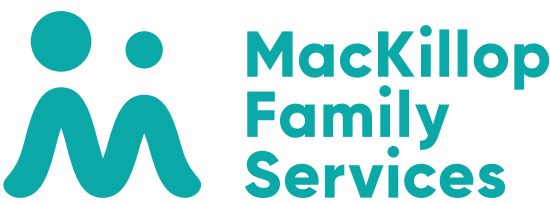
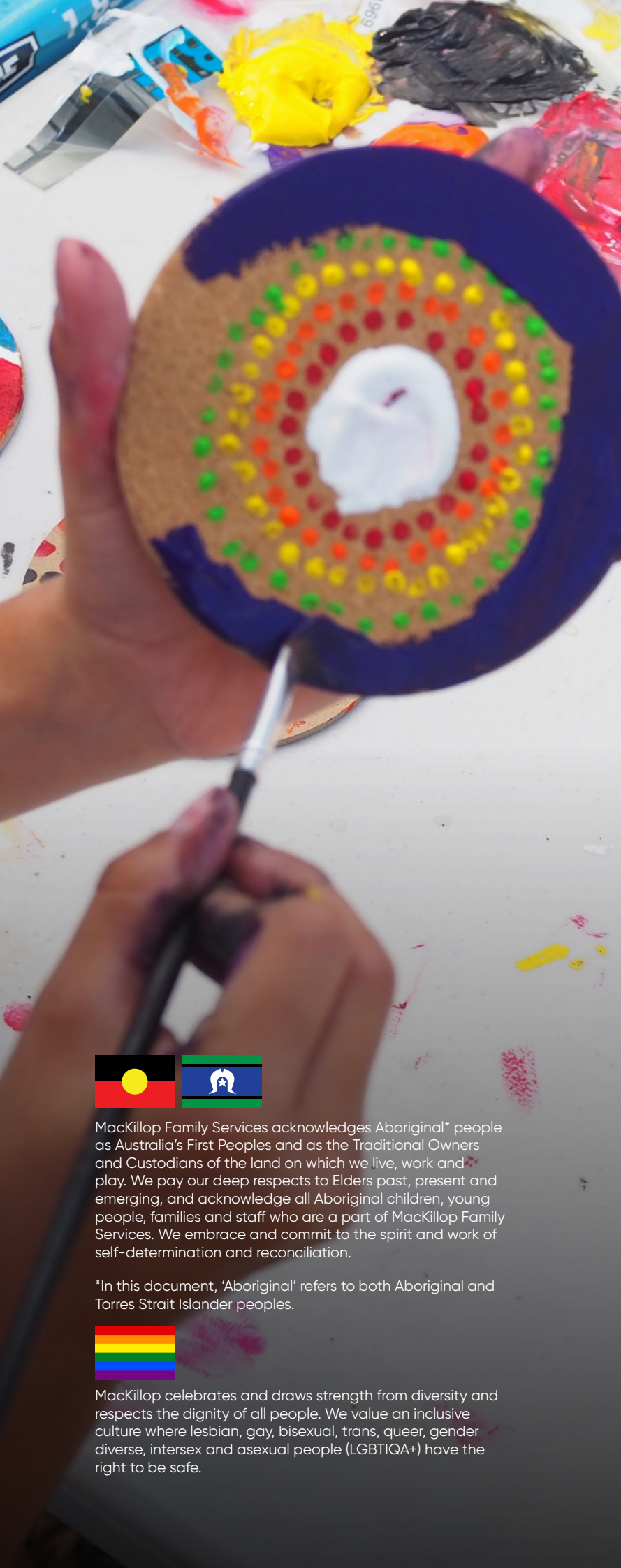


2022- 2023 | ANNUAL REPORT



Growth
& Change





MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal* people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services. We embrace and commit to the spirit and work of self-determination and reconciliation.

*In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



MacKillop celebrates and draws strength from diversity and respects the dignity of all people. We value an inclusive culture where lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, gender diverse, intersex and asexual people (LGBTIQA+) have the right to be safe.

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Our outcomes are driven by our Strategic Plan 2020–2027, which outlines five goals that guide our work. This Annual Report provides an update on progress against each goal.

Read our full strategic plan at mackillop.org.au/strategic-plan

Our Impact

Supporting Families

16,000+

families supported to stay together

1,156

care leavers supported to access records of their childhood



Safe homes for young people

314

young people at risk of homelessness provided accommodation and support

2,213

young people in foster care

715

young people in residential care



Access to Education

160

students enrolled at our three schools

784

young people connected to education

195

students assisted with therapy dogs via our Paw Pals program



Supporting people with a disability

11

adults in supported accommodation

320

families provided with support

1,000+

young people in care living with disability

Leading change

26

research projects to evaluate and pilot new initiatives

82

organisations trained by the MacKillop Institute



Board Chair Report



When I reflect on what makes MacKillop unique, my mind always goes to the can-do attitude of our staff. They are always up for a challenge, driven by Mary MacKillop's famous catchphrase, "Never see a need without doing something about it."

This spirit was never more evident than in April, when MacKillop was invited to take over the management of 15 residential care homes in the ACT. While the task was immense, the need was unquestionable, and our staff rose to the challenge, ensuring a smooth transition for the young people with whose care we are entrusted.

My fellow board members and I are indebted to the staff and carers of MacKillop for this attitude. We thank each and every one of you for your unwavering commitment and care for the children and families you work with.

We are particularly grateful to Robyn Miller, whose exemplary leadership gives the board the confidence to tackle the strategic challenges we face as we seek to deliver the best outcomes for children and families, while ensuring the long-term sustainability of MacKillop.

