



COMMUNITY

LIVING ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

2022-2023

Acknowledgment 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.



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History of Traditional Owners

THE TURRBAL PEOPLE

THE GUBBI GUBBI PEOPLE

THE JINIBARA PEOPLE

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 gi-wer (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 Keperra. 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 Moggil. 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.

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History of Community Living Association



History of CLA

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 (Skilling Queenslanders for Work)
- Support coordination
- Plan management
- Various research projects
- Village Housing

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.
- To support young people and their families where those young young people are at risk of homelessness, or early school leaving or other social disadvantages that could lead to poverty, sickness or misfortune.

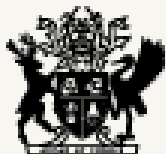
OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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

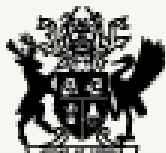


OUR FUNDING PARTNERS



**QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY,
SENIORS AND DISABILITY SERVICES**

**ARROS
BEROS**



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

**SKILL
QUEENSLANDERS
FOR WORK**



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

**ILC PROJECT
RECONNECT**

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following funding bodies for grants to support CLA Projects

- **Lords Mayors fund**
- **NAPCAN**
- **Airport Fund**
- **Keeping Women Safe from Violence - Department of Justice and Attorney-General**
- **Lady Bowen Trust**
- **Lord Mayors Grant**
- **Qld Mental Health Week Grant**
- **Religious of Qld Social Justice Grants**
- **Inger Rice Foundation**

Special thanks also goes out to Grill'd, My Coffee Counts, Street Smart, and Threads Together for their ongoing support to Constituents, young people and families.

CLA Presidents Report

CLA Presidents Report

The 2022/2023 financial year from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 has continued to be as busy and productive as any year in the past. At the end of December 2022, our long serving Co-ordinator Morrie O' Connor stepped down from that position and Tania Lawrie took up the Co-ordination position from Jan 1st 2023.

On behalf of CLA, I want to pay tribute to Tania's incredibly seamless transition into the role of coordinator. Her fierce passion for CLA combined with her extensive organisational experience shines through at every level. Tania's diligence in providing support, detailed and relevant information to myself as President, the Management Committee and associated subcommittees has assisted our decisions throughout the year enormously.

On behalf of CLA I want to thank Morrie for his graciousness in handing over the baton to Tania. It appeared seamless. I also want to thank him again for his long commitment to CLA and I love the fact that he is still contributing to the organisation with his project role. We are always grateful for your wise guidance, Morrie.

I also acknowledge and thank my fellow CLA Management Committee members and other volunteers who have served on our various subcommittees. In particular, I want to thank Linda McKey who has been on the Management Committee for a number of years but will not be renominating. CLA is a complex organisation so lots of information to read and digest for the committees. I thank everyone for your diligence and contribution over the year. It is much appreciated. I know CLA is stronger because of all your involvement and contributions.

One indicator that we are achieving our mission is through the number of compliments that CLA receives. A few examples are:

"Firstly, thank you for inviting me to the seminar. I honestly had so much fun and hearing other parents have the same issues made me feel so validated and good. Also, I really enjoyed our chat and also the chat I had with [young person]. I even teared up in the car a bit home because I felt so supported."

"Hi CLA, I was just in your local councillor office and they were praising your great work."

"...Thank you for being my social worker you are one of the most important people in my life right now and I am so grateful for you and love how comfortable I am to talk...I love what you do and how you help people. I wish I didn't have to turn 18 so I could have you as my social worker".

Another indicator of our success as an organisation is our financial viability. CLA again had a modest but welcome profit for the year ended 30 June 2023. The organisation also has a sound asset base including a separate diversified investment fund. The organisation has more than sufficient cash funds to be able to meet immediate financial obligations. The organisation also has no bank debt. This strong financial position allows the organisation to focus on the important work for those that need our services as well as look for opportunities for continued improvement.

The expansion of CLA's services over the past few years has meant that the CLA Committee made the decision that our organisation's constitution (our rule book) needed to be reviewed and modified. You will have received separate information on those changes which need to be ratified at this Annual General Meeting.

There is always so much I could talk about when I come to this report. I share some of the highlights for me.

- CLA Committee (which includes Constituents) and staff met and developed a new three-year strategic plan from 2023 to 2026.
- We have continued to explore redeveloping 5/9 Nundah St to provide new premises.
- CLA has continued to be involved in research through current BEROS and a joint ARC application with University of Queensland and other agencies.
- CLA has continued to support Advocacy; not only the works of self-advocates but also has contributed to Government enquiries, in particular the recent submission to the NDIS Review.

A huge shout out to all the Constituents of CLA whether they work with the CLP, ARROS, BEROS, Community Connections, Parenting, Counselling, Housing, admin, SQW, Compliance or Special Project Teams. And I use the term "work with" on purpose because CLA's approach is not about instructing people but about engaging them in the changes they want. The fruits of those efforts are measured by what individuals achieve but also by the efforts of groups within CLA and also our collaborators.

At the risk of omitting some of the many, I will mention-

- IYHG Housing Group
- The Independent Students Group
- Nundah Community Enterprises
- The young people at BEROS who come together to contribute to BEROS Research
- The Recyclers Group
- The Youth Co-op and Wavell Hall Management Group
- Nundah All Stars
- Adventure Holiday Group
- The Everyday Literacy Groups
- The Scammers Group
- The world smallest Op Shop crew.
- The Parents with an Intellectual Disability Group
- The Youth Group
- ARROS Place

Each and every group and the individuals involved have worked with staff to achieve and I will mention a few of those achievements.

Parents with an intellectual disability have advocated for themselves and others in the child safety context, offered each other mutual support being part of successful parenting symposium and developed a backpack of child/parent activities for contact visits.

NCEC reached its 20-year anniversary. It has had numerous outcomes including request after request from other communities for them to share their knowledge and experience. And that is on top of managing 40 parks, 2 Cafes and a variety of other businesses.

Independent students' group at Kedron High School have come together to provide mutual support between those students who are faced with the difficult task of finishing high school without a lot of family support.

IYHG have persuaded QLD Housing to a change in housing equity arrangements which has increased IYHG Capital worth by over a million dollars.

Community Connections and BEROS worked with Noonga Reconciliation Group for yet another packed moving Sorry Day at Kalinga Park.

Nundah All Stars held yet another fabulous musical where everybody got to be a star.

SQW graduated and has supported two cohorts of students towards employment over the years.

BEROS has continued provide support to self-placing young people and supported their involvement in Research Project.

It is an absolute privilege for me to serve as the President for CLA. I would like to thank everyone at CLA for another amazing year. There is no doubt that together we achieve wonderful outcomes.

Denise Gibbons
President
CLA Committee of Management



ARROS



ARROS

Across the ARROS teams, we have had a busy year with many new young people, parents and counselling clients being supported by the team, and facing and overcoming challenges. It is the people who we support that makes us who we are as a team of workers! The ARROS team is home to multiple programs of support.



THE 'UPSTAIRS' TEAM CONSISTS OF THE THERAPIES TEAMS:

- The Counselling Team provides Mental Health Social Work to young people at risk and people with intellectual disability and are affectionately known as the three 'Ms': Megumi, Monique, and Michael, who each work part time.
- The Parenting Team works with parents with intellectual and/or cognitive disability offering therapeutic and practical supports to develop healthy family relationships, navigate systems and support with education and advocacy. Jules, Mandy, Miryeong and Jess B make up the team.

OUR 'DOWNSTAIRS' TEAM FOCUSES ON WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE:

- The Outreach Team works with young people with intellectual and/or cognitive disabilities with out-of-home care experiences and are at risk of homelessness. The workers are Lilli, Hannah, Chloe, Shaun, and Jess A.
- Arros Place is funded through ILC funding (Dept Social Services) with Niamh and Gemma as the Project Workers

Over the past year ARROS has been expanding. The outreach team welcomed Hannah as a Senior Outreach Worker, and Matt as a casual ARROS PLACE worker. The Parenting Team welcomed Miryeong and the return of Jess B as Relationship Therapists (Disability and parenting specific), which has seen the team grow to 4 workers, enabling increased capacity to support parents with intellectual disability. We have also been fortunate for Nick's support as a volunteer for ARROS PLACE, and Social Work students Phoebe, Sandy, Casey, Candace, and Reshma for providing support across all ARROS teams during their placements. We are grateful for the knowledge and experience each team member contributes to ARROS and the support we provide to young people and each other.

Throughout the year workers have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to the people and communities with whom they work through respectfully working alongside, deeply listening, demonstrating success, and working through the challenges and celebrating young peoples and parents' success. Each worker has engaged in ongoing reflective practice and sought to take the issues they experience in their individual face to face work and elevate it through their contribution to systems level advocacy, education and awareness raising to hopefully create change at systems levels. A very big thank you to all the ARROs staff for their dedication to the young people, parents and people with disability with whom we work!



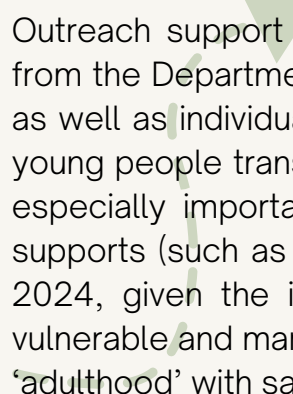
OUTREACH TEAM

ARROS' outreach team provide responsive outreach support to young people with intellectual and cognitive disability, who have experiences of out-of-home care and are either experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Outreach workers are out on the road each day, meeting young people where they are at, and connecting them with community. Over the last financial year, the outreach team drove more than 37400kms in their delivery of supports – that's almost a full lap around the earth! Lots of young people use the car as a therapeutic space to talk through what's happening in their lives; we work alongside them to navigate challenges and achieve their goals.

Young people have continued to do awesome work, sharing their knowledge with workers and peers, navigating challenging situations, and making meaningful steps toward their hopes for the future.

