

COMMUNITY
LIVING ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

2021 - 2022



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Acknowledgement of Country



Community Living Association acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work: the Turrbal and Juggera people, the Jinibara people and the Gubbi Gubbi people.

We pay respect to all our ancestors, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and non-indigenous, past and present, for shaping who we are and guiding us into the future. We welcome you to the community we share.

We acknowledge this country as a 3-flag nation.

History of Traditional Owners

The Turrbal People



The Turrbal People are the traditional custodians of the land where now is called North Brisbane. Petrie & Petrie (1904) stated that “the Turrbal or Brisbane tribe owned the country as far north as North Pine, south to the Logan, and inland to Moggill Creek”. European only appeared in Moreton Bay from early 1820s, when British Government decided to choose Moreton Bay to place offenders (Steel, 1984; Whalley, 1987).

The People and their ways of life were described in detail in Tom Petrie’s *Reminiscences of Early Queensland* (1904). People consumed a variety of foods, including fish, barra and giwer (goannas), snakes, binkins (tortoises), panko and chiber (flying squirrels), du-wir (quail), wargun (scrub turkey), marutchi (black swan), ngau-u (ducks), murri (kangaroos) and others. Abundant foods were supplied from the freshwater creeks, water holes, and ponds; the coastal swamps, the two main rivers - the Brisbane and the South Pine; and the coastline. Games, such as murun-murun and murri (spear kangaroos) were played particularly by young people (Petrie & Petrie, 1904).

The most important ceremonies in the people’s life were celebrated at the bora rings (Petrie & Petrie, 1904; Colliver & Woolston, 1978). Bora rings are initiation sites where corroborees occurred and where Indigenous males are welcomed into manhood through traditional ceremonious rituals such as circumcision, scarification, the learning of sacred songs, stories, dance and traditional law (Steel, 1984). The bora rings existed in various places such as Nudgee and Kepperra. Ceremonies were reportedly held in 1860 in Nudgee Bora Ring (Steel, 1984). The two bora-rings in Kepperra appeared on photos in 1946 and 1951, however, they were destroyed by developments of golf course and housing (Steel, 1984). These rings were the evidence of the Aboriginal connection to this land.

In the late 1890s, the government actively displaced Aboriginal people who were living in Brisbane. Many people were removed to reserves and mission stations (Aird, 2001). To remain and survive in their traditional lands, people had to prove their labour value for European industries and become part of European society (Aird, 2001).

In 1998, the Turrbal People lodged the Native Title application over the Meanjin area starting at the North Pine River and extending down to the Logan River and inland as far as Moggill. It marked an incredible historic moment for being the first native title claim over an Australian city and testified the continued association that people maintained with the land (Aird, 2001). Even though the claim was dismissed in 2015 and the Federal Court held that native title does not exist in Brisbane (Stride & Helu, 2015), in 2017, the representatives of the Turrbal People together with the representatives of the Yugerra People appealed the decision and the negative determination (Carseldine, 2017).

Note: While the early records of the Turrbal People and culture by settlers survived, it is recognised that they are very limited (Colliver & Woolston, 1978). Tom Petrie’s *Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, written in 1904, is the reference of the majority of this document. However, it is important to acknowledge the First Nation People who shared their knowledge with Petrie and passed it to the future generations (Aird, 2001).

History of Traditional Owners

The Gubbi Gubbi People



“My people have lived in the Noosa area and its surrounding hinterland for endless generations. They were, and still are, a gentle, refined people who respect their environment in a way that transcends the physical, and blends with the spiritual. They are, in fact, one with the land they live in.” – Nurdon Serico, Gubbi Gubbi Elder, 2000 (Cited in Adams, 2000).

Gubbi Gubbi people had inhabited in the Noosa area prior to the European settlement. Gubbi Gubbi people moved inland when the fishing was difficult due to weather. Therefore, people have lived at distances inland from the coast and on the coast. The people consumed various type of seafoods, salt-water and fresh-water species from rivers and lakes, and land creatures. It was highlighted that a variety of plants and native plants, such as black wattle, were important to the people’s foods, medicines and equipment manufacture.

Gubbi Gubbi people celebrated Bunya festivals with their neighbour – the Jinibara people and mullet feasts close to the coast. There were many bora rings in the area surrounding the Glasshouse mountains and the nearby coast. Some were destroyed but some have remained. Together with shell middens, axe grinding grooves and stone fragments, and scar trees, they are evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the area.

European settlement and the process of colonisation had harmful impacts on the life of Gubbi Gubbi people. Diseases, massacres and numerous of the government interventions, including assimilation and displacement policies disrupted the hunting, cultural, ceremonial, ecological and spiritual traditions of the people. Due to agriculture, large scale draining of low-lying coastal areas was undertaken and the valuable timber in the area was removed. Gubbi Gubbi people were removed to settlements while people from other places were brought into the area to work on sugar plantations. These interventions made it difficult for people to hold onto the traditions and familial ties.

However, it is believed that the future of Gubbi Gubbi people can be viewed optimistically, through the values, the commitment and the sense of responsibility to their traditions that were passed on from older generations to the young people (Adam, 2000). The Gubbi Gubbi people have been recognised in the Federal Court of Australia as being the only Registered Claimants and are now legally recognised as the Traditional Owners to the Noosa Area.

Note: The majority of the information above were retrieved from the report “Indigenous Cultural Heritage Study of Noosa Shire” by Noosa Council, reviewed by Dr. Eve Fesl – Associate Professor and Elder of the Gubbi Gubbi people.

History of Traditional Owners

The Jinibara People



The Jinibara People consist of four sub-groups or clans: the Dungidau (Kilcoy, Villeneuve and Mt Archer area), the Nalbo (the Blackall Range and the Glasshouse Mountains area), the Dala (Woodford and the Blackall Range), and the Garumngar (the rolling country between the Brisbane River and Mt Crosby and the southern edge of Brisbane Forest Park). "Jinibara" means "people of the Lawyer Vine", referring to the mountain area and the rain forest where the plant grows. The Jinibara People are called "mountain people" by tribal groups in Southeast Queensland and "Jarbu" (the inlanders) by coastal groups of Sunshine Coast.

In the past, many bunya festivals were held in Jinibara traditional country to celebrate the harvest of bonyi (Gubbi Gubbi word for the bunya pine). The neighbors and other Aboriginal groups were invited to the gatherings for important inter-group matters such as marriage arrangement, business trading and dispute resolutions. Such festival was disrupted due to the introduction of the non-indigenous settlement that displaced the First Nations people.

Under the Protection Act, people were forced to move and march to missions - Barambah (later Cherbourg), Deebing Creek and Stradbroke. Families were divided and children were removed from parents. During this "survival period" (according to the Jinibara People), people tried to keep their connection to traditional country and traditional knowledge, inside and outside the missions. Some Jinibara families lived in the edge of their traditional country such as Linville, Moore, Gympie, Cooroy, Nambour and Harlin and maintain connection with elders. This connection allowed the knowledge of traditional culture and belief, rights and responsibilities, law and customs to be passed on to younger generations.

In November 2012, after fourteen years of the Native Title process, the State of Queensland and the Federal Court found that the Jinibara People are the determined native title holders for the traditional country, including the western section of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Moreton Regional Council, as well as parts of Brisbane City Council and Somerset Regional Council. The prescribed body corporate is the Jinibara People Aboriginal Corporation.

Note: The information above were retrieved from the Jinibara Traditional Inputs for the Sunshine Coast Heritage Study by Ken Murphy (Elder and Spokeperson of Jinibara People), James Lillies (Senior Strategic Planner of Sunshine Coast Regional Council) and Ben Gall (Principal Consultant of AHS), published on the website of Sunshine Coast Council.

This history of Indigenous ownership is shared with the acknowledgment that some of the materials have been derived from colonist sources and we apologise for any misrepresentations that have been included.

Reference:

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- Whalley, P. (1987). An Introduction to the Aboriginal Social History of Moreton Bay South East Queensland from 1799 to 1830.



COMMUNITY LIVING ASSOCIATION

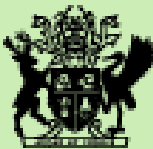
History of Community Living Association

Community Living Program (CLP) was established in 1987 as part of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS). The program, which was attached to the Taringa Rehabilitation Centre, was to support young people with an intellectual/learning disability towards independence. In 1987 the program was moved to the Spring Hill regional unit, its first community-based setting.

People with an interest in the program (Friends of CLP) became concerned when the CRS decided to cut back CLP's resources and decided to seek funding under the new Disability Services Act (1986). Funds were granted in 1989 for a research and development project. The Friends of CLP incorporated as the Community Living Program Inc. on the 23rd of June 1989. On the 20th of January 1995, CLP changed its name to Community Living Association Inc (CLA). CLA now manages CLP and has sponsored a range of other projects. CLA also manages:

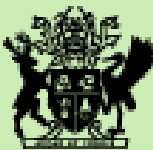
- ARROS
- Beros
- Community Living Program
- Community Connections (Reconnect)
- Community Projects (Skill Queenslanders for Work)
- Support coordination
- Plan management
- Various research projects
- Village Housing

Funding partners



**QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH
JUSTICE AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS**

**ARROS
BEROS**



**QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT,
SMALL BUSINESS AND TRAINING**

**SKILL
QUEENSLANDERS
FOR WORK**



**Australian Government
Department of Social Services**

**ILC PROJECT
RECONNECT**

OUR PURPOSE

Community Living Association (Inc.) aims to:

- contribute to the relief of poverty, sickness, and other misfortune and to the promotion of the wellbeing of individuals, groups or communities who are disadvantaged and vulnerable either socially, physically, intellectually, or emotionally (hereinafter called social welfare); in particular those people who experience a learning (intellectual) disability.
- undertake or carry out any other benevolent work or purpose.
- promote, establish carry out and support and to assist in promoting, establishing, carrying out and supporting any social welfare program designed to contribute to the alleviation of poverty, sickness or other misfortune including those undertaken by Statutory Authorities, voluntary Welfare Organisations, and other community groups.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to determine and achieve what is important to them.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to stand up for themselves, individually and collectively in the community and to have their say in representing their interests, issues and needs to all sectors of the community and government.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to improve the social and economic conditions of their lives, for example: income, housing, health, transport, sporting, recreational, artistic etc.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to develop a safe and secure life in the community.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to develop their family, friend, partner and community relationships and connections.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' achieve a state of good psychological and physical wellbeing.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' achieve a sense of personal potency and of personal meaning.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' achieve a sense of meaningful use of time for example, employment, community service etc.
- collaborate with other organisations in the achievement of C.L.A.'s objectives.
- document and record C.L.A.'s work and endeavours.
- identify and initiate creative responses to the needs and issues of people with 'learning difficulty'.
- assist community members, build better communities through the inclusion of people with learning difficulties.
- assist families in their commitment to family members with a learning difficulty.

MISSION STATEMENT

CLA Inc. will seek to carry out its' objectives in ways that are:

- Respectful, kind and encourage one's own control;
- Flexible, innovative and responsive, leading and giving hope;
- Diverse, fun and address the whole self;
- Written down and shared with others;
- Well-resourced and heading toward self-sufficiency;
- Co-operative and collaborative and value all opinions;
- Seek feedback and question deficiencies; and
- Challenge society and change it, acting politically.
- Stable, keeping core values and vitality

President REPORT

I am hopeful that when I present this report it will be in person after two years of having our AGM in Zoomland. So, if this is the case, let's have a big cheer for all of us, for constituents, young people, staff, volunteers, committees. Let's cheer that we are finally meeting in person to celebrate our amazing organisation.

