



keyassets

SERVING CHILDREN, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

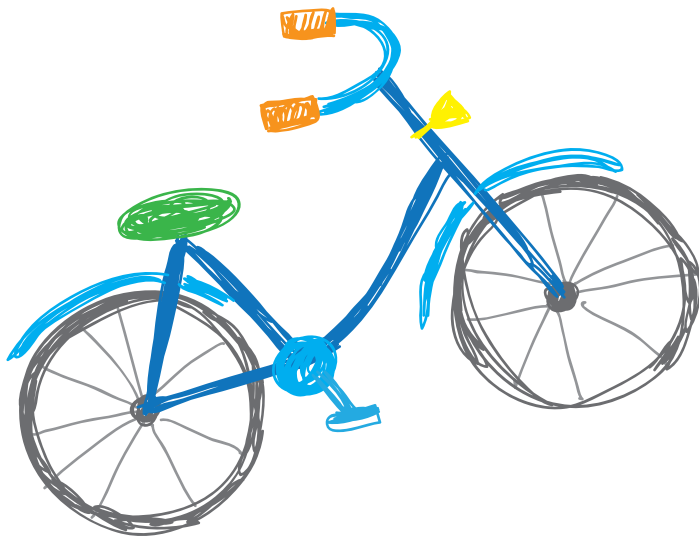


Impact Report

Making a positive and lasting difference
to children, families and communities

23





Find out more



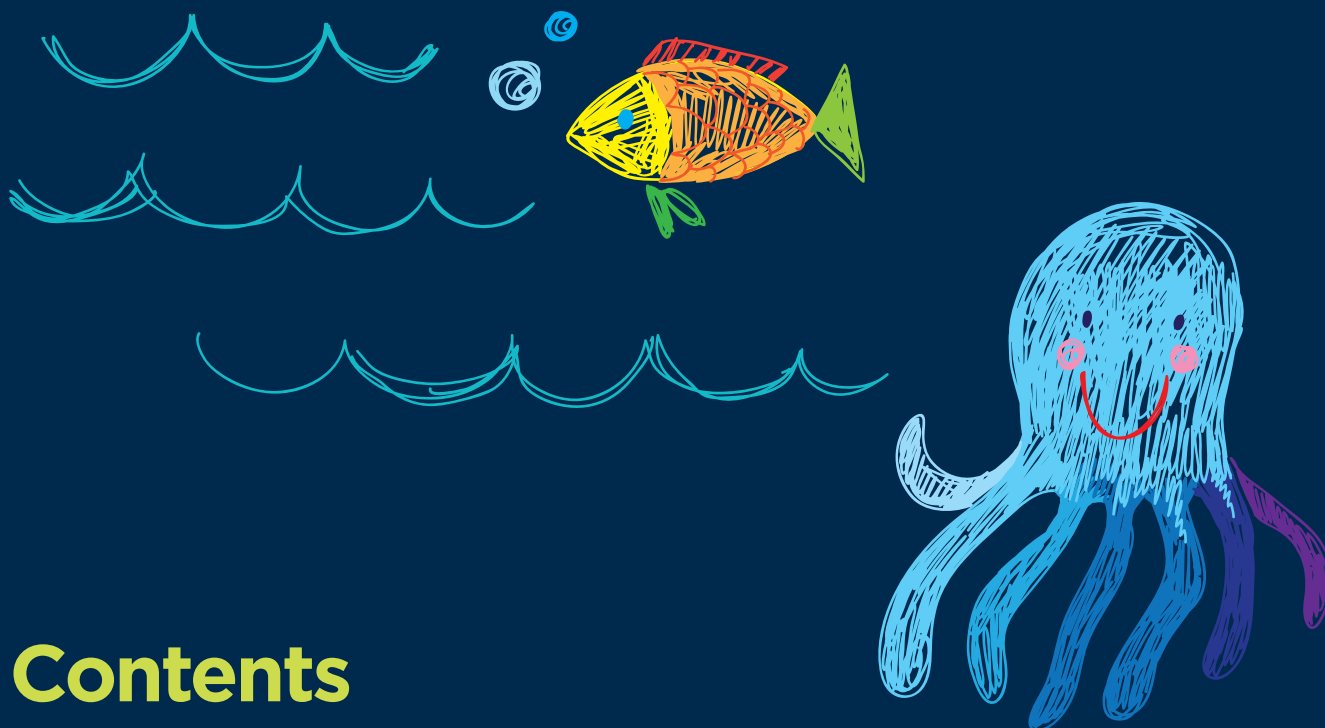
Key Assets Australia (KAA) is a non-government, not-for-profit children, family and community services agency which works in partnership with the Martin James Foundation, a global charitable group delivering services and support across Europe, Asia Pacific and Canada.

KAA was founded in 2007 and has grown to provide a wide range of services to children, families and communities in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria and Norfolk Island.

We strive to continue our work in developing an innovative range of services for children and young people, partnering with statutory bodies, foster carers, families and people with disabilities to understand and meet their unique needs, enabling them to succeed.



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Pledges

Our *pledges* to you



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

1. Set high **standards** for ourselves and the **care** and **support** we provide for you
2. Be on your side and **accept** you for who you are and what you want to be
3. Prioritise your **safety**, connections and build your **resilience**
4. Be **passionate**, **caring** and **respectful** in everything that we do
5. **Listen** to and **learn** from you so that we can do things better

CUSTOMERS, CARERS AND STAFF

1. Deliver excellence through **quality** service provision, **collaboration** and **measuring outcomes**
2. Act with **honesty** and **transparency**
3. Deliver **innovative** services in **cost effective** ways
4. **Challenge** the norm, ask questions and keep our promises
5. Conduct our business with financial **integrity** to achieve sustainability and **value**

COMMUNITIES

1. Build a **socially responsible** and **friendly** presence in each of our communities
2. Value **diversity** and **inclusion** and act with **cultural sensitivity** and **respect**
3. Be **creative** and **flexible** to respond to each community's unique **needs**
4. Recruit, train, support and retain the best people to deliver services
5. Contribute to **shared** learning through **research** and **partnerships**

We are all Key Assets



Our purpose is to achieve positive and lasting outcomes for children, families and communities.

We will achieve our purpose by positively impacting the lives of children, young people, their families and carers through quality services and expert advice designed to provide support, build confidence, improve skills, develop relationships, and strengthen resilience.



Our culture and core values

Key to what we do are our culture and our core values of:

Recognising everybody counts and is accountable

Providing high quality and safe services

Achieving excellence through continuous improvement

Cultivating knowledge, innovation and learning



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

CONTINUE TO SAFELY GROW AND EXPAND OUR SERVICES

We are excited about the future and have a vision to expand the positive impact we make on the lives of children, families and communities with a particular focus on vulnerable and at risk and communities.

- 1.1 We will embed a child centered and family focused approach across everything we do
- 1.2 We will increase our focus on building evidence of the positive outcomes
- 1.3 We will continue to grow and diversify our services
- 1.4 We will grow geographically seeking new opportunities in areas of need and collaborate with partners to achieve our purpose
- 1.5 We will strengthen our relationships with all levels of government and identify more opportunities to work in regional and remote areas
- 1.6 We will continue to deliver quality services through growing and development programmes for our staff, carers and volunteers
- 1.7 We will continue to build on our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and opportunities to partner to further our reconciliation journey
- 1.8 We will ensure that the voice of children is heard in everything we do



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

TRANSFORM OUR PROCESSES AND OUR SYSTEMS

We will invest in our people and processes, and technology to deliver services that are to be more effective, efficient and

- 2.1 We will continue to refine our processes to meet the demands of innovation
- 2.2 We will invest in the best technology to improve our network, systems and data
- 2.3 We will build staff capacity and succession planning and talent management
- 2.4 We will invest in learning and development
- 2.5 We will engage in a customer centric approach to understand our customers' experience and future direction
- 2.6 We will engage internationally to learn from contemporary trends
- 2.7 We will review the carer journey to improve our carers' experience
- 2.8 We will review and learn the lessons from COVID-19 as it informs our strategy

“ Our *purpose* is to achieve positive and lasting impact on our purpose by *positively impacting* the lives of children and expert advice designed to provide support



OBJECTIVE 2

PROCESSES AND DEVELOP AND SKILLS

l systems to transform our skills, deliver quality services to enable us flexible in maximising our impact.

skills, processes and systems innovation and diversification

technology and available solutions, and hardware

and create opportunities talent mapping

resources for staff and carers

and competitor analysis to better expectations, opportunities, risks and

to showcase our outcomes and to ds worldwide

ey to identify opportunities to e

ssons from our response to strategic objectives



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

INNOVATE AND LEAD

We will use our strengths and experience to demonstrate how our innovative solutions make a difference for the children, young people, families and communities we support, and help lead and share best practice.

- 3.1 We will develop thought leadership and best practice methods for care
- 3.2 We will explore changes to our business models to maximise our resources across the continuum of services
- 3.3 We will remain abreast of developments in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- 3.4 We will work with Aboriginal partners to support transitioning services to Aboriginal children and families to Aboriginal providers
- 3.5 We will continue the implementation of the Key to Care Practice Framework for Foster Care and Working with Families
- 3.6 We will trial innovative new services and regions
- 3.7 We will continue the development of innovative approaches to child safe organisations
- 3.8 We will continue to build the capability and governance of our Board and Executive Leadership Team

outcomes for children, families and communities. We will achieve lives of children, young people, their families and carers through quality services, support, build confidence, improve skills, develop relationships, and strengthen resilience.



Chair's Message

I am proud to present our 2023 Impact Report. It reflects a very successful year for KAA and shines a light on the difference that we have made in the lives of over 1,500 children and families.

As I reflect on the year, one of the big highlights has been spending time with our carers and employees around the country. I have been continually impressed and humbled by their commitment to our children, young people and carers, and their dedication to ensuring they achieve their best possible outcomes. I know my fellow Board Directors also share this appreciation.

This commitment is made even more relevant when viewed alongside the challenges the sector is facing nationally, such as carer shortages. Our own work, together with national collaborative efforts, is critical if we are to continue to make a positive impact. We also continue to significantly invest in our systems and skills, as well as innovation, including the launch of our Chrysalis Transformation Hub.

The year saw the growth of our Board and governance structures. Two new Non-Executive Directors joined KAA, representing our member organisation the Martin James Foundation. This has strengthened this relationship and increased our connection to our global learning environment.

Our commitment to delivering positive and lasting outcomes for the children and young people in our care and their families and communities continues to drive us. We have continued to

expand our services to support children to grow and be safe, ideally within their own strengthened families, with their kin, or with our devoted foster carers or complex care providers.

This applies equally to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, children, young people and carers, and continues to be the focus of our journey towards reconciliation. Our Cultural Practice Leads and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees work closely with our communities and help to inform our cultural practice. We are also working together to enable the successful transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in our care to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations wherever possible.

Finally, at the end of a very successful year, I would like to thank my fellow Board colleagues, our CEO and the Executive Leadership Team. The organisation's impact is made possible by your commitment and ongoing efforts to achieve our purpose.



CRAIG LAWN
CHAIR
KEY ASSETS AUSTRALIA



CEO's Message

At the end of my third year, I am reminded of the privilege that I hold as the Chief Executive Officer of KAA. It is truly an honour and I want to express my sincere gratitude to each one of our carers and employees for your unwavering dedication and support in achieving our purpose. Our organisation thrives because of your compassion and tireless efforts. As you read through this report you will see so many examples across the country that bring these words to life!

I also want to acknowledge and thank KAA's Executive Leadership Team for your exceptional leadership and strategic guidance. The complex work that we do is made possible in an environment that enables us to focus on our culture, and that is what underpins positive outcomes for all.

This year we have delivered on our strategy. We have continued to invest in our people, and in our systems and infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of our stakeholders. KAA also made a significant, new investment to deliver the third pillar of our strategy which focuses on innovation.

This investment saw us successfully launch the Chrysalis Transformation Hub, which is a new team within KAA. Chrysalis aims to lead, innovate and transform the development of services that deliver better outcomes for children, young people, and families. It is embedding end users with lived experience at the centre of all service development and delivery, by adopting a Human-Centred Design approach. Chrysalis is also focused on our place-based work, which will help us learn from and aggregate knowledge from our work on Norfolk Island, East Kimberley and 'Our Place' in Morwell to inform our practice in creating change through place.

This year also saw the commencement of two significant research partnerships. The first is a partnership with Western Sydney University to jointly fund an Aboriginal PhD scholarship. This scholarship was awarded to Kamilaroi man Bradley Burns whose research is designed to listen to the voices of First Nations children and young people in out-of-home care. Bradley is now embedded with our team in NSW and his work will have strong links to the Chrysalis Transformation Hub.

The second partnership is with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), Centre for Community Child Health. KAA is the inaugural organisation partnering with MCRI in its new

Researcher in Residence (RIR) program. The RIR is embedded with our team on Norfolk Island to capture the story of the development of our NI-Connect Child and Family Wellbeing Unit and the use of place-based approaches to drive change and outcomes.

Over the past year, we have also had many opportunities to learn and grow alongside our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, stakeholders and other professional colleagues. This has included working together towards the development of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, our cultural confidence development with the Stronger Smarter Institute, and collaboration with our national group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues as part of our founding membership of the national Allies for Children Australia group.

With travel finally getting back to normal after COVID-19, I also had the chance to meet with our colleagues at the Martin James Foundation in the UK. It was a great opportunity to come together with our affiliates from Europe and Canada as well, and to share and exchange valuable insights into all our work. The visit strengthened our international partnerships and set the stage for further global collaboration.

Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation to our KAA Board Directors for their unwavering support, wisdom and vision. Your guidance is invaluable, and we are truly fortunate to have you leading us forward.



DR DIANNE JACKSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
KEY ASSETS AUSTRALIA





Chrysalis

Transformation Hub

Mission: To lead and innovate the development of insight, interventions, services, and models that deliver better outcomes for children, young people, and families.

We were excited to officially launch our new transformation hub, Chrysalis, at the start of 2023. Research and practice show there are fundamental and complex systemic issues impacting positive outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. These issues are also creating significant barriers for service providers across Australia to achieve the best outcomes for the children and families in their care.

Chrysalis represents KAA's commitment to address these issues – and lead the way in systemic generational change. It is also delivering Pillar 3 in our Strategic Plan 2020-2025, which focuses on leveraging innovation and leadership to make a positive difference for the children, families and communities we support.

Beginning with building transformation capacity within our own organisation, Chrysalis will enable KAA to innovate and adapt with agility, pace, and purpose, while supporting organisational objectives and delivering on our strategy. Through collaboration, Chrysalis will support the leadership team to align what we do with desired outcomes and accelerate the right strategic initiatives.

Chrysalis starts with the Voice of the Child and will work to change the system through multiple transformation levers. Ultimately, Chrysalis will enable KAA to better respond to the needs of children and young people through our quality services and evidence-based practices, while also driving significant, lasting change within the system and sector.