The past year has presented a number of complex strategic challenges.

The challenging economic environment has driven discussion about how to diversify funding streams and how to maximise the use of our assets. These factors were central to our decision to sell our old Geelong office, and relocate to a new location in the town, a move which has been embraced by staff and service users alike, as well as helping to deliver a healthy financial surplus that we can put to good use in our work with families and children.

Another recurring theme is the increase in school refusal and poor mental health for young people. This has driven rapid growth in our Education services – with three new schools now in the

pipeline – and renewed our efforts to bring our deep knowledge of trauma and managing grief and loss to mainstream schools.

We are also acutely aware of the growing gap in outcomes for First Nations peoples. Our commitment to closing the gap is enshrined in our second RAP, in which we pledge to continue to listen to the voice of Aboriginal staff and service users about what works best for them.

Finally, we have worked closely with our Mercy colleagues to drive greater collaboration and share expertise. This led to a decision to join with McAuley Community Services for Women before the end of 2023. We look forward to leveraging the opportunities this presents.

As we look to the future, we will continue to be energised by the wonderful staff and carers at MacKillop, and the generous donors who make our work possible. Your commitment to social justice is inspiring and will ensure we continue to be able to "respond to where the need is greatest" for many years to come.

Brian Keane
Board Chair

CEO Report

This annual report, with a focus on growth and change, documents and celebrates some of the key outcomes of the past year. I'm indebted to our Trustees and board who provide strong governance and our chair, Brian Keane, who has provided unwavering guidance and support; our government funders, and our donors, partner agencies and universities who enable, collaborate and strengthen our practice.

We now have over 2,000 staff outreaching from 51 offices nationally. Every night we have 925 foster carers putting children and young people to bed, and going to extraordinary lengths to heal the pain from the loss and trauma these children have experienced. Our staff respond to the most heartbreaking family violence, homelessness, substance abuse, disability and mental health problems, but at MacKillop we are skilfully doing something about these problems, and time and again we see the most powerful change and growth within families and young people. That is the privilege and the joy of our work.

We have welcomed over 100 new staff in the ACT and are also delighted that McAuley Community Services for Women joined us in Victoria, as they are leaders in the provision of family violence and homelessness support to women and children.

In our residential care and youth homelessness programs we now have 107 homes where our teams display extraordinary patience, therapeutic skill and warmth to young people, each of who has a complex and painful story that we listen to deeply and sensitively. They are amazing young people, it's our job to help them to shine and to have a hopeful future.

Our practice has evolved to be much more skilled therapeutically, and we have invested heavily in the professional growth and development of our staff, using implementation science to embed the desired practice. This has borne fruit, with our



WHS incidence rate descending to less than half what it was 5 years ago – during the same period our funded programs have tripled. Outcomes for the children and families we work with have also improved, as measured by independent academic eyes on 26 different research and evaluation projects.

A highlight of the year was the launch of our second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). A key commitment in the RAP is the transition of Aboriginal children to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations where this is possible, and we are indebted to our Aboriginal colleagues who partner with us and guide our practice.

We know the best way to address childhood trauma is to prevent it happening, and by influencing policy, research and practice we are starting to make real inroads in early intervention and prevention. The work of our MacKillop Institute, MacKillop Seasons, and MacKillop Education is so exciting as we share our knowledge about best practice strategies to prevent mental illness, suicide, family violence, child abuse and the exclusion of children from mainstream education.

We hear so much about the problems in the world, but my hope is that you find inspiration and hope in the pages that follow!

Robyn Miller
CEO

About MacKillop Family Services

Why

Every child has the right to grow up in a safe and nurturing family environment, with access to their basic rights, including the right to education.

What

We deliver programs focused on four main areas:

1. Prevention and early intervention programs to support families to be safe, to heal from trauma, and to develop parenting skills, knowledge and strength
2. Out of home care programs that provide a warm, safe environment for children and young people who are unable to live at home. We also work with their families to reunify them with their children where possible
3. Education programs (including specialist schools) to ensure children remain connected to education whatever challenges they may be facing
4. Disability programs, including support coordination for children and young people and supported accommodation for adults living with a disability.

How

- We listen to the voice of the young people and families we work with
- We bring a deep understanding of the impact of trauma, informed and guided by the Sanctuary Model
- We are committed to cultural safety and understand the healing power of culture
- We celebrate and draw strength from diversity, our Rainbow Tick accreditation, and we respect the dignity of all people
- We are passionate about learning and continuous improvement
- We embody the spirit of our three founders – Mary MacKillop, Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice.

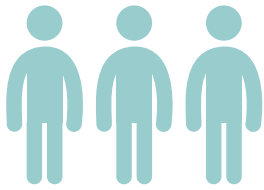


Where we work

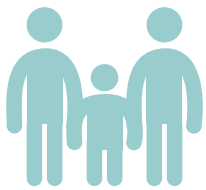
Operating with a national footprint, we support some of the most vulnerable families in Australia.

Our work takes place where it is needed most: in the community. From cities and their surrounding suburbs to regional and remote towns, our work aims to achieve positive outcomes in all the communities in which we work by warmly connecting with families to support their needs and prevent harm to children.