Once again, this year, we have had to negotiate operations around the Covid issue which created lots of additional angst, planning and fatigue for everyone in the organisation. Despite this challenge, our organisation continued to deliver beneficial client support to a wide range of constituents and young people.

This achievement is due to the dedication of the team of people that work at CLA along with those that volunteer. We thank everyone for your contribution and hard work. It is very much appreciated.

Although we appear to be at the end of the Covid crisis, our learning is that health and wellbeing is extremely important for every communicable illness. CLA will continue to adhere to strict hygiene and health practices so that everyone involved in the organisation can remain as healthy as possible throughout their involvement with the organisation.

Sad News

Unfortunately, we have had deaths of two CLA Constituents in the last year Sarah Healy and Charmaine Fletcher. We extend our thoughts to family and friends for their grief at the loss of these lives.

Good News

We can report that CLA had a strong financial outcome for the year ended 30 June 2022 with a profit of \$263,355 and net assets of \$6,043,225. Our strong financial position meant the Committee could commit to the following asset acquisitions:

- Purchase a Sunshine Coast BEROS house at Sippy Downs
- Allocate funds to an investment portfolio to diversify the organisation's assets and provide another source of income other than bank term deposit interest.

The Committee also continues to look at fundraising options through the fundraising venture with My Coffee Counts.

New Report

This year the Committee has endorsed the first Sustainability Report which measures CLA's results for the year around the three central risk factors – Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors. Please read this report to find the metrics, information and stories from all the different parts of our amazing organisation.

Advocacy

It is essential that CLA continues to speak-up and speak-out for social change for our constituents and the broader community. Some details of our work in this area are shown below.

BEROS and ARROS teams played a strong role in action of contributing to the Home Stretch Campaign which successfully

encouraged QLD Govt to support exited care options for young people in Child Safety Care to the age of 21.

ARROS has been strongly involved in advocating for Parents with an Intellectual Disability and held a successful National Webinar with ASID and also a successful face to face forum in Brisbane. This work continues with the CLA Advocacy Subcommittee's support.

A big congratulations goes to IYHG housing group who this year have successfully advocated for QLD Housing to hand over approximately \$1.2 million in housing equity to the group.

Self-Advocacy

CLA has for many years supported self-advocacy and amongst other new endeavors this year we were pleased to support Paul O'Dea and Michael Cherry in producing commentaries for the Australian Society for Intellectual Disability in ASID journal articles.

Research

CLA continues a commitment to Research. As well as supporting our constituents and staff to engage with Researchers. CLA is a partner with UQ and Dept of Child Safety on a second research project on the impact of BEROS work with young people who are self-placing.

CLA is also supporting the ASID self-advocacy community on research articles and Paul O'Dea and Morrie O'Connor were invited to be research funding assessors for a National Health Council of Assessment Authority by Intellectual Disability Funding Research Round

Succession Planning

The Committee has been working through succession planning for the coordinator's position.

Morrie O'Connor has advised that he will be stepping back from his role as coordinator from 31 December 2022.

Although this is a major change for our organisation, it is not the end of an era but merely a baton passing because Tania Lawrie has agreed to be the next coordinator of CLA from 1 January 2023.

We are excited that Tania with her 18+ years of experience at CLA will provide the necessary guidance to continue the standard of care to our constituents that we pride ourselves upon. This was considered an essential ingredient by the Committee for the sustainability of the organisation into the future.

Also, the Committee is very keen that Morrie is always a part of the organisation as the keeper of the history and culture, assistance for future strategy and all-around larrikin. What would the social events be without Morrie?

The Committee sincerely thanks Morrie for his many, many years at the helm of CLA. The organisation is what it is today because of Morrie's vision, dedication and enormous effort.

We, also, wish Tania all the best from 1 January 2023.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone at CLA for another amazing year. There is no doubt that together we achieve great outcomes.

Denise Gibbons
President
CLA Committee of Management

CLA

Reconciliation

CLA Inc recognises the rich and vibrant living history of our First Nations peoples around Nundah and the Meanjin (Brisbane) area and their unbroken connection to country - land, sky & waterways. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners & Custodians of the land that CLA Inc occupies today (Turrbal & Jagera people) and understand that the vibrant country fed by the river and bays provided for many people's who travelled to the area. We pay respect to all Elders past, present & emerging and thank them for their commitment to teaching where possible, the language, stories, rituals, talents, and lore of their lands.

CLA Inc is an active member of Noonga Reconciliation Group Inc. and 2022 marks our tenth year of partnership on reconciliation projects where CLA Inc assists the group by:

- Providing space for the Noonga committee to meet for their monthly meetings.
- Providing space for the Sorry Day working group to meet.
- Providing worker and social work student support to help organise an annual National Sorry Day Ceremony at the Kalinga Park Sorry Site in May.
- Supporting community engagement events to raise awareness of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and lived experiences.

National Sorry Day 2022 was again strongly supported in collaboration with northside schools and community to remember Sorry Day through personal tributes, songs, dance and sharing of stories. However, National Sorry Day 2022 saw a different way to honour the lives of Stolen Generations' families and communities as plans were adjusted due to the flooding and rain events.



The decision was made the week before Sorry Day after the working group visited the Sorry Site and found flooding and damage. To ensure no further damage was caused to the Sorry Site and prioritising the safety of attendees, the working group had to make the unfortunate decision to cancel the 2022 Sorry Day ceremony.

Even though the ceremony was cancelled, an alternative online resource was created this year with the intention to establish a permanent and accessible resource that commemorates Sorry Day at Kalinga Park for 2022 and into the future. The webpage displays contributions from schools, photos, and videos from Sorry Day ceremonies at Kalinga Park. The hope is that each year the gallery can grow and acknowledge the importance of continuing to commemorate and celebrate culture as we, as a Nation, continue the healing journey.

Visit the webpage: [Noonga Reconciliation Group](https://noongarg.org.au) (noongarg.org.au)

CLA Inc would like to thank Northside Connect and WWILD for supporting the working group this year and the significant support of the social work students throughout the planning process. CLA Inc also thanks the loyal members of the Noonga Reconciliation Group Inc for continuing our partnership in reconciliation and enabling significant connection to and learning from our local First Nations communities. We thank the group too, for the practical assistance they provide to young people and families that access support through our funded programs, as well as through other organisations in the north Brisbane region.



ARROS has had another busy year in our work with young people and parents with intellectual disability through the Outreach (Transitions and Post Care Support and NDIS funded), ARROS PLACE, Parenting, and Counselling support (NDIS and Medicare funded) teams. The young people and parents with intellectual disability that we work alongside continue to show us their incredible capacity to be resilient when times are tough, to speak up and share their experiences to make things better for themselves and others, and to engage in change, growth, and a bit of silliness and celebration. Each of the ARROS programs will share their successes in the reports that follow.

ARROS has been excited to see our team grow, with the expansion of both parenting and counselling. Julianne and Mandy, our parenting team, have expanded the number of parents with intellectual disability they connect with across the past year due to their increased capacity. This has seen our work expand to involve increased advocacy, awareness raising and cross-sector work, which have been both exciting and energising. We also welcomed Michael Wong and Monique Barnes (Accredited Mental Health Social Workers) to the counselling team which has enabled us to increase our referrals for therapeutic support for people with intellectual disability and young people at risk.

ARROS Place (ILC funding) groups continued to meet and battled through COVID lockdowns and illness of young people and staff to find creative ways to meet. We wait with bated breath to hear about the future of this work as funding ends towards the end of 2022. The ARROS outreach team worked hard during the year to connect with increased numbers of young people with intellectual disability

experiencing or at risk of homelessness, where they have an experience of out of home care, both through the Transitions and Post Care support programs. We continue to advocate for increased funding to support this work as we receive more referrals than we can accept and the need of this group of young people is significant. The hard work of this team has been acknowledged by the Department of Children Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, with the extension of the Transitions and Post Care Support Programs – funding was secured through until June 2023.

ARROS actively contributed to the Homestretch campaign along with other key stakeholders in this space. The Homestretch Launch in late 2021 was a great success and we recently celebrated the announcement by the QLD government that out of home care options will be extended for young people until the age of 21; ARROS has worked on over the past 12 months through active participation on the Homestretch committee, and we commend the government on this announcement. We look forward to supporting young people to engage in consultation during the upcoming year.

The team has shown incredible commitment to young people and parents; workers have listened to the experiences of young people and parents to find creative ways to respond, which has seen successful grant submissions being awarded for:

- A peer support group for parents with intellectual disability to raise awareness with Child Safety, in collaboration with WWILD (Mary McKillop Today).
- A fridge and freezer for the Shed (Lord Mayors Charitable Trust).

- A skills development group for young people with intellectual disability transitioning from care, who are pregnant or hope to have a family in the future (Dept. Of Justice: Investing in QLD women).
- Brokerage for young people transitioning from homelessness to stabilise accommodation (Lady Bowen Trust).
- A youth week event (Youth Justice Community Partnerships Innovation Grants), and a mental health week event (Queensland Mental Health Week).

The ARROS outreach crew was fortunate to welcome Chloe Mabb and Lilli Robinson, who both completed student placements at CLA (and couldn't wait to work with us!) to the team. We recently farewelled Darcy Villiers, who heads off on adventures across the globe as the world starts to relax its borders. We will miss Darcy for her hard work, passion and commitment to young people and ongoing advocacy. We have also been privileged to support social work students on placement to develop their emerging practice. Lorraine, Chloe, and Mackenzie each brought enthusiasm, commitment, and passion to their work with ARROS; we couldn't have offered the same level of support to young people without you!

Thank you to all the workers who have contributed to our work with young people, parents with intellectual disability and individuals accessing counselling. A big shout out to Darcy, Shaun, Jess, Lilli, Chloe, Niamh and Gemma for their work across the outreach and ARROS PLACE teams. Thank you also to the counselling team (also known as the 3 M's) Meg, Michael, and Monique, and our Parenting educators, Julianne and Mandy (otherwise known as Relationship Therapists) for your commitment and hard work! It has been a full and busy year.

Finally, thank you to the young people, parents, and families who have allowed us to walk alongside them over the past year. We value all the hard work you do, in what are often very challenging circumstances, to achieve your goals and to support your peers to do the same! You are all amazing and we look forward to continuing this support next year.

NDIS and transitions

The outreach team offers individual and holistic support to young people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, who are at risk of homelessness. Our aim is to work alongside young people to find meaningful roles with communities, places to live and spaces to belong. Our work can be funded through a young person's NDIS plan, or Transitions and Post Care Support (TPCS) program. The TPCS program is funded by the Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs to support young people aged 15 to 21 with their transition from child safety. Funding for this program has been extended until 2023, and we are grateful to be able to continue our work. Our NDIS funded outreach program then allows us to connect with young people until 25.

Over the last 12 months, we have worked with 22 young people through our TPCS and NDIS programs, utilising a proactive and flexible outreach approach in order to connect with young people who are otherwise deemed as "too challenging to engage". While we continue to navigate the challenges of a pandemic, and a housing crisis, we have had lots to celebrate this year.