In 2022-2023, ARROS young people have:

- Connected with community supports
- Engaged with new training and job opportunities
- Moved into new housing
- Continued on their parenting journeys
- Advocated against challenging systems
- Been successful in applying for NDIS and DSP
- Worked toward getting their drivers licenses
- Explored disability and accessed diagnoses to access supports
- Put in big efforts to meet parole and court requirements
- Made new connections within the ARROS community and beyond
- Built relationships with important people in their lives
- Took steps in the long journey of transitioning from out-of-home care into adulthood



Outreach support is funded through Transitions and Post Care Support (TPCS) funding from the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services (previously CYJMA), as well as individual NDIS plans. The extension of TPCS funding until June 2024 allowed young people transitioning out of care, to continue connecting to ARROS workers. This is especially important for young people that do not yet have access to other funding supports (such as the NDIS). We are hopeful for the continuation of this funding beyond 2024, given the important role the support it enables plays in ensuring those most vulnerable and marginalized continue to receive support they require to move forward into 'adulthood' with safety, security, meaning and inclusion in their communities.

ARROS will continue to advocate for ongoing support for this cohort of young people to ensure they can access appropriate, person centred, support to achieve their goals.

ARROS PLACE PROJECT

ARROS PLACE is funded by the Department of Social Services, Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant. Due to the impacts of Covid-19, funding was extended to continue until June 2024, building on the initial two-year project supporting young people aged 15 to 25, who have a disability and experiences with child safety and/or youth justice. The project aims to build young people's skills, confidence, and capacity through group engagement. Alongside groups, ARROS PLACE workers provide individual support to young people to address barriers to engaging in the group.

AP WEEKLY GROUPS

The ARROS PLACE Project Workers facilitate weekly groups on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

The Tuesday group aims to build positive peer relationships through completing practical tasks alongside peers. Each week, young people come to this group and learn practical cooking and budgeting skills – while also learning how to be a member of a group. Through Tuesday groups, young people have been able to connect with each other in peer roles, ask and offer support within the group, share their experiences (good and bad), and learn how to be team players. Every Tuesday after cooking, the group sits down together to share the meal we all made and there is always time for a boardgame or a round of Uno!

The Thursday group is exploring how to create tasty and accessible meals with items found in emergency relief hampers. Many ARROS young people experience poverty, homelessness and sometimes don't know how to cook. Every Thursday, young people work together to be creative and make a recipe using these hamper items. Each week the recipes are written down and at the end of the ARROS PLACE project the Thursday group will have a recipe book full of meal ideas that will be shared with the wider community! Young people are hoping to share the knowledge they have developed with emergency relief services and are currently working to build relationships with these providers.



AP EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



In September 2022, Hushy (an ARROS PLACE young person) was supported to plan, organise and facilitate two group art nights. Young people from ARROS came together to use a range of art materials and styles such as painting, drawing, clay making and photography. They connected with each other and showed their creativity through art! The nights were used to raise awareness about mental health and how art can positively impact people's mental health. To celebrate the amazing work done by young people, ARROS held a gallery night during Queensland Mental Health Week for young people to showcase and sell their artwork. A big thank you and congratulations must go to Hushy for her amazing work in creating such a successful event.

At the start of 2023 ARROS PLACE young people came together to form a Speaking Up group. Young people connected to talk about issues they are passionate about and work together to explore and create a resource to share with the community. Young people talked about a range of issues important to them and decided to create a safer drug use resource which focused on harm minimisation strategies and included contacts for helpful services

ARROS PLACE plans to hold Pop Up events throughout the year which will focus on young people sharing skills and learning new ones. Each event will give young people the opportunity to showcase a practical skill they have and teach it to the group. For the first Pop Up event of the year, we collaborated with trainees from Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) to hold a car skills day. The group learnt basic car skills such as how to change a tyre, check tyre air pressure and check engine water and oil levels. Following this event an easy read 'How to Change a Tyre' poster was made in collaboration with ARROS PLACE young people!



We asked young people why ARROS PLACE is important to them and what things they enjoy about coming to groups. Thank you to Joey, Alanah, Hushy, and Jarrod for sharing your thoughts.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT ARROS PLACE GROUPS?

- *Coming together to do something*
- *“Learning to cook”*
- *“Food”*
- *“Comfortable”*
- *“Helps social life”*
- *“Pay off SPER”*
- *“Helping other people”*
- *“Connection”*
- *“Encourage and motivate each other”*
- *“Cooking different things”*
- *“Having people to connect with that don’t judge you”*

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT YOU COME TO GROUPS?

- *“It’s like a family”*
- *“Belonging and connected”*
- *“Get out and see others”*
- *“Supporting friends”*
- *“Avoid crime”*

Over this past year, it has been fantastic to see young people frequently attend groups and learn new skills - even when life can be really hard!

We have seen some amazing skill development from the young people who attend ARROS PLACE groups. This has included:

- Taking ownership of the group and finding opportunities to lead
- Building working relationships with group members and learning how to communicate effectively with each other
- Giving and receiving peer support
- Building confidence in themselves and their ability to speak up for themselves
- Making the group a place where everyone belongs
- Improving on their cooking skills to the point that some tasks become intuitive
- Developing problem solving skills and learning how to problem solve as a group

It has been terrific participating in the many groups and activities ARROS PLACE has had on offer over the past year and we look forward to seeing what the group members continue to accomplish over the remainder of the project!

ARROS EVENTS

Youth Week and Christmas saw ARROS all come together, something both young people and workers really look forward to and value! Young people drive the events and contribute to all the planning and organising. They are highlights throughout the year.

Christmas 2022 was spent at the Wavell Hall, sharing a meal, creating Christmas decorations, and playing a round of ping pong. We had a fantastic turn out and participation. What a great way to celebrate the end of a big year!

For Youth Week 2023, ARROS celebrated with young people, spending a relaxed afternoon in the Shed playing some games, sharing stories, listening to music, and working on art projects including badge making and beading.

We are excited for this year's Christmas and other events in the upcoming year where ARROS workers and young people can all come together.



ADVOCACY

ARROS is committed to engaging in systems advocacy and ensuring that the people with whom we work are centred in this process and seek opportunities to ensure they are afforded opportunities to participate, engage and be heard.

In 2022 ARROs submitted a report to the Disability Royal Commission which included the voices of young people and worker experience and observation. The team also contributed to CLA's NDIS Review submission through development of case studies and their work alongside young people and parents.

Arros also actively contributed to the Homestretch Campaign which saw the announcement by the QLD government to extend care for young people in the care of Child Safety to the age of 21. The announcement of post care support for this cohort is welcomed by the ARROS team and the young people we support. We hope that services can continue to support young people with intellectual disability who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness

Young people, ARROS staff and The Hon. Minister Leanne Linard meeting to share their views on out of home care and transition to adulthood





ARROS workers engaged young people in consultation around what it would take to ensure a positive transition from out-of-home-care, which formed the development of the paper “The experiences and hopes of young people with intellectual and/or cognitive disability and transition from out of home care: Practice Issues and Responses informing Transition from Care practice and models.” This paper also documented the collective challenges and experiences workers have observed and experienced in practice. We were fortunate to have the Hon Minister Leanne Linard join young people for a morning tea, so she could directly connect with young people and hear the experiences, ideas and hopes for future funding.

Arros workers lent their voices and joined with other CLA staff for the Youth Homelessness Matters event held at Espresso Train.

TRAINING

To continue our growth and development, workers have attended professional development opportunities including YAC’s ‘Laying Down the Law’ training, ‘Relapse Management and Prevention’ by Insight, and ‘Working with men and boys for social justice’.

Three workers (Renee, Shaun, and Hannah) are now trained to facilitate the Trauma Informed Practice Training alongside BEROS for the AASW. We delivered this training both for the AASW and students and new workers throughout 2022-2023. We continue to develop this training each time we deliver it and continue to receive positive feedback from participants with each session.



FUTURE SELF PROJECT

The Future Self group was funded through the Queensland Government’s ‘Investing in QLD Women’ Initiative. It was an 8-week group facilitated by ARROS workers Jess and Chloe in 2022, which responded to young peoples’ interest in learning about parenting and developing practical skills. Future Self invited young people who were either parents, had a caring role, or had hopes to parent in the future, to learn practical parenting and caregiving skills and build connections within community.

Over the eight weeks young people learnt skills such as bath time routines, how to make a bottle, and change a nappy, and met with community providers such as a local Child Health Nurse and infant CPR service. Alongside this, Future Self created a book with photos taken throughout the weeks that demonstrated the skills and helpful tips group members had learnt. This visual resource has since been able to be shared with the wider community and has been snapped up by Child Safety Officers to share with young people they connect with. Jess and Chloe would like to thank all the young people who came along to Future Self and shared their knowledge!



THERAPIES TEAM

The Parenting and counselling team has come to be known as the Therapies Team throughout 2022-2023 and has welcomed both Miryeong Lee and Jess Burke (returning from parental leave) into the team as Relationship Therapists (Disability and parenting specific). The growth in the team has seen an increase in referrals across both counselling and parenting with work being done to build our profile for referrals to support those most in need of accessing the skillset of our team.

PARENTING TEAM

The parenting team has been incredibly busy across the year with increasing referrals and requests for support across the sector with workforce development and consultation. Our team has grown to meet this demand and Miryeong and Jess have settled into the team and are working at capacity, bringing lots of new energy. This has seen the team supporting more parents and connecting with more Child Safety Service Centres to be able to accept referrals and offer support.

PARENTING FORUM

In July 2022 we hosted our first parenting forum in collaboration with Susan Collings (Uni of Sydney) and Child Safety to explore what it takes to ensure better outcomes for parents with intellectual disability.

We had approximately 40 participants attend the day, which also included presentations from Mandy Audley (CLA) Jackie Parsons (WWILD), Renee Mills (CLA) and Lind McKey (private practitioner). We received incredibly positive feedback with an interest expressed in future forums. Child Safety reported that the forum enabled them to come together with people across their department which resulted in the establishment of a working group. Parents contributed to the day through contributing to a short film about their experiences.



Jon Eastgate from 99 Consulting also presented the paper, “Parents with Intellectual Disability: Issue and Responses”, he wrote for CLA. It was well distributed and received at the forum and continues to be a good groundwork document for this work.

BRISBANE FEMINIST FESTIVAL

We were invited to present at a session with WWILD at the Brisbane Feminist Festival in October 2022. Parents, Maggie and Rhiannon, each shared their experiences as parents with disability, and spoke about their achievements, the challenges they face in parenting and the supports and systems that both work and fail them. They did an incredibly job and have talked about wanting more opportunities to share their knowledge. Renee and Julianne presented alongside Rhi and Maggie to discuss practice issues in this space with the intent to raise awareness about the challenges systems pose for parents with intellectual disabilities.