Our footprint

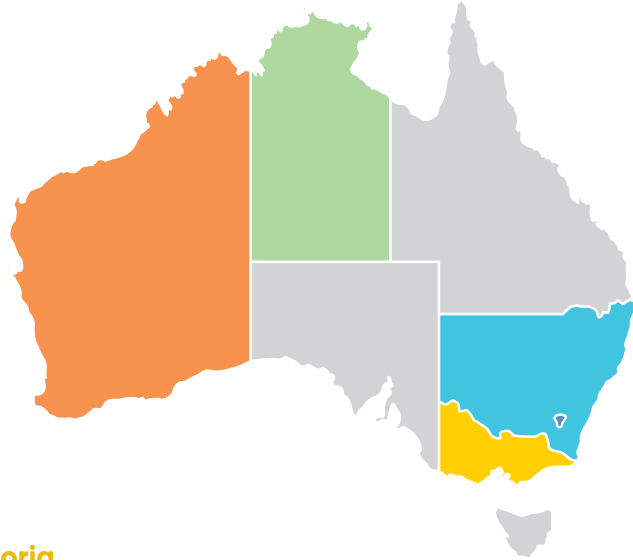


2,000
staff



925
foster carers

Our offices



Victoria

South Melbourne
Ballarat
Bendigo
Broadmeadows
Caulfield
Cobblebank
Dandenong

Footscray
Forest Hill
Geelong
Hamilton
Maidstone
Melton
Mildura

Preston
Sunshine
Swan Hill
Wangaratta
Warrnambool
Wodonga

New South Wales

Blacktown
Balranald
Batemans Bay
Bega
Brewarrina
Condobolin
Coonabarabran
Coonamble

Dubbo
Goulburn
Grafton
Gulargambone
Lightning Ridge
Lismore
North Sydney
Nowra

Nyngan
Quambone
Queanbeyan
Tweed Heads
Walgett
Wollongong

Western Australia

West Perth
Bunbury
Karratha
South Hedland
Onslow
Newman

Australian Capital Territory

Belconnen

Northern Territory

Darwin

Our national and international footprint

We deliver training programs such as Sanctuary, Power to Kids, ReLATE and Seasons for Growth across Australia. We also partner with organisations and trainers to deliver Seasons for Growth internationally in Scotland, England, Wales, New Zealand, Singapore and Ireland.

Learning to trust, beginning to heal, and becoming a confident mum

MacKillop case worker Jo Niu vividly remembers the day Morgan* was first referred to MacKillop.

"Morgan was a single mum to four children under the age of 5," she says. "In addition to managing her own trauma from a previous relationship with a violent partner, she was struggling to support her eldest child who was also showing trauma symptoms linked to the earlier violence in the home."

"It was very difficult for Morgan to create a regular routine and set boundaries for her children, and she was also experiencing financial difficulties, which meant she often couldn't afford phone credit. As a result, Morgan was isolated and distressed, and ashamed by thoughts she was letting her children down."

Jo's first challenge was to build trust. This was a significant barrier, as Morgan had briefly had her children removed from her care, and this had caused a lot of fear and mistrust in social services.

Supporting her emotionally and practically through the legal and housing crisis was the first step, then Jo set about supporting Morgan with strategies to become more confident in her parenting skills.

"We worked together collaboratively to develop strategies that worked for Morgan. This was terrific for her self-esteem, and her confidence improved remarkably when the children started to respond so positively."

We were also able to help with Morgan's financial situation, starting with the most important needs like buying a new SIM Card and helping to negotiate an annual data plan, and equipping the children with iPads.

"The ability to read stories on their devices has assisted with bedtime and morning routines in the busy household. It also means the school-aged children can participate in activities with their peers, which is critical to supporting school attendance."

The progress Morgan has made is quite extraordinary, and highlights what can be achieved once open, trusting relationships are established.

"Morgan has shown amazing resilience, determination and courage to create a safe and loving environment for her and the children, and has become the most wonderful mum," says Jo with pride.

*Names have been changed and stock images used to protect the privacy of our clients.



Strategic goal 1

Grow high quality, inclusive services to prevent harm, to support healing and to respond where the need is great.

“When we were in the most difficult time we got the support of MacKillop, which made us walk out of the darkness and rekindle the hope of life.”

– Program participant

At MacKillop, we strive to ensure every child grows up in a supportive and nurturing family environment. Our service delivery is guided by this goal, and focused on four main areas:

- Early intervention programs to support at-risk families to develop parenting skills, knowledge and capability
- Out of home care programs that provide a safe environment when children are temporarily removed from their home
- Education programs (including specialist schools) to ensure children remain connected to education whatever challenges they may be facing
- Disability programs, including support coordination for children and young people and supported accommodation for adults living with a disability.

Early intervention and Family Support

We know the best outcomes for young people are achieved by preventing harm from occurring, and our focus on prevention is evident in the growth of our early intervention services. In the past 12 months, almost one-third of new programs established across MacKillop were early intervention services. These included initiatives on wellbeing, family support, and family violence.

This year, MacKillop extended its geographical reach to the NT, launching a new **Family Support Service** in Darwin. This program – delivered in partnership with Danila Dilba Health Service – has supported over 50 families in the past 12 months.

We have also expanded our program reach across the Pilbara region of Western Australia, where our early intervention services include a **Family Support Service**, an **Indigenous Healing Service**, and a **Harmful Sexual Behaviour support program** for adolescents. The growth in this region has seen staff numbers triple in the past 12 months, and our program coverage now includes Port Hedland, Karratha, Onslow and Newman.

Care and space to 'be a kid'

Kat was first prompted to become a foster carer through her own lived experience in foster care. Having lived in many homes in her teens, then supported to live in an independent flat from the tender age of sixteen, Kat intimately understood the importance of a safe and stable home. She knew that even if she helped just one child, she would make a significant difference.

Six years ago, Kat became a foster carer. Thomas* joined her family most recently, after experiencing multiple broken placements.