We have seen young people get **housing**, **gain employment**, complete a **SQW traineeship**, get their **learner's license**, be successful in accessing the **NDIS** and the **disability support pension**. We have seen young people **reconnect with their children** and make **new connections** through ARROS groups and events.

Kaitlin:

Kaitlin graduated from Tafe in 2021 and found it difficult finding a job. As part of Disability Action Work, she shared some of the challenges she faced when trying to find a job as a person with a disability. We wanted to take the time to thank Kaitlin for her advocacy, and for sharing her experience. She is now working and has been celebrated as a friendly, dedicated, and hardworking employee; which is a testament to the value of having a diverse workplace.

I recently finished studying and I am now looking for a job. I wasn't sure what to do after high school, so my mum signed me up for a course. She thought I was good with kids. The course was hard because they didn't understand that everyone was different. At times I felt like they wanted me to fail and that I wasn't important. Sometimes I wanted to stop but I kept going, and I graduated this year. I am now trying to find a job and it's stressful. I prefer to hand in my resume in person, but they tell me to go online. Finding jobs online is hard because they ask all these questions that I don't understand. They will usually ask if I have a disability and I feel like I must answer it. If I say I have a disability people don't want to hire me, but if I don't, they then don't get why I can't make eye contact or don't understand things.

If I do get an interview, I think it goes well and but then I don't hear from them. Sometimes I don't understand the questions, but I get nervous asking them to reexplain it. I sometimes feel like I would get a job if I was like everyone else and could make eye contact and understand things. I would probably be more confident too. I had a job and worked for three weeks but didn't get paid. I found the job hard and had to remember a lot of things. A couple of people tried to help me, but the manager wanted things done quickly. He would do things for me which meant I wasn't learning how to do it. It made me feel like I was being annoying.

When I was on placement for my course, there were two staff who were really supportive. I was ready to breakdown because I had so much to do. They sat with me for an hour and helped me do my work. When they could see I didn't understand something they would explain it in a different way or show me how to do it. They let me have breaks when I needed, and they didn't make me feel like I was being annoying.

I have a disability, but we all have different strengths and weaknesses. I can't get experience if no one will give me a go. If I was an employer, I would give people with a disability a chance. I would have different ways to interview. My strong suit is not sitting down and talking to people, and I am better at showing people what I can do. I would also give people more time and support.

What else did we get up to?

With the help of young people, the Outreach and PLACE crew arranged events for Christmas and Easter. We were joined by young people, and their supporters to enjoy a sit-down Christmas dinner, games, karaoke, and craft activities. We were also fortunate enough to have a visit from Santa! We then had a hopping Easter with our first easter egg hunt, and with the help of a **Youth Justice Community Partnerships Innovation Grant**, a jumping castle.



Parenting and Counselling

The parenting and counselling team has grown over the past year which has seen the team relocate into a little office, all of their own, on the Mezzanine level of the Shed. The counselling team continues to provide therapeutic support through outreach for people with intellectual disability and young people at risk through both NDIS funding and Mental Health Care Plans (Medicare). The team has also worked with BEROS to create opportunities for young people accessing Beros support to engage with counselling.

The parenting educators have engaged individually with parents, their children and other networks to enhance parents' knowledge and skill around parenting and has grown to extend support to more parents over the past year. Rhiannon shared that:

“Support from the ARROS parenting worker has encouraged me to stand up for myself.

ARROS supported me to develop relationships with systems and services. I needed to find my voice and they helped teach me how I can trust myself, to advocate for myself and my family.

The team has racked up a number of other successes over the past year including:

- Building a relationship to increase awareness around the needs of parents with intellectual disability with Child Safety, Micah (FIN) and QDN.
- Delivering training to volunteers with CYMHS Perinatal Team.
- Supporting ASID to deliver a Webinar in collaboration with academic experts in this area - Dr Catherine Wade, Dr Susan Collings, and Dr Margaret Spencer.
- Successfully obtaining a grant through Mary MacKillop Today to run a ten-week group in collaboration with WWILD for parents with intellectual disability. Thank you to Maggie and Shai-Lee for contributing to a video that was submitted as part of the application - sharing their experiences certainly helped us in gaining the funds to trial the group! The group created contact kits for parents to use with Child Safety and celebrated Mothers' Day while they were hard at work.



ARROS Place (Peer-Led Advocacy and Community Engagement)

ARROS PLACE is a two-year project supporting young people aged 15 to 25, who have a disability and experiences with child safety and/or youth justice, to identify and start working towards their goals around employment, community participation, and advocacy. This project is funded through the Department of Social Services' Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant and will come to an end in 2022.

ARROS PLACE is made up of two groups who meet on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. These groups are focused on providing a paid opportunity for young people to come together and cook meals which are then stored at the ARROS office for members of the ARROS community.

During the month of January, ARROS PLACE was unable to meet face to face so instead headed to Zoom to do online groups. During this group time, young people were able to stay connected to each other and workers, and were supported to create a Covid-19 lockdown resource which if filled with suggestions on different activities people could do to stay connected and entertained. You can pick up a copy of the booklet from CLA reception!



Cover page and contents of Covid-19 Lockdown Resource



During times when ARROS PLACE couldn't meet in person, the group decided to do an online group and cook from home. Young people were given ingredients and a recipe to cook a meal at home. Here are some pictures of the meals young people made!



It has been a year of exciting achievements and progress for young people, constituents and parents alike. Thank you to everyone for your contributions to the ARROS work, and to young people, families, parents and ARROS supporters for allowing us to work alongside you!



BEROS

2022 has been another big year for BEROS, seeing the service continue to evolve while providing support to 162 young people across three sites. Our Sunshine Coast team moved into their forever home and worked very hard to set up the new house, making it a safe and comfortable place for young people to stay. The Brisbane and North Coast houses have also seen some upgrades to security systems, offices, furniture and sleepover spaces. Big thanks to Sam Moss and the SQW crews for their help with some of the manual labour across all sites, and for the ongoing maintenance of the lawns and gardens at the BEROS Brisbane site.

BEROS Staffing updates

CLA currently employs 20 staff across all 3 sites. With Micah's Street to Home workers, this brings the BEROS team to 32, with ongoing recruitment occurring to ensure the service is functioning at a high level, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

In the past 12 months BEROS have farewelled Mandii, Craig, Eli, Elijah, Megan, Laura, Jeremy, John, Steven, and Bre. We thank them all for their hard work and various contributions to BEROS in their time with us.

We also said a temporary goodbye to Chloe as she left late last year on maternity leave. Chloe has since extended her leave to mid-2023. Toni Sumner has stepped into the Acting team leader role until Chloe returns. This sees Toni move from Senior case manager in Brisbane to travelling across all three sites.

On the Case Management team, we have a Case Manager and Senior Case Manager at each site. Renee Billing and Doreen Tubei at Brisbane; Jess Larkin and Audrey Fernandez at North Coast; and Brigitte Lewis and Karlaminda Luckel on the Sunshine Coast. As there have been changes to staff in this space, much team building has occurred and is still to come.

Our current overnight crew is made up of: Pooja Bakshi, Ail Wang, Anthony Keast, Kathy Hahl, Michael Luck, Lana Khouri, Sophie Barge, Lauren Willet, Lili Slade, Murray Lanham, Rachel Augustine, and Alex Johnson. Welcoming new overnight workers has enabled the team to learn and grow with new skill levels and different experiences. The team have been able to work together to adapt and develop new processes to fine tune how BEROS operates.

This year Rachel Augustine completed her first placement with the North Coast and Brisbane teams and has since joined the team as an overnight worker. Currently Natalia Crestani and Sue Stubbs are on placement with BEROS and are doing a great job at connecting with young people. They have all actively participated in several projects with BEROS and CLA throughout the year.

Professional Development

This year BEROS Crew have attended a BDVS webinar, Trauma Informed Practice with Complex Care, Case clinics with Complex Care, Young People and AOD training with Dovetail and Naloxone training with QuHIN.

Toni and Tania attended a 3-day Social Impact Evaluation Principles and Practices training as well as a 1 day Strategic Leadership workshop with QUTeX.

BEROS North Coast

In the last 12 months BEROS farewelled Mandii Moore from the Senior Case Manager role, with Audrey Fernandez stepping into the role. We then welcomed Renee Billing and more recently Jess Larkin to the North Coast team. Renee has moved over to the Brisbane team so it's not a goodbye for her.

North Coast BEROS has been developing closer relationships with stakeholders in the region after a long period of disconnection due to Covid19 restrictions. Case managers have attended interagency meetings connecting with various stakeholders such as Metro Health North, Queensland Police, Education Queensland, and other vital supports in the community. Case managers have also been re-establishing connections with child safety officers and have visited each child safety service centre in the region to present the 'BEROS Roadshow'. Following the roadshow, BEROS received an influx of young people referred to Case Management, many of whom have engaged fully with the service and have achieved some fantastic outcomes.

This year, young people supported by BEROS North Coast have been smashing goals including:

- Being supported into independent living.
- Advocated for and supported to have braces fitted.
- Finding employment and being supported through the process with workers.
- Two young people have reunited with family and found stable accommodation with them after periods of rough sleeping.
- DV supports are frequently being linked to young people as well as supporting them out of abusive relationships and into positions of safety.
- Parenting workers linked in to enable young people to maintain relationship and connection to their babies.
- Ongoing support in linking young people with Centrelink payments to reduce the crisis presentation to child safety for vouchers or financial support.

BEROS Sunshine Coast

Over the last 12 months the Sunshine Coast team purchased their forever home and created a wonderful space for young people to stay. Karla and Brigitte completed various tasks not typically associated with social work: attending open homes and house auctions, buying a house, overseeing the installation of a safe, fire and security alarms, putting furniture together, having plumbing fixed, security screens installed, and a plethora of odd jobs that come with setting up an emergency accommodation service.

Sunshine Coast BEROS has also put a lot of effort into building relationship with Child Safety service centres and other youth services in the region. This has increased our referrals and enabled stronger connection and capacity for collaborative work and advocacy in support of young people in the region. The team have also been working with the Department of Child Safety's Investment and Partnership team and Placement Services Unit to increase referrals and build other services knowledge and understanding of BEROS.

The team have also come together to participate in a case clinic with Complex care to ensure we are communicating well and being consistent in our support of young people with complex trauma and support needs.

With BEROS support, young people have:

- Engaged in stakeholder meetings to talk about their goals.
- Returned to departmental placements.
- Engaged in education and employment.
- Left unsafe self-placing arrangements to utilise BEROS overnight support.
- Accessed Centrelink payments requiring lots of advocacy on the part of Case Managers alongside the young person.
- Re-engaged with Child Safety and other stakeholders.
- Participated in process of assessment and acceptance into Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Withdrawal Service.
- Secured consistency in vouchers for clothing and groceries from child safety.

BEROS and ARROS workers have continued to deliver Trauma informed Practice training to the new workers and students within CLA, as well as to various health and human service practitioners through AASW webinars. BEROS and ARROS have worked closely to update and revamp the session, with lots of reflections about how to co-facilitate well, and deliver the training in an engaging and accessible way to those supporting young people who have experiences of trauma.

