbeing through various partnerships. They have continued their

relationship with Healthy Living NT and met with the Gold Coast Suns as part of their ongoing partnership between AFL Northern Territory, Bagot Aboriginal Community, Gold Coast Suns and Child Australia’s Bagot Community programs. Their focus is to engage children in sports and healthy lifestyles.

During National Asthma Week 2022, Bagot OSHC teamed up with Asthma NT to share culturally relevant knowledge about asthma, particularly in relation to short wind. These initiatives exemplify how a shared commitment to wellbeing can bring about positive change in the community.

## Increase in occupancy in the Territory

The NT Early Learning Services have maintained stable to high utilisation rates throughout the year. A key factor contributing to this success was the commitment to staff development. The staff members continuously enhance their skills by participating in free Professional Development opportunities offered by Child Australia. These invaluable sessions included mentoring sessions, participation in conferences held in both WA and NT and engaging workshops.

At Wanguri OSHC, for instance, the staff attended training on Supervision Essentials, Effective Teamwork, Emerging Leader, a refresher on Educational Leader and more. The Wanguri OSHC Supervisor, described how completing a 4-day session of the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) equipped her with tools to guide and support children who have experienced trauma or chronic stress. “Structured around the five domains - Body, Stamina, Engagement and Character, all interconnected through Relationship, has enabled us to promptly identify children who may be struggling with issues like dysregulation, which can manifest as aggression and defiance. These insights have allowed us to meet the special and complex needs of vulnerable children effectively, providing them with the support they require.” Opportunities like these helped our educators stay current with the latest trends and

best practices to provide the best possible experiences for children in our care.

The team at Nightcliff Campus has completed a comprehensive 3 part online training program focused on child safety. The training program enabled the team to broaden their perspective beyond the physical safety of children and gain a better understanding of emotional, social and spiritual safety. It emphasised the importance of creating a community dedicated to ensuring child safety and fostering active involvement of children in the risk assessment process, auditing learning spaces and promoting mutual respect. A parent, Maddie, shared her positive feedback regarding the training program: “We love Nightcliff ELC. Our son has been attending since he was 18 months old and will be finishing up in January when he turns 5 and starts full-time school. During his time at the service, he was diagnosed with multiple disabilities and the service has provided an incredible level of care. If he could attend the service forever, he would! The staff are loving and attentive - it is like a second home.”



Our organisation's unwavering commitment to staff development had a direct impact on the quality of care we provided to children through our services in NT. A new family joined Anula OSHC, after being away from after-school care services for several years. Initially, they expressed strong reservations about enrolling their children, but their perspective quickly shifted after witnessing the positive impact that Anula OSHC had on their kids. Although they were originally booked for two days a week, the children eagerly requested more days to attend the program. Over time, the number of days increased until they were attending the full five days a week. The siblings are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to play and socialise with other children.

## Nurturing confident Leaders, Daryl's story

The Bagot OSHC program has offered valuable opportunities for children in the Bagot Community to develop and explore their identity in safe environments that are supported by their family and culture. The OSHC curriculum is designed to facilitate the development of children and young people into confident and capable members of their community, with a particular emphasis on life skills and social and emotional development.

Daryl, a 3-year-old boy, began attending Bagot OSHC in 2022, accompanied by his 5-year-old sister. Initially, he was hesitant to engage with anyone else and relied on his sister to participate in play, service routines, and communicate his needs. However, as time passed, he became more confident and now

eagerly participates in OSHC programs.

He has developed into one of the most enthusiastic and vocal participants and even takes the lead in cooking lunch. The OSHC curriculum has enabled Daryl to establish strong connections with both the OSHC staff and other children, while also developing his capacity to engage in diverse and collaborative experiences. He has taken on a mentorship role and is helping younger children attending the program by providing emotional support, demonstrating hygiene practices, and guiding them in following the OSHC rules. Through his ongoing engagement with OSHC programs, Daryl has evolved into a strong and confident leader within his community.

"I've come to OSHC for 7 years. We do different activities and learn things like cooking and sports and see different animals. It's fun."

- EG aged 10.



"At OSHC I play with the computers. I feel happy here."

- AC aged 8.



"OSHC is good because we go to the basketball court and play. We can go anywhere in Bagot together and play."

- MC aged 9.



"I wake up early so I can come OSHC. It's fun and good and nice and Stacy and Mum Cinta are nice"

- CC aged 6.

"OSHC is fun because I get to play outside. OSHC has different toys to my house."

- KW aged 7.



"I love to see all the children playing tag together, they love group games."  
– Parent at Anula OSHC

"Thank you all for taking great care of our kids it really sets our minds at peace"  
– Parent at Wanguri OSHC

"So Grateful for all the hard work that the educators do for our child"  
– Parent at Farrar ELC

"We would like to express how amazing these years have been for our children to attend such a loving and enriched childcare. We have felt supported, safe and connected to our community due to all that you and the staff have done for us."  
– Parent at Nightcliff Campus

"We have enjoyed the services that Palmerston child and family early learning centre has provided over the past months. You have cared for Arthur and Oscar very well, and we have no complaints about your service."  
– Parent at Palmerston ELC

"You're doing an amazing job, the centre is so nice I love bringing my son here. There is so much consistency and everything is organised"  
– Parent at Larapinta ELC





# Community Programs

## Bagot Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

### Collective impact

The partnership between Child Australia and the Bagot Community Aboriginal Corporation (BCAC) was strengthened over the past year.