MUM’S MORNING TEA (PARENTING GROUP)

Thanks to the Social Justice Grant (Presentation Sisters) we were able to run a group project for parents. Parents met weekly and created a safe space to share their parenting journey and to co-learn healthy relationship, emotional regulation and self-care strategies. Participants expressed interest in speaking up about their experiences, and were encouraged by Rhi and Maggie, after their experience at the Brisbane Feminist Festival. Workers supported parents to share their experiences and to share their ideas on what best supports parents and families works to promote positive changes in current child safety system. Their voices were shared through a video presentation at the parenting forum to educate professionals- how to work with parents with intellectual disability. Mums provided feedback that the group made them feel connected and understood by each other, wanting to continue to participate in the group.

We have been busy working across the sector to share knowledge, upskill practitioners and to develop collaborative partnerships across the year.

- We continued to regularly meet with Child Safety Specialist Services to ensure increased sector relationships and knowledge / change to improve outcomes for parents.
- We visited some Child Safety Service centres to share the work and/or spoke directly to CSOs
- We continued our relationship with QLD Health 0-5 mental health program, facilitating a workshop with their future volunteers to enhance their knowledge about supporting parents with intellectual disability.
- Maggie (parent) and Mandy Audley presented at the Child Safety Specialist Services Conference in May.
- We were part of a small group initiating the National Advocacy Collective which is a group of committed parents and professionals advocating for improvements to ensure better outcomes for families where a parent has intellectual disability. This group now has representation across every State and Territory and Inclusion Australia agreed to take on the role as Secretariat in place of CLA.
- We are working on developing some training in the future and have started this process by interviewing workers and parents about what works best in the therapeutic relationship to improve experience and outcomes.

COUNSELLING

Our counselling team of three Accredited Mental Health Social Workers – Megumi, Michael and Monique - continued to provide flexible, meaningful counselling both in office and out in the community. We worked with people under NDIS and Mental Health Care Plans and saw growth and change in our clients as we walked this journey with them. Combined we worked with about 45 different people this year.

Our counsellors are always learning and improving their knowledge of counselling methodologies. Monique completed the first stage of training in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing. Michael has been learning more about Acceptance Commitment Therapy and Megumi has continued her work with constituents alongside her work within the court system with vulnerable children and young people (external to CLA), through which she shares her knowledge of how to best communicate with people with disability.

Our team are also looking to move into providing external training and supervision and continue providing mental health advice to our colleagues and the social work community. The counselling team facilitated a Wellbeing workshop for the CLP Team and for placement students which was well received and are now looking to develop this workshop for future practice. There are so many opportunities to pursue in this work to ensure the health and wellbeing of the people we support in our community!


Thank you!



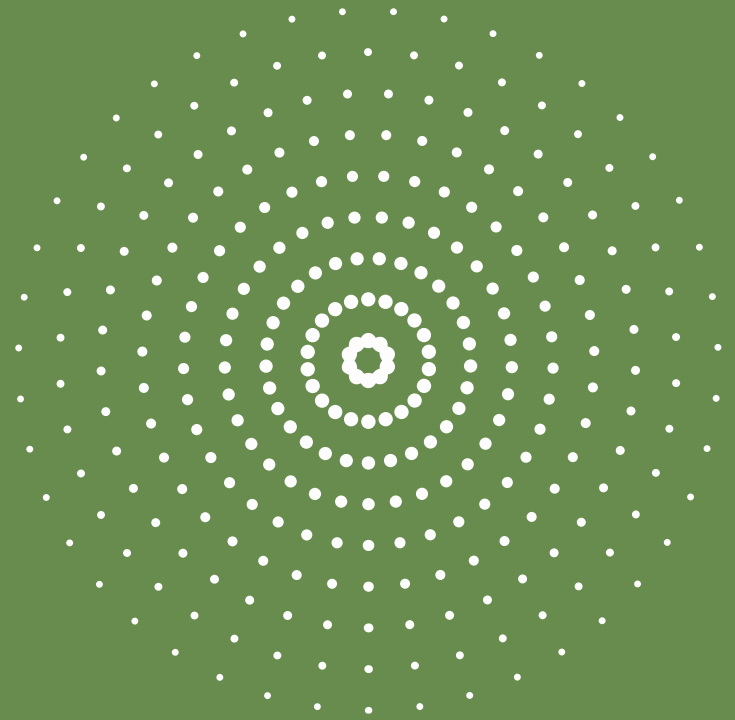
Arros would like to thank all the people who have supported our practice throughout 2022 and 2023. The list is long, but we would like to give a particular shout out to:

- The Hon Leanne Linard and her Electoral office and Ministerial staff for listening and engaging so thoughtfully with ARROS young people with out of home care experiences and supporting our raffles to upgrade the Shed facilities.
- The Hon Anika Wells for supporting our raffles!
- Child Safety staff, particularly Specialist Services who are so supportive of our work with parents with intellectual disability and Transitions and Post Care Support – you know who you are!
- Child Safety Service Centres who have supported our work by collaborating alongside the work with young people and continuing our relationship through referrals and participation in complex case reflections.
- All the funding bodies who have made our work possible across the year, including:
 - The Social Justice Grant (Presentation Sisters)
 - Department Social Services (Information Linkages and Capacity Building grant)
 - CYJMA (Transitions and Post Care Support)
 - The Dept of Justice and Attorney General for an Investing in QLD Women grant
 - The Inger Rice Foundation for a grant to deliver support to parents with young children
 - The Lady Bowen Trust – for providing funding to support young people transition from homelessness.
 - Queensland Mental Health Commission for a small grant to run activities during mental health week.
 - The members of the National Advocacy Collective for coming together to advocate alongside parents with intellectual disability. Particular thanks goes to Dr Susan Collings and Dr Margaret Spencer for their generous support of our work through supporting submissions and the forums we have held, and the consultation around practice.
- Our colleagues across the CLA teams for the collaborative and shared work and for the support you offer us.
- The many agencies we connect with to collaboratively support young people and parents to work towards the best possible outcomes!

Finally, the biggest thanks of all goes to the young people and parents who bravely show up every day to overcome the challenges they experience and allow ARROS workers to walk alongside them in moments that are often their most difficult. We thank you for the work you do alongside us to make changes, not only for yourselves and you families, but for your friends and peers who are experiencing similar adversity. We thank you for allowing us to celebrate the wins alongside you also, of which there have been so, so, many throughout the past year. Keep up the amazing work!!



BEROS



BEROS

2022 - 2023 has been another big year for BEROS. Across Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast regions, BEROS has provided support to 266 young people. BEROS provided a total of 426 bed nights to young people in out of home care, in need of emergency accommodation. Young people have come to BEROS as a safe place in between residential placements, after periods of rough sleeping and couch surfing, or for respite from their self-placing arrangements with family or friends.

WORKING ALONGSIDE YOUNG PEOPLE:

Young people in the care of child safety who are making their own choices about where to live, continue to show us just how resilient and determined they are to make progress with their goals on their own terms.

BEROS have supported young people to get their learners license, and for one young person, even rack up some driving hours in their logbook while on outreach; prepare for, apply for and maintain employment; obtain Centrelink payments; stay connected to school; return to departmental placements, or stabilise within self-placing or independent living arrangements; reunify with birth parents or foster carers; repair relationship with their Child Safety Officer; attend court; access resources; stay connected to their BEROS workers whilst in Brisbane Youth Detention Centre; look after their pets; plan for the future; transition out of child safety and even become parents without the need for child safety intervention.

Currently, young people are contributing to an artistic collage about what's important to them. Once completed, a collage of mini canvases will be framed and take pride of place at each of the BEROS houses. Here's a sneak peak of what young people have wanted to share with us and other young people accessing the service.



OUR TEAM

BEROS sincerely thank several members of staff who have moved on in 2023: Kathy Hahn, Pooja Bakshi, Michael Luck, Anthony Keast, Lauren Willet, and Karlaminda Luckel. We've said a temporary goodbye to Doreen Tubei and Sophie Barge who are both on parental leave. And we officially farewelled previous Team Leader Chloe Warrell who has developed her own Supervision and Consultancy practice. We wish her all the best and thank her for her years of dedication to, and leadership of BEROS.



BEROS were fortunate this year to have 2 amazing student social workers – Bec Patterson and Chloe Mabb. Bec and Chloe were incredibly motivated to learn and very supportive and valued members of the team, while with us. We're thrilled to report that Bec joined our overnight team. We also thank Micah Projects who continue to partner with CLA, delivering the Street to Home arm of BEROS.

With the addition of some fantastic new workers in 2023, the BEROS team currently consists of 18 CLA employees and 12 Micah employees who we collectively call BEROS Crew.

BEROS Overnight team:

Murray Lanham, Bec Patterson, Lili Slade, Lana Khouri, Rachel Augustine, Christine Extross, Rhiannon Dumsa, Adam Henry, Duane Bailey, Alex Johnson and Archie Edwards.

BEROS Case Management Team:

Brigitte Lewis, Ail Wang, Audrey Fernandez, Rachel Kirsch, Jess Larkin and Renee Billing. And Toni Sumner as the Team Leader

COLLABORATION

BEROS participate in various networking events and interagency groups across all three regions we work in; with the Department of Child Safety, Youth Justice, NDIS, residential placement providers as well as specialist youth, and community organisations. BEROS often share our practice in these spaces and forge connections with our sector partners to better serve young people in Out of Home Care.

BEROS Case Managers are now regularly co-locating at child safety service centres across Brisbane, Moreton and Sunshine Coast regions, to build relationships with child safety officers, ensure child safety understand how BEROS works, and continue to work collaboratively in support of self-placing young people.

Team Leader Toni has been working with the Department of Child Safety's Investments and Partnerships teams across all three districts to secure contract renewals for BEROS. We eagerly await some positive news in the coming months.