Research

BEROS are currently working with the University of Queensland on a research project exploring Young People's experience of self-placing and the supports they need. UQ has conducted focus groups with BEROS staff, face to face interviews with young people, case file reviews and are now interviewing child safety officers and people that young people have previously self-placed with, to better understand the needs of the self-placing community.

Mental Health support to Young People

In acknowledgement of how challenging it is for self-placing young people to access mainstream mental health supports, BEROS and ARROS last year proposed that CLA employ Accredited mental health social worker's to provide outreach mental health support. This project managed by ARROS began earlier this year and has been a very valuable experience for many young people under the care of child safety who remain highly transient. This project has enabled many young people who do not feel comfortable in traditional counselling spaces to access mental health support in the community and even at BEROS houses with their pets.

BEROS Brisbane

BEROS Brisbane has had some changes in the last 12 months. Workers have stepped up and transitioned to other roles such as Toni Sumner from the Senior Case Manager role to Acting team leader and Doreen Tubei from case manager to Senior Case manager.

With these transitions Brisbane BEROS has welcomed Jess Larkin who was previously an overnight support worker at BEROS Sunshine Coast and more recently Renee Billing to the team. Renee and Jess have swapped regions to reduce their commutes and increase productivity.

Senior case manager Doreen has been involved in the working group for Failure to report sexual offenses against children. Through the knowledge that she gained from participating in the working group she volunteered to be a panellist during Lawright Caseworker training in the mandatory reporting workshop. Doreen provided insight from the perspective of complex attachment, informed consent, young people's knowledge of healthy and safe relationships and intellectual disability. As the months have gone by, engagements with young people have provided opportunity for workers to gain a plethora of knowledge in trauma practice evolution and tailoring practice to young people with complex trauma.

This year young people supported by the Brisbane BEROS team have been kicking goals such as:

- Returning to school after long period of disengagement and achieving very high grades for the semester.
- Engaging in training course e.g., hospitality course.
- Assessing that their self-placing arrangement is not supportive to their goals and requesting support with housing application.
- Engaging in family contact thus reconnecting with family after a long period of time.
- Meeting youth justice requirements and attending court.
- Transitioned to family-based placement and has not been involved in criminal activity since commencing placement approx. 4 months.
- Getting shortlisted for trial in women under 18 Broncos.
- Engaging in mental health support via Accredited Mental Health Social worker.
- Working toward a reduction in substance use.

CLP

Over the past year Community Living Program has provided individual support to 70 constituents and supported ten constituent member groups, including Nundah All Stars, Shared Meal, Adventure Holiday Group, Youth Group, Cooking Group, Fitness Group, Train Enthusiasts, Scammers, Committee, Recyclers. Please read about the activities and efforts of CLP groups later in this report. CLP Team would like to thank all constituents of CLP and their significant others for allowing us to work alongside you over the past year. Congratulations on the work you are doing to achieve your goals.

CLP Team has continued to consolidate our team structure and commitment to developmental practice to support our work with CLP constituents. CLP service includes two teams (Salt & Pepper) comprised of twenty-three workers in a range of roles, including Team Leaders (2), Senior Key Workers (5); Key Workers (6); Community & Homespace Workers (2); Project Workers (2); and Casual Workers (6). CLP has provided placements to five social work students in 2022. Thank you for your efforts and contribution to CLP constituents and team! CLP workers have worked hard over the past year to deliver capacity building individual support and group work with CLP constituents. CLP office is a busy and supportive place to work! Thank you to all workers for the commitment, energy, passion, compassion, empathy and fun you bring to your work.

In February we farewelled Michael Wong from the CLP Team Leader role, to commence his PhD studies and part-time work as CLA Mental Health Social Worker. Michael worked as Pepper Team leader from 2019-2022 and contributed his experience in social work practice with young people with intellectual disability and knowledge of the NDIS to assist the development of CLP Team over the past three years. Michael also brought a lot of fun and steady support to workers and colleagues as CLP Team Leader. Thanks Michael for all your efforts in CLP and we wish you the best of success in your studies!

In August we welcomed Sabrina Stokes as the new Pepper Team Leader. Sabrina has had a long association with CLA and has worked previously in the Community Connections Team and as a parenting worker. Sabrina is an experienced social work practitioner, supervisor and educator and we are very lucky to have her join CLP to support the ongoing development and work of our team.

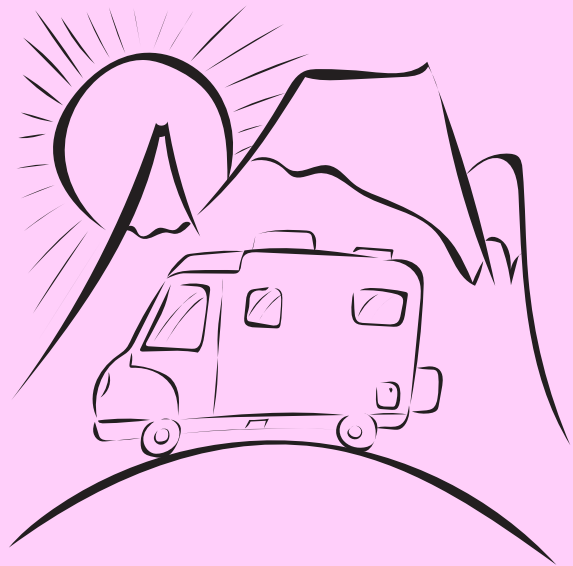
CLP Teams continue to meet weekly in our small "Salt" & "Pepper" Teams to reflect on our practice and conduct other team meeting business. We have also come together for a range of professional development opportunities over the past year, including Supervision workshop with Jill Wilson and Self Care Workshop with Megumi Hassan & Navneet Sangha. Each team have engaged in team building activities throughout the year and in November we will come together for a service planning activity.

With great sadness we farewelled CLP constituent Charmaine Fletcher in 2022. Charmaine has been a member of CLA community in ARROS and CLP Teams for over 20 years. Charmaine shared her warmth, kindness and strength with many CLP constituents and workers. We will miss you Charmaine.

We would like to say a very big thank you to all the people who have provided support, leadership and guidance to the CLP team over the past twelve months. Thank you to Morrie O'Connor, Tania Lawrie, Kat Henderson, Carmel Towler, Beulah Moses, Mandy Sinnamon, Sylvia Jeyakumar; all CLA Team Leaders and our colleagues in Support Co-ordination, ARROS, BEROS, Finance & Administration Teams, and NCEC. With your support, knowledge, wisdom, innovation and humour we have made it through floods, COVID waves, staff and constituent isolation periods, and team leader recruitment, on top of the everyday business of social work and human service practice in the NDIS context.

Please read on for updates on the activities of CLP constituent member groups in 2022.

Adventure Holiday



The Adventure Holiday Group arose out of constituent interest in holiday opportunities. For people with disabilities, holidays can be difficult to afford, plan and execute. Over the years, the group has taken daytrips, camping trips and hotel stays around Queensland. This year, Adventure Holiday activities involved more than a dozen constituents in trips to theme parks, regional festivals and scenic camps.

While the scenery varied, all trips included fond memories, lots of laughs, friendship, delicious food and enthusiastic group singalongs in the van – watch out Nundah All Stars! The group has already started dreaming up some possible adventures for next year and we’re all excited for what next year might bring for the Adventure Holiday Group!

A constituent and member of Adventure Holiday Group

A worker involved in Adventure Holiday Group.

“Adventure Holiday is a great place, a great way to spend time away from home. It’s where you get to go places and have a good time in the sun.”

“Holidays, and the ability to take a holiday that’s even an hour’s drive away, can be something we take for granted. A group like the Adventure Holiday Group is so vital, and the time we spend away is so precious.”

Cooking team

This last month we have seen a rise in interest with fresh faces joining the Cooking Group. The participants are enthusiastic about learning new kitchen skills and are actively involved in cooking the meals. During the activity, we used the opportunity to discuss with participants what do they want to cook. There were some great ideas: from pasta, to deserts, cakes, and salads.

So far, we have cooked meat pie and Bolognese sauce with pasta shells.

In addition to learning how to prepare a few recipes, constituents will be able to cook a variety of meals using basic ingredients.

Our focus is not only on cooking delicious health food, but also on developing knife skills, kitchen safety, sanitation, and creativity. The idea is to learn how can we make our lives easier by learning simple recipes (around 5 ingredients).

We will also explore the herbs in the back of the Wavell Heights Hall in the next few classes to see how these herbs can alter the flavour of recipes.

Big thank you all the constituents, support workers, students involved in this group and look forward to the next year!

MEAT PIE

- 1 onion finely chopped
- 500g beef mince
- 1 cup water
- 2 beef stock cubes
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 pinch salt and pepper *to taste
- 3 tbs plain flour
- 1 sheet shortcrust pastry
- 1 sheet puff pastry
- 1 egg to glaze

Method:

- 1 - Cook meat and onion until meat is well browned.
- 2 - Add ¾ cup water, stock cubes, sauces and seasonings.
- 3 - Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
- 4 - Blend flour and the remaining water, add to meat, bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool
- 5 - Line a pie plate with the shortcrust pastry.
- 6 - Spoon in the cooled meat mixture. Moisten edges of pastry with water.
- 7 - Top with puff pastry, pressing down to seal the edges, trim and glaze with egg.
- 8 - Bake at 230C for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 190C and bake for a further 25 minutes until golden.

PASTA BOLOGNESE

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 400g pasta (any shape)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, trimmed and grated
- Dried Italian herbs (2 tsp) or
- 2-3 sprigs rosemary leaves picked and finely chopped or
- Basil (4 leaves)
- Thyme and parsley (about 2 tbs)
- 500g beef mince and 500gr of pork mince
- 1 x 400g tins plum tomatoes
- Tomato paste (1 TBS)
- To season and serve: 75g parmesan grated

Method:

- 1 - Put a large saucepan on a medium heat and add 1 tbsp olive oil.
- 2 - Add the meat and cook stirring for 3-4 mins until the meat is browned all over. Remove meat from the pan.
- 3 - reduce the heat and add the onion. Cook until soft. Add carrot and cook for another 10 mins. Add herbs.
- 4 - Add tomato paste and mix. Add tomato can.
- 5 - Bring to the boil, reduce to a gentle simmer. Add the cooked meat. Cook for about 1 hour stirring occasionally, until you have a rich, thick sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste (usually 1 tsp for each).
- 6 - Boil water. Add pasta. Cook for about 7-10 minutes or as per package instructions.
- 7 - Drain pasta. Serve with the meat adding cheese on top.

Fitness group

Now in its third-year fitness group continues to be an extremely popular activity for both constituents and support workers. Everyone has been committed over the past 12 months with all members of the group continuing to participate. We have continued with the previous activities of swimming, walking and low impact exercises such as yoga and pilates, however FG is very focussed on continually meeting the needs of the constituents, so during the year we had several discussions with the group and their feedback and suggestions has led to new exercises being incorporated, these include tennis, boxercise, breathing techniques and meditation. All the sessions this year have been face to face each Monday.

Whilst the primary goal of FG as the name suggests is to improve the fitness of the participants, there has also been additional benefits achieved.

These include improved independence with some constituents now taking public transport to attend and improved mental health since incorporating the new activities of breathing techniques, relaxation and meditation. With fitness levels improving this has also motivated some participants to focus more on healthy eating. The physical and mental health benefits are always important, but the most satisfying aspect of FG continues to be how much fun the group has socialising together each week.