BCAC witnessed a surge in membership and conducted regular meetings to promote community growth. The collaboration led to various program activities, including monthly safety meetings, ensuring that safety was a top priority.

An introduction of Batchelor Institute's Certificate II in Construction course within the Bagot community was an exciting development that drew around 15-20 participants. This course had been a game-changer in boosting residents' confidence, and it helped them

find employment. The program also assisted participants in obtaining different machinery licenses, such as Bobcat, forklift, chainsaw, backhoe, excavator and more. The engagement and networking with several services continued to build community capacity and knowledge. Hoops4Health had been a regular presence every Wednesday, conducting engaging programs with the children.



### Families For School Attendance (FFSA)

The FFSA Program remained consistent in the delivery of family support, school attendance and participation. The 3-Year-old Preschool Trial was introduced, which provided support to families to engage their children in education from an early age, laying foundations for lifelong learning while boosting their physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. FFSA also played an important role in facilitating the transition of students and families from primary school to middle school, including supporting applications and interviews. A significant achievement was the acceptance of Marcus, one of our students who commenced this year at the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School. The FFSA Program placed a strong emphasis on actively involving families. The celebration of the National Reconciliation Week was a platform for families to share their historical narratives, linguistic heritage and cultural traditions. To further empower students and enhance their sense of identity,

the program supported them to create Cultural Profiles, enabling them to share their origins, their dreaming and their rich family and cultural heritage. FFSA maintained an enduring partnership with the Aboriginal Culture and Language Group to ensure that the voices and cultural perspectives of families remained integral.



The program's role extended beyond the classroom; it also orchestrated various school activities, including assemblies, Kids as Teachers nights, after-school AFL Challenge competitions and more, which contributed to building a sense of community. Positive outcomes were seen with fortnightly engagement and wellbeing meetings, with a number of students re-engaging in school. FFSA further assisted families in navigating essential administrative tasks, such as registration for the nutrition program, enrolments, excursions, health and educational assessments, ensuring that all children were supported in all aspects of schooling.





## Mums and Bubs | Bambatj Learning

An important step taken this year is that a new name for the centre has been chosen.

This name resonates deeply with the community and preserves our language. The name is “Bambatj Learning Centre” – where “Bambatj” means babies or children.

## Walking Bus

The walking bus was again a highly popular initiative among children and families in our community this year and proved to be a success factor in achieving better attendance outcomes.

Our OSHC program joined the walking bus this year to ensure that children also come along to OSHC after school. The walking bus route concluded at the Ludmilla canteen area, where the Aboriginal Islander Education Worker (AIEW) awaited with the breakfast club. During this time, the walking bus staff and the AIEW exchanged important updates, including information about any sick students or those participating in cultural events.

It was also an important time to check in regarding any students who were at risk of disengagement or were already disengaged. The walking bus staff personally visited the students' homes to encourage them to come to school, and they called the school at 9:00 AM to check on any children who did not join the walking bus. They also followed up with families if the children were absent.



## Turning dreams to reality, Marcus' story



Marcus had a remarkable set of achievements while studying at Ludmilla Primary School. He served as the school captain, sports house captain, and was the school council representative. He was an excellent role model for students in the community. Marcus had an outstanding attendance record, earning him the 100% attendance award every term. During his last year at Ludmilla Primary School, Marcus submitted an application

to the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS), which was accepted. In 2023, he began attending school in Melbourne. Initially, the transition from his small Aboriginal community posed some challenges, leading to moments of homesickness. Nevertheless, Marcus demonstrated resilience and determination to overcome these hurdles. He embraced new experiences and even attended AFL matches, fulfilling a childhood dream. The unwavering support of the community, his family and Ludmilla Primary School made Marcus' education pathway possible.





# West Pilbara Mobile Children's Services (WPMCS)

At the heart of the West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service (WPMCS) lies a profound commitment to delivering a play-based learning program firmly rooted in the Early Years Learning Framework.

WPMCS remained 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.

With a strong two-woman team, WPMCS has actively engaged with and supported a variety of local events and initiatives. The program achieved noteworthy recognition for its contributions to the community.

WPMCS proudly received the Community or School Partnerships Award at the ECLD Sector Awards held in Perth, WA.

Supervisor Rachel mentioned, "It is an honour to accept the award for Community Partnerships and School Engagement. This

has been an amazing opportunity to showcase what the Pilbara truly has to offer. We are the only mobile children's service that offers weekly support for socially and geographically isolated young families and communities. These families had limited or no access to quality early childhood education and care. A massive thank you to Yandeyarra, Strelley and Warralong Community school and Elders for allowing this collaboration for over 10 years."

WPMCS was also nominated for the Port Hedland Excellence in Business Award (0-4 Employees).



## Mutual learning and growth, a mum's story

This year, a mother who had worked alongside WPMCS for over a decade reached out with a unique request. She sought assistance in pursuing formal studies in Certificate III in Education and Care.