Developing Chrysalis

Chrysalis is the outcome of a 12-month Human-Centred Design process involving young people, and our KAA employees, Executive Leadership Team and Board. This approach ensured service users, the KAA team and children's voices remained at the centre of the design and development. We conducted interviews, co-design sessions and workshops, and feedback sessions with stakeholders. We also analysed research exploring social innovation and

Australian child and family wellbeing innovation to gain insights and understand practices across the whole spectrum of the system. This thorough development phase resulted in the design of a robust, evidence-based framework.

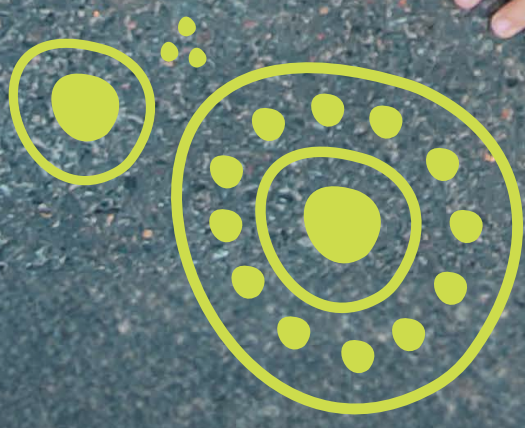
How Chrysalis will work

Chrysalis is an independent, dedicated transformation function within KAA, with the capability to test ideas and run initiatives that will disrupt, provoke and influence the system and elevate the way KAA can achieve positive, lasting outcomes for children, families, and communities. Chrysalis' autonomous role enables the team to drive capability and capacity for change within the organisation, without destabilising what is already working.

Employees will be able to submit initiatives, projects and ideas to Chrysalis for consideration. Ideas will be assessed and then selected to be scoped, designed and delivered by the Chrysalis team with the goal of improving KAA's practices, or the system as a whole. Completed initiatives will be evaluated for further learning and analysis of impact within and external to KAA. Through championing their voices, children and young people will be embedded in Chrysalis' work and decision making across our organisation. The needs of children and young people will be further integrated into our service delivery and design of services and programs, and we will amplify their voices in government and across the sector to ensure they are being clearly informed, represented and involved in the decision making of their lives.



JAMIE HODGSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CHRYSALIS TRANSFORMATION HUB



Annual Statistics

RECRUITMENT



124

new carers approved

FOSTER CARE



693

carers who have cared



327

children left our care

DISABILITY SERVICE



205

NDIS participants receiving a service



354

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



1,247

children supported through foster and kinship care programs

FAMILY SERVICES



231

families supported



823

children in care on 30 June 2023



Our Australian Services



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- > Foster care
- > Family Support Services
- > Complex care
- > Disability Services

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- > Foster care
- > Disability services

VICTORIA

- > Foster care
- > Kinship care
- > Family Preservation and Reunification
- > Intensive family support
- > Early help



QUEENSLAND

- > Foster care
- > Kinship care
- > Disability services

NORFOLK ISLAND

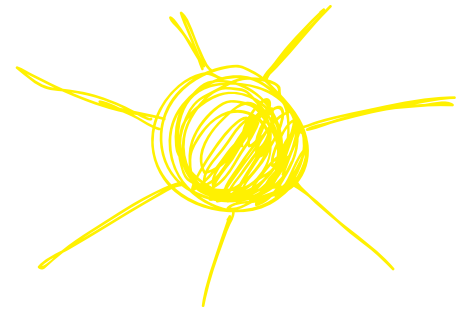
- > Children and family wellbeing

NEW SOUTH WALES

- > Foster care
- > Kinship care
- > Guardianship
- > Foster Care to Adoption

TASMANIA

- > Sibling care
- > Intensive family support



Queensland

This year our Queensland service completed another successful Human Service Quality Standards audit. This, in conjunction with our reputation for delivering best practice care, has cemented our position as the Department's organisation of choice for family-based care and the support and assessment of provisionally approved carers within several regions across Queensland.

Cultural practice

In Queensland, approximately 40% of children and young people in our care come from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. While 44.5% of all children in our care are in kinship care placements, only 5% are placed with Aboriginal or kin families. To ensure these children and young people have opportunities to learn about their cultural background and connect to Country and family, we invested heavily in developing cultural support plans, and hosting cultural events and activities within the school holiday program. We have also utilised our staff members trained in family finding.

Our Cultural Practice Lead, Elaine Tanaka, has worked with staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities to build cultural confidence and connection. Elaine provided cultural training and education sessions on Intergenerational Trauma and other topics to both staff and carers. She was also involved in training the wider community in intergenerational trauma, including delivering sessions for the Department and peak foster and kinship care bodies and their representatives.

We also formed meaningful and respectful partnerships with several Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO). This included sponsorship of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community Health Service Brisbane, and a memorandum of understanding with the Ngutana-Lui Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Studies Centre. These have enabled us to connect more closely with Elders in community as well as provide assessment and support to families supported by ACCOs within the region.

Virtual Reality training

In the Darling Downs region in the south-west of the state, our Education and Social Work Teams provided trauma-informed care training to school principals and guidance officers using Virtual Reality (VR) technology. Participants wear

VR headsets to gain an understanding of what it is like to walk in the shoes of a young person who is living in out-of-home care or who has experienced an abusive or neglectful upbringing. Similar training has also been delivered to local community organisations including PCYC.

“We're always told that we need to put ourselves in the shoes of the young person. Until this experience, I'd never really visualised what that was. This has made it so much more real for me.”

- SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND TRAINING PARTICIPANT

Hook into Books campaign

We were delighted to partner with Life Without Barriers for their national Hook into Books campaign in September 2022. This campaign aims to give children and young people in out-of-home care opportunities to develop a love of reading and storytelling through access to books, cultural connections and digital literacy resources. Our Social Work Team embraced the campaign, filling suitcases with donated and purchased books to take to households for children to choose and swap. They were also encouraged to talk about the books and their favourite genres to share their love of reading. We are looking forward to being involved in the campaign again in September 2023.



Research project with University of Queensland

Our employees and carers contributed to a research project with the University of Queensland's Child Health Research Centre looking at navigating the barriers to supporting neurodevelopmental disorders in children in out-of-home care. The project is investigating how to increase referrals, assessments and ongoing therapeutic support for these children and young people.

National Kinship Care Project

Significant development work was completed in preparation to run a pilot of our National Kinship Care Project evaluation framework and model. As the trial site, our Queensland team developed a bespoke kinship care program, including a suite of procedures and practice guides, an evaluation framework, training schedule and kin assessment guide and tools. Ten carer families have been recruited to take part in the pilot, which will run through the next financial year. The goal is to develop a national program and framework to guide all KAA work with kinship care families.

Our workforce

We conducted a full functional review of our Queensland team to ensure we can continue to meet demand from carers and the community for our services and supports. This included examining how we can best grow our team and diversify our services in the future. As a result of this work, we employed an Operations Manager to oversee all our activities and a Senior Social Worker who sits across the team to cover employee vacancies and absences so carers, children and young people always have support.



MELISSA HAYES
STATE DIRECTOR
QUEENSLAND



RECRUITMENT

26

new carers approved



DISABILITY SERVICES

117

NDIS participants receiving a service



FOSTER CARE

143

carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

115

children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

120

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

326

Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

173

children in care on 30 June 2023

Buddies for our new carers

QUEENSLAND CASE STUDY

“If I’m able to help anybody break down some of the barriers [of fostering] and understand a little bit more about how it works, I think that helps carers be carers for longer.”

- JIA BROOKS, FOSTER CARER AND BUDDY

The first 12 months of becoming a foster carer is a critical time for engaging with new carers to keep them on board. Recognising that peer support is a key factor in retaining new carers – particularly during their first 12 months of becoming a carer – a Carer Buddy Program was established within the jurisdiction approximately two years ago.

The team now has 10 active carer buddies who share their wealth of knowledge and lived experience of fostering with newcomers to the role. The buddies are also an important resource for our team – providing feedback on activities and resources and sharing their experiences to help us improve our service.

Louise Ireland, Senior Social Worker and the coordinator of the program says the opportunity is a win-win for everyone involved.

“Research shows that mentoring increases retention, confidence and resilience in carers in that first 12 months, which is a key risk period for them not to stay on as carers. Being linked to a buddy or mentor is a key factor that can hold retention. If we can get them through the first 12 months, then we’ve got a pretty good base to continue from,” she says.

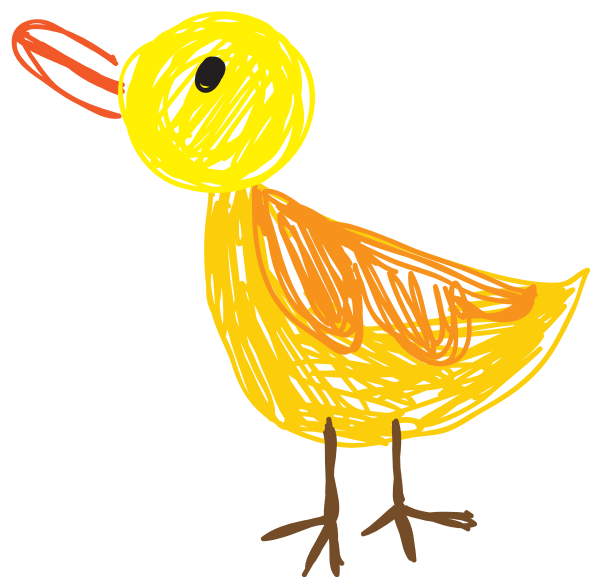
How it works

New carers are linked with a carer buddy when they are first registered with our Queensland service, even before they have had their first child placed with them.

“The experienced carer buddy will reach out by phone and be there to share the journey, answer questions and link them to our training and events so they have someone that they know and can come along with,” explains Louise.

“It’s about building that village or informal support network for people within the foster care community.”

Buddies are also provided with other opportunities to work with the team, including scoping training programs and attending events to share their story.



Jia Brooks - Buddy

Jia loves fostering. He became a carer eight years ago, when a young child came into his life needing care for a longer period. That experience inspired him to do more. Jia and his family are now regular respite carers. Jia put his hand up to become a carer buddy because he wanted to help others understand and love fostering like he does. He is currently supporting two new carers.

"Fostering is very inaccessible to people and very confusing if you're not in it. I'm happy for any opportunity to help somebody through those experiences," he says.

"One of my carers reaches out to me regularly. She's having a little bit of trouble with a young person, somebody out of her scope. I've been able to guide her with dealing with things and working through what that might look like. I've also been helping her navigate some issues with child safety and removing the guilt that comes from wanting to help these kids and focusing on what your family is able to do."

Jia's carer has told him she values his opinion as somebody who is unbiased and who can share his own experiences.

"That's rewarding for me. Having an opportunity to offer a little bit of insight from a real point of view, to help somebody move along in being a carer is awesome."

Shelly Currie - Buddy

Shelly has been caring on and off for 27 years, as a kinship carer, respite carer and full-time carer. She became involved with the Carer Buddy Program so new carers can have some extra support to tap into.

"If I can take a little bit of the burden off and help another person who's caring for a child with a quick answer or give them a little bit of advice, I'm happy to. I think new carers need that little bit of extra support from people who have been there, done that," she says.

Shelly is currently mentoring two carers in the pre-approval stage, but also informally offering support to another two carers. Additionally, she has taken up our offer to support her to complete a Certificate IV in Youth, Child, and Family Intervention.

"My carers haven't really needed my support and assistance yet, but I'm assuming once they get a child and they've got some questions, they will come on board."

"I'm looking forward to working with them to make sure that their expectations are right, that they understand and know fully what they're getting into. I want them to know that this is a journey, and you're going to go three steps forward and five steps backwards, two steps forward, and one step backwards."





New South Wales

This year was a milestone year for our New South Wales service. We celebrated our 10-year anniversary, achieved full accreditation for our out-of-home care, case management and adoption services, celebrated family finding success and have been supporting several young people in foster care to transition to guardianship and adoption.

A decade in NSW

In September 2022 we marked 10 years of service in New South Wales with a gala dinner for our carers with members of the Board, Senior Executive, and employees in attendance. This was an opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved in the past decade, as well as present carer awards and employee service awards. Steve Jacques, former Key Assets Group CEO, delivered a video message and our carer, Rachel Wax, shared insights from her foster carer journey.

In 10 years, our New South Wales team has:

- › grown from supporting 19 children in care, to a team of 85, supporting almost 250 children and young people
- › been located in nine different office locations and now operates from offices in Botany, Blacktown and Wallsend
- › supported 34 young people to transition out of care to independence
- › supported and authorised 566 carers.



Accreditation

We achieved full accreditation by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) to provide statutory out-of-home care and adoption services for a further five years until June 2028. This process was a huge feat for the team, with the OCG visiting our offices twice during the assessment phase to collect evidence and review our practices and processes. To be awarded five-year accreditation is a vote of confidence in our services.

Family finding

Meaningful, lifelong connections with family members are considered the most important factor impacting positive outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care. This year, our New South Wales team had some significant wins in this space, with children and young people connected with family or significant people in their lives who they hadn't met previously.

In one case, after extensive investigations involving NSW Police and Centrelink, a six-month-old baby was connected with 10 family members who didn't know she existed. Our team was able to identify one family member as a possible carer and following assessments, the baby was placed with an aunt, uncle and three cousins.

Mind of My Own app

Following a pilot with our team in Blacktown we extended the trial of the Mind of My Own app to all case management employees across the jurisdiction. This interactive app provides a way for children and young people who may have difficulty speaking up to share their experiences, feelings and views on being in care with their social worker or case manager in a safe, digital space.

Through a series of structured prompts, young people can use the app to share what may be worrying them. This information is then sent safely and securely to their social worker so they can

respond and address the situation. The app, which features simple words, images and graphics, has proven to be an effective way for children as young as four years old to express how they are feeling. More than 35 children and young people in our care and 28 KAA practitioners have set up accounts in the app, with more than 100 online conversations completed. It is hoped that in the coming year, uptake will have increased significantly.

Design for Care research project

We were pleased to contribute insights to the Design for Care research project led by Curtin University’s Centre for Transformative Work Design, in collaboration with University of Sydney, Monash University and several other industry partner organisations.

Funded by icare NSW, the project aims to understand and improve workplace mental health and wellbeing by redesigning work in the Healthcare and Social Assistance industry.

Our team completed surveys and interviews, providing their views on ways their work tasks, activities, responsibilities and relationships could be improved to help prevent psychological injury such as work stress and burnout. Leaders at all levels worked with their employees to develop and implement work redesign strategies focused on reducing workload, empowering individuals to communicate with each other, and ensuring regular opportunities for employees to support each other. The research team will present their final report in late 2023.



JAMES ISLES
STATE DIRECTOR
NEW SOUTH WALES & NORFOLK ISLAND



RECRUITMENT

40

new carers approved



FAMILY SERVICES

9

families supported



FOSTER CARE

220

carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

33

children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

61

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

267

Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

234

children in care on 30 June 2023

A special family reunion

NEW SOUTH WALES CASE STUDY

“It has been a real privilege to work with Sam*, Lily* and their family, and support them to achieve restoration. This process has been a great reminder of the impact that our work has on the families we work with and the importance of exploring restoration for our young people.”

- JESSIE ZHANG, NSW SOCIAL WORKER

A child’s basic human right is to be with their parents, as long as it is safe to do so. When two siblings in our care told their social worker they wanted to live with their mother in the Netherlands, our team spared no effort in making it happen.