A big thank you to all the members of Fitness Group for your efforts and contributions during the last year it has been amazing.

With the constituents' consent here are some great and fun photos taken from a few sessions.



Fitness group

Low impact exercise



exercise plan:



Stretch - 10 mins



Pelvic workout - 2x20



Sit up - 2x20



Side-leg raise - 2x20



Squat - 2x20



Star jump - 2x20



Push up - 2x20



Stretch - 10 mins



Remember to take



30secs - 2 mins break



between exercises!!



stay hydrated!



Learning And Voice Everyday



Learning And Voice Everyday is a program where pathways of meaningful skill development and positive learning experiences are co-created with constituents. We recognise that everyone has a right to explore different ways of learning and self-expression across their lifespan. This is especially true for people with disabilities who may feel excluded from mainstream learning and education.

We believe that positive learning experiences in a supportive environment reinforce and enhance people's unique strengths, talents and capacities. Learning is an opportunity for us all to be creative and curious about new discoveries, as well as emphasising collaborative approaches and honouring people's lived experiences.

In 2022, the Learning And Voice Everyday groups have explored a range of themes using different approaches such as brainstorming ideas; collaborative mind-mapping; planning and sequencing with everyday scenarios; reading; writing; storytelling; practical activities; creative learning games; developing personal profiles and projects and participating in group discussions. This year's themes have included Story Sharing; Lifestyle and Thinking Habits; Everyday Problem-Solving Skills and Developing Community Connections.

Learning And Voice Everyday currently runs groups in Holland Park on Mondays (9:30 am and 1:30 pm) and in Nundah on Tuesdays (9:30 am) and Fridays (10 am and 12:30 pm). Please contact the CLA office if you would like more information about the program.

The following is a collective narrative story by Allan, Christian, Susan and Taurean.

These group members shared their thoughts about ways they like to connect with their local and wider communities. This piece was co-created as part of our Term One unit 'My Story'. The collaborative process allowed each person's unique contribution to add something to the wider story.

Adventure Awaits

By Allan Castellaro, Christian Hauser, Susan Harbottle and Taurean Lea

Life is an Adventure!

You never know what's around the corner.

Sometimes you can explore your local neighbourhood.

I walk in my neighbourhood every day to look after my health.

Sometimes you can explore new places and meet new people.

I like to watch the sun set over the mountains.

Adventures, big and small, fill my heart with excitement and joy.

The following story has been written by constituents from one of the Nundah groups, Isaac and Garry.

Garry and Isaac are Deaf, and both are passionate about advocating for the Deaf Community. The theme of this story is 'how can community spaces and places be more inclusive and welcoming of people with disabilities?'. It was collaboratively written during our Term One unit 'My Story'

Just Give Us A Chance

By Isaac Harmer and Garry Perry

We all like to feel welcome in our community.

We all have challenges sometimes.

Everybody has strengths that are worth recognising.

We can all help each other in different ways.

The community benefits when we can all share our knowledge and experiences together.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Listening is a key part of respect.

Everybody deserves to have a say.

Feeling understood and cared for is important to all of us.

The community can learn a lot from people with disabilities.

People just need to give us a chance to show what we can do.

The following story was written by Allison.

Allison shares with us the importance of having agency and autonomy in one's life and making time to appreciate things like family, friends, pets, art and sensory joy. Allison's stories were written as part of our Term One unit 'My Story'.

The CEO of My Life

By Allison Jones

I have support workers to help me learn.

Sometimes people can't express themselves.

It's important when you have a disability to express yourself.

I have support so I can do what I want in my life.

I am the CEO of my life.

The following story is by Allan.

Allan reflects on his habit of mindfully appreciating moonlight and being grateful for the moon's beauty in all its forms. Allan wrote this beautiful poem as part of our Term Two unit 'My Habits'.

Moon

By Allan Castellaro

I like all types of moons.

I see the moon change colour every day.

It turns red and brown and yellow and grey.

The moon can be big and the moon can be small.

Sometimes it disappears behind the clouds.

The stars are beautiful just like the moon.

People always talk about the sun but I like the moon.

The moon is peaceful and gentle.

The following story is by Kelee.

Kelee shared some details about herself and things that are important to her as part of our Term Two unit 'My Habits'. Kelee reminds us of the importance of having enjoyable things to do and look forward to and keeping ourselves organised and punctual.

My Day to Day Life

By Kelee Sheard

I am a playful person who enjoys a laugh.

I like to keep myself busy because it's good to have things to do and things to look forward to.

I use my calendar to organise my time and keep up to date with what's coming up in my week.

I have a talent for keeping track of time, it helps me organise my day well.

I like to know what's planned ahead of time so I feel prepared.

My favourite things to do are getting out and about and going to coffee shops.

Looking after my health and wellbeing is important to me.

On Fridays, I come to Literacy Group.

Learning through games and group work with others is a good way to build skills and meet people.

The following story is by Garry.

Garry shares a powerful story of how improving his reading, writing, numeracy and technology skills helped him safeguard his housing and prevent him from potential eviction and homelessness. Garry wrote this story during our Term Three unit 'Everyday Problem Solving'.

How I Problem Solved My Rent

By Garry Perry

I was moving to a new rental place.

I had to go to Rent Connect at Centrelink to sign some paperwork so that my rent would be taken directly out of my pay.

My support worker and I went to Centrelink to get the old rent payment details taken off Centrelink's computer records.

That night I phoned my good friend Tim to let him know that my worker and I went to Centrelink.

But when I looked at my payment records on my phone, I spotted that something was not right.

Centrelink had made a mistake.

They had cancelled my old rent, but they had also cancelled my new rent payment.

My rent wasn't being paid on time!

I only saw this because I can read much better than I could 2 years ago.

My good friend and I went to Rent Connect to get my rent taken out of my pay.

The lady at Rent Connect told me I would have been kicked out of my home and on the street if I had not seen this.

Learning to read saved me from being homeless.

Feedback from our groups

"I like seeing my friends and being around people." **Kelee**

"I'm grateful for the fact that I can come here to learn, I wish I could come to class five times a week!"

Chris

"I like being around people who enjoy the same things as me."

Miranda

"I like it when we can go on outings to different places." **Shawn and**

Kelee

"Do I like coming to literacy group? I love it! My favourite thing about it is making and playing Memory Games." **Taurean**

"We all get along with each other – it's called teamwork and we all work as a team." **Sean**

"I've met lots of people I enjoy spending time with and learning together in a safe space."

Amanda

"I feel safe in class and know that if I make a mistake I will not be laughed at." **Chris**

"I am really grateful for this opportunity to learn and grow and I am now able to express myself and fulfil a goal to write a book on something I'm passionate about. In fact, I have three books in progress!" **Melissa**

*Learning And
Voice Everyday*

"I like getting to meet new people and getting to know people better."

Jess

"It's a chance for self-expression in so many different ways." **Isaac**

"We don't judge each other, and we always help each other out." **Garry**

"I like how we check in with each other. It's a good feeling." **Olivia**

"Everybody has a say, everybody listens and everybody is heard."

Garry

"I value our respect for each other."

Garry

"I'm always learning to use the tips and skills in my daily life." **Isaac**

"Something that's really important to me is getting my learner's permit so I'm hoping to improve my reading skills for that." **Lilly**

"We work on our strengths and our struggles, and I like that." **Isaac**

"There are lots of positive vibes and we support each other." **Jess and**

Olivia

"We are all friends here, and I miss people when I don't see them."

Stephen

"It's my favourite thing to do each week." **Allison**

NUNDAH ★ ★ ALL ★ ★ STARS

We are the Nundah All Stars, and we are here to give a report on this year's musical "Light up the night: A tribute to music". We have been rehearsing for the past seven months. We rehearse songs each week. We do our group songs and solo songs. We organise fundraising. This year we made our first ever supporter shirts, and sold them to staff and other supporters – they were very popular. Craig does good work on the music and our backgrounds. Alan does a good job on the sound.

Once again, we are proud to have the staff and students of Mary Mackillop College Nundah help us out. The college lets us use

their hall every week for rehearsals and for our performance. Five students from the college joined our performance and helped us sing, dance, and organise backstage.

We love Nundah All Stars because we love singing our songs, it's a great way to have fun, and it's very good to meet other people and make some friends. This year a few of us performed Australian classics. For our group songs we performed "I am Australian" and "We are the World". We learned some Auslan for the chorus of "I am Australian". It was a very good musical.

On the night we had a sausage sizzle, and we sold raffle tickets. We made over \$1,500 for the group! We gave away prizes donated by Bunnings, Anika Wells, and Leanne Linard. Vouchers for our sausage sizzle were kindly donated by Nundah Village. Our musical was also supported by Councillor Adam Allan from the Northgate Ward.

We are looking forward to our next musical and we hope everyone can come along and see us perform!



Op Shop

Nundah's Smallest Community Op Shop

Our tiny little Op Shop has continued to find its feet this year, opening every Wednesday from 9am – 2pm. The Op Shop has had a mini makeover with brand new shelves courtesy of Sam M and a team of handy SQW participants! These fancy new shelves have allowed the Op Shop group to make better use of the space and welcome new donations of stock from community members.

This year, the Op Shop group has also welcomed two new CLP constituents as volunteers whose individual skills and interests have been a great addition to the group. Current Social Work placement students working alongside constituents at the Op Shop have observed that constituents have expressed a great sense of pride in running the Op Shop and witnessing it develop. We continue to have regular customers, members of the community who stop by every week without fail in addition to some new faces who have also become regulars. Overall, the Op Shop continues to bring a sense of fun, colour and community to Nundah Street every Wednesday with community members and constituents coming together to have a chat, share a laugh and occasionally even a dance to some tunes on the Op Shop music playlist!



Every Wednesday our Op Shop volunteers take turns to style our mannequin in the shop's latest wares. Please enjoy a few of the fabulous fashion looks that the Op Shop volunteers have put together this year!