"We run a busy farm. My partner works full-time, and we have three children of our own. We wanted to support a child in care, but we needed to consider how they would fit into our loud, busy family," Kat said.

The farm, sitting on 300 acres, complete with cows, chooks, ducks and horses, turned out to be just the right fit for Thomas. The family's busy routine, and the process of caring for the animals had a calming effect, and gave Thomas the space to be a kid, and take part in farm life.

Kat also noticed the positive impact on her own children, with the children growing up side by side and the experience making them, in Kat's words, 'more worldly and more understanding'. She notes however it has its challenges. Thomas' autism diagnosis and behavioural challenges, as well as adjusting to living with a new family, required a carer who could communicate and apply boundaries, and manage behaviours through a trauma-informed lens.

Kat has seen her family grow in their understanding of disability, with lots of learnings along the way. Development of a daily routine has given Thomas stability and with lots of warmth and praise, provided him the space to feel stable and secure. Thomas is growing in confidence every day, and continues to thrive and be louder and busier than most of his foster family.

*Child's name changed to protect privacy

Kat and her family



Meanwhile in Victoria, the **Family Preservation and Reunification Response** is entering its fourth year. This program operates across 12 regions, and includes 80 staff, who are supporting over 500 families to keep their children safe, and prevent placement in out of home care. The program is being evaluated by researcher-in-residence, Dr Heather Morris, from Monash University, who has already published a number of peer-reviewed papers demonstrating positive outcomes.

In the year ahead, we are excited to leverage the opportunities from joining with **McAuley Community Services for Women (McAuley)**, which joined MacKillop in October 2023. McAuley is an outstanding organisation that supports women and children who have experienced family violence and homelessness, through advocacy and delivery of services such as supported accommodation.

Out of Home Care

2023 has been a period of growth and change in our out of home care program, which includes foster care, residential care, lead tenant and homelessness programs for young people.

The most significant development has been the growth in our **residential care program** in the Australian Capital Territory, which has increased from one residential care home to 15 homes, following a change in management from Barnardos to MacKillop. This brings our total number of residential care homes to 107 nationally.

Another highlight has been the continued focus on providing clinical support to help young people heal from past trauma. Thanks to our generous supporters, every residential care home has access to a clinician to provide therapeutic support. We have also continued to deliver training in **Therapeutic Life Story Work** to all our case workers. In 2023, we partnered with Deakin University on a world-first study which demonstrated the significant positive outcomes this program delivers by helping young people to understand their identity. The report was launched in October 2023 at an event attended by Richard Rose, the developer of Therapeutic Life Story Work.

Other important clinical interventions include **trauma-sensitive yoga**, **creative arts therapy**, **Neurofeedback**, and **Eye Movement Desensitisation Therapy**, which helps staff and young people to process and integrate past trauma. We have funded a specialist neurofeedback team overseen by our psychiatrist Dr Helen Driscoll.

In our **foster care program**, recruitment and retention of carers continues to be a significant challenge to our goal of providing safe, nurturing care in the homes of our wonderful foster carers. We have introduced a number of initiatives to tackle these challenges, including the **Carer Call Out**, which mobilises staff across MacKillop to



Carer Call Out



Therapeutic Life Story Work Evaluation Launch

“ We know that while recovery for these children is not simple or straightforward, it is always possible. ”

– Richard Rose,
Therapeutic Life Story Work developer

Foster Care Week celebration



spread the word about the need for more foster carers within their local community organisations, whilst on the retention side our **Spotlight project** has introduced initiatives such as a **Foster and Kinship Care Gala** to thank and acknowledge our 925 carers for their passion and commitment, and a **peer mentoring program** to provide an informal support network for our carers.

Education

Our **MacKillop Education schools** support children and young people who struggle to learn in mainstream schools, ensuring they stay engaged with education and enhance their life outcomes.

This year, our three schools are at capacity, with 160 students returning average attendance levels of 80 per cent. 11 students returned to mainstream education and we supported eight graduates to move onto further study, commence apprenticeships, or move to full-time or supported employment.

With school refusal on the rise nationally, we implemented a pilot of the **In2School program** (see story on p13). Other new developments included training staff in a **phonics program** based on the science of reading, which is helping us to improve literacy outcomes for students, while support from the Geelong Community Foundation and Percy Baxter Charitable Trust will see students take our **Bittersweet Café program** to the roads with a mobile food truck.

In 2024, we will open our first school in NSW when we take over the management of Good Shepherd's **Waranara school** in Marrackville. Plans are underway to establish schools in Ballarat and Sunbury in Victoria to respond to the increasing demand for our services.

Meanwhile, our highly-regarded **Education and Engagement programs** continue to deliver outreach education to young people living in foster care and residential care, who face insurmountable barriers to attending school in person. In 2023 this work extended to a collaboration with McAuley to deliver education for children in family violence crisis accommodation.

Our outreach work gave rise to the **Paw Pals program**, which has used therapy dogs to help more than 700 students to stay engaged in education since its launch in 2019.

Creating an inclusive environment

Creating a safe and welcoming environment for all staff and service users is critical to the way we work, and this year we achieved a significant milestone with the attainment of **Rainbow Tick accreditation**. The journey to this outcome has raised awareness of LGBTIQ+ culture and how to embed safe and welcoming practice, which is reflected in initiatives such as proactive pronoun use, the establishment of safe physical spaces, and celebration of awareness dates with colleagues, families and young people.