ADVOCACY

Hundreds of children under Queensland government care are in 'other living arrangements', for many that means homelessness

By Elizabeth Cramsie

Posted Sat 29 Mar 2023 at 7:08am, updated Sat 29 Mar 2023 at 1:02pm



BEROS continues to work behind the scenes to raise the voices of young people in care. Toni, Tania, Jess, Brigitte and a young person supported by BEROS, all shared their views in consultations and interviews around the review of Queensland's residential care system, meeting with the Department of Child Safety and the Queensland Family and Child Commission. In 2024, BEROS plan to support young people to actively participate in the dissemination of research findings around supporting young people in Out of Home Care who 'self-place'.

Toni and Tania from CLA and Karyn, Mele and Marshall from BEROS Street to Home also contributed to an ABC news story in March about young people in out of home care who are homeless titled '*Hundreds of children under Queensland government care are in 'other living arrangements', for many that means homelessness.*' (Cramsie, 2023).

THINKING OF SELF-PLACING?

YOUNG PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN THROUGH IT WANT YOU TO KNOW:

ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT



- Workers and the system are there to help you - use it to your advantage and don't feel bad. Find out what you're entitled to. Beros can talk to Child Safety to get you what you need.

PROTECT YOURSELF

- Don't ignore your gut feelings. Small incidents can be red flags for future big incidents. Check out the info down the bottom for services that can help you out.



ALWAYS HAVE A BACKUP PLAN



- Develop a safety plan with a person you trust for if you have to leave the place you are staying. Where would you go, who can you stay with, what services are there to help?

BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK

- Friends, family and workers are often your strongest allies when you're self-placing. Keep in mind: whose couch can you sleep on for a few days and who can get you food quickly?



THE GRASS IS NOT ALWAYS GREENER



- When you leave a resi placement, Child Safety can close it and it could take time to find another one. When your placement is closed, you also lose all the support they provide. Is leaving worth losing the support and a place to keep your things?

PREPARE FOR TRANSITIONING OUT OF CARE

- Talk to your workers about a plan for when you turn 18. This could involve getting Centrelink, getting your licence, writing a resume, graduating school or finishing Grade 10, or starting TAFE. Have a plan to secure your future.



DO WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO SURVIVE



- Self-placing is hard and there's going to be bumps in the road. There is no shame in doing what you need to do to survive. Hold on to people who have your back, and continue to work towards something better in the future.

What young people in out-of-home care would like you to know about self-placing:

Be respectful of young people's belongings - it might be all they have.



Be kind, patient, compassionate, person-centred, empathetic, curious, non-judgemental & trauma-informed.



Give young people information about all the possible resources, services and support they are entitled to - especially after-hours services.



Stress your availability to young people. Be transparent about the future and provide stability where possible.



Support young people to have a safety plan in case their placement doesn't work out. This could involve using other services, or making a safe word.



Advocate for the needs of young people with Child Safety and other services, and provide guidance where possible.



Support young people to secure their future by providing resources - eg. Centrelink support, housing application, drivers' licence, updated resume etc.



Understand AOD and other typically "naughty" behaviours as mechanisms for survival, and encourage harm minimisation approaches.



Don't make promises you can't keep about staying in touch when you leave. This is how young people lose trust in workers.



MOST IMPORTANTLY:

"Feed the kids."

Ensure young people have access to the basics - transport, food, a phone, and a place to stay.

TRAINING

BEROS Crew gathered for training this year with Open Doors and Insight, to better understand Trauma Informed Practice for LGBTQIA+ young people, and about how to support young people who use Alcohol and Other Drugs.

Toni, Jess and Audrey, worked closely with ARROS workers Renee, Shaun and Hannah to continue co-facilitating Trauma Informed Practice with Young People through the AASW. We have received some great feedback and look forward to delivering this training in 2024.

RESEARCH

BEROS' partnership with the University of Queensland (UQ) has also garnered some interesting research findings and resources...

An article written by Jemma Venables was published in 2023, following research exploring BEROS' practice and implementation: *Features of Service Delivery that Young People in Out-of-Home Care Who 'Self-place' and Stay in Unapproved Placements Value When Accessing a Specialist Support Service*.

Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-023-00939-8>



Features of Service Delivery that Young People in Out-of-Home Care Who 'Self-place' and Stay in Unapproved Placements Value When Accessing a Specialist Support Service

Jemma Venables¹

The infographics (included on the previous pages) share the voices of 11 young people who took part in interviews about their experiences of self-placing as part of another research project conducted by the University of Queensland: Venables, J., Healy, K., Ellem, K., & Cullin, J. (2022). Enhancing outcomes for young people in out-of-home care who 'self-place': Optimising practice and policy responses. The University of Queensland.

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- Venables, J. (2023). Features of Service Delivery that Young People in Out-of-Home Care Who 'Self-place' and Stay in Unapproved Placements Value When Accessing a Specialist Support Service. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-023-00939-8>

Community Connections

Community Connections

As one of the youth teams at CLA Inc. Community Connections support young people, their families and the significant people in their lives to navigate challenges that may lead to homelessness or school disengagement.

We thank the young people, families and community partners we collaborate with so young people reach their goals. We acknowledge the school communities we work in every week and who help connect young people to our support at the first possible instance. We also acknowledge the many workers we collaborate with across the sector for young people to gain housing, health services, mental health support, sexual assault counselling, cultural support, emergency relief, driver's licences, connection to family, education, employment, friendship and community.

This year saw many transitions for the team. Karen Becker finished her maternity leave locum to follow ongoing Social Work goals and Eden McNamara transitioned from the Community Connections Team Leader position to the CLA Practice Manager. We thank Karen and Eden for their contributions to our work, for the flexible, creative, caring and collaborative support they provided to young people, families, schools and the many peers in the youth sector. More changes afoot, Tania Lawrie moved from sharing the Community Connections Office – where she practiced for 18 years – relocating to the CLP office in the CLA Coordinator role. Tania, we thank you for all the time and energy you've given to workers in our space, sharing skills and practice wisdom in your daily presence.

Joining the remaining team – Kelsey McArthur and Katherine Ritchie – were Beck Taylor (Reconnect Program) and Cate Ryan (Team Leader). Together we've worked hard to continue the great practice Community Connections is renowned – outreach to where young people are, flexible & responsive, creative & collaborative problem solving, young person lead & family focused planning and strong relationships with systems to achieve change.

We thank placements students Indigo Nguyen and Simone Glover for contributing to the many projects and groups and coming alongside young people to help achieve their goals.

Below the team shares the hard-won achievements from their efforts in the year. We hope you enjoy finding out more about the fun, grit, vision and care provided through the relationships we hold in our community.

Reconnect

Reconnect is funded by the Department of Social Services to support 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. Reconnect allows us to work flexibly with young people according to their goals and circumstances. We do this through a mix of individual, group and community-based supports.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

In 2022-2023 we have again had the privilege of working alongside young people as they work towards their goals and navigate difficult situations. Some of the goals we have supported young people with include:

Accessing Housing

- Collaborating with young people, families, couch providers and services to sustain safe housing for young people
- Supporting young people to access housing within their networks and to negotiate housing sustainability

Participate in Education

- Participating in stakeholder groups to advocate for young people's needs and goals, and for young person-centred responses.
- Identify goals and pathways for current & future learning & support young person to share these with other stakeholders

Healthy, Connected Support networks

- Advocacy within systems such as Centrelink, Education Queensland, employment, Youth Justice and legal services.
- Support to navigate systems and access information for young people to make informed decisions, access resources and build capacity

Access to resources to alleviate financial hardship

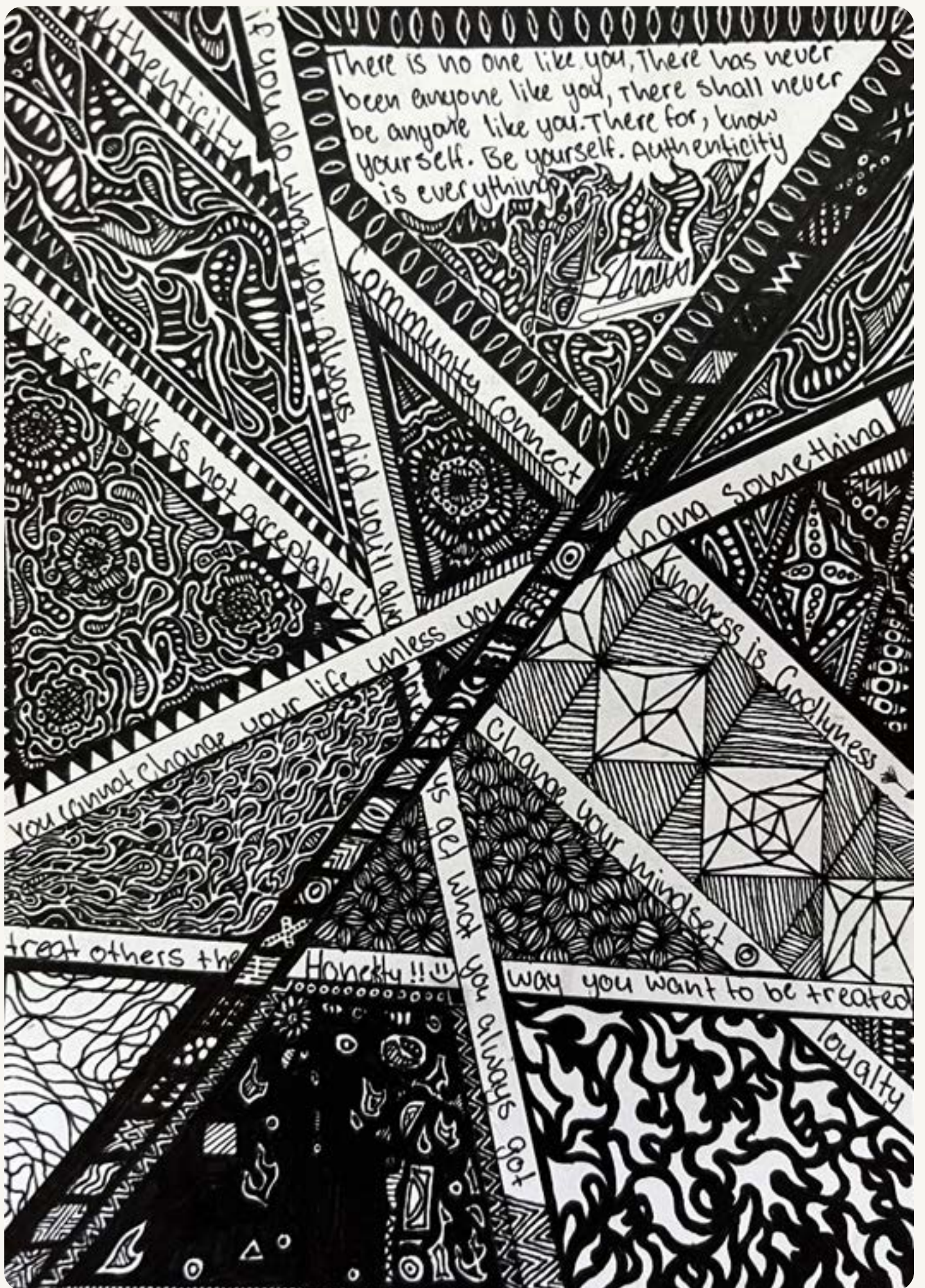
- Provided material wellbeing and emergency relief through Givit, brokerage, community resources and supported access to emergency relief services
- Supporting young people and their families to access material items and supports whilst isolating due to COVID-19