"It's my first time working at the op shop. I like coming here and meeting new people. It gives me a break from the Chermside Shopping Centre. We make lots of jokes and laugh...and get a free cappuccino" – Op Shop Volunteer

"The Op Shop is a great place to work, great customers and a wonderful team" – Taurean (Op Shop Volunteer)

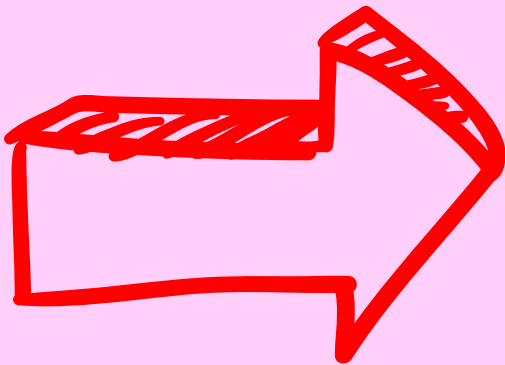
"The vibe here is just amazing" – Op Shop Customer



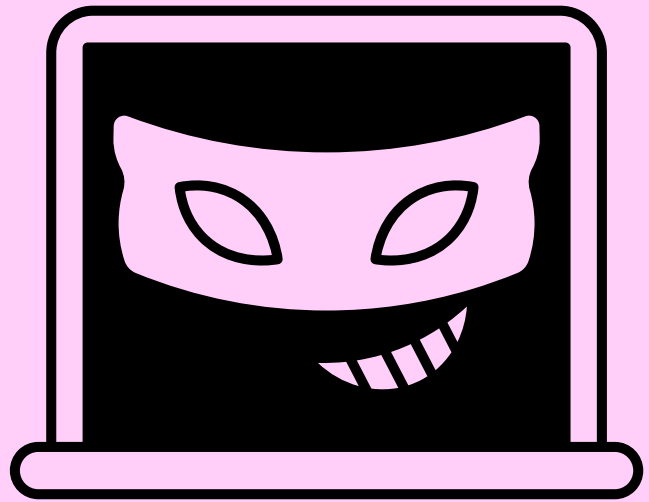
Scammers Group

Scammers group meets once a month to talk about different scams. Over the past year, we did few workshops to educate the community about how to protect ourselves against scams, we have been updating our facebook page every fortnight including our personal experiences and up-to-date scam alerts, we have also been working on Podcasts and newsletters. It is an important group because it teaches vulnerable people in the community how to stay away from scams. For the following months, we are looking at present more workshops to the community and apply for a grant/grants to keep the group funded so we could keep more vulnerable people scam-safe.

We want to share some general tips with you to keep you safe from scammers!



We want to let people know that Everybody is welcomed to join us. If you have any stories to share, we'd love to hear from you. If you have any questions or want to learn some tips, talk to one of the group members – Paul, Alan, Craig, Bernard, Kelee, James, Ian, Michael and Taurean. We are here to help!



- 1. Do not open suspicious texts, pop-up windows or click on links or attachments in emails – you should delete them immediately.**
- 2. Do not respond to phone calls from someone you don't know, especially they offering something too good to be true or threatening you are in trouble. Just hang up,**
- 3. Keep your personal details secure. Put a lock on your mailbox and shred your bills and other important documents before throwing them out. Keep your passwords and pin numbers in a safe place.**
- 4. Beware of any requests for your details or money. Never send money or give credit card details, online account details or copies of personal documents to anyone you don't know or trust.**
- 5. Be wary of unusual payment requests. Scammers will often ask you to use an unusual payment method, including preloaded debit cards, gift cards, iTunes cards or virtual currency such as Bitcoin.**
- 6. Be careful when shopping online. Beware of offers that seem too good to be true, and always use an online shopping service that you know and trust.**

Shared Meal

Shared Meal group was meeting fortnightly to continue to enjoy great food, fun games, and company from each other. This year, we have started a new catering system which was to have the Espresso Train to do meals for us. Unfortunately, we have been informed that the café is not able to do catering anymore. We would like to express our immense gratitude and appreciation to the Espresso Train for preparing so many delicious meals in the past year. The group will come together to discuss what we would like to do for dinner and what are the available options. We are very excited to hear some wonderful ideas and perhaps to try out a new catering system.

There were few new faces in Shared Meal this year which the group was very excited to see and spend fun time with. The Mary MacKillop students and teachers have finally returned to join the group this year. The group welcomed them with our all-time favorite games such as memory game and Bingo. We would also like to welcome our new members Gary and Kevin to join Shared Meal from early this year. We did a farewell for amazing Shared Meal worker Karem and welcomed Fernanda who will now be one of the facilitators. She has brought her passion, creativity, and wonderful skills to the group in the last couple of months. Last but not least, a big Shout out to our placement students Jo, Jaclyn, Navneet and Kathryn for all the supports you provided to Shared Meal.

What do I like about Shared Meal?

Aidan: Talking to people / Meals

Susan: Company

Jonathan: Talk to people / Food

Taurean: Shared Meal is a wonderful place to share a meal with friends and to share some games with other people there as well



Train Enthusiast

Group members: **Alan Castellaro, Taurean Lea, Jack Barnes, Sean McCrystal**

Who are we:

We are the Train Enthusiast Group. We are four men who love trainspotting. We do trainspotting every second Friday from 9am to 11am. We have been trainspotting together for a few years.

Our group rules include:

- No swearing, No bullying, No fighting
- Be nice to everyone
- Stay behind the yellow line at the station
- Introduce the group to the station Train Master to let them know that we will be trainspotting at their station
- When taking videos and/or photos, don't get strangers in the shot. It might make them feel uncomfortable.
- When taking videos and/or photos, don't put your flash on. It can confuse the train driver. It can be a safety hazard.

What if you want to join the group?

- Please come and tell us. You can also tell the facilitator of the group.
- Join us for a practice session.
- We are happy to accept new members.

What do we love about trainspotting?

"I have been interested in trains since I was a kid. I used to train-spot with my mum. I like to see all types of trains. My favourite trains are the NGR's with the First Nation's art painted on it. It looks very nice. It feels good being a member of this group". – **Jack Barnes.**

"I have been interested in trains all my life. It was probably Thomas the Tank Engine that got me interested in trains. I don't have a favourite train; I like all trains. Filming trains is my hobby. All of my pictures go onto my computer. I have a lot of trains in my memory game. I like being a part of this group because it is fun and friendly". – **Taurean Lea**

"I have been interested in trains for a long time. I used to go to Shorncliffe with my mum when I was a kid. My favourite type of train is a diesel train. I like that it runs on diesel. I also like electric trains. I like the shape of trains. I like all different shapes. I enjoy coming to this group. I enjoy meeting people" – **Alan Castellaro**

"I have been a fan of trains since 2015, when I was in high school in year 10. It's my passion. I go trainspotting on my weekends off as well as when I have Christmas and New Year's off from CLP and Endeavour. My Grandad took me on trains, he was my best mate. He took me on train rides all around Brisbane". – **Sean McCrystal.**



Youth Week

Youth Week Group officially started in May this year! The purpose of Youth Week Group is to build capacity and connections. Members of the Youth Week Group have indicated a keen interest in building their confidence and skills in terms of learning and exploring different activities and places that they do not often do on their own. They also mentioned that they would like to build stronger and more meaningful friendships and bond with others over similar interests.

Since then, some of the activities the Youth Week Group has done involved going to different places and watching movies. Through these activities, there were opportunities for members to build their technical skills through planning and decision-making. For example, during planning meetings, members get repeated learning opportunities to learn how to efficiently utilise the internet to search for places and activities. They were able to decide on how to get to these places and the things that they require for each outing. Even when not all group members agree with one another, they are still able to go through the process of negotiation and arrive at a unanimous decision.



Another activity the group did was to watch the movie "Inside Out" where they get to discuss various topics in relation to the movie. Through this movie, they were able to identify different emotions, and how and where to best seek support when they are experiencing big feelings. Even though it is challenging to talk about big feelings, the group members were able to openly talk about these feelings which is a reflection of how comfortable they are with one another. Members of the Youth Week Group look forward to every week because they get to learn and experience new and exciting things. In the future, the group will still continue focusing on the same purpose and working towards building members' capacity and connections.

COCOS



Community Connections
CASEWORK | COUNSELLING | GROUP FACILITATION

Community Connections is one of the youth teams within CLA Inc. We support young people, their families and/or their significant relationships to navigate challenging circumstances that may lead to homelessness or disengaging from education.

The 2021-2022 financial year saw some big transitions for the Community Connections team with Tania leaving the Cocos team leader role in December 2021. Tania joined the Community Connections team as a Reconnect worker many years ago and has led the team for over a decade. We are grateful for your dedication and guidance over this time!

We also farewelled Monique in December who moved into the CLA Counselling team after completing AMHSW accreditation. We welcomed Kelsey into the Reconnect program after Eden became team leader. Kath continues in her role as a School-based social worker at Kedron SHS and Karen stayed on in her locum role in the Reconnect program with Cate extending her parental leave. We were fortunate for Cate to be involved in policy writing and our strategic planning through “keeping in touch” days. We also welcomed the contributions of Lilli & Indigo who joined the Community Connections team for their student placements.



staff spotlight

Community Connections workers work within or outreach to schools and the broader community, which means we aren't often in the office space at Nundah... so we wanted to introduce ourselves:



Left to right: Karen, Eden, Kath & Kelsey.

Karen

My journey to social work started with a Bachelor of Nursing in the 90s and then working in the Princess Alexandra Hospital. I had a few years off to have children, then worked for 10 years as a piano teacher both at school and in my own business. In 2017, I went back to uni to study a Masters of Social Work and joined the Cocos team as a student in July 2020. Conveniently, I graduated just as Cate went on maternity leave and was able to step into her role, and it has been a privilege to learn from a very experienced and dedicated team.

Some values and approaches that are important to me in my work in CoCos are; All people deserve respect and dignity. Systems theory - we are all social beings, constantly influencing and being influenced by the community around us. Capacity building - we all need resources to cope with difficulties and grow through life. Families matter - they can make life great and/or really hard for young people.

I love getting outdoors and my favourite activities are running, kayaking and hiking. A fun fact about me is that I lived in a remote village in Kenya in the 80s which greatly shaped my worldview (and shows my age!!).

Kath

I am the school based social worker at Kedron State High school. I joined the COCOs team approximately 2 years ago. I have been a social worker for around 14 years and have worked in both government and community sectors, in a variety of fields, but almost always with a focus on children and young people.

It's such a privilege to work with young people in schools. I have the opportunity to hear young people's stories and can offer early-intervention support such as advocacy within the school and with external services. Many of the young people I work with require information, support and access to Centrelink, accommodation and independent Student status. Common themes that arise within a counselling context include, relationships with families and friends, coping with pressure of school, mental health, school refusal, sexuality and gender identity. Many young people who require support to attend school and stay at school have complex trauma histories. I'm passionate about promoting trauma-informed practice in schools, and advocating for policies, practices that uphold young people's human rights (Social Justice).

Outside of work, I'm busy with my two small children, a dog and a constant battle maintaining an unruly but beautiful, garden.

Eden

Hello, I'm Eden (She/her) and my role is the Community Connections team leader. I have been fortunate to grow and develop my practice since I started at CLA as a CLP social work student in July 2009 and am grateful to have been part of such a fun and supportive community that doesn't shy away from critical reflection, adapting to challenges and thinking creatively to address the barriers that marginalised folks face.

My practice is informed by anti-oppressive, critical social work, intersectional feminist and decolonising frameworks with some solutions-focused, narrative and developmental approaches thrown in for good measure. Working alongside young people and families I am also using trauma informed and attachment focused perspectives. I am interested in collective care and collaborative responses to trauma and violence.

In my spare time you can find me close to the ocean or the rainforest; arranging flowers in ceramic pots; playing basketball badly but with enthusiasm; eating delicious food with family and friends or watching arthouse films or trash TV (no in betweens! ha ha!)

Kelsey

Hi! My name is Kelsey (she/her).

I joined the CoCos team in January 2022 as a Reconnect worker after graduating at the end of last year from QUT with a Bachelor of Social Work.

CoCos excited me due to the strong practice and ethics framework, community development focus and it being a youth service! I'm looking forward to learning from the CoCos team and wider CLA. I am passionate about social justice, learning, reflective conversations, art and reading. Central aspects to my practice framework are critical theories that provide tools to understand structural and systemic power and individual micro tools like narrative practice. I resonate with strong person-centred and trauma informed practice that promote safe, anti-oppressive social work. I value relationship-based work that is meaningful, relevant and aim for the right amount of playfulness!