“Restoration work is really common, but to do restoration overseas is very rare,” explains Tony Jans, NSW Operations Manager.

“It’s complicated. It’s difficult. We have to navigate policies, processes, inter-country requirements and assessments, and all that is very challenging ... But [when successful], it really can have a massive impact.”

Listening and advocating

Sam and his older sister Lily had been living in separate foster placements since 2016. During this time their mother was incarcerated, living in detention and then deported to her homeland of the Netherlands in January 2021. Throughout this, through regular phone calls and FaceTime, she maintained a close relationship with her children and expressed a desire to have them come to the Netherlands to live with her. The children had also expressed to Jessie Zhang, NSW Social Worker, that they too wanted to be reunited with their mother.

With no concerns regarding the mother’s parenting, our team were fully supportive of exploring this restoration case and worked with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to make it possible.

“We had lots of conversations with DCJ. We also arranged for an international organisation to do an assessment of mum, which came back positive,” explains Tony.

With DCJ supportive of the possibility of restoration, our team was able to take the next step to gather the required information to support a Section 90 application to change the care order for the children.

An overseas trip

A critical piece of the puzzle was observing Sam and Lily’s relationship with their mother and assessing her ability to care for them. KAA chaperoned Sam and Lily to the Netherlands to visit their mother, observe them together and conduct a thorough restoration assessment, including meeting with mum’s supports and extended family members.

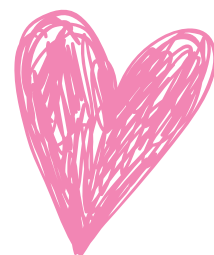
Significant planning and preparation went into the trip, including risk assessments because of the pandemic and the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. We organised all the travel plans and also connected with Fostering First Ireland, one of our affiliates, to ensure support was close by in the case of an emergency. Tony says the reunion couldn’t have gone better.

“It was like they had seen mum yesterday. The kids were really comfortable with her, and she was really comfortable with them. You could tell that Sam had a really good bond with mum.”

“We let the kids stay with mum, but we saw them every day. We needed to be really clear about the interactions between mum and the kids, what that looked like, and to make sure that the kids were okay and comfortable.”

“We went for lunches and did activities with mum and the kids. We also met with her mum and met with all the friends that she could identify. We met with other family members, and then had a lengthy interview with mum,” says Tony.

*names changed for privacy reasons



A positive outcome for all

Back in Australia, our team prepared the assessments and information they needed to apply to the Court for a restoration order.

“We gave all our information to DCJ and then lodged a Section 90 application supporting restoration to the Court, on behalf of mum, for the restoration. The dad, who lives in Australia, consented to the children going to live with mum because that’s what the kids wanted.”

“The Court didn’t hesitate in making the restoration order. I took the kids to the Netherlands in September to restore them to mum,” Tony says.

If all goes well with the move, our team will have parental oversight for three months, after which mum will take full custody.

Jessie is delighted with the positive outcome.

“There was never any doubt this was the right decision from the beginning. We were able to achieve this wonderful outcome because Sam and Lily have been vocal from the beginning about their wishes, and because they had so many advocates including family members, carers, social workers, therapists and other professionals,” Jessie says.

“I am incredibly proud of the work that has been done by everyone and so thrilled that Sam and Lily will be reunited with mum in the Netherlands.”

*names changed for privacy reasons



Norfolk Island

Operating as NI-Connect Child & Family Wellbeing Unit, our small team on Norfolk Island helped more children and families this year than any previous year of delivering services. Successful community engagement has led to more families voluntarily seeking advice and counselling services from the team, with 30 children and young people from 21 families now being supported.

21 families used Family or Individual Support Services in 2022-23.

Holiday Wellbeing Program

Following a review of our Holiday Wellbeing Program, changes were made to focus on delivering a wider variety of activities tailored to the different ages and interests of children. The restructure was intended to better meet the needs of children attending and not impact so significantly on other child and family services delivered by the team, making the program more sustainable over the long term. Adjustments continue to be made based on feedback from children, parents, staff and young people.

A short survey was sent mid-year to casual staff and parents asking for feedback and suggestions for future programs. Some comments received included:

"Thank you for such a great program ... The kids absolutely love it and enjoy going every day."

"Thank you so much for looking after our kids. It is a tremendous help for full time working parents. To know that they are out doing fun activities and not stuck at work with me on screens is awesome!"

"Fantastic effort team. How lucky we all are to have access to such a wonderful program that is on offer to all."

Breakfast Club

We have continued to deliver a Breakfast Club once a week at Norfolk Island Central School, with 40-50 children attending each week. Having this regular presence on the school grounds has helped to build closer relationships between NI-Connect employees, school staff and the students, enabling more opportunities for engagement with children and young people. We have been able to involve the students and school staff more in planning and implementation of community

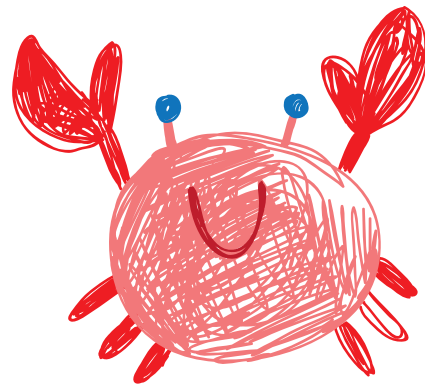
programs and activities, particularly to respond to emerging needs or issues to build social and emotional wellbeing.

Parenting group

NI-Connect worked with Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service to jointly facilitate Tuning into Teens, a parenting program for parents of pre-teens and adolescents. Through group discussions, videos, role play, meditation and other activities, the program focuses on ways parents can help their teens develop emotional intelligence. Fourteen parents, including two school staff members, attended the group, with all providing positive feedback.

"I have become a better listener, learning to pause before reacting, looking at the emotion rather than behaviour, behaviour means they are trying to communicate."

"The content was not too specific, while being useful in a range of contexts. I enjoyed the program and thought it was well delivered, encouraging and was comfortable/safe at all times."



NI-Connect
Child and Family Wellbeing Unit



A team approach to providing support

NORFOLK ISLAND CASE STUDY

“This situation is a good reflection of how we provide support here on Norfolk Island. We figure out who’s best placed to work with someone or fill a particular role. In this case, each staff member at some point has had contact with Kristy* and her sons.”

- KATE MILLER, TEAM MANAGER

After leaving her long-term partner, Kristy reached out to NI-Connect’s Family Support Worker Shirl McLeod for advice about how to manage post-separation parenting arrangements. It soon became apparent that Kristy and her sons, Luke* (10) and Billy* (6), would also benefit from a range of other support and engagement from the NI-Connect team.

“Kristy had just left [her partner] and was trying to figure out the post-separation parenting arrangements, and how she could afford to survive without the relationship. Shirl did a lot of really good work with her, getting her comfortable with telling her story and talking about what had been going on.

“Then it got to the point where Shirl realised that Kristy needed some counselling, so she brought me in to start individual counselling. We soon realised that the two boys probably needed someone to talk to as well, but there were not a lot of options on the island at the time. [NI-Connect’s Senior Social Worker] Bec Carleton has now been doing counselling with the boys for about nine months,” explains Kate Miller, NI-Connect Team Manager.

Kristy’s situation was complicated. In addition to managing post-separation parenting arrangements for her sons, finalising her divorce and moving into her own home, Kristy was also dealing with leaving a long-term controlling relationship which had involved some family and domestic violence. She was also managing alcohol issues and child-parent instabilities. At the same time, Luke and Billy were adjusting to mum and dad separating and moving between two homes.

“If they lived elsewhere, Kristy would have to go to a domestic violence service, an alcohol and other drugs service, the family relationship advice line

or a family lawyer to get that advice. But we are it here. NI-Connect are all of those services,” says Kate.

In Kristy’s case, Shirl provides family support and advice, while Kate has been providing individual counselling, helping Kristy to work through her past experiences, manage her alcohol issues and gain trust and confidence, while also realising her boundaries.

“With Kristy, we’re sitting in that trauma-informed practice space, focusing on the Blue Knot principles around empowerment, collaboration, choice, safety, and trustworthiness,” says Kate, adding that it has been important for Kristy to realise overcoming trauma takes time.

The younger son, Billy has also been attending NI-Connect’s School Holiday Program to maintain engagement during time away from school and his counselling sessions. Kristy’s older son Luke has attended another NI-Connect program at school called Rock and Water. This program uses physical movement as a way of dealing with strong emotions.

“With the boys we’ve noticed their willingness to engage. They are getting something out of [their counselling with Bec] because they’re both consistently still coming to see her,” Kate says.

“With this family, if they had to go to five different agencies to get the same kind of support, I think the outcome could be very different. But because they’ve got that consistency with us...they can see it’s a good thing that they’re coming and talking about these things.

“Seeing some of the changes that Kristy has made has been really positive.”

*names changed for privacy reasons





Victoria

After a period of significant growth and expansion, this was a year of consolidation for our Victoria operations. Our key focus has been strengthening existing programs and setting ourselves up to meet future challenges.

New funding opportunity in Gippsland

This year, we took advantage of a funding opportunity to deliver integrated family services in Gippsland. Building on the work we already do in the region, this new funding allows us to work with families in a much more intensive way. It also enables us to provide additional, long-term support to those experiencing complex disadvantage to achieve sustained change.

New office in Parkville

Our Victoria team were delighted to open a new office in Parkville to support the important work we are doing with the Victorian Child Protection Department's North and West Divisions. Both the North and West Programs are steadily growing and delivering enhanced, home-based care for children who have complex needs and require a therapeutic team around them and their placement.

Investing in our people

This year, we formed a partnership with child and family service organisations Windermere and Wayss to provide the Diploma of Leadership and Management to emerging leaders. The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare is delivering the training. Five KAA employees who have shown strong leadership potential or who have recently moved into a leadership role are completing the Diploma.

Baby College is born

During the year we launched Baby College in Morwell, a new parenting course that supports women in their last trimester of pregnancy and into the first 12 months of their baby's life. Created and delivered as part of the 'Our Place' model, Baby College brings people together to share experiences of parenting and educates and supports parents to understand and respond to their baby's needs.

With the successful graduation of our first cohort of Baby College parents this year, the program has received funding for a second year.

To support this important work, the team also runs playgroups and parenting groups in school settings parents can drop their children off and access support. Many of these families are facing multiple issues including family violence, mental health concerns and homelessness. This work is part of the Early Help program being delivered in 'Our Place'.

Audit passed with flying colours

Victoria was successfully reaccredited as a children, youth and family services provider, passing with 100% compliance and no non-conformities. With our carers and other key stakeholders interviewed as part of the audit process, it was a strong vote of confidence in our capacity to deliver effective programs and services.



Recognition for a powerful contribution

We were proud to announce that our Victoria State Director, Lisa Ranahan, was shortlisted for a Robin Clark Award for Leadership this year. Named in honour of the inspirational child protection advocate, the award recognises an individual whose leadership inspires others to act wisely and care deeply about achieving the best outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers.

The nomination is a fitting acknowledgment of the wonderful contribution Lisa has made here at KAA and to the sector more broadly.



LISA RANAHAN
STATE DIRECTOR
VICTORIA



RECRUITMENT

21

new carers approved



FAMILY SERVICES

110

families supported



FOSTER CARE

107

carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

101

children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

37

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

225

Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

119

children in care on 30 June 2023

Supporting vulnerable new mums

VICTORIA CASE STUDY

“If we can support a mum from the last trimester of her pregnancy, it can change the entire trajectory of her child’s life.”

- TONI BRAIN, TEAM MANAGER OF EARLY HELP

Our Victorian team were delighted to celebrate the graduation of the first cohort of mums from Baby College in 2023.

Launched in October 2022, Baby College is a 12-month program focused on supporting vulnerable mothers on the first 12 months of their pre-natal and early post-natal periods to improve developmental outcomes for their babies.

The free program delivered as part of Our Place at Morwell Central Primary School, involves two-hour face-to-face sessions each week on topics ranging from child development, feeding, sleeping, relationships, safety, roles and routines as well as music and reading.

Mothers enrolled in Baby College are connected with other support services in the community to help them cope with the demands of parenthood and other challenges in their lives.

The Baby College team also undertake assessments that involve going into the families’ homes to support parents set up safe and enriching bedrooms for their baby. We can also assist in purchasing items for baby and parents.

Toni Brain, Team Manager, says Baby College is meeting a critical community need.

“A lot of the mums we work with didn’t have the most positive experiences of childhood themselves. A lot of what we do is about helping them break that cycle and teaching them the importance of their baby’s development.”

“Teaching them what a nourishing and safe environment looks like and helping them recognise where things went wrong in their own lives allows them to ensure the trajectory for their child isn’t the same as theirs.”

“If we can improve a mother’s parenting skills, it can stop a child from ending up in care, which is where many would likely otherwise end up.”

Toni says the Baby College team goes above and beyond to help mums and babies to thrive, both during the course and when they leave.

“For us, it’s about giving them every opportunity for growth. That might involve running cooking classes or engaging a dietician. It might involve offering swimming vouchers to encourage mums to take their kids to the local pool and teach them how to swim. Or it might involve linking them with local jobs and skills providers.”

A lot of hard work has gone into getting Baby College up and running and seeing the first class through to graduation, but Toni says the results have been worth all the effort.

“Watching the bonds growing between the babies and their mothers has been really special. The babies are so happy now, and they’re comfortable around other people. That’s a positive sign that they’re in a really good place.”

“When you’re given the opportunity to enhance the development and growth of a mother and baby, it’s a really beautiful thing. It’s really special to watch.”







Tasmania

This year was a strong year of diversification for our Tasmania service. In addition to the increasing number of children and families receiving support through our existing programs, we also took advantage of opportunities to provide new services in partnership with government. At a time when other organisations are struggling to recruit and retain staff, we continued to grow our passionate and talented team.

Sibling Care Program

Tasmania's Sibling Care Program has been providing family-based, sibling foster care since 2015. Experience and data tell us that children and young people living with their brothers and sisters in foster care do better across a range of indicators. These include fewer placement disruptions, greater school attendance and a higher likelihood of being successfully reunified with their family of origin. We acknowledge and thank our wonderful foster families, who have been critical to supporting the change in the way foster care is perceived on the continuum of child and family safety and support. Our sibling carers play such an important role in family restoration. Their support for the process and for the children and young people involved is integral to successful return to family of origin.

Supporting families

Our Intensive Family Engagement Service (IFES) remains at the core of the work we do with families in Tasmania. Under this program, at-risk families are provided with six months of intensive support to build the parenting skills they need to ensure their children can remain in their care.

Accompanying IFES is our Bringing Baby Home Service Model. It delivers intensive assessment, intervention and parenting capacity building so at-risk infants can remain in the care of their parents.

External respite service

We are also pleased to be able to offer a respite service for carer and kinship carers who are external to KAA. Children and young people in this program are provided the opportunity to develop friendships with others in foster care and experience the benefit of establishing positive caring relationships with other adults. Carers and kinship carers also make connections with our foster carers and can relax and re-charge in the knowledge that the children they care for are happy and well cared for. Scheduled, good quality respite and positive connection and association help to support and sustain primary care.