Healthy Lives & Relationships

- Minimised barriers for young people to access health care to support their physical and mental health wellbeing outcomes
- Safety planning for physical and mental wellbeing
- Providing counselling for mental health intervention, parenting support, family, relationships and conflict resolution

Independent Living Skills

- Increasing young people's confidence to negotiate independent living, including income, employment, education, budgeting, managing appointments and obligations and linking young people in with appropriate services
- Access services which support young people to access their driver's licence



'Your imagination doesn't have a limitation' - Lacey Shaw



'Think twice? I don't even think once'
- Ben Shield



'My art is an exploration of the beauty and symbolism embodied by the blue flower. The delicate petals and the vibrant blue hues serve as my canvas to convey a sense of serenity, hope, and mystery. I draw inspiration from the tranquillity of nature and the way the blue flower symbolizes the unattainable and the extraordinary. The grey background demonstrates even if it's tough there will always be a beautiful outcome. Through my artwork, I attempt to create a visual experience that resonates with the soul, evoking emotions and sparking contemplation'
-Georgia Shoebridge

Young people told us:

"[Community Connections] is an incredible organisation that has assisted me through rough circumstances and has continued to have a positive attitude to working with me and providing the upmost support. Kelsey has made sure that my support network has grown and strengthened with every meeting we have and I'm grateful for her work"

"Whilst being a client of Community Connections the services and help provided to me has helped me and impacted my life greatly. I am so grateful for all the workers at community connections, and I would not know where I would be without them. Thank you to Beck and Eden for all that you have done to help me and all the students and other staff willing to help me too"

Groups and Projects

PAR - PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Community Connections continued work on our current Participatory Action Research (PAR) question - 'What would it take to understand under 16's experience of homelessness?'. This project acknowledges the systems barriers faced by young people we support who are ineligible (e.g. too young) for Specialist Youth Housing Services and not responded to by the Department of Child Safety. We've observed young people often surviving in highly vulnerable and risky situations with minimal options for housing intervention. The youth sector has anecdotally acknowledged the existence of this problem for decades however, there is little documented collective data and evidence which demonstrates this problem to policy makers who rely heavily on an evidence base to inform policy. Accordingly, this project aims to add to the evidence base with survey data and stories from young people and workers who are, or have been, supported young people navigating homelessness whilst under 16.

The Reconnect Team engaged workers through networks (Inner Urban Youth Interagency, Local Level Alliance, Brisbane North Youth Alliance) to ask young people they meet to complete surveys. We also attended Homeless Connect where 75 stakeholders connected to the issue and shared reflections.

We look forward to sharing our findings in the next financial year.

'PARENTING YOUR TEENS' SEMINAR SERIES

With funds from the Kedron Wavell Community Giving Fund, we delivered a 6 session seminar series supporting parents and carers of young people to navigate issues and strengthen family relationships. We partnered with eight local services to cover topics such as; communication and conflict resolution, e-safety, supporting LGBTQIAP+ young people, alcohol and drugs, mental health and resilience and sex, consent and relationships. The series aimed to increase safety and support for young people by equipping parents and carers with quality information, strategies and



community resources. 45 participants attended across the six weeks, 30 information packs containing community resources, service information and strategies were distributed. Out of the 35 participants that answered the question 'would you attend a future parenting seminar?' 100% said yes, additionally 100% also said that they would recommend attending the session to others.

Parents and carers told us:

"For starters, a very warm, welcoming space. Knowing I'm not alone in my challenges. Hearing other people's challenges. The reminder to consider our teen's needs. Tips for areas to focus on, knowing what's going on with your teen, being aware of what's going on for them emotionally, managing our own emotions and recognising our tipping point. Recognising bids for connections from your teen. All the content was practical, relevant, relatable and thoughtfully presented. The note-taking resources provided were helpful. Refreshments were a real treat! Thank you!"

"Firstly, thank you for inviting me to the seminar. I honestly had so much fun and hearing other parents have the same issues made me feel so validated and good. Also, I really enjoyed our chat and the chat I had with Kimberly. I even teared up in the car on the way home because I felt so supported"

YOUTH WEEK 2023



Winning Artwork by Visible Ink Collaborative



Runner Up by Madalyn T

Community Connections partnered with Picabeen Community Centre to run the Brisbane North Youth Alliance Art Comp in Term 1, 2023 and displayed the collection of 35 works at Visible Ink during Youth Week 2023. A winning artwork was decided by a predominantly youth lead audience and will be used on the next edition of the Brisbane North Youth Info Card. The project celebrated young people's talents and sense of community. It provided a communal opportunity to gather, create new friendships and celebrate while creating something imaginative. The winning artwork will front the 2023 version of the Brisbane North Youth Info Card.

SORRY DAY

Community Connection again led CLAs contribution to the Noonga Reconciliation Group (NRG) Sorry Day planning committee. This activity continues to foster rich relationships with our community, First Nations Leaders and local schools. Hundreds of people gathered at the Sorry Site in Kalinga Park on National Sorry Day – 26 May – to pay respect to the harm caused by removal and assimilation policies and celebrate the strength of First Nations cultures to survive and grow today. CLA stands with NRG in paying respect to Aunty Maud Gorman as she retires from her leadership of song and dance across the region.



ELDERS CELEBRATION LUNCH 15.08.2023

This year's National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) celebration theme was "For Our Elders." CLA, alongside Noonga Reconciliation Group hosted a lunch at Northside Connect to celebrate and thank Elders from north Brisbane. The event was well attended by Elders, First Nations Trainees, and CLA staff. The Elders said that enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with each other and requested that this becomes an annual event.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY

The 2023 Youth Homelessness Matters Day saw the Reconnect team create a local campaign bringing attention to current youth homelessness statistics and experiences in collaboration with the 2 other youth focused teams of CLA Inc, BEROS and ARROS, and the Nundah Community Enterprise Coop (NCEC). The event was supported with a \$250 donation by local government member, Cr Adam Allans.

The campaign highlighted:

- Almost 40 000 specialist homelessness service clients were young people presenting alone in 2021-2022. Almost 1/3 of this group were couch surfing before they turned up as well as experienced domestic and family violence. Almost half had a mental health issue.
- Anglicare's rental snapshot 2022 showed that for someone on youth allowance there was one affordable rental property available across the country
- 12-24 year olds make up 24% of the homeless population but only 16% of the general population
- 46% young people (15-24 years old) presenting alone to specialist youth homelessness services needed long term housing and only 3.9% received it.

On YHMD, 156 people interacted with the installation and community education information about youth homelessness statistics at Nundah Espresso Train and 94 People at the Marhaba Café, Brisbane City Hall. Due to the importance of the issue, Nundah Espresso Train agreed to leave the installation in place for an extra 4 days of trade.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



Community Connections participated in the NSAAN (Northside Sexual Assault Action Network) workshop series focused on the theme HELP, HOPE, CHANGE. Participants shared stories, experiences, and thoughts on how communities and services could be supportive for victim-survivors. Participants created postcards with meaningful and powerful messages, and determined how their artwork would be delivered to the public. The collective artwork now hangs at Northside Connect.

“

"The artworks reflect what has given survivors HOPE, what has HELPED them in their recovery & what CHANGE they want to see in our community that would better support survivors and help to end sexual violence."

-NSAAN

”

HARMONY WEEK

Cate, Simone and CLPs student Alfred Tsang participated in Everton Parks SHS's Harmony Day celebrations. Alfred and Cate addressed the school community inviting them to consider everyday acts of inclusion and anti-racist ways of being in relationships and in the community.

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Reconnect workers facilitated stalls at Kedron State High School, Wavell State High School, Kelvin Grove College, Everton Park State High School, and Craigslea State High School and focused on providing an opportunity for young people to engage in everyday mindfulness through beading bracelets and charms and air-dry clay. Mindful beading was very popular. Eden and Kelsey had opportunities to talk with young people about how they support their mental health by using the wheel of wellbeing and opportunities to implement everyday mindfulness.



CAREERS EXPO

Kelsey attended Wavell State High Schools career expo to talk with year 10 students about social work and what being a Reconnect worker at Community Connections looks like. 60 students attended over three sessions. This allowed young people to engage in capacity building around community resources, social work and also acted a soft entry point within the school.



KOPING ADOLESCENCE GROUP – PARTNERSHIP WITH CHILDREN’S HEALTH QUEENSLAND

Community Connection reignited its partnership with the Children of Parents with Mental Illness (COMPI) team at Childrens Health Queensland (CHQ) to explore how we can deliver the KOPING groupwork to young people (12-18) who have a parent living with mental illness. The group aimed to utilise psychoeducation, mental health strategies and peer support to link young people with each other and validate experiences.

Kelsey worked with the COMPI team to review intake processes and promote access to the group across our network for delivery in the next financial year.

THE QUILTMAKERS @ PEPPERMINT STITCHES PARTNERSHIP – A WARM RIPPLE

Community Connections was approached by the community minded members of “Quiltmakers @ Peppermint Stiches” to share handmade quilts with women and children who’ve experienced domestic and family violence. Through this partnership we helped share warm ripples of solidarity and care with young people and families connected to CLA Inc, as well as the Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence (NAADV) since May 2023. We thank the quilters for their thoughtfulness and diligence to make and share the quilts with people they’ll never meet. We know the smiles the quilts create when given to their new owners.