The impact of the Playgroup sessions on the whole family has been visible through the stories shared by children with their families. The children talked about their creations using playdough and slime, healthy cooking adventures, and various art and craft activities. These stories have sparked an interest in two mothers who are keen to learn more about early learning and development. The mothers were invested in understanding how WPMCS

taught and what nurtures young minds. They sought more information and support in the opportunity and options to obtain a Certificate III in Education and Care. The interaction with families supported WPMCS in two-way learning. During these interactions, the service got the opportunity to ask the mothers about ways to integrate culture, history and language into program delivery.

"Thank you for raising generations of our children and giving them an opportunity to thrive"

- WPMCS participant





# 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.



It has been a momentous year for our organisation with the successful implementation of the new Age 3 program in our HIPPY programs. Our program has always been committed to fostering innovation and collaboration and this year was no exception. In 2023, a new administrative approach was introduced that involved the recruitment of two coordinators at HIPPY Geraldton. This strengthened our team and allowed us to expand our program to the community:

## ● Morning tea

HIPPY Geraldton commemorated the progress of 21 families who successfully completed their first year of the HIPPY Program. The hosting of morning tea on several occasions provided an opportunity to welcome and connect with new and existing families.

## ● Strong partnerships

HIPPY Hedland has expanded its reach by joining hands with Child Australia's West Pilbara Mobile Children's Services. Together, we host Playgroup sessions every Thursday, providing a valuable space for parents to connect while offering children a supportive environment to learn through play.

## ● Active participation in community events

HIPPY Hedland and Geraldton have been actively engaged in community events such as Children's Week, in collaboration with local organisations and services with the common aim to help children thrive.

## ● Graduation of mentors

Two tutors for the 'age 5 cohort' graduated from their TAFE course, which they enrolled in through HIPPY Geraldton.



# HIPPY Facts



## Children Enrolled

**40** Geraldton

**37** Hedland

## Families Graduated

**18** Geraldton

**14** Hedland

## Families Attended Regular Meetings

**16** Geraldton

**10** Hedland



## Quality time and learning, Nicole's story

At HIPPY Geraldton, one of the mothers, Nicole, has thoroughly enjoyed both the home visits and Age 3 program gatherings.

At the group gatherings, she appreciated the opportunity to partake in one-on-one activities with her son Liam. While her baby girl Ellie preferred to be held by Nicole most of the time, she was content spending time with the tutor team, allowing Nicole to engage fully with Liam.

Liam, in turn, enjoyed participating in craft activities during the gatherings, which he had not previously shown interest in.

Nicole found the HIPPY activities at home useful, as they provided a structured way to spend one-on-one time with

Liam, without the need to research new things to do. Through home visits, Nicole learned ways to teach Liam and gained knowledge and confidence in how to respond to him, using Behaviour Specific Praise and the 3C's (Confirm, Complete and Correct).

Additionally, discussing HIPPY activities and child development with her mentor/tutor, who also had a three-year-old, supported Nicole to stay engaged in HIPPY and spend more quality time interacting with Liam both at home and in the community.



## Comprehensive care, Jack's story

Jack was enrolled in the HIPPY Hedland program in 2023 as part of the new age 3 cohort. Concerns regarding his speech delay were expressed by his mother on his enrolment form.

During the program, Jack's mother highlighted that he had started a speech program at the hospital. However, the speech therapist had gone on vacation, and she had not received any further appointments for Jack. Furthermore, Jack had not seen a paediatrician in over a year.

HIPPY decided to reach out to the Allied Health team and followed-up with the speech team. Consequently, Jack was able to participate in a new group speech program in term 4 and has an appointment with a paediatrician scheduled.





# Community Programs Testimonials

20

"You mob always show up, that's why we continue to come and learn. Now my son can count and sing in more than 3 languages thanks to you mob."

- WPMCS participant

"I love taking my son and daughter to the mums and bubs because it's appropriate for the needs of my kids and myself. I learn new things and enjoy the playtime with my children."

– Kaylene, Parent at Bagot Programs

"The Child Australia team is highly reliable, travelling long distances to reach children in communities which is very important because parents know that they can rely on the team to be on time and delivering the planned session. The staff are highly skilled and committed to the wellbeing of the children in this community."

– Principal of Yandeyarra community

# Professional Practice Consultants

The Professional Practice Consultants (PPC) team has been committed to enhancing the quality of Education and Care practices and enabling educators to receive supportive and engaging professional development through in-person and online learning opportunities.

This was done to help them meet the ever-changing needs of the sector and deliver the best possible early learning experiences to all children. All professional development and support activities focused on linking theory and frameworks to practice to establish sustainable learning and quality outcomes.

The PPC team focused on building sector capacity to provide children with the support they needed to thrive. Throughout the year, PPC placed significant emphasis on enhancing the Online Learning Center (OLC) and face-to-face training materials. This endeavour aligned

closely with the organisation's commitment to ensure that the sector received the most current and pertinent information, particularly in light of the recent updates to the curriculum frameworks.

The latest iterations of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and My Time, Our Place (MTOP) Framework have been unveiled. The PPC team had worked diligently to update all their materials to align with EYLF and MTOP V2.0.

This process had borne fruit in the form of fresh content and workshops, as well as a thorough overhaul of webcasts and online learning resources.