New services

Our team has continued to develop and provide a range of services for children and families in response to requests from the Department of Education, Children and Young People. These services have included supporting children to have quality time with their parents.

We have also supported families from culturally diverse backgrounds to reconnect with each other, navigate the complex system of child and family welfare, and understand parenting. We have connected families with mentoring services and supported children returning to the care of their family of origin. We have completed assessments on family circumstances and made recommendations tailored to support positive outcomes and sustained change.



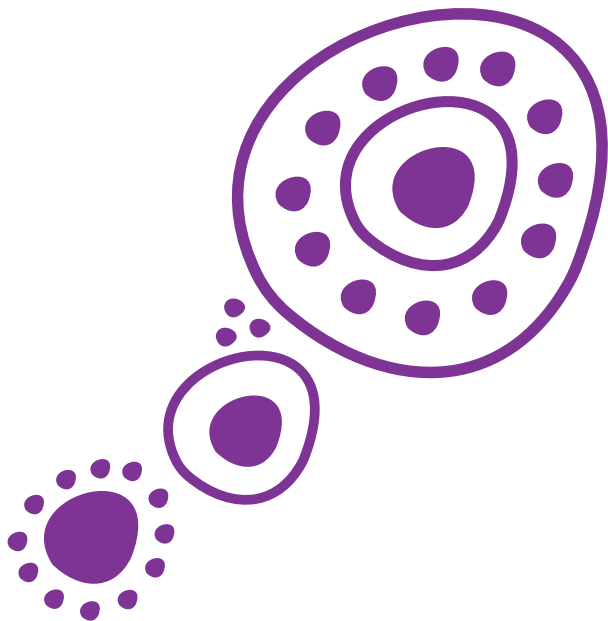
Supporting Tasmanian Aboriginals

Our Tasmania service was proud to follow our other states and appoint a Cultural Practice Lead this year. It was a pivotal step in our actions towards reconciliation, communicating our intent to provide a culturally safe organisational environment for children and young people, carers and our employees. It forms a critical part of our commitment to raising the profile of Aboriginal people and respecting and learning more about their culture.

We continue to strive to make KAA a culturally safe workplace focused, front and centre, on the needs of the Aboriginal communities we work with.



JOANNE HILLIARD
STATE DIRECTOR
TASMANIA



RECRUITMENT

11

new carers approved



FAMILY SERVICES

70

families supported



FOSTER CARE

32

carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

15

children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

14

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

78

Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

45

children in care on 30 June 2023

Providing children with therapeutic support through respite care

TASMANIA CASE STUDY

“We use respite care as a therapeutic tool to keep families together and increase the wellbeing and safety of young people.”

- FLEUR BRADBURN, MANAGER OF FOSTERING (SOUTH), TASMANIA

While respite care is often seen simply as a way of giving tired family, kinship and foster carers a break, it has the potential to deliver so much more for children and young people. Our Tasmanian team are exploring the potential of respite care to provide therapeutic support for children and help them remain living with their family and kin.

Although scheduled respite offers foster and kinship carers valuable time for self-care to help them sustain their energy and commitment, Fleur Bradburn, Manager of Fostering (South) in Tasmania, says KAA's respite carers provide so much more than a break for primary carers.

“Everything we do is therapeutic. For us it's integral that every point of contact with a child is consistently providing a therapeutic response. To achieve this, we recognise that our carers are the agents of therapeutic change and we have made a significant investment in training and support for them. All our carers are trained in providing trauma-informed care, and all of them are supported by a social worker,” Fleur says.

“A great example of this approach in action was a young girl we supported recently who was living with her grandmother. Child Safety were concerned about her living situation and wanted to transition her to foster care. Instead, we connected the girl with a respite carer who understood trauma-informed care. The child was having trouble sleeping at night, something the respite carer was able to help with by spending time drawing with her at bedtime, instead of watching her iPad, which she usually did,” explains Fleur.

“With the therapeutic support of her respite carer, the girl started doing better at school and was able to stay living with her grandmother, a wonderful outcome for everyone involved.”

Fleur says respite care can bring a range of benefits for children.

“Often when kids come into care, they don't have enough safe adults around them. Giving a child more examples of what a safe adult looks like is really beneficial for them.”

“Respite carers can also give children a fresh perspective. They give kids the chance to experience new things, like going to restaurants and art galleries. Some of them have other children or pets to bond and form friendships with.”







South Australia

It has been a year of growth for our South Australian service with more children and young people coming into our team's care and a growing community of carers choosing to work with us. With more than 1,000 enquiries for support, and a new level of accreditation, our reputation as a leading child protection organisation has continued to grow.

ASES accreditation

This year we were proud to achieve three-year Award Level Accreditation under the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). The feedback received after the audit was overwhelmingly positive. Our South Australian team were previously accredited at Certificate Level. Earning this accreditation is endorsement of our work and a sign of maturity for our organisation in South Australia.

Staff growth and impact

Over the year, the number of children and young people in our care grew to 153. To ensure we could support this growing cohort, we introduced several new senior roles and employed additional social workers. We also employed a Carer Retention Officer to enhance connection with our carer community which this year grew with eight newly approved carers and eight experienced carers who transferred from another organisation. Our Carer Retention Officer focuses on continuing to strengthen community connections and improving the training experience for new carers.

Our Placing and Matching Advisor has made a valuable contribution to our team. Working with families and young people, this role ensures those in our care are placed in appropriate foster care homes offering stability and positive experiences.

To create more space for our growing workforce, our College Park office underwent significant renovations to create extra breakout areas, meeting rooms and a new training and learning space. The changes support our growth and enhance our capability to connect and host our foster care community.

Supporting our families

We continued to support our carers with training opportunities as well as positive health and wellbeing initiatives. Our Carer Appreciation event in September 2022 was a special occasion with 70 carers joining our team to share experiences and connect with each other. The event was an

opportunity for employees to thank all carers and recognise those who have been part of our carer family for 5 and 10 years. Special guest Katrine Hildyard MP, Minister of Child Protection, was on hand to honour the milestones.

Throughout the year other activities for our carers, children and young people included wellness days, chair yoga sessions, a men's support group, laughter therapy, movie days, community events and family days. We also hosted a Christmas party at the Beach House in Glenelg for more than 100 children and carers, and our school holiday program offered activities including rock climbing, and visits to adventure parks.

Employees also provided close to 900 support and coaching sessions and made 99 advice visits and 2,044 home visits to approved carers across the year.

Training topics for carers included play therapy, disability, the adolescent brain, trauma and attachment, and cultural and linguistic diversity. Education sessions to help carers better understand how to support children with their schooling were also delivered by Student Support Officers and Wellbeing Officers from the Department of Education.

Launch of Disability Services

We began offering Disability Services as a registered service provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from January 2023. We held a launch event at our College Park office with special guests including Emily Bourke MLC, Assistant Minister for Autism and Assistant Minister to the Premier, Paige Greco OAM OLY, Paralympic cyclist, and Isabella Vincent PLY, Paralympic swimmer. We are currently offering Home and Community Supports to any children and young people aged 0-18 years who have an NDIS funding plan within South Australia. In the coming year, we plan to add Allied Health services to our disability support offerings.

Reconciliation journey

Led by our Cultural Practice Lead, we have moved forward in our reconciliation journey. In addition to providing more cultural awareness training to employees and carers, we have enhanced our connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by attending events and hosting stalls and culturally significant activities. See the case study on page 38 for more on this work.

Child Protection Awards 2023

We were delighted to have two members from the KAA family nominated as finalists in the 2023 South Australian Child Protection Awards. Our congratulations go to:

- › Lorraine Joy who was a finalist in two categories, Foster Carer of the Year and Volunteer of the Year
- › Young person in our care, finalist in the Outstanding achievement of a child or young person category.

The awards, presented by the South Australian Department of Child Protection, were announced in September 2023.



MICHAEL AINSWORTH
STATE DIRECTOR
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



RECRUITMENT

17

new carers approved



DISABILITY SERVICES

5

NDIS participants receiving a service



FOSTER CARE

107

carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

16

children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

44

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

189

Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

153

children in care on 30 June 2023



Connecting community and culture

SOUTH AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

“Being a part of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee in South Australia has been a fantastic opportunity. It makes me feel proud to work for an agency who values the reconciliation and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and puts this at the forefront of the work we do.”

- MADDY NORMAN, SOCIAL WORKER AND RAP COMMITTEE MEMBER

In the past year, our South Australian team has taken every opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation and growing their cultural awareness. The team’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been integral, with staff involved in many different ways.

“It’s been wonderful seeing so many team members actively wanting to invest in the RAP Committee and be involved in this space. It shows our staff really value it and see it as being important to the work we do,” says Sarah McPharlin, Quality & Practice Lead and RAP Committee member.

Assisted by a Cultural Advisor initially, and later the Cultural Practice Lead, the team has worked hard over recent years to increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the workforce and be seen in the community as a safe place to work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Staff members have also actively participated in and celebrated significant dates and events on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar, including proudly joining 1,000 people at the National Reconciliation breakfast during National Reconciliation Week 2023.

“This year, we made a commitment to increase our presence and engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It has been great to see the organisation, including our staff, carers and young people, engaging with the community throughout the year. Events have included Closing the Gap Day, and Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week activities across the state,” says Karolina Harrison, Recruitment and Panel Manager and RAP Committee member.

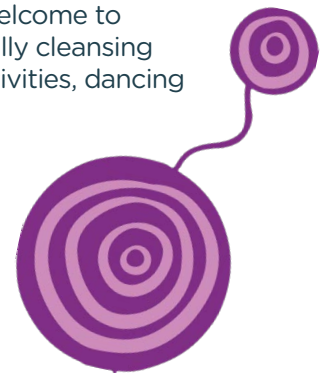
“It’s been a privilege and a wonderful opportunity to hear from the community and learn more about services that can support our families to keep children and young people connected to culture,” says Michael Ainsworth, South Australia State Director.

There has also been a strong focus on ensuring carers are culturally responsive to the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children that may come into their care.

“As part of our commitment to keep children and young people connected to culture, we require all our prospective carers to demonstrate a willingness to care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. Our training and assessments are aimed at ensuring carers are culturally responsive to the needs of the children coming into their care,” explains Karolina.

The team’s annual camp in October included opportunities to connect everyone with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. More than 100 foster carers, children and young people joined staff in Victor Harbor for three days of fun activities, connection and socialising. To support our reconciliation work, we included dedicated cultural experiences including a Welcome to Country by Naomi Hicks, a spiritually cleansing smoking ceremony, cultural art activities, dancing and karaoke.

“This year’s camp was a massive success, and it was wonderful to dedicate some time for camp-goers to immerse in cultural activities to enhance their experience,” says Michael.





Connecting through artwork

One of the most significant aspects of the team’s reconciliation journey was the commissioning of a beautiful Aboriginal artwork to portray our South Australian story. We worked alongside local Aboriginal organisation Ochre Dawn to engage Gabriel Stengle, a talented artist of Kaurna, Ngarrindjeri and Nurrunga heritage.

“We embarked on a dedicated and extensive collaboration with Gabriel. Together, we worked to convey the story of our South Australia service through the lens of Aboriginal art. Gabriel’s modern and vibrant style perfectly captured the essence of our children’s service,” Michael says.

After learning about our story, people and organisation, Gabriel designed a stunning, contemporary tribute that recognises our children and young people, carers and community.

“It was a privilege to collaborate with Gabriel. Her art not only adorns our space but also enriches our understanding of Aboriginal culture. This artwork stands as a reminder of our collective dedication and serves as a source of inspiration,” says Amy Kane, Assistant Director.



The Artwork

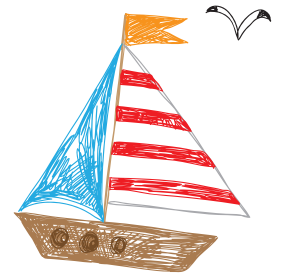
The blue waterholes that flow through the middle represent KAA. They are surrounded by waterholes of different colours which represent the children, families and communities.

These meeting places are surrounded by people who are part of KAA as well as the children and families they support.

The waterholes that are joined with journey lines show both the connections and journey that the families, children and KAA family share on their path to making a positive and lasting difference.

The kangaroo and emu prints show KAA always moving forward and never back.





Western Australia

Our Western Australian team continued to grow the KAA footprint this year while successfully meeting increased demand for our existing services. We also took significant steps to deepen connections with First Nations communities across the jurisdiction.

Family Support Wellbeing Service

After the successful expansion of our Family Support Wellbeing Service (FSWS) program into Halls Creek last financial year, KAA was approached to deliver a 12-month pilot early intervention service with extended scope and reach across the East Kimberley region.

The project strengthens our partnerships with Jungarni-Jutiya Indigenous Corporation and the Wunan Foundation to provide intensive family support to vulnerable children and families in the area. It also involves the establishment of a 'diversionary network' of coordinated services aimed at diverting families away from the child protection system. The project requires the recruitment of additional local staff via our partner agencies, who are provided with training and support.

Under our social investment approach, the intention is to assist in building the infrastructure within the local communities so that services can be led and operated by local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) in the future.

Complex Care

Complex Care was one of the fastest growing areas of work for us in Western Australia. This service delivers homes and support services to children and young people with high and complex needs who are not able to live in a family setting.

This year the number of young people supported through our Complex Care program increased from 4 to 14. We also expanded the service for the first time into Halls Creek and Broome. This reflects our commitment, wherever possible, to keep children on Country close to family. We were delighted to employ new Case Managers to support the rapid growth of this service.

We were proud to maintain high rates of employee retention in our Complex Care program, with 23 of 24 Youth Workers employed in the South West still working for us. This is testament to the level of support we provide our direct care employees, who we value as the key agents of change for young people in the program.

Measuring the power of cultural connection

This year, our Western Australian team partnered with the Telethon Kids Institute – a preeminent medical research institute based at Perth Children's Hospital – on a research project measuring the impact and importance of cultural connection for First Nations children living in non-First Nations foster care.

Focus groups were held with social workers around themes of cultural planning and connection, and the research was co-designed with a First Nations Elders consultation committee who had oversight of the direction and approach. The wellbeing of children and young people is being measured pre and post cultural interventions and activities to track the impact of the cultural planning and connection.

The outcomes of this research will inform KAA and the broader sector's practice around cultural connection for First Nations children in non-First Nations care into the future.

Strengthening connections with First Nations communities

Our Western Australian team took significant steps during the year to deepen their awareness and understanding of First Nations culture, and to make our organisation a culturally safe one for First Nations people.

We created a Cultural Support Worker role to support our newly appointed Senior Cultural Practice Lead. This new team member will work closely with carers, children and young people to value add to cultural connection and planning.

In recognition of the importance of early cultural connection, we made it a requirement for all First Nations children to be offered a cultural activity within seven days of coming into our care. These activities include storytelling, colouring, crafts, visiting culturally significant places and meeting with people in community.

This year we employed a dedicated Family Finding Social Worker to help children in care connect or reconnect with family members. This

targeted work has led to some significant family connections being made for children who have been in care for many years. Some were not aware of the existence of extended family members while others were aware that they had family connections but had not met them.