A selection of the many quilts made and shared

PRACTICE SHARING – INNER URBAN YOUTH INTERAGENCY

Peer led practice sharing is a pivotal activity of the Inner Urban Youth Interagency to increase reflection and linkage between the different organisations to benefit young people across the region. Beck and Kelsey presented at IUYI and facilitated reflection on early intervention and prevention in youth homelessness. This presentation allowed workers across the sector to consider collaborative practices and young person-centred approaches in day-to-day work as well as generated new connections between services.

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.

This financial year, here's how we delivered this program in 22-23:

- Kelsey co-facilitated Peer Skills at Brisbane State School in November 2022
- Kelsey co-facilitated Peer Skills at Wavell SHS in December 2022
- Kelsey co-facilitated Peer Skills at Everton Park SHS in January 2023
- Beck and Cate facilitated Peer Skills at Craigslea SHS in February 2023
- Cate & Simone facilitated Peer Skills at Wavell SHS in March 2023

We thank the Brisbane Airport Corporation for their support to resource Peer Skills at the beginning of 2023 and we look forward to doing more their donation to grow the next generation of leaders at the end of 2023.

SCHOOL BASED SOCIAL WORK

It's been another big year at Kedron SHS! In the second half of 2022, we celebrated Mental Health Week, Kedron Week - a celebration of all the different cultures represented at the school - and Year 12 Graduation.

Across the year, SBSW focused on exploring ways to promote the voices of young people within the school community. This involved consulting young people who identify as part of the LGBTQI+ community, in particular, about their relationships with their parents and caregivers. For example, a young person identified that they wanted support around how to 'come out' to parents, explaining the importance of pronouns, and how to cope if a parent responds negatively.

Other young people shared that they wanted their caregivers to be better informed about mental health issues and how they can support and respond to their YP when they are experiencing difficulties.

Young people at Kedron have felt supported by SBSW through advocacy, systems navigation, practical support and the provision of confidential counselling and mental health support.

LOVE BITES

Kelsey supported Kath in facilitating a relationships session at Kedron State High School in December 2022.

LOCAL DRUG ACTION TEAM

The Alcohol & Drug foundation (ADF) funded our ongoing Peer Support for Wellbeing project alongside Wavell SHS and The Boss Boxing. During Term 4 2022 we worked alongside the Peer Skills trained Student Leaders to evaluate the Wavell Connections Group. This group consisted of lunch time activities for young people experiencing social isolation at school. Young people described the experience of supporting and being supported to meet peers from across grades, provide mentoring and casual supportive conversations as overwhelmingly positive. The Boss Boxing held their boxing tournament using funds from ADF to pay for First Nations Cultural performers and Elders attendance. Thanks to the ADF for their ongoing support.

SPECIAL THANKS

Community Connections would like to say special thanks to:

The young people and families
Co-Workers, Placement Students and
Partners we collaborate with
CLA Inc teams
Department of Social Services
Services Australia and your very special
Social Work team
Kedron State High School
QLD Department of Education
Alcohol & Drug Foundation
Brisbane City Council
Councillor Adam Allan – Northgate Ward
Northside Connect
WWild
Kedron Wavell
Brisbane Airport Corporation
Childrens Health Queensland – COMPI
Nundah Headspace
Zig Zag
Reset Therapy
Tools for Hard Conversations
Clarence Street
Parentline
Open Doors
PFLAG
Visible Ink
Picabeen Community Centre
Nundah Community Enterprise Coop
Noonga Reconciliation Group

NPCAN – Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect
Youth Affairs Network Queensland

INTERAGENCIES AND NETWORKS

Community Connections holds ongoing working relationships with the following professional networks:

IUYI – Inner Urban Youth Interagency
LLA – Local Level Alliance
NAADV – Northside Alliance Against
Domestic Violence
NSAAN – Northside Sexual Assault
Network
BANYA – Brisbane North Youth Alliance
SAYS – Supporting Advocacy with Youth
Nundah Headspace Consortium
Youth Affairs Network Queensland –
Community of Practice



Community Connections

CASEWORK | COUNSELLING | GROUP FACILITATION

Community Living Program (CLP)

Community Living Program



CLP would like to share gratitude and thank all of the constituents of CLP and their significant others for the opportunity to work alongside you through your many capacity building projects. This year has continued to allow us to work together through relationship based practice to focus on what matters most to the constituents, families, friends, community and other stakeholders.

We have worked alongside over 70 constituents in a variety of ways including individual work and group work. The groups and projects have included Nundah All Stars, Shared Meal, Adventure Holiday Group, Youth Group, Cooking Group, Fitness Group, Train Enthusiasts, Scammers, Committee, Recyclers, Literacy and the Op Shop. The groups have written up a summary of their year and can be found at the end of this report.

CLP Team has focused on building our knowledge of reflective practice, group work and the NDIS system to continue to offer best practice. CLP service includes two teams (Salt & Pepper) comprised of twenty-three workers in a range of roles, including Team Leaders (2), Senior Key Workers (6); Key Workers (6); Community & Homespace Workers (2); and Casual Workers (3). CLP has provided placements to six social work students in 2023. CLP workers have worked hard over the past year to deliver capacity building individual support and group work with CLP constituents. It is with ongoing gratitude that we thank all CLP workers and students for your dedication, enthusiasm, persistence, openness, creativity and kindness. CLP is truly one in a kind place to work.

CLP Teams meet as a large joined team (Salt and Pepper) to offer ongoing opportunities of learning from each other, collaborative practice and strong cohesiveness. We have Kat Henderson join our meetings on a regular basis to support our skill and knowledge development of the NDIS system, and Eden McNamara to enhance our group work and critical reflection skills. CLP has incorporated team building activities which focus on shared strengths, collaboration, fun and best practice. We have also come together to continue to incorporate the strategic planning for the next three years. CLP has also joined whole of organization training inclusive of Trauma Informed practice focusing on Grief and Loss, as well as Hidden Histories facilitated by Uncle James Sandy.

We have welcomed new workers to the CLP Team. Mitali Ghosh Pradhan whom has moved from a Community & Homespace Worker to a Key Worker role, Amy Hitchins has moved from a casual staff member to a Key Worker role and we have welcomed Lilli Lebovits to the team as a Community & Homespace Worker.

In our usual fashion 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, Community Connections, Finance & Administration Teams, Systems and Compliance Team, NCEC and the Management Committee. We very much enjoy and appreciate your ongoing support, knowledge, wisdom, innovation, creativity, fun and compassion.

Please read on for updates on the activities of CLP constituent member groups in 2023.



CLP Member Groups

YOUTH WEEK



Rock-and-roll!!! It's Youth Week Group! YWG had such an exciting season and did a plethora of activities this year! To begin with, the purpose of YWG is to build capacity and connections. Members of the YWG have indicated a keen interest to continue 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. This year, YWG members shared a strong interest in wanting to know more about the various ways they can stay fit – both physically and mentally.



Therefore, the activities this year looked a tad bit different from those of last year's. Some examples of the activities that YWG did were bush-walking, going to trampoline parks, mini-golf courses, and boating. Through these activities, YWG members were also able to explore unfamiliar activities, build their technical skills through planning and decision-making, and touch on their collaborative and teamwork skills. Overtime, the group has also observed increased sense of confidence individually and collectively within the group. Other examples include 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.



This year, YWG also witnessed the transition of a member who was a part of YWG for 3 years as he felt that he was transitioning into adulthood and was ready to explore other interests. YWG members all sat down together at New Farm Park and celebrated his last day by reminiscing old memories from the previous years. It was a bittersweet moment for everyone, but the group understood that change is normal and a part of life. In saying this, YWG members discussed and now feel that they are ready to receive new members into the group and to build and share more amazing memories with members both old and new. 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.



SHARED MEAL

Oh, what a fun space to come together for delicious food and great company...

This year we said goodbye to Rita and Fernanda who was the facilitator last year and welcomed Mitali and Mandy who co-facilitated together to run the group. Shared Meal is a fortnightly community meal held in The Shed with approximately 15 constituents who attend on an evening and share good food. This year constituents have voted for doing 2 movie nights a year and enjoyed GHOSTBUSTERS with delicious pizzas and drinks. After COVID hit, it has been hard to bring people together and enjoy meals and good company. However, we tried to bring shared meals back for people to enjoy and build good meaningful relationships and of course yummy food.



We would also like to express our immense gratitude and appreciation to the Espresso Train for preparing delicious meals and continuing to prepare meals for this year's shared meal. The Mary MacKillop students and teachers have returned to join the group this year. The group welcomed them with our all-time favorite games such as memory games and Bingo. Apart from the Bingo and memory games constituent also enjoyed playing celebrity head. Finally, a big shout out to our placement students Alfred, Elvin, and Thabitha, for all the support you have provided to Shared Meal.

What did we do differently from last year?

Well, some of the members this year decided to bring home-cooked meals to share after the pandemic. All the members participated in making decisions, shared their ideas on how they wanted shared meal to be this year, shared good vibes, and continued to respect everyone who is part of the shared meal. Some of the shared meal members commented that it is the good food, a great social get-together, and catching up with good friends, which are some of the factors that make the evening enjoyable and the fact that everyone gets on well with each other. The constituents are looking forward to another amazing movie night and celebrating birthdays this year.



Here are comments from constituents about shared meals.

“Very good food. Enjoy being with Aiden” - Susan

“Doing games with people, having dinner together, and getting together.” - Taurean

“Good, fun.” - Aidan



TRAIN ENTHUSIAST GROUP

Group members: Allan Castellaro, Taurean Lea, Sean McCrystal

Train Enthusiast Group continued meeting fortnightly this year. Group members got creative working with Australia's changing seasons. Scorching hot summer? Allan suggested we get the train all the way to Shorncliffe and back, just so we could stay in the air conditioning. Score! Freezing cold weather? Group members knew exactly what stations would have access to sunlight. Sunshine Station, Geebung, anyone? Rainy day? Taurean had us covered by bringing his laptop and train DVD's. Thanks, Taurean! Queensland Rail was kind enough to provide the group with some resources to build cardboard NGR trains (New Generation Rollingstock), as well as learn more about the meaning behind the First Nations artwork displayed. The group loved building them (see photos below). Lastly, a shoutout to Sean for always predicting what train was about to appear simply from the sound and shakiness of the floor! What a skill.