Foster and Kinship Carer Gala Dinner



Launch of Paw Pals in Ballarat

“Paw Pals has supported our students to move from surviving to thriving. The educators, with their remarkable therapy dogs, have enabled our young people to improve academic outcomes, increase engagement and attendance and build peer connections in a way that is safe & inclusive”

—Kristy, Ascot Vales West Primary School

MacKillop at MidSumma Festival



Responding to the rise in school refusal

Developed by the University of Melbourne and delivered by MacKillop Education, the In2School program is changing the lives of students who struggle to learn at school.

In the three years leading up to 2021, school refusal in Victoria grew by 50 per cent, as students who were already struggling to engage in mainstream education settings were further challenged by COVID-19 lockdowns.

Challenges of this nature require innovative responses, and in recognition of this, the team at the Geelong campus of MacKillop Education has partnered with the University of Melbourne, the Royal Children's Hospital and Travancore School to deliver the In2School program, which is changing the lives of young people who struggle to learn at school.

Designed by academics at the University, the program targets students whose attendance rate is less than 50 per cent. The trauma-informed model sees the school day tailored to meet the individual needs of each student, with a focus on social, emotional, and academic learning.

The program initially focuses on attendance. The school curriculum is put on pause, as students are engaged individually with their families or carers, to identify and

reduce the barriers that are preventing them from attending school. To support attendance, the classroom is designed differently to a typical school, with a number of break-out spaces that provide a relaxed environment.

The amount of academic work that students are asked to complete is increased, with the goal for the classroom to function the same as other classroom settings.

Group Director of MacKillop Education, Anne Henderson, says the success of the program lies in its alignment with, and promotion of, trauma-informed practice, which has been identified by a recent Senate Inquiry into the national growth in school refusal as a critical strategy to support students at risk of disengaging from education.

"By listening to each student about the challenges they face, we can work collaboratively with them to overcome these barriers, and get them back on track with their learning."

"Trauma-informed practices can also prevent disengagement from occurring. All schools should consider how such practices can support their students, and their school community."

Student Josh engaging in the In2School program at MacKillop Education



Power to Kids

Power to Kids was developed in partnership with the University of Melbourne to strengthen prevention and responses to sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviours and dating violence for young people in residential care. Piloted in MacKillop Family Services homes, and now offered to Residential Care Providers across Australia, Power to Kids is upskilling the out of home care workforce, and keeping young people safe.

We are now working on an adaptation of Power to Kids for schools to equip educators and support staff with the skills and confidence to engage in preventative sexual health and safety conversations with students; implement preventative strategies; and work collaboratively with parents and caregivers to safeguard children from sexual exploitation.

Our Impact

2,000

young people directly impacted by the Power to Kids program in other organisations

45

Residential care organisations trained across Australia

1,220

Youth Workers and sector professionals completed Workforce/Staff training



4.65/5 star rating
(overall training experience)

64

Workforce Training Sessions completed

26

Champions & Leaders Training Sessions completed

20

Community of Practice sessions held to regularly link workers who have completed the Power to Kids training



“It’s reinforced and deepened my knowledge and really given me the confidence to put this learning into practice.”



“This course is providing support workers with the tools to educate and empower our vulnerable youth, what a gift.”



Strategic goal 2

Be an innovative and responsive leader by developing best practices and advocating for social justice.

“Useful for the team to grow together in creating a healthy culture. I see a lot of utility for clients, modelling safety plans and helping them become curious about creating their own.”

– Sanctuary training participant, Kinetic Medicine NSW

This goal expresses our commitment to evidence-based practice, and ensuring we not only deliver services of the highest quality within our own programs, but that we play a leadership role at a sector level in driving innovation and enhancing practice quality.

In furtherance of this goal, MacKillop is managing 26 research and evaluation projects in partnership with academic institutions across Australia. We also ran a **Family Services Symposium** in March 2023, to share insights from our early intervention work with sector leaders and policy makers.

The MacKillop Institute

The establishment of **The MacKillop Institute** in 2019 was a key strategy to support the achievement of Goal 2. The Institute draws on our frontline experience to deliver training programs that promote wellbeing and resilience, including: **Sanctuary** (a trauma-informed cultural change program); **ReLATE** (a program to create trauma-informed education settings); and **Power to Kids** (a program aimed at preventing harmful sexual behaviour, dating violence and child sexual abuse).

A highlight in the last 12 months was a Public Lecture featuring Professor Simon Hackett, Professor of Child Abuse and Neglect at Durham University. More than 200 guests attended the lecture in which Professor Hackett provided valuable insights about what constitutes normal, inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent behaviours, and what to consider when responding to these.

MacKillop targets these challenges through **Power to Kids**. In the past 12 months we trained 45 organisations in this innovative program, to mitigate the risk of harm to some of the most at-risk young people in our community. The program is currently being co-designed and piloted in schools, to equip parents and teachers with the skills to identify, educate and inform children about the risks of grooming and harmful sexual behaviour.

The **Sanctuary** program has also grown significantly, with nine organisations now undertaking the three-year journey towards Sanctuary accreditation, while modules of the program have been delivered within hospitals, government departments, aged care, and mental health organisations.

In keeping with our commitment to sharing best practice, our National Program Director Cameron Burgess and CEO Robyn Miller, presented at the Sanctuary Network

Conference in New York on the importance of Cultural Humility as part of a thriving organisation culture.

The Institute continues to support schools with the implementation of the **ReLATE model**, with 44 schools now committed to the three-year roll-out of the program.

Mackillop Seasons

Our **Mackillop Seasons** suite of programs train facilitators to deliver change, loss and grief programs to community-based professionals, such as teachers and psychologists.

A key development in the past year has been the creation of **Seasons for Life**, a program funded by the Federal Department of Social Services to provide loss and grief education to secondary schools following a suicide or other loss event, in response to a rise in demand for evidence-based programs in this area. We are delivering this program to over 500 schools over a three-year period.