## Sector collaborations

The Professional Practice Consultants team have travelled across WA to provide Professional Development opportunities. As part of the Early Childhood Resource Unit's (ECRU) initiative, Child Australia hosted a series of free workshops, forming a comprehensive roadshow that addressed key topics relevant to the sector. These topics were thoughtfully identified by both ECRU and the sector.

- Approved Providers and Managers Focus -Staff Induction and Retention
- Educators Focus - Behaviour Guidance and Inclusive Practice

## Sharing insights at conferences

Throughout the year, the Professional Practice Consultants demonstrated their expertise by participating in several noteworthy conferences.

During the Regional Early and Education Development (REED) Annual Educator Conference, the PPC team delivered an engaging one-hour presentation on the significance of educator wellbeing. The presentation emphasised the profound impact that prioritising the wellbeing of educators has on the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector. Burn-out among educators can lead to a high turnover rate, which may result in suboptimal educational outcomes for children. By investing in their own wellbeing,

educators equip themselves to provide better support to children in their care, thus fostering nurturing and positive learning environments.

The consultants also proudly contributed to the Little People Big Dreams (LPBD) and Early Childhood Learning and Development (ECLD) Conferences, sharing insights on topics such as "Trauma Sensitive ECEC," "Developing Professional Wellbeing," and "But I Can't Dance!" with a broader community of educators and ECEC professionals.





## Positive impact

The consistent positive feedback received by the PPC team serves as a powerful testament to the quality of our work and the remarkable ability to educate and support the sector effectively.

### Mulberry Tree

The Area Manager of Mulberry Tree reached out to our support team, expressing their satisfaction with our Supervision Training, highlighting its significant impact on the younger educators within their organisation.

This initial success blossomed into a broader partnership, encompassing their Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services throughout Western Australia. We have been entrusted with the responsibility of delivering this crucial training both in face-to-face sessions and through virtual platforms.

### Buttercups Childcare

Buttercups Childcare has been actively participating in our hosted workshops. In 2023, a major win in our collaboration was reached when Mr. Steve Goldsworthy, the Director of Buttercups requested support in the development of the company's core values.

Together with Mr. Goldsworthy, our consultants crafted a concise survey featuring 20 core values handpicked by Mr. Goldsworthy himself. This survey laid the foundation for the subsequent 2-hour workshop, providing the necessary structure and focus.

The workshop brought together Buttercups' upper management and support team. Over two hours, they delved into thoughtful discussions surrounding the top five core values, aiming to translate these values into practical daily practices.

The immediate feedback from this workshop was overwhelmingly positive, strengthening the relationship between Buttercups and Child Australia. The PPC team has been actively engaging in discussions with Buttercups' Area Management, exploring ways to further support the growth and development of centre managers and assistant centre managers.

## Highlights



Face-to-Face  
Training delivered

**60** Hours in Northern Territory  
**420** Hours in Western Australia  
**4924** Participants attended  
(Approximate only)  
**5** New courses developed

Online Learning Centre



**16** New courses developed  
**12,973** Students enrolled  
**4,495** New students



**48**  
Flights taken to  
deliver training



Worked with  
**110**  
services



“The ERP program has supported educators at Newman Day Care Centre to advance their skill sets through professional development while being incentivised to do so. With the new skills and ongoing training, the whole NDC community is benefitting as we implement new practices and level of quality into our services. The incentive scheme has boosted morale, provided the whole service with advancement sector knowledge, played a significant part in our retention strategy, and given a well-earned monetary boost to our dedicated educators.”

Claire Caton  
Centre Manager, Newman Day Care Centre

“The ERP program has opened our educators’ eyes to different ways they are able to upskill within their roles. It has helped us as a service retain educators, providing the opportunity for our service to grow.

Our educators have used the ERP program to also benefit children, creating educational spaces, learning opportunities, and educated educators.”

Georgie McAuliffe  
Assistant Director, Treloar Child Care Centre



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 arrives in the Goldfields

This year, the childcare sector continued to be plagued by critical workforce shortages across the country and the Goldfields region has been significantly impacted. With an initial focus on supporting Goodstart Early Learning in Somerville and Leinster Community Day Care, the Thriving Futures program worked alongside the two services to help stabilise staffing levels.

In addition, there have been a series of professional development learning opportunities offered to the broader childcare sector within the region to support strengthening the capacity of sector professionals. The workforce development initiative provided recruitment attraction and retention campaigns and supports career development pathways including scholarships, mentoring and professional development opportunities.

As a result of this concentrated recruitment model attracting new and seasoned educators, Goodstart Somerville successfully employed 5 educators in just over 6 months, local to the region and from interstate. The centre has also been able to open an additional room, expanding its capacity to accommodate 20 local families who had been patiently waiting for placement, some for over a year.



# Thriving Futures in the Pilbara

In the Pilbara region, significant progress has been made towards achieving project objectives. Throughout the year, 15 out of 19 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been successfully accomplished, while an additional 3 are currently progressing as planned, with 1 slightly lagging behind schedule.