Who are we:

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

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.



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.

LEARNING AND VOICE EVERYDAY (LAVE)

In 2023 the Learning and Voice Everyday (LAVE) program has continued to co-create learning opportunities with group members through three learning groups that meet weekly in Nundah. LAVE continues to incorporate feedback from group members about what they would like to learn and aims to create a safe environment for group members to build skills in literacy and numeracy, problem-solving, self-advocacy, self-confidence and share their experiences of life and learning through a range of approaches including verbal and written storytelling, participating in group discussions, role playing everyday scenarios, collaborative mind mapping, and creative learning games.

Learning themes for 2023 have included:

Emotional literacy: Focus on building capacity to understand, name and describe feelings and identify and develop strategies for managing challenging feelings.

Communication: Focus on understanding and describing helpful and unhelpful communication habits and building skills in communicating effectively in a range of everyday scenarios.

Money Matters: Focus on developing skills in practical maths and managing money more effectively including identifying ways to solve problems involving purchases and calculation of change in a real-world context.

Community Connections: Focus on developing community connections through learning about opportunities to enhance meaningful participation in the wider community.

LAVE groups are excited to be holding their first ever community showcase at the Shed on Friday the 24th November to share their stories, personal strengths and learnings with the wider community!

The LAVE team of facilitators (Sally, Amy, Eli and Ash) would like to say a big thank you to Amanda Toivanen for the passion, hard work and guidance she has brought to the program this year.

LAVE currently runs a group in Nundah on Tuesdays (9:30 am – 12:30pm) and two groups on Fridays (10am – 12pm and 12:30 pm – 2:30pm) during the school terms. Please contact the CLA office if you would like more information about the program or the LAVE Community Showcase in November.

Please enjoy the following stories that have been written by some of our LAVE group members:

Please enjoy the following stories that have been written by some of our LAVE group members...

My Community Activism – Refugees are Welcome

I am part of an activist group for refugees. They welcome me every time I do a protest with them. Being part of such a welcoming group makes me feel included. We can include other people by calling or texting them and inviting them to join a group event.
By Jessica

The Power of Calmness

Sometimes I feel hurt when other people are arguing. When I feel scared, I don't need to shout. Instead, I can put my foot down and say "I will pray for you." When other people are upset, I want to say "It's not worth it to fight over things that are not true." Telling stories helps me feel calm.
By Stephen

A Two-Way Street

Respect is important to me. Respect is something we give and receive. We have agreements in our group about respect because it's like a two-way street. Respect goes both ways. It's not just about me respecting other people. Other people need to respect me too. There's more than one side to a story.
By Shawn C

Learning and Friendship

I come to Learning and Voice mainly for the friendship. Life would be boring if we didn't have friends. Learning is important, but really, it's the friendships and the chance to learn with other people that makes a difference in my life. When I first started the group, I didn't know I was going to make friends but I'm glad that I did. I like how we check in with each other at the start and end of every session. It's an important way to start the day and end our time each week. Checking in helps other people know when I need to take things easy, like if I'm having medical problems or just feeling like it's a hard day. Check-ins also let me know how other people are going. It's all part of good communication. Our group checks in every week as a way of showing we care about each other. We all need to feel cared for. One of my favourite things is when we celebrate our work at the end of each term. I think it's good to take a break from working and have a chance for a chat every now and then. I've been part of this group in a few different places – West End, Milton and now Nundah – and the one thing that's remained constant is the feeling of connection with people and the friendship and learning we share.
By Olivia

FITNESS GROUP

We have continued to run Fitness Group during 2023 with great success. The activities vary throughout the year depending on the weather, but includes the following, walking, yoga, Pilates, stretching, meditation, and swimming. The walking is an extremely popular activity where the constituents choose the location. The favourite locations are Nudgee Beach, Sandgate, and Boondall Wetlands. This year we retained most of the group participants from previous years but also had new members joining Fitness Group. Whilst the primary purpose of Fitness Group is to improve the physical and mental health of its members, it also has additional benefits, such as building the members capacity through involvement in the planning, decision making and organising the activities. Increased Social & Community Participation is also achieved as the group will sometimes use public transport to travel to and from the activities.



I would like to personally say a big thank you to all the Fitness Group members for their dedication, commitment, and assistance in making Fitness Group so successful and a lot of fun. As always, we will welcome any new members who may be interested in joining us.

The following is some fantastic feedback and comments with consent from the Fitness Group members.

“Hello, my name is Monny, and I would like to share my thoughts about fitness group. I like fitness group because it keeps me active, I can talk to my friends and go to different places for walks.” ML

“One of the things I love about Fitness Group is we all get to be fit and active every Monday afternoon, especially going out to parks to exercise and even walks along the Brisbane coast e.g., Shorncliffe, Nudgee Beach etc. I enjoy Fitness Group so much and I would love to continue doing this for many years to come.” TL

“I like Fitness Group because it helps me with my physical and mental health. I enjoy the walks and catching up with mates.” SD

NUNDAH ALL STARS



Nundah All Stars recently concluded our highly anticipated annual show, which proved to be a success! Nundah All Stars was fun for all of us. This year's show was called "Clipz". We all chose our songs and have been rehearsing for the past few months. We enjoyed supporting each other on the stage as well as setting up equipment on the performance night. One notable improvement this year was getting new microphones for the show. Using our new microphones, we enjoyed singing loud to the audience because the quality of the microphone ensured that the performances were clear and enjoyable. Before the show we had our hair and make-up done, which we loved.

The most exciting part of Nundah All Stars this year was putting on costumes for the show, adding an extra layer of entertainment and visual appeal. We loved that our workers, friends, and family came to support us on the performance night. Craig did a great job editing musical videos/introductions and background work. Alan and James did a great job on the sound, and Carolyn designed some amazing program books. Susan and Taurean organized our raffle prizes, and Ian was a fantastic stage-hand!

On the night we had a sausage sizzle, sold raffle tickets and Nundah All Stars supporter t-shirts. This year we made a lot of money for the group!

Next year we hope to have the Mary Mackillop college students back in the musical. We would like to invite Anika Wells, Leanne Linnard and Councilor Adam Allan. We also hope that everyone can come along and see us perform in 2024!

Written by Michael, Taurean, Shannon, Karen and Sarah K.



ADVENTURE HOLIDAY GROUP

This year, the Adventure Holiday Group has had two holidays and some day trips.

Some of us had a great few days camping up the Sunshine Coast in April. It was relaxing. We did some cooking. We saw some big kangaroos right next to the cabins. We went bushwalking around the national park and we saw rocks, trees, and birds. Some of us did some line dancing in the sand (not mentioning any names). We had pizza for dinner at the restaurant. Some of us enjoyed singing karaoke in our cabins and we had fun choosing our beds. Some people went for a swim. Morrie kept pinching our food. We went for a night hike and some workers were scaring other workers. Some of us had to save our workers' lives when they got a fright!! Some people slept in tents and boy were they suffering. They thought their tent was going to fly away – it was that windy. But they survived, so that's a good thing. We went to Eumundi markets before we went home. It was good. We had lunch, looked at some things and bought some things.

Some of us went on a trip to the Gold Coast instead of going camping. We slept in a hotel and went out to a restaurant for dinner. We went to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and had a great time! We got even got to cuddle a koala. Some of us went to Mt Cooth-tha Botanical gardens for a day trip. It was a great experience, including a visit to the planetarium and watching a space documentary. We went to the café for lunch.

We have some more day trips coming up this year. For our next one we will be hiking up at the Sunshine Coast, going to the beach and having lunch.

Written by Taurean, Michael, Karen and Emma



OP SHOP



In 2023, Op shop continues to provide a space for goods to find a second home to be used and loved, a community connecting point, as well as an opportunity for people to gain skills and experience such as providing customer service, keeping the store neat and tidy and managing cash and card payments. The running of op shop is highly dependent on volunteers. I would like to express my great gratitude to all volunteers for their hard work, to student social workers for their timely onsite support to our volunteers and to Morrie O'Connor for his guidance and support.



At the op-shop, everyone has a say in how the op-shop will be run. We meet regularly, discussing things and making decisions together. In July 2023, we made a joint decision in our planning meeting about where to distribute \$5000 we earned from selling things. We have decided to keep \$1500 for things we need to buy for the op-shop and to offer the rest \$3500 to CLA groups and CLA constituents who are experiencing emergencies. We are all very happy that we could help our community out. As many of us have said, one thing we love about the op-shop is we care about each other.



We look forward to continuing caring for each other, selling things, donating more money, and having lots of laughs and fun. And of course, we can't wait to have our Op-shop Crew End of Year Breakfast in December. YUM!

We love working at the op-shop because:

'I can meet people in the community.'

'I get a chance to get out from my unit.'

'I make friends and good laugh.'

CONSTITUENT CELEBRATION - JT

James is talented in many areas. He is proficient in electronics, setting up solar panels, CB radio, repairing push bikes, gardening, and various building tasks. James operates an organic worm juice farm under his unit, his home-produced worm juice is a hot-selling product at Espresso Train Café, Patent Park Nursery and Garden Gem Nursery.

James also has a special interest in bikes, he often refers to himself as a 'cycle advocate'. This is because James cares about the environment very much, he particularly enjoys the convenience and freedom bikes provide without any exhaust emissions.

For a very long time, James required support from workers to stock worm juices due to not having an appropriate transport method. James owned a few bikes, both traditional and electrical ones. However, none of them have enough space to carry a few crates of worm juice. James has been searching for something that is environmentally friendly and enables him to deliver his worm juice to places independently. One day in 2021, James saw a cargo bike which was exactly what he wanted.