We also continue to develop our capacity in disaster response, through both training community leaders in the **Stormbirds program**, and appointing Community Resilience Officers in communities such as East Gippsland (Vic) and the Northern Rivers (NSW), which have recently suffered catastrophic natural disasters.

Maintaining best practice in records release

Our **Heritage and Information Service** has long been recognised as an international leader in the supported release of records to people who grew up in care. In 2022-23, the team responded to 1,156 requests for records. We continue to use the experiences of historical care leavers in accessing their records to enhance the record keeping skills of our current case workers.

Educating tomorrow's leaders

As part of our commitment to progressing social justice, we regularly invite student leaders from schools to come to MacKillop to learn more about our work and gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by some young people in our community. The workshops inform young people about social justice issues; address the stigma that young people with a care experience face; and seek to create an empathetic generation that will support children and young people. In 2022-23, we held four **Social Justice workshops** in Melbourne and Geelong, engaging 155 students.



Seasons for Life team



Heritage reunion

“ It was eye-opening to hear about what happens when people go into care. Hearing it from someone who went through all that gave us all another perspective ... it completely changed my view on so many things ”

– year eight student at Marymede Catholic College



Social Justice workshop

Supporting schools to respond to youth mental health

The mental health of young people in Australia is at crisis point. The latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare research reports that suicide is the leading cause of death among people aged 15–24. At MacKillop, our work with children and young people informs us that many are struggling and in psychological distress, which in turn drives us to create innovative programs to promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our Seasons for Life program was developed to support high school communities across Australia with evidence-based loss and grief education following a suicide or other loss event. A strategically targeted intervention, Seasons for Life strengthens the capacity of young people, and the adults who support them, to understand and respond well to change, loss and grief. The program is being rolled out to high schools across the country with 142 schools supported by Seasons for Life since October 2022.

School refusal is currently at an all-time high with many students finding it challenging to even contemplate going through the school gates. Defined as a long-term absence from school, school refusal can be a daily battle that strains family relationships and harms the prospects of kids who miss months or years of school.

Our Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE) model has been leading the way in promoting wellbeing as an essential precondition for learning. ReLATE creates whole-of-school safe, predictable and supportive learning environments where students are not just known, but deeply understood. The ReLATE model underpins MacKillop Education schools and our MacKillop Institute is supporting 44 mainstream schools to implement ReLATE and create supportive environments for teaching and improved student learning and wellbeing.

Our famous furry friends, MacKillop's Paw Pals therapy dogs, continue their vital support for children who are disengaged with education. Paw Pals is well established in Melbourne and Geelong and in 2022, we opened a new outlet in Ballarat, working out of St James' Parish School, Sebastopol. It has been a busy year for the Paw Pals team, who have supported 195 children and young people in 2022–23 to build their confidence and re-engage with education through animal assisted educational-based activities and individualised learning sessions.

Mackillop Seasons at the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Conference



A roadmap to reconciliation

Larisha Jerome is a proud Jarowair, Wakka Wakka and Wulli Wulli woman who grew up on Darug Country. Her early childhood was spent in a women's refuge and Housing Commission flats, before eventually coming into the care of MacKillop at a home in Mount Druitt at the age of seventeen.

We were thrilled that Larisha was able to share her story at the launch of our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in February 2023. Her heartfelt words provided an unforgettable reminder of the importance of connection to country, and the healing power of culture.

Larisha said that when she thought about reconciliation, "I think of bringing us home, and home is bringing you home to yourself, the most safe, protected and healed version of you fully as we stand in our power and overcome self-limiting beliefs."

She continued, "We know we embody strength. We know we are resilient; we have been for over 60,000 years. The children and families that you work with, these children are the physical manifestation of our ancestors, and they deserve to be protected, loved, supported and celebrated for making it through every single day that they didn't think they would."

"It's our job to remind them that nothing is impossible. We have a collective responsibility to advocate, show up and push the boundaries. To keep our mob, and our children at the forefront of everything we do."

Larisha spoke gratefully of her time in the care of MacKillop, reflecting it was a time she felt loved, safe and culturally supported, and this had inspired her to become a foster carer herself to three young First Nations boys who she supported to reunify with their families, "even though I was still a child myself."

Every guest at the launch felt motivated by Larisha's words to take action to promote reconciliation, and for MacKillop staff, our second Innovate RAP provides our roadmap for the next two years.

In the words of our CEO, Robyn Miller, "It will guide us to continue our development as a culturally safe, and welcoming organisation, where all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities will be heard and respected."



Strategic goal 3

Deepen our commitment to Aboriginal self-determination, reconciliation and cultural safety.



Culture to Aboriginal young people is integral to their wellbeing. It provides connection, strength, identity, healing, and learning. ”

– Wurundjeri young person supported by MacKillop and Strong Brother Strong Sister

This Strategic goal expresses the critical importance of embedding culture and cultural humility into practice, with a focus on healing and prevention.

To guide us in this goal, in 2023 we launched our second Innovate **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**. Developed following consultation across the entire MacKillop network, which included truth-telling with Aboriginal Elders, the RAP outlines 27 actions with 109 corresponding deliverables that will be implemented over the next two years.

This follows the success of our first Innovate RAP, which strengthened our approach to driving reconciliation and healing through all our activities and community programs, and nurtured relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Some of the key achievements from our first Innovate RAP include: appointing our first Aboriginal board member; employing an Aboriginal Cultural Healing Specialist and Cultural Design and Implementation Program Specialist; developing a

procurement policy in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses; and launching an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy.