## Introduction of the Educator Recognition Program (ERP)

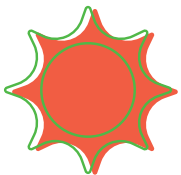
BHP and Child Australia have committed to creating meaningful change within the struggling sector. Building on the success of the BHP-funded Thriving Futures childcare workforce development project operating in Hedland and Newman, Child Australia has strongly advocated for a critical element to be included in this initiative – Educator Recognition.

“A program designed to improve the professional recognition of the workforce entrusted to care for our children.”

The Educator Recognition Program (ERP) is designed to be the catalyst for a new benchmark in raising the professional status of the workforce entrusted with the critical role of caring, nurturing and educating our children in their early years.

BHP’s commitment to the project totalling \$2.5 million over a 3-year period, has seen childcare professionals access generous wage subsidies, professional development, scholarship opportunities, supported mentoring, career pathways and more.

Since its launch in September 2022, The Educator Recognition Program has yielded excellent results. During the most recent engagement, over 70% of program participants shared their feedback through a Candidate Satisfaction survey:



- 85% of survey respondents reported improvements in their day-to-day work.
- An overwhelming 96% expressed greater job satisfaction as a direct result of their involvement in the ERP.

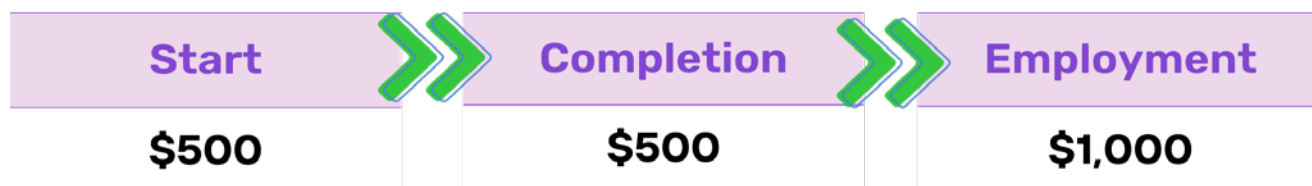




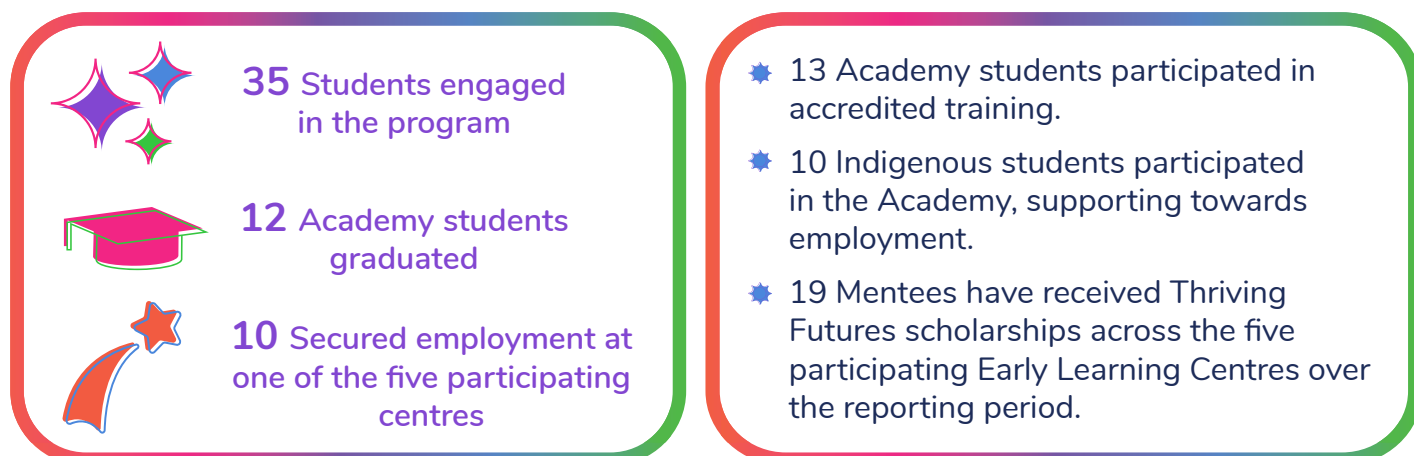
## The Academy offers financial incentives

Continuing this year, The Academy has been a free pre-employment training program that providing a fast-tracked pathway to enter and explore the ECEC sector. It has been the ideal platform for those who are looking to explore a career in the sector and keen to give it a try before fully committing.

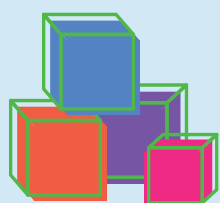
In late 2022, Thriving Futures introduced a new feature to The Academy – the financial incentives. This gives the students the opportunity to explore their passion and try out the ECEC sector while financial rewards along the way.



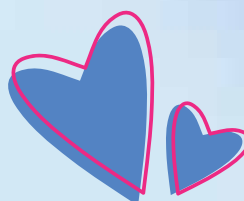
Since its inception, the Thriving Futures Academy has seen remarkable outcomes:



## THRIVING FUTURES FACTS



**7**  
Early Learning Centres involved



**64**  
Relationships established with organisations



**88**  
Hours of consultancy



**137**  
Hours of professional development workshops



**294.5**  
Hours of mentoring

The Little People, Big Dreams Conference brought together the ECEC Sector in Darwin on Saturday, 22 October 2022. Over 400 attendees from across Australia's ECEC sector gathered in Darwin to listen to a variety of exceptional speakers.