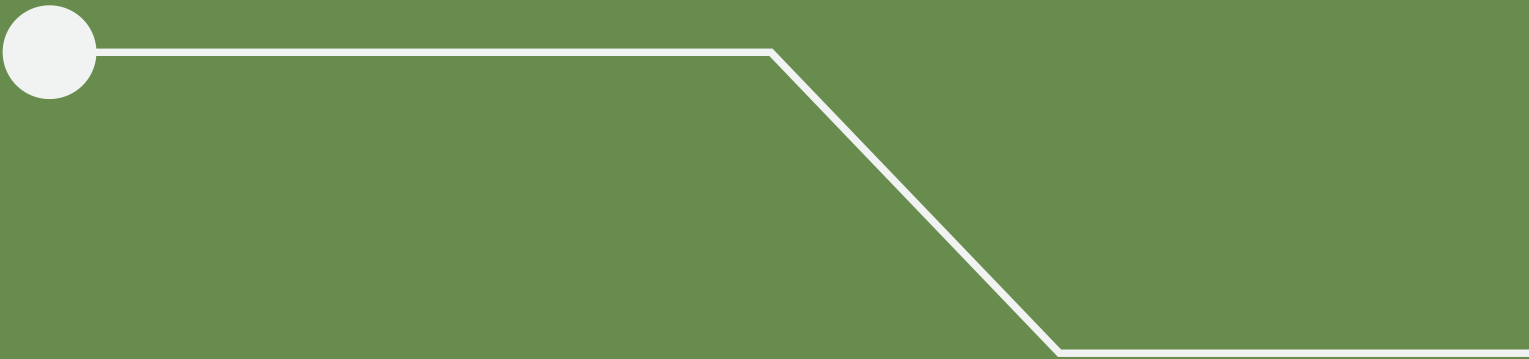
While a cargo bike seemed to be a perfect solution, it was very expensive to James at the time. In general, the bike James was looking for cost between \$6000 and \$10,000. James did not have enough money, so he set up a saving goal. James used to have issues with budgeting as he tended to spend on things he did not need. Since he set up his goal, he only bought things he needed. James asked to have a saving account with CLA, of which his income from selling worm juice goes into his savings. James also collects empty bottles and cans for Containers for Change, money earned from this also contributes to the cargo bike. James believes that quitting smoking also helped him to save lots of money.



After 24 months of hard work, James finally saved enough money for a cargo bike. James bought his first ever electric cargo bike with 500Wh battery capacity, 90km maximum range, and 220kg max rider weight. James loves his cargo bike, since he got it in September 2023, he had a ride to the gateway bridge to Murrarie and to Woody Point in Redcliffe, he has also delivered a load of worm juice to Nundah Espresso Train himself.

In the future, James would like to put another battery on the cargo bike so it can take him to further places. James wants to use his cargo bike to do some delivery jobs in the community. He is also planning to put his worm juice label on his cargo bike so he can advertise his business whenever he goes

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, 1 CAP unit and 2 houses. Over the past year we have undergone some minor alterations and upgrades, including new flooring, blinds and appliances.

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

VH CRISIS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM (CAP)

Village Housing utilises one property in private rental, with Queensland Housing Department funding, for crisis accommodation for eligible persons. Village Housing has successfully obtained funding for another 3 CAP properties which are currently being sourced for suitable, eligible constituents in the 2023/2024 financial year.

Village Housing also subsidises a number of people with crisis housing needs in private rental. Funds for this purpose are through donations.

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 33 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, Woolloowin and Zillmere areas and houses 14 people.

IYHG had a very successful outcome with the Department of Housing in obtaining the title and caveat of 1 of their properties with the hope that this may set a precedent with the Department for further properties to have the title transferred into their name and the mortgage released. This property is currently on the market with a contract of sale in place after 1 week. The proceeds of this sale will assist in IYHG purchasing another more purposeful property.



Celebrating with Jane from the Department of Housing

IYHG has continued throughout the year to improve and maintain its' properties. This year saw 2 properties with a full renovation, including new bathroom, kitchen, internal painting, flooring and window coverings.

Keep up the great work!

Support Coordination

Support Coordination

Another busy, challenging, yet successful year has passed for the NDIS Support Coordination team at CLA. We continue to support participants and their supporters to make the best use of their NDIS plans, achieve their goals and navigate the NDIS and the interactions with other systems. Our team, composed of five full time and one part time support coordinators, has offered 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.

As support coordinators we assist participants and their supporters in a wide number of ways. Some examples are:

- Developing the understanding of their NDIS plan and building their capacity to manage their NDIS funds.
- Providing assistance and information in relation to identifying, connecting and linking with informal, mainstream and funded supports in a complex service delivery environment.
- Assisting participants to search for, manage and monitor their providers based on their needs and plan goals.
- Providing support and information at points of crisis.
- Making referrals for assessments as participants require or as per their NDIS plan.
- Preparing participants for reassessments of their NDIS plans by collecting reports from other service providers, evaluating current supports and developing new goals.
- Working proactively with NDIA Planners and Local Area Coordinators to address the complexity of challenges that the people we work with face daily.

Based on this, the work of support coordinators can reflect on many aspects of the participants' life. Throughout the year we share within the team those successful moments and stories that give meaning to the work we do. We would like to use this opportunity to also share some of the highlights here:

SAFETY AND SECURITY

In the last year we have supported some of our participants to access a safe and secure living environment and/or to improve their living conditions. By ensuring Special Disability Accommodation, Independent Living Options or even Short-term Accommodation, some of our participants achieved or increased their independence and have had more opportunities to share accommodation if that is their preference. One of our participants refers to her new place as “her forever home”, while another one had a significant improvement in their quality of life by improving the quality of their 24 h care. Another participant is currently in the process of moving out from an aged care facility to a place where he can share with people of similar age and interests.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Our work also aims to support participants to build and strengthen relationships with family, friends, other informal supports and their local communities. It also implies supporting parents with a disability to have the skills and supports necessary to maintain custody of their children. There are many happy stories that we would like to share but chose a few that show the breadth of our work.

Supported a constituent to reconnect and repair relationship with their parent through organizing quarterly lunch catch ups.

Connected a constituent with a volunteer who shares the same interest around Arts and Crafts.

A constituent with a mowing business of their own, now has a client committed to being a community supporter and who has assisted with some advocacy supports.

The appropriate and ongoing support that a constituent receives has helped to build their confidence and is now able to say “Hello” to people when out for a walk or when out watering the lawn.

Supported a constituent who has difficulties engaging with people, and was isolated, to recruit an independent support worker who enjoys music and plays the guitar making the connection less overwhelming.

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

By providing information and assistance to our participants about the NDIS and other systems we help them build their knowledge and understanding, empowering them to exercise their choice and control. We are also often involved in activities aimed at supporting participants to share their stories and life experiences, informing other participants, their networks and community. One constituent, for example, who was very reliant on support workers for activities and group sessions, has grown as a person to a point where no longer needs that level of support and can confidently balance work at the Espresso café while pursuing TAFE studies. It's a testament to growth and newfound skills, illustrating the power of building knowledge and self-sufficiency

BUILDING RESOURCES

Another type of support we provide involves helping participants to access assistive technology and other types of resources or services in the community to cope and manage daily life challenges. “I don't need to use my arms anymore, I am very excited and happy. I like it.” Those were the words shared by a constituent when he got a new electric wheelchair that allows him to be more independent (DT gave consent to share the photo).

Similar excitement showed by one of our young constituents when he got his driver's license. He received supports from occupational therapy, specialized driving lessons, from “Breaking the cycle” (a volunteer mentor program) and specialized therapy from his optometrist to help him achieve this goal. Also, the team successfully connected a constituent and their family to advocacy services and worked all together with participant and family to navigate the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) enabling them to secure appropriate level of funding for the level of care and support required.



Looking ahead, there are several changes coming ahead regarding how the NDIA operates. We anticipate various challenges and again a transitioning period in which many participants may face some difficulties implementing their supports. 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.



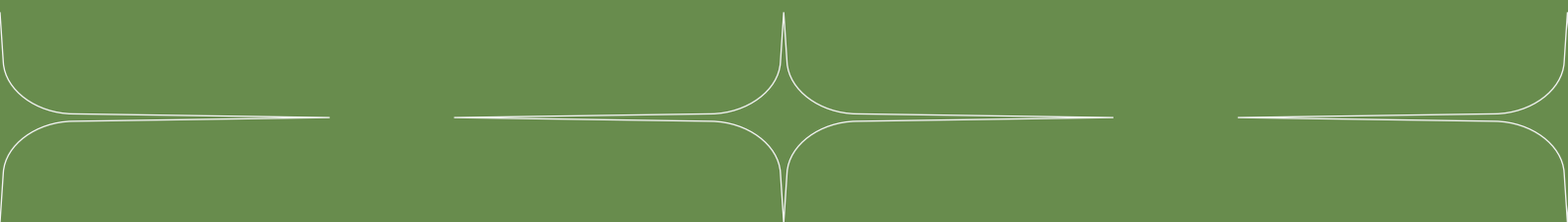
The NDIS Support Coordination Team would like to acknowledge and say thank you to:

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

CLA Inc, in particular Morrie, Tania, the Management Committee, Kat, Carmel, Mucy, Sally, Sylvia, 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.

Skilling Queenslanders For Work



Skilling Queenslanders for Work

CLA's Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) operates funded training programs in horticulture and hospitality aimed at assisting people facing barriers to work. The Re-Gen Project and The Good Food Project, work with refugees, asylum seekers, and people with intellectual disabilities. Participants of SQW projects graduate with qualifications, but more importantly they are "work ready" with increased confidence, new networks, and improved routines.

Our programs continue to perform consistently creating high levels of employment and training outcomes for around 50 participants annually. Our work was acknowledged in a visit by Minister Farmer to announce renewed funding 2023 calendar year funding in which CLA was successful. Applications for 2024 funding was submitted in September, and the SQW team look forward to having these projects to offer CLA constituents, which enhance their prospects of a better quality of life through employment.

There are so many amazing stories of success within SQW of people finding work and their lives being changed for the better through participation in our programs. We thank all participants, support staff and program partners such as Nundah Coop, Hendra Pony Club and the registered training organisations who provide tailored education to our students.







BUILDING COMMUNITIES THAT SUPPORT, AFFIRM AND VALUE ALL PEOPLE

This report was compiled by placement students of CLA. We would like to extend our gratitude for CLA's continuous support, guidance and contributions to future generations of social workers.



How many staff names do you find?

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J O W J K C T X D W E V C W W K U Y W J D C E J N R H N X Y



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