To date the two RAPs have successfully begun to tackle prevention; healing; listening to the voice of children and young people; cultural responsiveness and competence; improved Aboriginal data; education; growing partnerships; advocacy; sustainability; and intersectionality (LGBTQIA+).

Establishing, building, collaborating, and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations has remained a key focus for us in 2022-23. We are strongly committed to transitioning the care and case management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to Aboriginal organisations wherever possible, and we continue to partner with over 30 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations across NSW, Victoria, and WA to realise our vision for all children to have a nurturing home with a genuine sense of belonging and connection to their culture.

Key relationships include Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency (VACCA), Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC), Danila Dilba Health Service, Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS), Njernda Aboriginal Corporation, Strong Brother Strong Sister, Wathaurong, Wirraka Maya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation and Woolkabunning Kiaka Aboriginal Corporation.

In 2022, Strong Brother Strong Sister, an Aboriginal youth-led organisation, and MacKillop launched a partnership in the Barwon region to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out of home care. Funded by the Anthony Costa Foundation, the program is considered to be a game changer, offering cultural connections, support and investment through First Nations mentors and sector professionals. This partnership has supported 73 children in our Barwon foster care and residential care programs to better connect with their culture and community, and create a strong sense of identity.

Our commitment to reconciliation underpinned our decision to support the First Nations Voice to Parliament. This decision was based on our belief that we have a social responsibility to ensure voters made an informed decision, and we supported our staff with information, resources, and access to webinars to make up their own minds and have the capacity to educate people within their network about the pros and cons of the Voice debate.

In the year ahead, we are focused on delivering upon the actions in our RAP; implementing our **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy**; and growing the **MacKillop Aboriginal Staff Network, Ngindaay Guumaldanha (Everyone Gathering)**, a space where our increasing MacKillop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff can come together to share stories, culture, provide supports to each other and to mentor fellow MacKillop staff to listen, seek guidance and to acknowledge and respect the customs, protocols, languages and traditions of our First Nations people.



Launch of Healing Garden, Footscray



Smoking ceremony

“ We believe Australia can never reach its potential as a nation until there is true reconciliation with, and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ”



Melbourne NAIDOC March

Nurturing cultural pride and identity

Nicco* a 16-year-old boy from Victoria, knew of his Aboriginal ancestry but didn't know much about his cultural history, leaving big gaps in his identity and sense of belonging. At a crossroads in his life, and on a trajectory toward the criminal justice system, our Barwon residential care team identified an opportunity to facilitate healing by strengthening Nicco's connection to his culture.

In partnership with Woolkabunning Kiaka Aboriginal Corporation in Western Australia, and Outback Academy Australia – and with the support of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – MacKillop developed an innovative cultural immersion and healing experience for Nicco. The experience was designed to develop Nicco's sense of identity and belonging by introducing him to his own unique story, his family's people, places and stories and to 'wrap culture' around him.

We know the healing power of connecting to country and culture, but this can be difficult to achieve for young people growing up far from their mob. Nicco's support staff, who were instrumental in organising all aspects of his travels, were confident that by visiting the lands of his ancestors and living and breathing their culture, it would help get Nicco get back on track.

The experience allowed Nicco to begin to heal and develop a sense of his identity as a proud Aboriginal man, standing on the shoulders of the Elders who had come before him. This strengthened his self-belief and helped Nicco to see opportunities for a better future for himself than he had previously imagined.

Nicco's experience was so profound that upon returning to Victoria he expressed his self-pride, his desire to change his future, reassess the people he surrounded himself with and be a future leader of his mob. Local family members are providing ongoing connection, support and mentoring to Nicco with one commenting, "Nicco is transforming into a beautiful version of himself".

*Child's name changed and stock photo used to protect privacy



Using implementation science to embed training into practice

Communities of Practice (CoP) are monthly gatherings which have been introduced by our CEO to facilitate knowledge sharing, deepen understanding and enhance the implementation of four critical programs within Residential Care: the Sanctuary Model and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (aimed at creating trauma-informed environments); HEALing Matters (aimed at healthy eating and promoting physical activity); and Power to Kids (aimed at promoting positive relationships and preventing sexual exploitation).

CoPs ensure our residential care workers continually hold these four important practice models at the front of their mind when providing direct care and support to young people. They positively impact the lives of young people living in out of home care by encouraging workers to reflect on the strategies that generate the best outcomes for young people, and providing a forum for the cross-pollination of ideas.

The monthly CoP meetings are designed to generate actionable ideas which are workshopped as a team and tailored to each house. The 'wins' and best practices are shared, and ideas for challenging the big problems of violence and exploitation are put into action each month and are reported on.

A number of wonderful outcomes have been generated as a direct result of participating in CoP meetings. For example, by discussing the importance of cultural safety in the context of the Sanctuary Model, several homes have created culturally-inspired meal evenings. In addition to celebrating the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the young people in the home, this initiative has seen staff prepare cookbooks featuring the meals they have prepared, that will become a keepsake for the young people and a guide to healthy eating when they leave care.

The benefits of the initiative were recently captured by a residential care worker who said, "Participating in Communities of Practice has brought all the programs together in a cohesive and holistic framework. This makes it easier to take the actions back to the team and to share them with the young people. I like the gathering of minds. It brings the diversity of thinking that is so critical to delivering the best outcomes for the young people we care for."



The Communities of Practice leadership team

Rachael Green

Chanelle den Ouden

Esmail Manahan

Strategic goal 4

Ensure accountable and integrated systems that prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, families, volunteers and staff.