We continued to host First Nations interns through our partnership with Aurora, providing vital training, professional development and employment opportunities to those interested in working in the sector.

We were also proud to sponsor and support First Nations community activities throughout the year. These included an event on Sorry Day in May 2023, where Auntie Millie Penny shared her inspiring story, and a ‘Walk and Talk’ through Mooro Kaarta (Perth’s Kings Park) during Reconciliation Week. We were also delighted to host the premiere of the film *The Lost Daughter* in Perth. We invited our friends and partners from across the sector to this exclusive screening, which tells the emotional story of a First Nations girl who spent the first six years of her life with a white foster family, before being reunified with her birth family.

Investing in our people

This year there were several key learning and development opportunities provided for our employees and carers.

In addition to our usual training calendar, we offered training in CREATE Your Future and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention to employees. We sent several staff to the Australian Childhood Conference in March 2023, with attendees presenting their key learnings to the rest of the organisation. In June 2023, we supported five of our carers and four employees to attend an ADHD Conference.

This year, we also introduced simple and easy-to-read monthly tip sheets for our carers on topics including managing mealtimes and sleep routines. We also added training models to our Care2Learn online learning platform for carers which now includes easy access to information sheets on relevant policies and processes.



BRENDA YELLAND
STATE DIRECTOR
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



RECRUITMENT

9 new carers approved



DISABILITY SERVICES

83 NDIS participants receiving a service



FAMILY SERVICES

42 families supported



FOSTER CARE

84 carers who have cared



FOSTER CARE

47 children who have exited our care



FOSTER CARE

78 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported



FOSTER CARE

162 Children supported through foster and kinship care programs



FOSTER CARE

99 children in care on 30 June 2023

Keeping children with complex needs connected to Country

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

“It’s important for kids like Cody* to feel connected to their Country, their mob and their family.”

- PIERRE BUSH, REGIONAL MANAGER, KIMBERLEY

Cody’s first 10 years of life were as difficult and traumatic as they come. He was taken into state care at the age of seven due to extreme neglect, physical abuse and exposure to domestic violence.

Cody came from a family with a complex dynamic, where drugs and alcohol were widely used and there was a long history of children being removed. By the time he was 10, he had experienced more than 150 interactions with police, and had disengaged from education. Sadly, at the time, there were no service providers in Cody’s hometown, which is located in the Kimberley region, to provide the level of support and care he needed. As so often happens to children from remote communities, Cody was sent to Perth, the only place where programs existed to accommodate his complex needs and challenging behaviour.

A fresh approach

Cody spent almost three years living off Country, which further exacerbated his trauma. With a growing awareness in Western Australia of the importance of keeping First Nations children on Country wherever possible, KAA saw an opportunity to provide a solution for Cody, as Pierre Bush, Regional Manager explains.

“We put together a pitch and funding model to set up a program for him to return to the Kimberley, which the Department of Communities (DoC) accepted. As part of that program, we rented a house and recruited a team of youth workers to provide 24/7 support for him.”

“One of the biggest points of difference in how we handled Cody’s situation was we employed a family-centred model of care. We were adamant that, if we were going to manage the placement, Cody had to have contact with his family. We wanted him to be able to engage positively with them, and we wanted to be able to role model to them how to deal with him in a positive and therapeutic way.”

An inspiring outcome

Since coming into KAA’s care, Cody has made impressive progress. In his first 18 months with us, there was an 83% reduction in the number of his interactions with the police. His behaviour also deescalated to the point where we were able to reduce the number of staff needed to work with him from a 2:1 to a 1:1 model of care.

“We’ve had some significant wins with Cody over the last two years,” Pierre says. “I’ve heard senior Department employees describe him as one of their greatest success stories.”

As Cody’s relationships with his support workers improved, he started having positive conversations around adulthood, education and making money. This provided an opportunity to reengage him with learning.

“One day Cody asked if he could cook a big barbeque for his youth workers and family down at the park, something we were very happy to help him organise. After doing that successfully, he asked, ‘Do you reckon I could sell food and drinks and make money.’ We were able to engage him in a conversation about commerce, and we pitched to him the idea that he starts selling food to order. He said, ‘I’d really like to do that.’”

“With the support of the team, he designed his own order forms, took them around to customers and made muffins for everyone who ordered from him. We gave him a loan of \$60 for his business, which he called ‘Hundreds and Thousands’.

“The whole thing was a great success. Not only did he make enough to pay his business loan back, he also made a profit of \$116, a decent amount for a 13-year-old. The best thing though was, in the process he was able to sign off on key competencies needed to complete a Certificate I in both Business and Hospitality at TAFE.”

Pierre puts Cody's inspiring progress down to the consistency of his care and maintaining a strong connection to family and Country.

"He's benefited so much from having a small, stable team working with him. We all use the same language and the same approach. Like any child who lives at home with the parent, he knows what he's going to get from us every time."

"We're a highly trained team that knows the therapeutic strategies to mould a young person like him and start healing their trauma. Involving family in the process as much as possible has also been critical. They're welcome to visit him and stay with him whenever they want."

A growing need

Pierre says he hopes the success of Cody's program opens the door for more on-Country support for complex care cases like this one in remote communities.

"There are no lost causes. These are traumatised kids. Some need more help than others, but everyone can start healing."

*names changed for privacy reasons



Disability Services

This year was a year of significant change for our Disability Services Team with a new Director, a restructure of our Senior Leadership Team, expansion into a new jurisdiction and a shift in the focus of our work.

New people and structure

February 2023 saw Kerrie Maxworthy step into the Director of Disability Services role bringing with her a wealth of sector experience, both inside and outside the organisation. Kerrie's appointment was accompanied by an expansion of the leadership team to include Operations and Programs Managers for both Queensland and Western Australia.

To support this new structure, we made significant improvements in the business support space by recruiting people with the right expertise and taking advantage of opportunities to automate and enhance our systems and processes.

Redefining our services

Since moving into the Director role, Kerrie has turned her attention to redefining KAA's Disability Services product offering from Home and Community Support, to an Allied Health model which wraps around our out-of-home care services across the country. Operating an Allied Health model opens the potential for KAA to provide services to people outside the NDIS through Medicare and other funding packages.

Expansion into South Australia

KAA was delighted to introduce Disability Services into South Australia for the first time this year. We are currently offering Home and Community Support with a plan to grow an Allied Health footprint across the state in the future. We are also exploring opportunities to showcase our services by delivering support in partnership with government.

Delivering disability support in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities

A key focus for KAA's Disability Services Team has been looking for opportunities to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the NDIS. Kerrie has been working with Cultural Practice Leads across

our jurisdictions to develop connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's health services.

As part of our commitment to meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with disabilities, we have explored opportunities to deliver therapeutic services to children in remote communities. This year we negotiated with the Queensland Department of Health and other industry stakeholders to deliver therapeutic services on Macleay and Russell Islands on a trial basis. Children living in these communities currently lack access to these services.

A voice for our disability clients

Our Disability Participant Advisory Group (PAG) gives our clients an opportunity to have their say on our support services, activities, policies and procedures, and how they might be improved. The PAG meets quarterly and is made up of participants from across Western Australia and Queensland who access our services.

A key outcome from the PAG this year was the launch of a specialist parent-child playgroup trial for people living with disabilities. This idea was first floated by PAG participants, who did not feel comfortable in a mainstream playgroup setting.

NDIS audit

In November 2022 we passed our NDIS audit with flying colours. The culmination of 10 months of work for the Disability Services Team, the audit found numerous elements of best practice and reported no non-conformities. KAA is required to complete a NDIS audit every 18 months.



KERRIE MAXWORTHY
DIRECTOR OF DISABILITY

Advocating for young people living with disabilities

DISABILITY CASE STUDY

“Even though she finds communication difficult, Hayley* still has a voice.”

- TIYARN TAYLOR, SUPPORT COORDINATOR

When our Disability Services Team first started working with Hayley, the 20-year-old was not getting the support she was entitled to and needed.

“Hayley had spent her whole life living with her family, where she was exposed to a lot of psychosocial challenges like domestic violence,” Tiyarn Taylor, Support Coordinator explains.

“She has an intellectual disability, level-three autism spectrum disorder and is completely non-verbal. At home she displayed self-harm and other challenging behaviours.”

“Despite the fact she was eligible for NDIS funding for Supported Independent Living (SIL) and an array of therapies, she’d gone more than 10 years without active support services. That lack of intervention had left her really behind.”

Tiyarn says what Hayley needed most was someone to advocate for her and make sure she was getting the support she was entitled to.

“She had no networks at all that could help her navigate the system. KAA was able to be her voice, advocating for and coordinating the services she needed.”

KAA helped Hayley with the difficult process of moving out of home into a NDIS-funded SIL property, where she has access to 24/7 support. Tiyarn says she has made “leaps and bounds” forward since moving in.

“The house and the daily routine are set up to meet Hayley’s needs. There’s a sensory room and a chill out room just for Hayley. The staff do lots of art and reading with her, and they take her out into the community for walks and swimming, which she loves.”

“The fact that she’s settled into an environment with two people she didn’t know is really positive for her. She’s made some really great connections

with her workers, and we’re not seeing the same kind of incidents or behaviours we were seeing when she was still living at home.”

To increase Hayley’s independence and quality of life, Tiyarn and the team have connected Hayley with speech, behaviour support and occupational therapists as well as mainstream services for health. With the right support around her, she’s thriving.

“One of our main goals with Hayley was to increase her dignity and autonomy around self-care. Since moving into the house, she’s been able to learn and implement a new toileting program, which is huge for her.”

Tiyarn says a critical aspect of the work KAA is doing with Hayley is to maintain and strengthen her connection to family.

“Hayley’s relationship with her mum is a complicated one. Mum has a lot of challenges herself with mental health, poverty and domestic violence. But we’ve worked really hard and put plans in place to make sure we maintain that relationship with family. A big part of our role is about educating mum about Hayley’s needs.”

After such a positive start to life in her new home, Tiyarn is optimistic about what the future will hold for Hayley.

“I’m really excited to see what life looks like for her in the next six to nine months.”

*names changed for privacy reasons



Practice, Quality and Safeguarding

The Quality and Practice Team continued to grow and evolve throughout the year. The team is now established across all jurisdictions and works in conjunction with them to improve the quality of services we offer to children and families.

Carer recruitment and retention

In 2019, KAA commissioned research into how we could improve our carer recruitment process to reflect the changing face of our foster carers over the last 10 years. The Carer Journey Project has continued to build on the outcomes of that research in collaboration with our colleagues in the Marketing Team. This year, as part of this commitment to reinventing and reinvesting in our recruitment efforts, we engaged a sales trainer to teach our Recruitment Team how to become 'trusted advisors' to potential foster carers and to provide an enhanced level of support to them throughout the process.

The success of our Carer Journey project and learnings from this work have also informed the development of a new suite of carer onboarding resources. The work has resulted in the rollout of a new national approach to how we recruit, assess and support our carers during their first year with us, replacing foster care manuals with a series of more accessible information sheets to support carers to find the information they need quickly.

An important focus of this work has also involved developing practices to ensure applicants have a positive and meaningful experience from the point of their first contact with us, through the assessment and panel process and then a smooth handover to their worker and first placement. The project involved collaboration between the Quality and Practice Team and representatives from all jurisdictions. Technology was used to improve our understanding of the needs of carers and enhance recruitment and retention rates.

Practice Guides are now available for staff members to assist with recruitment and there is a new procedure for carer recruitment. Detailed toolkits have been developed for workers and managers. These resources sit alongside a large library of information sheets designed to make learning more accessible to carers.

Safe Care

A key area of our work involves reviews of practice across the jurisdictions to identify and implement learnings from incidents. Our most recent review identified the need to improve our organisational approach to Safe Care practice. The focus of Safe Care practice has now shifted from focusing on the risks children may pose, to looking at the role carers and other household members play in caring for children safely.

We launched a new set of guidelines encouraging conversations with carers around how to respond to children's individual needs in a sensitive and child-focused way. A new, Safe Care assessment is in use across all jurisdictions and associated national guidance has been implemented. This work was supported by a Community of Practice.

New ways of working with children and young people to involve them in discussions about the elements of Safe Care have also been implemented using a children's Safe Care document.

Practice Framework

Our Practice Framework continues to be embedded in practice across all areas of the organisation. This year, a new one-day, face-to-face training course was delivered to several jurisdictions. The Quality and Practice Team linked closely with jurisdictional-based Practice Leads to support the implementation of the framework. Bespoke support was also developed for Team Managers to enable best practice in using the framework to support and coach employees. Employee consultations were used to inform the development of an E-Learning resource for coaches.

Participation event

During the year, events were held across all jurisdictions with the aim of gaining feedback from children and young people to inform our future practice. The focus of the events was

gaining their views on what we can do to make the transition process smoother for them when they come to live in out-of-home care.

Activities were structured to provide a welcoming, relaxed and child-focused environment, where they felt safe to share their wishes and feelings. They were encouraged to explore what factors were important to them when they moved from one family to another, and what helped them to feel safer in their new homes. Hearing firsthand from children and young people about their experiences of coming into care was very powerful for all involved.

These sessions highlighted the importance of telling children and young people the reasons why they come into care and helped us understand what workers and carers can do to help children settle. The significance of simple things like familiar faces and personal items and how they can make a difference to their experience shone through.

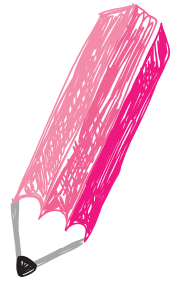
Virtual Reality

The use of Virtual Reality (VR) as a tool to train carers and staff has gained momentum this year. Increasing numbers of staff are now trained in a Certification Course to equip them with the skills to use VR as a learning resource with carers and other professionals. We continue to look at ways of evaluating and learning about the impact of VR as a resource to help adults care for children and young people in a trauma-informed way.



CAROLINE BROWN
GROUP DIRECTOR
CORPORATE SERVICES





Marketing

The Marketing Team has continued to remain effective and efficient with only a small team. Onboarding two new Digital Marketing employees in August and November 2022, we re-established capacity to engage and service all jurisdictions across our growing organisation.

Working collaboratively, the team has evolved our marketing practices and processes, positively delivering across a broad range of initiatives. Highlights include the following.

Intelligent advertising optimisation

With a new strategic direction, we identified advertising spend wastage and optimised paid media campaigns to provide better visibility across our target demographics and continue to drive interest and enquiries for our Recruitment teams. This has enabled us to reduce our overall 'Cost Per Acquisition', thus improving our 'Return On Investment'. Updating our suite of advertising creatives across social media platforms resulted in an increase in website visitors. Repurposing our budget into effective campaigns has led to statistically significant improvement in enquiries across all jurisdictions.

Darwin International Foster Care Conference

The Marketing Team was proud to be a sponsor and represent KAA at the September 2022 International Foster Care Organisation Conference in Darwin. Foster carers, young people with a care experience, children, families, and not-for-profit organisations in the sector gathered from across the globe for three days of purpose-led discussion and activities. We were privileged to witness young Ethan welcome us in the main auditorium. His words rang true: *"I am the author of my own journey, not the system. This is your chance to hear our voices and help make our care experiences the best they can be"* (paraphrased).