The conference kicked off with Dr. Red Ruby Scarlet and Louise Dorrat in NQF The Musical sponsored by Territory Child Care Group, setting the tone with their uplifting and humorous performance.

"The NQF Musical presented by Red and her fellow was so amazing and informative. No dull moments during play."

"Why Play? With Angus Gorrie [started us] on a journey towards facilitating more authentic play experiences for our children.

Our entire team left the conference reinvigorated and eager to share our new knowledge and ideas with our community."

Angus Gorrie then took to the stage to present 'Why Play' sponsored by Charles Darwin University, which did a deep dive into the importance of play, exploring popular topics like 'risky play' and 'loose part play' and their emotional and physical benefits.

Concurrent session presenters brought practical ideas that delegates could put into practice in their own workplaces during the course of the day. In depth discussions meant that a wealth of new ideas and information was exchanged and voices of united connection were found.

"I have been really impressed with the range of topics to choose from. There was a range of areas of interest and I was finding it hard to choose which topic I wanted to visit."



"You knew you were going to be in a great session when Nicole Talarico's presentation 'Emotionally literate classrooms' was moved to a larger room to be able to cater for everyone that had arrived to see her! She was able to capture excitement, intrigue and a genuine interest and kept you wanting more."



The sold-out conference inspired delegates with a common theme throughout the sessions: that regardless of the child's story, they have the right to be included and have a voice.

The Market Place provided an opportunity to meet industry leaders and network with other Education & Care professionals.

"Networking with like-minded professionals, affirming my knowledge base in key areas, but also learning about and researching other potential areas to further development myself professionally."

## LPBD Conference facts



# 415

Delegates  
at Sold out  
Conference



# 3

Keynote  
presentations



# 15

Concurrent  
presentations



# 14

Exhibitions

### Exhibitor information

- Exhibition ran in the ballroom foyer and was open during session breaks
- Exhibitors were listed on the event website, event programs and highlighted in an EDM as well as individual Social Media Posts

### Delegate information

- Primary and Pre-School Teachers
- Senior Educators (OSHC & ELC)
- Supervisors (OSHC & ELC)
- Leaders (OSCH & ELC)
- Centre Directors
- Managing Directors
- Family Daycare Managers
- Inclusion Professionals
- Coordinators (OSHC & ELC)
- Trainers & Assessors
- Area Managers

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EARLY EDUCATION NEWS, VIEWS & REVIEWS

## ECLD events and conference inspired ECEC professionals to grow, change and thrive

The events kicks off on Thursday 16 March, 2023 with the Reimagining the Early Years Masterclass which brought together national early years experts, State and Federal Government, key stakeholders and many distinguished guests, to engage in critical conversations and deep thinking on reimagining early years systems. This was followed on Friday by the Excellence in the Outdoor Bus Tour & Masterclass, hosted by Angus Gorrie.

Angus led a dedicated group of ECEC professionals to reflect upon the many forms of excellence within the context of the Australian National Quality Framework, in particular focusing on inspirational outdoor environments that showcase safe risk taking, the promotion of autonomy and decision making, and which support children to develop resilience and support a sense of agency.

The tour was followed by three presentations providing ideas to consider while interacting in the outdoor environment, discuss setting up the learning environment to support risk taking and autonomy, as well as supporting children's sense of agency.

The Early Childhood Learning & Development Conference brought delegates throughout Western Australia's ECEC Sector to Optus Stadium on Saturday, 18 March 2023. The sold-out conference inspired over 700 attendees with a variety of exceptional speakers.

The event brought together some of the

most exciting minds in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector for a program of masterclasses, awards, professional development and networking opportunities. The keynote speakers and concurrent presentations designed to cover a number of topics and issues from workforce shortages through to creative arts, Playwork, leadership development, happiness within a workforce culture and many more.

Humanitarian lawyer Rabia Siddique opened the day, sharing her perspective on personal power and leadership, and brought her insightful and unique perspective to resilience, trauma and leadership.

Dr Leanne Gibbs used her perspective and position as an active member of not-for-profit Boards and advisory groups in the ECEC sector to share her thoughts on how ECEC has emerged from the pandemic, and what lies ahead.

A concluding keynote from Robbie Figg from the Happiness Co, provided delegates with an uplifting and motivational session about wellbeing and happiness in their professional and personal lives.

Overall feedback from the day was very positive, with many delegates commenting how valued they felt after the stellar event. There was a common theme throughout the sessions reminding us of our purpose in the Early Years sector, and the important role we play in the lives of children in WA.





## ECLD Conference facts



**700**

Over 700  
Delegates at sold  
out Conference



**4**

Keynote  
presentations



**16**

Concurrent  
presentations



**35**

Exhibitions

“All key note speakers and sessions were great. The networking and meeting new people was awesome. Thank you to the Child Australia staff who made me feel welcome to travel with them and associate when at the Fraser Suites.” – Betty McKinlay

“The breakout sessions were great, it allowed us to choose our own preferences”



“The Autism talk was Fantastic...and very enlightening for all children not just diagnosed Autistic children.”