A fun fact about me is that I can operate an excavator and am half Dutch, wat leuk!

Reconnect

Reconnect is a federally funded program that supports young people aged 12 to 18 who are homeless or at risk of leaving home early. We work alongside young people and the people they identify as important in their lives, to be connected to their goals, relationships and communities.

Individual support

Reconnect allows us to work flexibly with young people according to their goals and circumstances, this means that our work can look different from person to person. In 2021-2022 we have had the privilege of working alongside young people individually and within groups as they work towards their goals and navigate some difficult situations. Some of the goals we have supported young people with include:

- access safe housing and housing support within their informal and formal networks such as family, friends and housing providers
- advocacy within systems – Centrelink, educational systems, employment, legal
- access to health care to support their physical and mental health wellbeing outcomes
- supported young people's confidence in being independent – income, confidence in managing appointments and obligations, employment, financial literacy
- provided food, transport, hygiene products, grocery vouchers
- being a part of stakeholder groups to advocate for young people's identified goals and align supports to be consistent and be young person centered
- supported young people isolating due to COVID19 with material wellbeing items, groceries and checking in
- access to information and processes regarding housing options, getting a driver's license, acquiring identification documents, external support and referrals and community resources and support to build capacity
- counselling – parenting support, mental health, family, relationships, conflict resolution
- safety planning for both physical and mental health wellbeing



“I was listened to and had someone I could talk to without feeling judged. Kelsey has helped me so much with becoming independent, while also supporting me with things that I need. I also love how she’ll take me out for a coffee to discuss occupational topics, helping me find hobbies and connecting me with other young people. She has also linked me in with specific organisations suited to further suit my needs. I like that Kelsey checks in on how I’m feeling. She is very understanding, and I feel that I can talk to her when I need. She respects my pronouns, gender identity, and sexuality, which I appreciate immensely. I like how I am listened to and understood. Being heard.”

In addition to individual support, Reconnect also supports community capacity building and development through group work and community-based projects. Below are some highlights of this work.

Groups and Projects

Resourceful Adolescent Program

In terms 3 and 4 2021, Eden and Karen co-facilitated the RAP-A program at Craigslea SHS. The participants were year 7 students selected by the Guidance Officer and Year Level Coordinator. This program attempts to integrate both cognitive-behavioural and interpersonal approaches to improve coping skills and build resilience to promote positive development.

Peer Skills

Peer Skills is a program that helps young people learn skills to support their friends who are facing challenges in life. Participants learn skills in listening, supporting a diversity of values, problem-solving and asking for help.

Eden and Karen co-facilitated the Peer Skills program for Year 11 student leaders in February 2022. Karen co-facilitated with other community workers at Brisbane State High School in November 2021. Karen also worked with Amanda, from Brisbane City Council, to deliver some workshops in the community using Wavell Hall as a base. These were not completed however, when a young person had to drop out of the program due to difficult life circumstances.

Mental Health Week

Reconnect workers facilitated stalls at Kedron State High School, Kelvin Grove State College, Craigslea State High School and Wavell State High School and focused on strategies young people use to cope with mental health challenges and promote wellbeing. Activities included making ‘chatterboxes’, in which students wrote strategies for wellbeing, and creating badges with positive messages or images.

School Leavers Expo

Karen attended Wavell SHS school leavers expo with information from the First Time Renters resources. The stall was attended in collaboration with workers from Tenants Queensland and Youth Advocacy Centre. This resource includes information about budgeting, terminology, legal requirements and rights, and testimonies directly from young people.

Sorry Day

Community Connections partnered with Noonga Reconciliation Group again this year to plan the annual National Sorry Day ceremony at Kalinga Park. This event is strongly supported by the community as schools, education centers and services in the North Brisbane region join Elders and community members to commemorate the harm caused by the policies that saw the forcible removal of First Nations children from the mothers, families and community. Unfortunately, during the week prior to the ceremony Brisbane experienced flash flooding and rain, causing the working

group to make the decision to cancel the 2022 Sorry Day ceremony. The Sorry Site at Kalinga Park is in a low-lying area of the park and the working group did not wish to further damage the site and park. Even though the ceremony was cancelled, there was great support from schools and the community to plan and participate in the ceremony. An alternative resource was created this year in response to the cancellation and is intended to be a changing resource to commemorate Sorry Day at Kalinga Park for 2022 and into the future.

Resource: Noonga Reconciliation Group (noongarg.org.au)

Interagencies and Networks

Collaboration is one of the Reconnect principles and working with other agencies can lead to streamlined service provision, information sharing and improved outcomes for young people. Community Connections are involved in the following interagencies and networks.

BNYA – Brisbane North Youth Alliance

BNYA continues to be convened by our Reconnect team with a focus on peer support to youth & family workers across North Brisbane. A working party was formed with workers from Reconnect, Jabiru Community College and Zillmere Young Persons Support Service to develop a survey to collect data about homeless experiences of young people under the age of 16 years.

IUYI – Inner Urban Youth Interagency

IUYI is a valuable network for information sharing and collaboration. IUYI has provided Reconnect workers an opportunity to increase knowledge of services and resources available and a space to promote projects and groups.

LLA – Local Level Alliance

Community Connections contributes to the LLA through working groups and making links between the LLA and schools to enable projects around young people's use of violence.

NAADV – Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence

NAADV is a vibrant network continuing to engage with and build the capacity of the Northside community to respond to domestic & Family Violence. As part of her involvement with NAADV, Eden was asked to contribute to the Injustice of Intimacy podcast. All of the episodes are led by Victim Survivors talking about their lived experiences of coercive control including both helpful and unhelpful responses from service organisations.

Listen to the episodes via the following QR code:



Headspace consortium meeting

Community Connections is involved in the Nundah Headspace consortium meeting and contributes feedback about themes, issues and gaps face by young people and families in this region.

Respectful Relationship & Consent Education working group

Community Connections is leading this working group with participants from EQ, school G.O's, SBYHN clinical supervisor, Zig Zag, BRISSC, True Relationships, Act for Kids, SVDP, QLD Health Sexual Violence Response Team and others. Currently working toward opportunities to support schools to embed a whole-school approach to healthy relationships. Two schools have been identified for implementation in Term 4 2022 or early 2023.

QYHC working group

This group formed to develop the First Time Renters resource and then continued as an advocacy group to address housing issues for young people, in particular the siloing of issues such as poverty, health, intergenerational trauma and education, which in reality are all interlinked. It was put on hold at the end of 2021 as some members worked to address the new sexual assault legislation introduced by the Queensland Government, however there are plans to work together again to focus on the housing crisis and lack of resources for young homeless people under 16 years.

School based social work

Community Connections has a long history of working within the Kedron SHS community and they currently contract our team's School Based Social Worker Kath for two days a week. Kath is part of the Wellbeing team and works alongside the Guidance Officers, SBYHN and chaplains to support the wellbeing of students, families and staff.

The School-based Social Worker works directly with young people and their families to support them through a wide range of issues, including mental health issues, family conflict, alcohol and other drugs, independence, peer issues, relationships and much more. This takes place through counselling and casework and generally listening to the young person and trying to identify creative solutions to help them solve these issues.

Below is a case study and celebration written by Kath to highlight the work she does at Kedron State High School:

I recently began supporting a young person in year 8, who identifies as having severe anxiety, and is school refusing. The young person had accessed the Hub as he did not want to attend a particular class (X). The young person disclosed that he feels anxiety and worry leading up to X and during the class (if he does attend). The young person has attempted to explain his situation to his teachers but feels that they don't understand his anxiety and the impact it has on his life. He says that his teachers label him as 'refusing to go to class or participate, because he just doesn't want to'. The young person advised that he wants to attend and participate in X but feels unable, he feels shame as he is failing this subject and he feels that he is being punished at school for having anxiety. Young person is doing well in all his other subjects and he values school, his strengths are in music, singing and drama.

The young person began avoiding X by coming to the Wellness Hub, or hiding in the bathrooms, or missing an entire day of school when that lesson was scheduled. Avoidance began approximately one year ago, and the frequency of avoidance has slowly increased during this time. The young person disclosed a family trauma which occurred in the last year. Young person reported that he began self-harming as a strategy to cope with intense feelings. The young person began meeting with an external psychologist approximately 3 months ago and he feels that he is making progress.

My celebration is being able to provide early intervention support for this young person who is showing early signs of school refusal. There is an opportunity to work with the young person, his family and school before behaviours become entrenched.

Other benefits of early intervention include:

- Ability to offer support while the young person is still attending school regularly
- Advocacy for the young person within the school system and his family
- Avoidance is currently contained to one area/subject, rather than a complete avoidance of school
- Reduction of negative impacts associated with long term school refusal such as disruption to learning and education, social isolation, worsening mental health

The young person had indicated that he wanted to withdraw completely from X and his external psychologist is able to advocate for this. After requesting permission from the young person, I contacted his mum to explore a support plan for him at school. I provided mum with some information regarding processes and documentation needed to allow the young person to withdraw from X. He was then able to provide documentation from his GP and psychologist for the school to enact these changes.

Our contracts with Bracken Ridge SHS & Kelvin Grove College finished in December 2021 and we thank the students, families and staff in these schools for allowing us to contribute to the wellbeing of their school communities.

Local Drug Action team

The latest Community Action Plan for LDAT focuses on Peer Support for Wellbeing. Community Connections has partnered with Wavell SHS & The Boss Boxing to deliver the project with some great outcomes. This project will be finalized in December 2022 with a view to planning a new project for 2023.

The Boss Boxing

In partnership with Sammy Leone from the Boss Boxing Community Connections delivered 5 group work sessions in December 2021 and 10 group work sessions in May and June 2022. With a focus on learning boxing, emotional self-regulation, goal setting and peer support skills, participants connected well and gave positive feedback. One young person went on to get a job and stop offending behaviours. The group will culminate with the Boss Boxing tournament in October 2022.



Wavell Connections



Local Drug Action Team / Community Action Plan - Peer Skills at Wavell SHS

Community Connections co-facilitated the Peer Skills program with 19 Year 9 students from Wavell State High School as part of our Local Drug Action Team Community Action Plan. The program aims to reduce young people's uptake of drugs and alcohol by focusing on the wellbeing of young people and in particular, young people supporting their peers through tough times.

The Peer Skills Workshop explored five key elements of: Exploring Values, Really Listening and Responding, Problem Solving, Looking After Yourself and Getting Help. The young people that participated in the workshop were incredibly engaged and displayed a lot of insight and wisdom when discussing difficult topics and exploring problem solving frameworks.

I will be meeting with the year 9 leaders again in early May to discuss how they would like to use their peer helping skills and the next steps in the LDAT project - Eden.

SOME OF THE FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT WHAT THEY GOT OUT OF THE WORKSHOP AND THEIR PERSONAL STRENGTH!

The part of the workshop that related games to the issue or solution were enjoyable and engaging.

THE GAMES AND FOOD. GETTING CLOSER WITH MY PEERS.

I liked how the learning was fun and you weren't pressured to answer on the spot.

I liked learning how to problem solve

I liked how I learnt new things about myself and others.

I think my personal strengths are problem solving, being a good listener and being a friendly person to talk to.