Launching Disability Services and career opportunities

Over the last year, the Marketing Team supported KAA Disability Services across three states – Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia – by creating advertising campaigns to generate enquiries and referrals. Career opportunities within KAA's Disability Services Team were promoted within our community to recruit and grow service delivery capacity.

In January, the Marketing Team also collaborated with our Director of Disability and local team to host a South Australian launch event to promote KAA's new SA Disability Service.

Investing in technology and integrated marketing systems

After an extensive review and analysis of our marketing systems in March, significant opportunities to improve carer recruitment and retention were identified.

In alignment with KAA's commitment to reinvent and reinvest in recruitment, the Marketing Team has started to update its technology infrastructure to better support its activities. The goal has been to maximise 'Return On Investment' from media advertising, improve prequalification and prioritisation of enquiries and enhance attribution, conversion tracking and reporting capabilities. Through advanced communication targeting, the Marketing Team aims to deliver more relevant information and improve overall engagement and response rates with applicants and existing carers.

Carer recruitment and retention

The Marketing Team has been an active participant in the Carer Journey Project over the last 12 months, which has yielded valuable insights into the recruitment application process. These insights have informed our recruitment communication strategy which focuses on delivering prospective and approved carers with a seamless, positive KAA experience.

New carer stories coming soon...

We love hearing stories from our amazing foster carers who are supporting children and young people across the country.

Throughout the year, we had the pleasure of speaking with carer households in each jurisdiction and would like to share Karl and Will's Foster Care/Guardianship journey with you.



Watch the video

Martin James Foundation

KAA is part of the Martin James Foundation (MJF), a global network of charitable organisations working with a shared vision of a world in which children grow up and thrive in safe and loving families. MJF is our member, and we work in collaboration to deliver innovative solutions and provide high quality family-based type care to vulnerable children and families. KAA continues to benefit from these international connections by mutually sharing best practice, research and innovation.

MJF and their global affiliates in Australia, Canada, Japan and New Zealand deliver high-quality family strengthening programs, foster care and support services to foster families.

In October 2022, MJF Co-Founders Jim and Ayyab Cockburn, Daniel Croft MJF Vice Chair and Key Assets Group Europe CEO, and Calum Sawford MJF's Chief Operating Officer met with KAA's Board, Senior Executive and Executive Teams in Brisbane. The four-day meeting was extremely positive and provided the opportunity for the organisations to share business and project updates and to connect face-to-face.

In May 2023, Dianne Jackson, KAA's CEO and Jamie Hodgson, CEO of the Chrysalis Transformation Hub met with MJF and some of our global colleagues in Birmingham. The day was filled with meaningful discussions about projects that were shared by MJF, KA Canada, Fostering First Ireland, FosterTalk and EPIC.

KAA is also a strong supporter and active participant in the MJF Communities of Practice (COP). These sessions are an opportunity to hear from presenters across the globe on current issues, research and challenges and solutions in the child and family services sector.

This year KAA employees presented several sessions at COPs which were attended by people across Australia and around the world. Topics included our Carer Journey research project, work in remote East Kimberley in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context, and managing engagement and retention of foster carers.

KAA also engaged in presentations from Canada, New Zealand, Uganda and the UK on various topics related to fostering. Employees reflected on the similarity of the challenges we all face, as well as the creative ways used across the world to respond to those challenges.



Martin James
FOUNDATION

Our Reconciliation Journey

KAA's commitment to reconciliation permeates everything we do.

A fresh RAP

KAA is focused on integrating cultural education and reconciliation across our organisation. With a significant percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care it is important that we continue to strengthen steps towards reconciliation.

We have progressed to the next phase of ensuring that we are a culturally safe and culturally confident organisation in the way we provide support and services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care through our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This work is supported by our Cultural Practice Leads in each jurisdiction.

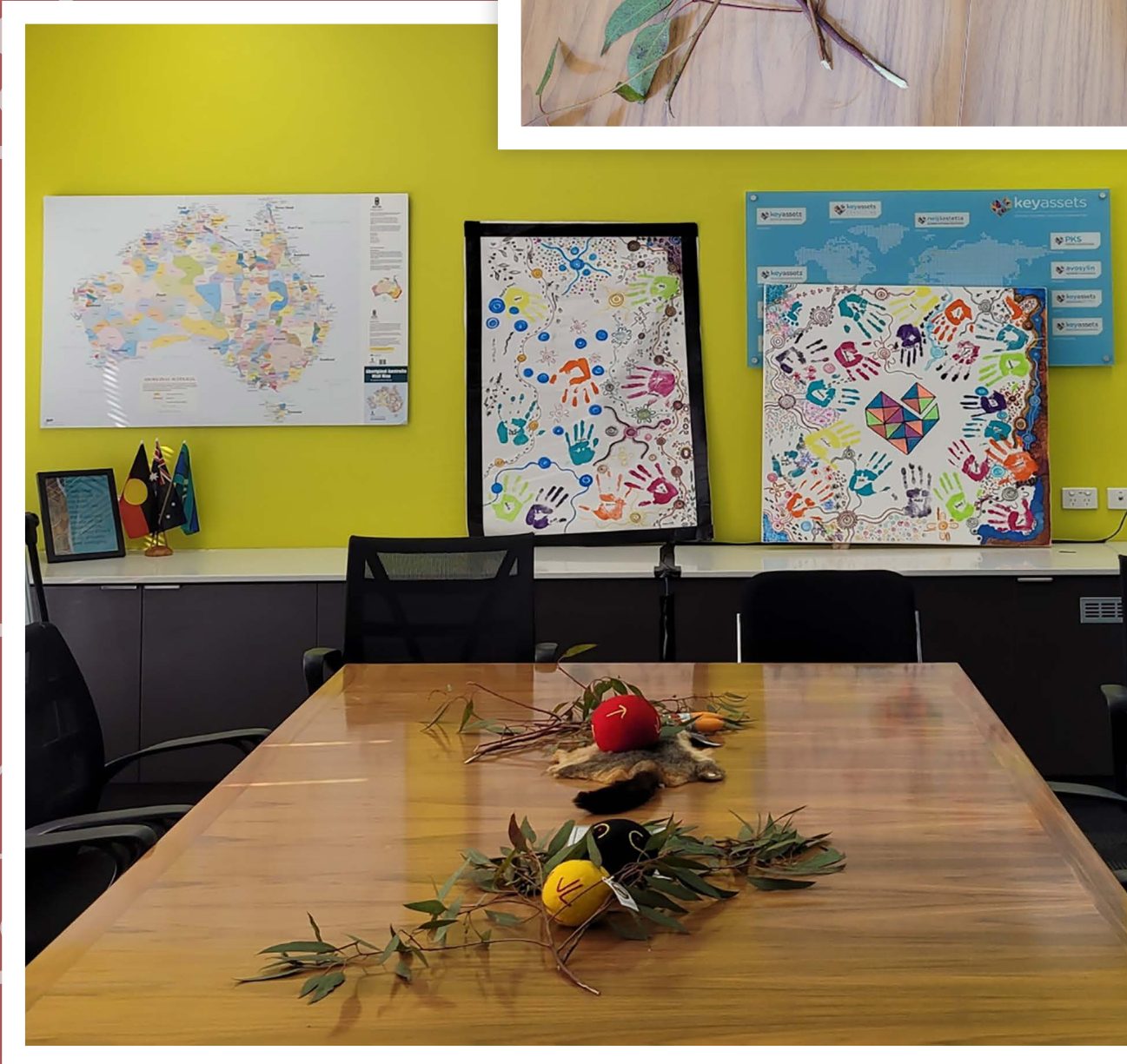
We have also commenced work in preparation for the future transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), who can better meet the children's cultural needs and connect them with community and Country.

Photo highlights

At KAA we acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their histories, cultures and values. We all have a role to play in reconciliation. During National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June), our teams across the country each commemorated the week in a different way. For example, Denice Kickett, our newly appointed Senior Cultural Practice Lead for Western Australia, took the team for a walk around Kaarta Gar-up (Kings Park) sharing stories passed down to her about Kaarta Gar-up being a place for meetings, gatherings and birthing. The group then gathered under the gazebo and each person spoke about what reconciliation means to them personally. This was followed by a delicious bush tucker lunch.

In Victoria the team hosted a re-launch of their Reconciliation Tree, with totems painted by KAA children and young people as well as handprints of employees. They also had some possum skins on display for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, painted clap sticks and weaved balls.





Our People

At KAA we are grateful to our team of dedicated and passionate employees who choose to work with us to support positive outcomes for children, families and communities.

Our workforce is located across Australia and on Norfolk Island, and includes people of all ages, genders, cultures and experiences. We pride ourselves on our employee-focused approach and inclusive culture.

We provide support, training and professional development opportunities to ensure our people have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the children, young people, families, carers and communities we support. We recognise the achievements of our employees so they feel valued and take pride in their work.

Workplace profile FY2023

Total number of employees - 461



Our workforce	Full Time	Part Time	Active Casuals	Total Employees	Male	Female	Total full time equivalent
Queensland	30	9	10	49	8	41	38.07
New South Wales	63	15	11	89	9	79	74.78
Norfolk Island	6	3	22	31	8	23	9.15
Victoria	51	8	8	67	6	61	58.07
Tasmania	24	0	0	24	1	23	24
South Australia	27	6	4	37	4	32	31.87
Western Australia	33	18	28	79	23	56	56.8
Disability Services	13	11	26	50	17	33	24.43
National Support Services	31	4	0	35	10	25	33.71
Total	278	74	109	461	86*	373*	350.88

* 2 not disclosed

Leadership Development Program

To support our mission, purpose and values, we began developing and delivering a suite of leadership development initiatives to support the needs of our leaders.

Through this initiative, we aim to equip leaders with skills to lead, inspire and guide their teams to success, while also ensuring they can foster a collaborative, engaged and high performing culture at KAA. The program emphasises KAA's people-centred approach and aims to develop our leaders into strategic thinkers who can drive KAA impact.

The suite of programs includes elements of:

1. Leader as Coach
2. Leadership in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) World
3. Sustainable Brain

Annual Learning Fund

This year as part of our commitment towards developing the capability of our people, we launched the Annual Learning Fund.

This initiative provides funding support for staff who wish to further develop skills and knowledge for their current role by completing additional learning. Funding can also be used for qualifications which form part of an ongoing career progression plan.

Across two rounds of the program, 46 applications were received and more than \$50,000 in funding was awarded.

Some examples of the courses listed in applications include:

- › Diploma of Leadership and Management
- › Qualifications in Community Services
- › The Rhythm 2 Recovery Model
- › ISO9001 Quality Management Systems Lead Auditor Course
- › Graduate Diploma of Psychology
- › Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy
- › Theraplay Level 1 & 2
- › Bachelor & Masters of Social Work
- › Diploma of HR Management
- › Certificate IV in Training & Assessment
- › Diploma of Child, Youth and Family Intervention
- › Professional Diploma: Therapeutic Life Story Work
- › Sensory Attachment Intervention (SAI) Adults & Adolescents - Impact of Trauma on Regulation and Sensory Processing
- › Clinical Training in Psychoanalytic Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy

Staff engagement survey

In June, we invited all staff to complete our annual engagement survey and provide feedback on their experience working for KAA. We received 307 responses with a participate rate of 80% for permanent employees and 21% for casual staff.

Our overall engagement score for 2023 was 74%. This is slightly below the 2022 score (78%), but above the average score for not-for-profits in Australia of 70%.

Based on feedback gathered in the report, in the coming year we will be developing an action plan around the key themes of building on our Employee Value Proposition, flexible working, wellbeing, leadership and career development.

Staff Stories

HEAR FROM OUR STAFF



Emily Brown

OPERATIONS MANAGER - NEW SOUTH WALES

Emily was backpacking around the world when she interviewed for a position as a Social Worker with KAA sitting on a milk crate using free Wi-Fi in Byron Bay. She only intended to stay in Australia for a year. When KAA offered her more responsibilities, her life took an entirely different path.

"I started as a Social Worker in June 2016 and by 2018 I had grown from the Senior to the Team Manager, overseeing the established team in Eastern Sydney.

"Things really took off for me in 2019 when I was offered a unique opportunity to start up an office in the Metro West region of Sydney. I started with one Social Worker and 16 children. We now have 11 Social Workers, two Seniors, two Team Managers and Business Support, as well as myself, now the Operations Manager - and are established in Blacktown.

"Undoubtedly, my biggest achievement has been the establishment and growth of our Blacktown office, nurturing a high-performing team, fostering growth opportunities, and empowering exceptional leaders and a team of social workers. This, coupled with our remarkable work culture, has enabled us to grow safely and achieve remarkable outcomes for children and families on a larger scale.

"I'm passionate about continuous learning to better support my teams and the families we serve. I enjoy the opportunity of being engaged in different projects and gaining insights into the intricate systems surrounding social work and children in out-of-home care."



Juanita Begley

TEAM MANAGER - QUEENSLAND

A six-month social work student placement at KAA in Eight Mile Plains in 2015 was all it took for Juanita to be convinced that this was where she wanted to start her social work career. After working at KAA as a Support Worker while completing her degree, Juanita was invited to apply for a position as a Social Worker after graduating. Her career journey with KAA didn't stop there.

"I went into my social work degree with every intention of working with the refugee and migrant community, but then, through my student placement at KAA, I found child protection. After coming back to work as a support worker, I felt so comfortable and part of the team, I could see a future for myself with KAA. The team and the culture, their passion, drive and vision are what attracted me. I wanted to be part of the amazing work that they were doing, making a positive and lasting difference for young people and families. I see that in action every day.

"My role now is primarily supporting my team of social workers to support their caseload of carers, helping them with their reflections and their goals for carers with our Practice Framework. I also do lots of advocacy work with the Department. Backing my team on those trickier meetings that we have around standards of care or placement disruptions.

"KAA values further learning and professional development. There have been some great opportunities for myself and my team. I've been to conferences and training where I've met KAA employees and carers and been inspired by guest speakers. These opportunities have continued to drive my desire for ongoing learning and professional development and allowed me to share these learnings with my team and our carers. It's important to also be able to put my own team forward to attend conferences and trainings nationally.

"I would have never imagined, as a student, that I would be Team Manager. I remember thinking the team managers who interviewed me for my student role were so knowledgeable and inspiring. I'm really proud that I'm in that position now."



Pierre Bush

REGIONAL MANAGER - KIMBERLEY, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Pierre was living in New South Wales and between jobs when he accepted a role with our Perth team. He never imagined it would lead to moving to the beautiful Kimberley region.

"KAA approached me to work with a high needs young person, so I agreed to come over to stabilise and help transition him to a less intensive model of care. After about six weeks we achieved that. At the time there was a need for somebody to come to Kununurra and manage a Family Support Wellbeing Program for three weeks while a manager was recruited. Sometime during my first week of that I called my manager and asked if I could apply. She said, 'We were hoping you would say that'. Here I am almost five years later, in the same role although it's changed significantly.

"I liked WA and I got an impression early on that KAA was a very staff-focused organisation where I would be treated well. I got along very well with the Director and could see her vision for the Kimberley.