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# WA Sector Awards

Child Australia, in collaboration with organising partners, were thrilled to host the first WA ECEC Sector awards in March 2023.

The awards serve as a platform to recognise and celebrate the exceptional contributions of individuals and organisations who have demonstrated unwavering commitment to delivering quality outcomes for children and families within the Early Childhood Sector.

“Now more than ever we need to come together to celebrate and acknowledge the commitment and dedication of sector professionals who strive to make a difference and a positive impact on the lives of children and families every day”, said Tina Holtom, Child Australia’s CEO.

24 finalists were selected from across hundreds of nominations in WA - a testament to the many high calibre professionals working in the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector.

An independent judging panel was appointed to select the best of best in the ECEC sector. The Panel consists of key stakeholders from across the sector and other industries including Tertiary Education, Independent Training and Local Government.

As well as the recognition that these awards bring, finalists received \$500 and winners received an additional \$1,000 prize.

Winners were announced at the awards ceremony was held on Friday, 17 March 2023 at Optus Stadium.

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# Our People

32

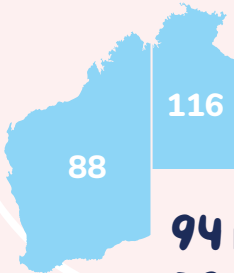


**204**  
Employees

**7**  
Male

**197**  
Female

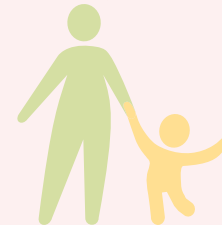
**21**  
identify as Aboriginal  
or Torres Strait Islander



**94** Full time  
**59** Part time  
**51** Casual



**51**  
Corporate and  
Community  
Services  
employees



**153**  
Early  
Learning  
Services  
employees

## Significant Milestones

### 1. Aspire Awards and Recognition

The Aspire Awards recognised employees who continually strive to achieve their very best in pursuit of upholding the organisations values. These awards highlighted the outstanding efforts of our team in their pursuit of excellence.

### 2. Nine-day Fortnight

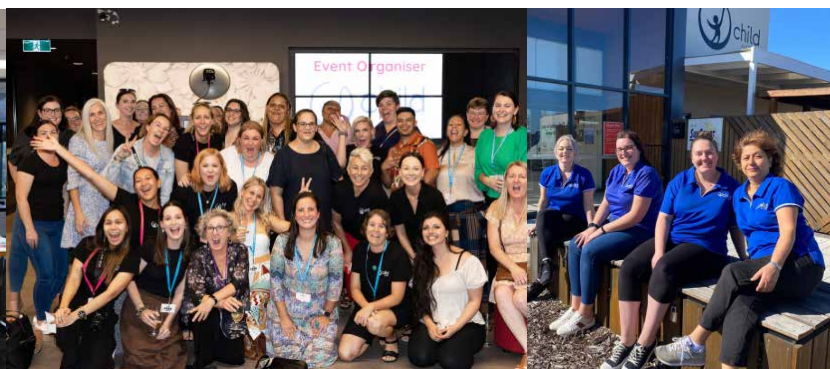
Recognising the importance of a healthy work-life balance, we have implemented the Nine-Day Fortnight, a flexible working option available to all full-time staff. This initiative empowered the Child Australia team to better manage their personal and professional lives, fostering a healthier and happier workforce.

### 3. New Onboarding Program

A seamless onboarding experience has been introduced for our new Child Australia staff. The new onboarding program ensured that every new addition to team received a positive and informative onboarding experience, enabling them to integrate smoothly into Child Australia.

### 4. Wellbeing Program

To ensure we are supporting staff and providing regular opportunities to focus on wellbeing in the workplace, we have introduced a wellness program led by a 'Wellness Officer.' Each program and service organises initiatives to address various facets of wellbeing, including physical health, mental wellbeing, team connection and nutrition.



# 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 holds a Masters in Mental Health Science (Child Psychology) and 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 wellbeing 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. She has broad experience working across various roles within the Early Childhood Sector including overseas experience. 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.



**Maria Miller**  
**Executive Director, Corporate Services**

Maria has been with Child Australia since 2017 and is passionate about contributing towards improving outcomes for children. 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 Practising 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.



**Carren Ford**  
**Executive Director of Professional Learning & Transformation**

Having worked in the Early Childhood Sector for more than 20 years in various roles; being Workplace Training and Assessment, working within the VET Sector delivering the Early Childhood qualifications, delivering the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and traineeships within the sector to Metro and Regional services. Carren's background has included Senior Lecturing roles within training and assessment and Director and Early childhood educator. She holds a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.





## Elaine Pavlos, Chairperson

Elaine is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Notre Dame Australia and a Director on the Board of Southern Cross Care (WA). She holds a Master Degree in Nursing from Edith Cowan University and an Master of Business Administration from the University of Western Australia. She specializes in working with new managers and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Elaine joined the Child Australia Board in 2011.



## 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, the Head of Impact Consulting at Impact Seed, partners with organisations on Impact and ESG strategy, measurement and management to create deep impact. Prior to this, she led a strategy team in Rio Tinto's social performance function, managed a \$200m fund for the Department of Communities aimed at creating pathways towards social and economic independence for Aboriginal people, established and managed the WA arm of the Social Ventures Australia consulting team, and worked as a senior manager with Deloitte Consulting. Steph is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



## Nick Warth

Nick is a Director at KPMG and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. He has over 15 years of experience providing transfer pricing and tax advice to multinational companies, assisting them to meet their domestic and international tax obligations.