I am empathetic and kind

help people talk about their emotions

listening and thinking beyond myself

I learned about its ok to feel what I am feeling

THAT MY OPINIONS ARE VERY DIFFERENT FROM MY PEERS, OR I UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

How one person can impact another so greatly

That I can give people help without telling them what to do

How well I can problem solve

My morals and values are affected by the circumstances

PHOTOS FROM OUR YEAR



Making badges and chatterboxes at a Mental Health Week stall.



School Leavers expo at Wavell State High School



Sorry Day contributions



Barriers and strengths identified by young people in a Peer Skills workshop



Special thanks



Community Connections would like to say special thanks to:

The young people, families and groups that trust us to support them to navigate the difficult times in their life, and shine a light on the resilience, skills, intentions, beliefs and connections that get them through.

Our dedicated and skilled team:

Tania who moved out of the Community Connections team leader role in December 2021, Monique who moved on from the school based social worker role to the CLA counselling team. Karen & Kelsey (Reconnect), Kath (School Based Social Worker) & Eden (Reconnect/LDAT worker and team leader from December 2021).

Lilli & Indigo for bringing effort and fresh energy as Social Work Students.

CLA Inc- Morrie, Tania, the Management Committee, Carmel, Sylvia, Kat, Andrew, Mandy, Beulah and the workers at CLP, ARROS, BEROS and SQW.

Department of Social Services

Department of Children, Youth Justice & Multicultural Affairs

QLD Department of Education

Alcohol & Drug Foundation

Brisbane City Council

Bracken Ridge State Highschool

Kedron State Highschool
Kelvin Grove College

HOUSING

Village Housing

Village Housing is an initiative of CLA that provides long-term housing to Community Living Program (CLP) constituents and other eligible community members.

Village Housing purposely includes people with and without intellectual disability in its aim to create the best life possibilities for people with an intellectual disability. Village Housing hopes to demonstrate that communities can be a place where all people are equally valued and where their gifts and contributions to others can be recognized.

Goals of Village Housing are to:

- Increase housing options for constituents of CLA and other eligible persons in North-East Brisbane;
- Provide safe, affordable and secure accommodation close to public transport and other services;
- Provide supportive accommodation through:
 - A balance of people with and without an intellectual disability;
 - Positive and purposeful interactions with other tenants and neighbours;
 - Engagement of those who are important to constituents in their housing situation; and
 - Engagement of tenants in sharing the management of Village Housing

Village Housing has 10 dwellings, comprising 6 units (2) CAP and 2 houses.

Over the past year we have undergone some minor alterations and upgrades, including new flooring, blinds, appliances and landscaping.

Village Housing continues to offer good quality, well maintained and affordable housing to people on low incomes and pensions.

VH Crisis Accommodation Program

Village Housing utilises one property with Queensland Housing Department funding for crisis accommodation for eligible persons. Village Housing also subsidises a number of people with crisis housing needs in private rental. Funds for this purpose are through donations.

In Home Mentor Scheme

Village Housing also provides support for the In Home Mentor Scheme which provides in house support to people transitioning to independent living.

Independent Youth Housing Group Ltd

IYHG is a constituted body which receives ongoing support from Community Living Association. The co-operative has been operating for 32 years and is not for profit and completely run and maintained by its 14 members.

The main goal of IYHG is to provide quality, stable housing for low-income earners. IYHG presently has 12 properties in Clayfield, Nundah, Northgate, Wooloowin and Zillmere areas and houses 14 people.

IYHG has continued throughout the year to improve and maintain its' properties. The year saw 3 properties with a full renovation, including new bathroom, kitchen, internal painting, flooring and window coverings.

IYHG were successful in obtaining funds through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund which contributed to a kitchen upgrade, new flooring and window coverings.



NCEC

OVERVIEW

Nundah Community Enterprises Cooperative (NCEC) provides meaningful work for people with cognitive disabilities who were long-term unemployed, having fallen through gaps in the employment system. This is achieved through the establishment of employment generating businesses. NCEC measures its performance by the sustainability of its businesses and the quantity and quality of employment it creates.

NCEC adopts a depth approach to social impact, creating employment for those whom the private market and funded programs had been unable to assist. Our leadership is demonstrated in being finalists in each year of the Australian Social Enterprise Awards (2013–2019) and being awarded Australia’s best Social Enterprise in 2015 (small) and 2020 (large).

STAKEHOLDER OUTCOMES

SOCIAL - IMPACT

The Co-op continues to operate according to the model outlined in a Social Return on Investment (SROI) report (2011) which found employment in the Coop to be ‘highly valuable’ to its members and achieving a SROI ratio of 3.31 : 1 (indicating that for every \$1 of investment in the cooperative \$3.31 of social value is created). NCEC maintains its commitment to measuring social impact by reporting annually according to quantitative and qualitative measures.

QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS

Measurement of employment and wage creation for calendar year 2022 is as follows:

Work created for members* = 15,501 (hours) (*members who were from disadvantaged backgrounds and formerly long-term unemployed. Primarily people experiencing intellectual disability/mental illness)

Work positions created / sustained for members = 35 (same as 2021)



(Council booth at the Social Enterprise World Forum)

QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENTS

In 2015 NCEC embarked on a three-year research partnership with the University of Queensland (UQ) to document qualitative outcomes for workers within the co-operative as well as our model of sustainable job creation. The study had two key findings:

- 1) Most participants acknowledged they had an increased sense of belonging, happiness, and confidence in comparison to past experiences of work.
- 2) The Co-operative culture encourages members to have a say, values workers for who they are, and supports their autonomy.

The findings of this research were published in the leading international Disability studies Journal 'Disability and Society' on May 3rd 2019.

VOICES FROM THE RESEARCH

"I get a vote I get to vote and have a part/say. if I think something's not right. I can put up my hand and say, 'hey I disagree with this'".

"Feeling good because you have done something for yourself and proud because you have done something for the community"

"This job has helped me to become the person I am".

TRAINING & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT:

Supporting the Social Enterprise Sector:

- In early 2021 NCEC started a new social enterprise focused on creating employment for Young People with disability from disadvantaged backgrounds called the 'Youth Co-op'. It seeks to mirror NCEC's success.
- NCEC continues to mentor a number of external social enterprises and social entrepreneurs.

Hands on Training:

Again, this year, more than 40 people with disability and/or refugee background have accessed certified training in partnership with Community Living Association's Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) program in 2022. NCEC hosted trainees in our businesses pro-bono through offering of hands-on work experience. 70% have found employment post-training.



(SQW with Anika Wells)



(Youth Co-op cleaning council cars)

SUPPORT COORDINATION

The NDIS Support Coordination Team

The team has had another busy yet successful year in supporting participants and their supporters to navigate the NDIS system as well as achieve their NDIS goals. Currently, our team consists of four full time and two part time Support Coordinators, offering both Coordination of Supports and Specialist Support Coordination to participants with complex support needs, living anywhere between South of the Brisbane River and Sunshine Coast area. The main functions of Support Coordination include, but are not limited to :

- Develop participant's and their supporter's capacity in understanding their NDIS plan;
- Provide assistance and information to participant in identifying, connecting and linking with informal, mainstream and funded supports in a complex service delivery environment;
- Assist participant to search for, contact and engage with selected providers based on their needs and plan goals;
- Build participant's capacity in managing and directing their NDIS funds;
- Provide support and information at points of crisis;
- Make referrals for assessments as per their NDIS plan;
- Prepare participant for review by collecting reports from other service providers, evaluating current support and developing new goals.
- Work proactively with NDIA Planners and Local Area Coordinators to address the complexity of the people we work with, and the challenges they face on a daily basis.

Some of the highlights include:

(1) Safety and Security

- Support participants to have a safe living environment through home modification - to increase accessibility and independent living.
- Support participants to access emergency accommodation after the Brisbane Flood in February 2022 whilst their flooded homes were getting fixed and repaired.
- Support participants to move out from family home and share with friends for the first time.
- Support participants to move out from Aged Care Facilities.
- Support participants to transfer to another living arrangement where they can share with people of similar age and interests.

(2) Building Relationships

- Facilitate relationships and connections with family and other informal supports.
- Support parents with a disability to engage with disability specific parenting support where they can maintain custody of their children.
- Support connections and reciprocity of relationships within participants' local community e.g. local gym and shopping centre.

(3) Building Knowledge

- Provide information, assistance and empower participants to exercise their right, choice and control with the NDIA and other systems.
- Support participants to share their stories and lived experience with the wider community e.g. workshop and practice forum.

(4) Building Resources

- Support participants to purchase Assistive Technology products e.g. personal alarm, scooter, hi-low bed to improve quality of life.
- Connect participants with advocacy service to negotiate with various systems – NDIA, Department of Housing, Department of Health, Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), Office of the Public Guardian, The Public Trustee of Queensland, Department of Child Safety, Justice System.
- Support participants to engage in education and training e.g. Skilling Queenslanders for Work and TAFE.

(5) Building Decision Making

- Connect participants to become a member of the Youth Co-op with NCEC.
- Support participant to provide feedback and/or make complaints to service providers, politicians, NDIS Safeguard Commission, Aged Care Commission, Department of Child Safety, Department of Housing etc.
- Support participants to terminate service agreements with providers when they are not satisfied with the services / support they receive.
- Support participants to make informed decisions.

(6) Physical and Mental Wellbeing

- Support participants to try new activities e.g. Martial Arts, equine therapy, guitar lessons, lego museum.
- Support participants to engage with health professionals to improve their physical and mental health outcomes.

(7) Being, Doing and Becoming

- Support participants to compete in Special Olympics and local power lifting competition.
- Support participants to save, organise and achieve their interstate holiday plans where they can visit their loved ones as Covid has halted holiday plans for the past 2 years.
- Support participants to apply for grants and set up micro business e.g. card making business, recycling business.

On 15 December 2021, we hosted a Christmas Party for external Support Coordination Participants. We had a relaxing and casual BBQ lunch at the Redcliffe Pier where constituents from both Sunshine Coast and Brisbane could meet one another, as well as other members of the Support Coordination Team. It was lovely to meet the children of our participants who are parents. We enjoyed each other's company by having a swim at the beach, sharing lunch and playing 'Pass the Parcel'. It was a great afternoon enjoyed by all.

On a sombre note, it is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of Charmaine Fletcher in September 2022. The Support Coordination team and the wider CLA community will miss and remember Charmaine as a fun, kind and creative member of the CLA community who had been with us for over a decade.

Looking ahead, there will be more changes and challenges waiting for us. Nevertheless, we are committed to continue to learn, reflect and refine our practice as we walk alongside participants and their supporters on their NDIS journey.

The NDIS Support Coordination Team would like to acknowledge and say thank you to:

Current NDIS Support Coordinators – Agnes So, Luis Sanchez, Megan Salisbury, Gurleen Virk, Mischelle Surawski (based on Sunshine Coast) and Heidi Cheng.

Previous Support Coordinator – Sylvia Jeyakumar and Tegan Bell.

CLA Inc, in particular Morrie, Tania, the Management Committee, Kat, Carmel, Mucy, Sally, Beulah and Mandy, as well as the CLP, ARROS, Community Connections and BEROs workers.

All the constituents and families who have shared their journey and stories with us.



How many staff names do you find?

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