"The organisation's willingness to do whatever it takes to deliver services that are so crucial is a big part of why I love working for KAA. Living in the Kimberley is amazing and I'm passionate about the community here, but that only takes you so far. The organisation that you work for has to be willing to move with you and allow you to be creative and resourceful."



Madeleine Turnbull

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY - DISABILITY SERVICES

Madeleine joined our Disability Services team in September 2022 as our first Occupational Therapist based in Perth. Early into the role, she stepped up to manage our Disability Services Team based in Queensland during a restructure. It was valuable experience that has enhanced her clinical practice.

"I was only meant to be in the Acting Manager role for six weeks, but it turned into seven months because of a restructure. I held a caseload and managed, which was very challenging. I had never managed before so it was nice to be given that opportunity to grow my skillset. It came with a lot of challenges, but also came with a lot of highs.

"Kerrie [Maxworthy, Director of Disability Services] was a great role model. I felt very supported and the team were great. They knew that I was new to it, so were very patient with me. I think they also appreciated that I was also working as a clinician. A lot of problems or celebrations they were experiencing, I was experiencing myself.

"Therapy and Allied Health disability services are emerging and new for our Western Australian team. I've been very involved, especially early on, in supporting the team to know what our therapy services in the disability space look like and what we need. Whether that's resources or assessments, reporting templates or our policies and procedures.

"KAA has given me the flexibility and the autonomy to learn, grow and be curious. I also have had a valued opinion about what our service should look like, what our brand should be, and what our values and our ethics are.

"We've made a lot of progress, establishing our service and establishing our name in the community. It's been exciting and I enjoy working somewhere with people who really care."



Theresa Gee

PLACEMENTS AND BUSINESS MANAGER - QUEENSLAND

Theresa joined our Queensland team in 2012, looking for a career where she could have a positive impact on the community around her. With KAA she says she found an organisation—and colleagues—with shared values and the passion to make a difference.

“The Queensland operations formed in 2011 and I joined in 2012. I’m incredibly proud to be part of KAA’s beginnings here. Being part of that growth and watching the organisation flourish with the opening of three offices has been rewarding. There is amazing work happening across the organisation, particularly the work being undertaken in the Carer Journey project and Chrysalis.

“I am proud of the journey that I have undertaken from Recruitment Officer to Matching Officer, Placements Coordinator, Placements Manager and now the Placements and Business Manager. I currently oversee the business and placements of children from an operational and strategic viewpoint. I have always been given the opportunity to grow and evolve along with the organisation. I have enjoyed working to achieve outcomes and goals that align with our values and organisational plan.

“KAA invests in the ongoing development of its employees. During my journey with KAA, I have been supported by all levels within the organisation from CEOs, Directors, Line Managers, Social Workers and therapeutic staff. Our carers and children have also had a hand in mentoring my growth on my KAA journey.

“KAA is a very socially-just organisation and the culture is top down. Everyone lives and breathes the same values, and these have always aligned with my own. Everyone across the organisation, no matter what their role, works collaboratively to achieve the same outcomes in supporting our children and families.”





Board of Directors

The Directors present their report, together with the financial statements, of Key Assets The Children's Services Provider (Australia) Limited ('the company') for the year ended 30 June 2023.



Craig Lawn CHAIR

Craig is the Chair of the Key Assets Australia Board. He has been a Board member since 2019. He is also the Chair of Key Assets New Zealand and is a Non-Executive Director of Key Assets Foundation NZ (KAF).

Craig is passionate about education, helping to build communities, deepening relationships between people and creating a sustainable and vibrant Australia.

Craig is highly skilled at not-for-profit strategic reviews and designing innovative business models for numerous charities. He has extensive experience advising boards and executives and providing business advice to private businesses and not for profit scientific and educational institutions on business structure optimisation, commercialising opportunities, acquisitions and growth strategies.

Craig spent his career with PwC on the firm's National Tax and Private Business leadership teams, and was the business leader for tax and private client teams in Brisbane and Sydney. He dedicated over 31 years to the firm, 20 years of those as a partner, advising large and private groups, including charities, research groups and universities, before retiring in 2014.

Craig advises a number of private companies and as well as his Key Assets roles is on the board of Anglican Aid overseas development. He is also on the MIA research and ACEMID melanoma executive and is an investigator and consumer representative on multiple medical research projects. Until recently Craig was on the boards of Red Room Company and Cleanspace.

Craig is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD). Craig was a Chartered Accountant until his retirement from PwC and has a Bachelor of Economics and Law from Sydney University.

COMMITTEE ROLES: Member, Quality, Safeguarding and Practice, Member, People and Culture.



Lisa Landon-Smith

Lisa is a Non-Executive Director and joined the Key Assets Australia Board in 2021.

Lisa is passionate about bringing her commercial experience to For Purpose organisations to help them create greater impact and become more resilient.

Lisa has extensive finance and commercial experience in the corporate sector as well as expertise in corporate governance. She is currently the Director of Finance and Corporate Services at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). Prior to joining the MCA in 2021, Lisa held a range of senior executive roles at Qantas Airlines including leading Finance, Strategy and Commercial Planning functions. She has also led transformational change in commercial activities, customer experience and workforce planning, and worked with PwC in both Sydney and London.

Lisa is a Chartered Accountant and holds a Bachelor of Economics from Sydney University. She has also completed a Certificate in Business Sustainability from Cambridge University.

COMMITTEE ROLES: Chair, People and Culture.



Jenni Hutchins

Jenni is a Non-Executive Director and joined the Key Assets Australia Board in 2022.

Jenni is a passionate advocate for children and families and believes all children, everywhere, have the right to flourish and thrive and reach their full potential. She believes the provision of quality, accessible, targeted services is critical in achieving this outcome for vulnerable individuals.

Jenni has an extensive background in the child and family sector, governance, service delivery, executive leadership, fiscal management and asset and facility management. She is skilled at advocacy and engaging with State and Federal governments and key stakeholders to assist in the development of effective policies and regulations to aid the early childhood landscape.

Jenni has over 30 years' experience working across NFPs and organisations in the child and community services sectors. She is currently the CEO of Warrigal, a community-owned organisation that operates community, retirement, and aged care services. Prior to this she was the CEO of Big Fat Smile, a not-for-profit organisation providing quality early learning and care, out of school hours care, and community services for children and families, as well as national and state wide inclusion services.

For five years until 2022, Jenni was the co-Chair of the Early Learning and Care Council of Australia (ELACCA) and was an active member of both the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate (ECECD) and the Federal Government's Advisory Committee. All these committees focused on developing the best outcomes for children through social policy, advocacy, and collective action. She is currently the Chair of Tresillian Trust.

In 2022 she received a Churchill Fellowship in Best Practice Models in Out of School Care.

Jenni is a registered Psychologist and has a Bachelor of Arts (Welfare Studies) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Psychology from Western Sydney University.

COMMITTEE ROLES: Chair, Quality, Practice and Safeguarding.



Con Manos

Con is a Non-Executive Director and the Company Secretary for Key Assets Australia. He has been on the Board since 2020.

Con works closely with Australian and international businesses and organisations in the private and not-for-profit sectors. He has a keen interest in providing strategic advice on financial strategy, organisational governance, and process improvement to support growth and transformation.

Con has over 20 years' experience in accounting and finance services, specialising in audit, financial reporting, and CFO advisory services. He qualified as a Chartered Accountant with PwC and is currently the principal of Manos Tax and Advisory.

Con is a Registered Company Auditor and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Along with Key Assets Australia, he is also a Board Member of PlanNET SA Limited, a not-for-profit NDIS service provider.

Con has a Bachelor of Commerce (Major in Accounting and Management) from the University of Adelaide, a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment, and an Advanced Diploma in Financial Planning.

COMMITTEE ROLES: Chair Finance, Risk and Audit.



Daniel Croft

Daniel is a Non-Executive Director for Key Assets Australia and joined the Board in 2023.

Daniel is the CEO, Key Assets Group (Europe) and Vice Chairman, MJF Foundation. Daniel is also the CEO of Children's Always First Ltd.

Daniel is a staunch advocate for children's rights and seeks to incorporate social responsibility and ethical practices into his business strategy. He is highly skilled in strategy, communication, social services, business planning and continuity.

Daniel has over 20 years' experience and commitment to supporting vulnerable children. At a young age, Daniel established his own independent fostering agency and collaborated with schools and national fostering agencies across the country. He is the founder of AutismTalk and serves as an ambassador for a Special Educational Needs tutoring service.

BOARD ROLES: Key Assets Australia, Key Assets New Zealand, Key Assets Nova Scotia, Key Assets Ontario, Key Assets Norway (Familiehjelp), Key Assets New Foundland and Labrador, Martin James Foundation, Foster Talk, Key Assets Group Europe (KAG), Fostering First Ireland, Key Assets Finland (Avosylin)



Calum Sawford

Calum is a Non-Executive Director and joined the Key Assets Australia Board in 2023.

Calum is the Chief Operating Officer of the Martin James Foundation (MJF). Calum is passionate about the theory of change and business transformation and is always seeking innovative ways to empower staff to achieve long lasting change and development.

Calum has a range of experience delivering successful outcomes in both the public and private sectors, specialising in hybrid project management methodologies. Before joining MJF, Calum worked within the Martin James Network as the Programme Director to support Network Programme Management and the successful delivery of all project-based workstreams. Prior to this, Calum worked across both private and public sectors as a Programme Management and Business Transformation consultant, successfully delivering in a range of settings from Children's Social Services to privately owned SMEs with a constant focus on the realisation of tangible outcomes and measurable benefits for end-users & clients.

Calum has a Bachelor of Arts (1st class honours) in Ancient History from the University of Nottingham. He also has a PRINCE II Certificate in Project Management.

COMMITTEE ROLES: Member, Finance, Risk and Audit.



Elaine Golding

Appointed November 2019 - Resigned April 2023

Elaine is the Managing Director and Principal Consultant of momentum Organisational Solutions, a small consultancy practice working predominantly with organisations in the not-for-profit sector specialising in culture and strategy, change and development, service quality, stakeholder engagement and people.

Prior to this, Elaine held a number of senior and executive roles in areas significant in their impact on the lives of vulnerable children and families, including health, education, homelessness and correctional services. She has also held a range of Board positions and is currently a member of the South Australia Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal (SACAT).

Elaine is passionate about the rights of every child and enabling them to live safe, happy and fulfilling lives.

Elaine has a Master of Business Administration, a Bachelor of Education and a Diploma in Teaching (Sec). She is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (MAICD).

COMMITTEE ROLES: Chair, People and Culture.

Senior Executive Leadership

KAA is led by the Senior Executive Leadership Team reporting to the Board of Directors. They are supported by the State Directors and their teams; and our National Support Services.



Dr Dianne Jackson **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Dianne joined KAA in 2020.

Dianne is a passionate and strategic leader in the child and community sector, with a deep commitment to the wellbeing of children and young people.

Throughout Dianne's career she has developed substantial national and international networks across government, philanthropy, business, research and the not-for-profit sector. These networks provide a conduit between practice, policy and evidence building that keeps the circumstances of children and families experiencing vulnerability front and centre of decision making, a cause to which Dianne is strongly committed.

Dianne has a deep understanding for the ecology of vulnerable children in families and communities. She has also provided thought leadership and practice expertise to the development of multi-faceted, integrated approaches that span the continuum of universal child and family services, early intervention and prevention, disability, family preservation, child protection and out-of-home care. Having begun her career as a teacher, Dianne now has more than 30 years' experience in the education, government, community and philanthropy sectors. She has successfully led child and family services and national peak and start up organisations. This includes 11 years as the CEO of Connect Child and Family Services and CEO of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. She currently also sits on the board of Link Wentworth, one of Australia's largest community housing providers.

Dianne is also an Adjunct Professor at Western Sydney University where she chairs the Transforming Early Education and Child Health (TeEACH) External Advisory Board. She is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

She holds a Bachelor of Teaching, a First Class Honours Degree in Social Science and a Doctor of Philosophy from Western Sydney University.



Jamie Hodgson **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Chrysalis Transformation Hub** from February 2023 **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER** July 2022 to January 2023

Jamie joined KAA in 2012.

Jamie is a dedicated advocate for children's rights, driven by an unwavering passion to create a positive and enduring impact in the lives of children and young people. Central to Jamie's approach is the utilisation of Human-Centred Design (HCD).

Jamie is passionate about engaging with children, young people, and families in a meaningful way. By valuing the lived experiences and insights of individuals, Jamie aims to create solutions that genuinely address their needs, promote inclusivity, and generate sustainable positive change. Jamie embodies a dynamic array of skills and attributes that defines his impactful approach to his work and driving positive change. With strong leadership acumen and exceptional interpersonal proficiency, he excels in uniting people and leading them through complex transformations in an environment of support and inclusivity. Jamie's adeptness in engagement and design thinking empowers him to connect with stakeholders deeply and navigate challenges innovatively. He places a premium on consultation, valuing lived experiences and incorporating diverse perspectives to inform decisions.

Jamie has over 25 years' experience in out of home care, child protection and human services in Australia and the UK. With a proven track record in leadership roles, he has consistently championed community and individual interests while effectively collaborating with governmental bodies to influence policy and advocacy positions. His expertise encompasses the intricate landscape of nonprofit start-ups, encompassing service design, systems development, change management, recruitment, budgeting, and stakeholder engagement. Serving as a strategic advisor to both the Board and Senior Leaders, he has been instrumental in shaping organisational direction and executing strategic and business plans.

Jamie is a Member of the Institute of Company Directors (MAICD). He holds a Bachelor of Community Development, a Bachelor of Social Work, and a Graduate Diploma of Social Impact, from the Centre for Social Impact, UNSW. He also has a Diploma of Management.



Clive Robson

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Clive joined KAA in 2013.

Clive prides himself on his overall ability and understanding of KAA's business. He has a passion for numbers and problem-solving, and excellent attention to detail. His primary goal is to ensure the accuracy and integrity of financial records, statements, and reports. Clive strives to provide valuable insights and analysis to help the business make informed decisions and achieve their financial objectives.

Clive has over 25 years' experience in financial management with over 10 years in not-for-profits. His expertise in evaluating, forecasting and analysis assists KAA Board Directors make fundamental financial decisions.

Clive has worked in finance in the service industry for over 20 years. He has worked in South Africa, the UK and Australia across a variety of sectors including telecommunications, travel and tourism, and shipping and logistics.

Clive attended university in South Africa, and after emigrating to Australia in 2009 he converted his qualification to a CPA in 2013.



Caroline Brown

GROUP DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES from January 2023

GROUP DIRECTOR OPERATIONS July 2022 to December 2022

Caroline joined KAA in 2015.

Caroline is passionate about child, family and person-centred practice, safeguarding, outcomes measurement and ethical practice. She is a strong believer in early intervention and keeping children with their families wherever possible. She believes in the importance of keeping siblings together in foster care as relationships with siblings are the most enduring of our lives. She is also a strong advocate of data and evidence to support sound decision making.

Caroline's top strength is curiosity, and she loves learning about the world around her. She has strong analytical and communication skills, and a substantive portfolio of operational experience that she loves to apply to policy development. Caroline is very creative and enjoys "thinking outside the box" when finding solutions to the challenging problems that can be faced working in and navigating complex systems.