## 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.



## Dr Susan King

Dr Susan King joined our board in May 2023. Susan holds a PhD (Cultural Foundations of Education) and other academic qualifications, and has had broad experience across the schools, vocational education and higher education sectors. Susan is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAIDC), a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management WA (FAIM WA) and currently serves on ECU's governing Council and legislative Committee.

# Financials

Child Australia demonstrated solid growth throughout the 2022-23 financial year, ending with a consolidated profit of \$816,000. The organisation's revenue streams were derived from a mixture of 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.

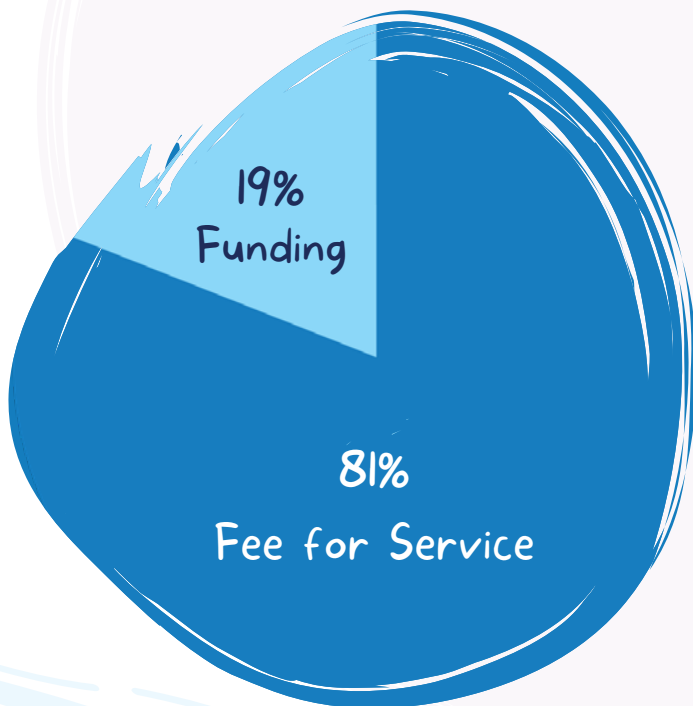
Financial stability is the key to delivering on our organisations vision, mission and goals. Child Australia continues to ensure this is a key focus along with growth opportunities to further enhance our broader impact.

Staffing costs remained the largest expenditure item and accounted for almost 70% of the organisation's total expenditure. Ongoing investment in our people is key to our continued success. Our commitment to employee wellbeing was evidenced through our initiatives, including offering above-award wages, implementing staff recognition programs and providing ongoing professional development opportunities throughout the organisation.

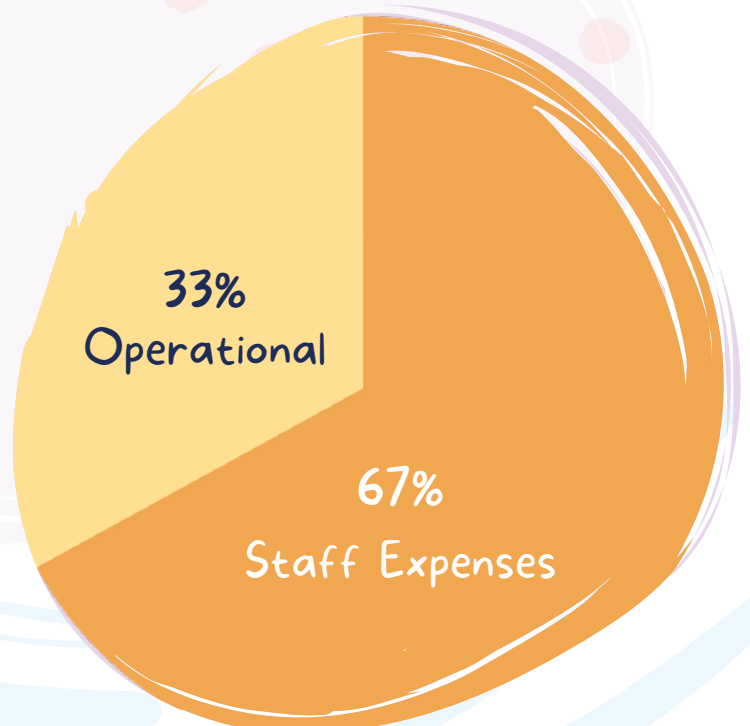
Looking toward 2024, the Executive team will continue to prioritise continuous improvement, invest further in our people, and refine strategies to adapt to the changed and challenging workforce landscape post the pandemic.

As we look forward to another exciting year for the organisation, Child Australia is in a strong financial position to embrace growth and mission-driven opportunities. We have a proven track record of expanding our revenue sources and building our asset base, which allows us to effectively pursue and deliver on our strategic initiatives.

## Revenue



## Expenditure





# Thank you to our partners



Department of  
Education



Australian Government



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Department of Communities

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