Caroline has over 30 years' experience in operational, policy and senior management roles. Prior to her current role at Key Assets, Caroline was the Group Director, Operations and earlier the State Director, Tasmania. Before this, Caroline was state manager of a child trauma counselling service which provided support to children in the child protection system. She has also held a state management role in a disability services organisation and worked at senior levels of government in South Australia and Tasmania focusing on child protection, out-of-home care, disability, family violence, youth justice and child health. Child and adolescent mental health and the wellbeing of the people she serves remains a key focus in all her roles.

Caroline is a chairperson and board member of FACT (Family and Children) Tasmania, a peak body representing non-Government agencies in Tasmania involved in children and family services.

Caroline has a Bachelor of Arts, Psychology from the University of Adelaide, and a Master's in Clinical Psychology from the Flinders University of South Australia. She also holds a Certificate IV in Government Investigations, a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and a Graduate Certificate in Management.



Damion Lipman

GROUP DIRECTOR OPERATIONS from January 2023
DIRECTOR OF DISABILITY July 2022 to December 2022

Damion joined KAA in 2022.

Damion is passionate about providing person-centred supports for people and leading the KAA team in the provision of current services, and the expansion of service delivery to other parts of Australia. He thrives in mentoring teams, driving objectives, organising and managing organisational transitions and transforming ideas into practical realities and productive results.

Damion has extensive experience in leading and achieving change objectives and organisational improvement goals. He has over 25 years' experience working in the community services sector in a variety of roles in disability management. His out-of-home care experience includes working in the Queensland Public Service and not-for-profit organisations. Prior to working for KAA, Damion worked as a Director with the National Disability Insurance Agency (the commonwealth organisation responsible for administering the National Disability Insurance Scheme).

Damion holds a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Queensland and a Certificate IV in Frontline Management.



Judith Wilkinson

GROUP DIRECTOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT - Retired in December 2022

Judith joined KAA in September 2012, having previously been Director of Fostering Services with the Department for Child Protection.

Judith did her Arts degree at the University of Western Australia and then completed a Social Work Degree in Melbourne. About a year after she graduated, Judith left for the UK. Between extensive travel, she worked in London and Oxford in various social work positions. She settled in Oxford in the late '80's and progressed to a management position when Oxfordshire Social Services was in charge of adult services in the south of the county.

Judith achieved a Diploma in Management in Oxford and later completed a Masters in Business Studies at University College Dublin - after love had lured her to Ireland. She married in Dublin and lived and worked there until moving to Perth in late 2003. Judith says "I very much enjoy my job with Key Assets. I have a highly professional dedicated team and we have lots of laughs too. I find this company a good 'fit' for me as my personal and professional values align closely with the Key Assets values."

Judith's extensive knowledge of operations and established relationships within KAA support our strategic objectives in her role as Group Director Business Development.



Operations Directors



Melissa Hayes STATE DIRECTOR, QUEENSLAND

Melissa joined KAA in 2011.

Melissa is a fierce advocate for change to improve outcomes for those involved in out-of-home care. Having spent many years working with families, she has developed a deeper understanding of the impact that a consistent, safe, stable, loving and nurturing family-based placement can have on everyone involved in out-of-home care. Her passion for child protection began while working in the UK and the Republic of Ireland where she delivered frontline child protection practices to families within inner city Dublin and Southampton in the UK.

More recently, Melissa has focused attention on research and investigation into kinship care and the possible outcomes for children and young people accessing family care arrangements.

Melissa has a strong focus on strength-based leadership and providing meaning and purpose to the work that KAA undertakes. She has found great success in working collaboratively to create goals, to encourage positivity and solutions while listening and empowering the team to develop practices that drives them to create a child safe environment.

Melissa has over 25 years' experience as a social worker in the child protection sector with a keen focus on out-of-home care. Prior to joining Key Assets, Melissa held management positions at other NFP providers and Local Government services in child protection, while also enjoying frontline work with families, children and young people most in need.

Commencing her career in the disability and health services, Melissa gained experience in dual diagnosis, geriatric care and women's health. She joined Key Assets to undertake foster carer assessments before being appointed a recruitment and panel manager in mid-2011. Since joining Key Assets 12 years ago, Mel has undertaken senior management positions within Queensland.

Melissa is a Member of the Institute of Company Directors (MAICD) and a member for Queensland Child Protection Week Committee. In 2020 she was awarded an Outstanding Leadership Award in the Courageous Team category.

Melissa holds a Bachelor of Social Work and a Diploma in Business Management. She also holds a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.



James Isles STATE DIRECTOR, NEW SOUTH WALES & NORFOLK ISLAND

James joined KAA in 2020.

James is dedicated to the well-being of children and families ensuring that vulnerable children find safe and nurturing homes. His passion is ensuring a positive and engaging workplace culture for everyone to thrive in. James' key strengths lie in inspiring leadership, adaptability, collaboration, communications, change management and cultivating creativity and innovative service delivery.

James' expertise has developed over time through continuous learning, practical experience and a commitment to improvement.

James has over 20 years' experience in both the statutory and not-for-profit sector in child protection, out-of-home care, adoption and youth mental health in Australia and the UK.

His interest in youth mental health was sparked by his work as Service Manager for Headspace Bondi Junction between 2014-2020; a hugely successful service supporting over 1,200 young people. James has also worked at other not-for-profit organisations including The Benevolent Society.

James is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (MAICD). He has a Masters in Social Work from Lancaster University and an Honours Degree in Social Policy and Criminology from the University of Central Lancashire.



Lisa Ranahan **STATE DIRECTOR, VICTORIA**

Lisa joined KAA in 2018.

Lisa has a strong passion for supporting the service system to ensure the care experience of children and young people is focused on the relationships that enable healing from trauma.

In 1995, she established a children's resource service that built capacity in the homeless sector to identify and respond to the needs of children accompanying their parents in homelessness services.

Lisa began working in the UK, starting what has now become a 25-year career across a range of services that focus on the wellbeing of traumatised and vulnerable children. Lisa was a senior practitioner in statutory child protection for two years, before moving to the not-for-profit sector. During her 13 years' employment with Australian Childhood Foundation, she held several positions from Senior Practice Consultant to National Manager, with the last six years as Program Manager across several services in regional Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Lisa holds a Bachelor of Social Work from RMIT and a Master's of Business Administration from the Australian Institute of Business.



Joanne Hilliard **STATE DIRECTOR, TASMANIA**

Jo joined KAA in 2015.

Jo is passionate about service innovation and design in Child Safety. She has led the Tasmanian Team to further develop Tasmania's Sibling Group Program and in the development and implementation of new models of intervention in Edge of Care and Early Years.

Jo is a qualified Social Worker with over 25 years' experience working in Statutory Child Protection, frontline and Senior Management positions, and in therapeutic settings including Education, The Australian Childhood Foundation, and Veterans and Their Families Counselling.

Starting with KAA is, in Jo's opinion, the best career decision she has made to date. KAA offers a fantastic culture, challenge, diversity, and opportunities for creativity within a framework that is child centred and child safe.

Jo has a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Tasmania.



Michael Ainsworth **STATE DIRECTOR, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Michael joined KAA in 2021.

Michael is passionate about transforming the lives of children, young people and families and is motivated by influencing positive change in the sector. He is particularly driven to create more opportunities to provide support to vulnerable children and young people.

Michael has vast experience across multiple complex and challenging sectors bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to steer his team to success. He leads with infectious energy and enthusiasm, taking a mentorship approach to lead people and bring them on the journey.

Michael comes from a long line of family who have proudly worked in the human services sector. He began his career trajectory as a support worker and over the past 20 years has progressed to senior roles spanning allied health, practice, and leadership. Prior to KAA, Michael worked at one of Australia's largest not-for-profits as Victorian Director of Children, Youth and Families.

Michael has a Bachelor of Developmental Education, Disability Studies from Flinders University and a Bachelor of Behavioural Studies (Psychology), from Swinburne University. He also has a Certificate IV in both Mental Health and Disability.



Brenda Yelland

STATE DIRECTOR, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Brenda joined KAA in 2015.

Brenda loves leading her fabulous team and is passionate about making a difference to the lives of children, young people and families. She is passionate about nurturing an emotionally and physically safe workplace culture where people can continue to improve, be curious, be innovative, grow their strengths and make a lasting difference to the people we serve.

Brenda started her career in the Northern Territory, working in several remote Aboriginal communities. She has since held social work positions at several community service organisations in Western Australia prior to spending 10 years as a senior social worker for the Department of Communities (Child Protection). She then went on to become a Senior Practice Development Officer before assuming management of a respite programme, a permanent care programme and the local and intercountry adoptions teams. Brenda was appointed as the Assistant Director of Fostering and Adoptions in 2012 where she remained until coming to KAA in 2015. After four years as the Assistant Director, in 2019 Brenda moved into the State Director role.

Brenda has a Bachelor of Social Work from Curtin University and has completed the Finance module of the ACID's Directors Foundations Course.



Kerrie Maxworthy

DIRECTOR OF DISABILITY

Kerrie joined KAA in 2022.

Kerrie is passionate about enriching the lives of children and young people with and without disability, ensuring their voice is heard and independence maintained. Striving to build capacity and promote inclusion wherever possible, Kerrie focuses on supporting the entire family unit as this is where real change and positive impact can be made, particularly when navigating large government systems. Kerrie has lived experience of disability within her family unit and draws upon this as a driver to create change through her various career paths.

Kerrie assisted in establishing the Integrated International School of Singapore, an inclusive education model that allows children with disability and their families to thrive within an education environment. This passion has also led Kerrie to developing a childcare product that promoted inclusion and acceptance in a mainstream environment for children with additional needs, ensuring their transition to the mainstream education system was a positive and accepting one. Inclusive early education is a passion and driver for all practices that Kerrie undertakes with the overall goal of developing a care and education system that caters and is accepting of all.

With over 10 years' experience in the children services and disability sectors Kerrie has undertaken leadership roles within the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), mainstream childcare chains, early intervention centres and large charitable organisations such as Autism Spectrum Australia in New South Wales. She also has experience within the Queensland Parliamentary system representing a State Member of Parliament. Kerrie is currently completing her MBA at Deakin University.



Ben Winduss

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

Ben joined KAA in 2023.

Ben is passionate about developing people and challenging the status quo to enable exciting outcomes for employees. He loves mentoring staff and makes a concerted effort to understand and develop their professional skills.

Ben is highly skilled at HR management, HR consulting and employee engagement. He uses innovative ideas to improve organisational performance and engagement in order to build a positive workplace culture. With a natural talent to engage and build rapport with stakeholders, Ben brings a unique style to the HR environment and infuses his positive energy into the workplace. Ben has more than 15 years' experience in HR and recruitment, across the financial services, education and health sectors.

Ben is a member of the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI). He has a Master of Human Resource Management and Employment Law from Edith Cowan University, a Bachelor of Education and Business from QUT and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment from TAFE. Ben is also an accredited International Coaching Federation Level 1 Organisational Coach.



Financial summary

	2023	2022
	30 June 2023	30 June 2022
REVENUE	AUD \$	AUD \$
Total revenue	70,708,363	59,708,135
EXPENSES		
Fostering allowances	8,069,433	8,096,008
Service delivery and support costs	9,929,452	7,144,873
Recruitment and placement costs	1,676,500	1,612,052
Employee benefits expense	37,571,416	30,863,825
Depreciation and amortisation expense	3,298,422	3,429,068
Occupancy	820,604	580,681
Administration	6,469,410	5,552,321
Net foreign exchange gain	-	(176)
Finance costs	475,409	294,683
Total expenses	68,310,646	57,573,335
Surplus before income tax expense	2,397,717	2,134,800
Income tax expense	-	-
Surplus after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of Key Assets The Children's Services provider (Australia) Limited	2,397,717	2,134,800
Other comprehensive income		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss</i>		
<i>Gain on the revaluation of land and buildings, net of tax</i>	590,231	-
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	590,231	-
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the members of Key Assets The Children's Services Provider (Australia) Limited	2,987,948	2,134,800

*The figures presented are extracted from the audited financial statements of Key Assets The Children's Services Provider (Australia) Limited for the twelve months ended 30 Jun 2023. To view the financial statements in full, please visit the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission website at www.acnc.gov.au

Funding partners

KAA acknowledges and appreciates the funding support of the following Government Departments:



Communities & Justice



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**



Tasmanian Government

Department for Education, Children and Young People



Government of **South Australia**
Department for Child Protection



Australian Government



Registered
NDIS Provider



Families,
Fairness
and Housing



Queensland Government





Key highlights



Carer Journey Recruitment Training

Having travelled to Victoria from across the country, our dedicated foster carer recruitment teams were immersed in two days of training, learning new ways of engaging, motivating, listening and understanding our carer applicants.



Brisbane Pride Festival - Fair Day



Queensland Team Building Event

The Queensland Team attended a team building event with the morning session focused on the Employee Engagement Survey results and priority action setting for the year ahead.





Norfolk Island Connect Child and Family Wellbeing Visit



New South Wales 10 Year Anniversary



Celebrating National Reconciliation Week

Our Victoria team had the privilege of watching 'The Last Daughter' in a private pre-release screening at Village Cinemas Rivoli Aunty Brenda Matthews and Mark Matthews as well as the film's producers, Simon, and Brendon.



South Australia Disability Services Launch

KAA celebrated the launch of our new Disability Service in South Australia with an official community launch event. We were delighted to be joined by Emily Bourke - Assistant Minister for Autism and Assistant Minister to the Premier, Paige Greco - Australian Paralympic Cyclist and Gold Medallist, Isabella Vincent - Australian Paralympic swimmer, Rebecca Wessels CEO of Ochre Dawn, Sue B. - Executive Director Out of Home Care DCP, our local foster carers and families, members of our KAA Board and Executive, our CEO Dianne Jackson and our local team members in South Australia.

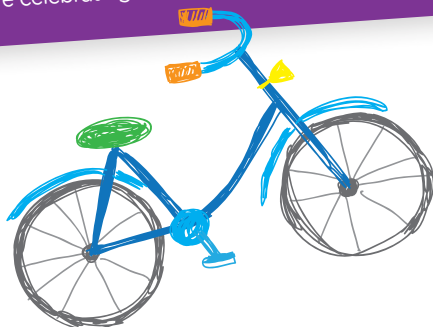


Foster Carer Appreciation

The South Australia team held its annual Foster Carer Appreciation event which honours the Foster and Kinship carers for their invaluable contributions to the lives of children and young people with KAA. Several carers were celebrating 5 and 10 year anniversaries with KAA.

Western Australia 15 Year Anniversary

We are celebrating the 15 Year Anniversary of KAA service delivery in Western Australia. During this time, collectively our carers have provided 4403 placements and amounts to 1016 years of care! For a total of 618 children. We support approx 60 families in our Disability Services and Family Support Service in East Kimberley region.





Staff Appreciation Day - Queensland



Staff Appreciation Day - New South Wales



Staff Appreciation Day - Victoria



Staff Appreciation Day - South Australia



Staff Appreciation Day - Tasmania

Staff Appreciation Day

Every year in June, KAA takes the time to show our appreciation to the amazing people we have working in our organisation and acknowledge their efforts and contributions.





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