“ A child-safe institution...consciously and systematically creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children, creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm, and responds appropriately to disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm. ”

– Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Safety of children and families

Child safety is at the forefront of every decision we make at MacKillop. Every day we encourage our staff to view their work environment through the eyes of a child and ask themselves, “If I were a child, would I feel safe?”

One of the key initiatives we have implemented in the last 12 months to enhance child safety is the introduction of our **Communities of Practice (CoPs)** (see story on 22). Drawing heavily on implementation science, this initiative recognises that training alone will not assure compliance. Instead, it is important to regularly pause to critically reflect on practice and share learnings of strategies that work well to embed desired behaviours and outcomes. The CoPs have proven to be particularly effective at reinforcing the learnings of four key training modules delivered to residential care staff: Sanctuary; Power to Kids; Therapeutic Crisis Intervention; and HEALING Matters.

We have also introduced a number of additional systems to ensure we regularly monitor and discuss child-safe practice at a governance level, including a **Quality Committee** (which reports on outcomes

and encourages innovative problem-solving); a **Residential Care Governance Committee**; a **Foster Care Governance Committee**; the well-established **Outcomes 100 case review**; and the **Intensive Therapeutic Care case reviews** in NSW, led by our CEO.

We have also embedded formal mechanisms to listen and respond to the voice of service users, including various **Colloquia** (which include program participants); and the **Youth Ambassador Group**, made up of recent care leavers. The latter group has identified a number of focus areas for innovation, including supporting care leavers with financial literacy skills before they transition out of care, and educating school teachers about the out of home care system and how it is experienced by young people.

A wonderful example of enhanced safety led by a young person came from our **Permanency Support Program** in New South Wales, where a young person talked to their case worker about how better engagement during home visits helped young people to build trust and feel more comfortable communicating with program staff. This feedback was shared and acted on across the program.

Safety of staff

Safety of staff has also been a critical focus of our work, given the occasionally volatile nature of our work environment, particularly for staff working in residential care. We are therefore delighted that the average monthly rate for Occupational Health and Safety incidents in 2022-23 – a key metric for assessing employee safety – has seen a 41.8% reduction over a four-year period.

This outstanding outcome can be attributed to a number of strategies, including: a focus on more stable teams in residential care homes; increasing training for staff; increasing availability of reflective practice sessions led by clinical staff; participation in **Outcomes 100 case reviews**; participation in **Communities of Practice**, and the roll-out of **Mental Health First Aid training**.

Another key development has been increased uptake of **Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR)** after a critical incident, which helps staff to process and integrate any trauma they may be experiencing and return to work more promptly, as we know the best outcomes are attained when staff are supported to quickly return to productive work.

A key challenge over the next five years will be workforce attraction and retention, and our HR team is currently focused on embedding new systems to help tackle this critical challenge. For example, in 2023 we launched a 12-month **Graduate Program for Social Workers**. This first intake of new graduates made outstanding contributions in case management and clinical roles, and all four have secured ongoing positions. We also hosted a further 60 students on student placements, many of whom expressed their interest in furthering their career at MacKillop.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety for all cultures has been a major focus in our residential care program, with a Cultural Practice Lead recently appointed to enhance the cultural responsiveness of our program by identifying and training cultural mentors from across our workforce. This important pilot program has been funded by several philanthropic organisations, with the ultimate goal of building evidence to enhance practice across the sector. This work is supported by our Aboriginal Services Development team.

Family Journey

Family Journey is a client and case management IT system, developed by MacKillop and used by more than 30 organisations working in areas such as out of home care, family services, homelessness and disability services. In August 2023 we reached the milestone of over 2 million case notes recorded in the Family Journey system which speaks to the levels of adoption and engagement by users of the system.



“The MacKillop team have helped me and my family in ways I never would have thought were possible.”



Building systems to sustain growth

In October 2019, MacKillop Family Services hosted over 300 guests at the Lead the Way Towards Wellbeing Conference in Sydney.

As we shared our insights into the most effective strategies to support children, young people and adults to understand and respond to experiences of change, loss and trauma, a smoky haze descended on the city from bushfires that were raging along the eastern coast of Australia, while some six months later, we woke to news about a virus that would change our lives forever.

The impact of events such as the devastating bushfires, floods, and the COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented demand for our Seasons for Growth suite of programs, particularly the Stormbirds program, which is designed to manage experiences following natural disasters, as communities across Australia and the world grapple with changes they never could have imagined.

In order to meet the needs of our customers and respond to the growing demand, it became clear we needed to streamline our business operations, and move to a more efficient, online approach that would integrate all of our systems, including inventory, customer relationship management, financial management, and a new web presence.

We also hoped to create a better online experience for the people, partners, institutions and communities we work with, who have rapidly adapted to a world in which online training is a necessity, rather than an optional extra.

In the past 12 months, we have undertaken a significant business improvement project to respond to this challenge, informed by client consultation and feedback. This has created a fresh new interface for users, and a state-of-the-art operational platform that empowers program facilitators with the tools and information required to easily deliver change, loss and grief programs in their communities.

What started as a project to integrate systems has become a key undertaking to future-proof the Seasons for Growth suite of programs, which are now delivered under the MacKillop Seasons brand.

"This project has provided an integrated operational platform to ensure we are well-placed to meet the needs of city and regional communities to respond to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and disasters. Equally, it is vital we focus on building the capacity and resilience of communities to prepare and respond to future disasters and life-changing events," said Fiona McCallum, MacKillop Seasons General Manager.

Stormbirds Companion delivering support to children affected by floods in Eugowra



Steps to independence with philanthropic support

Leaving home for the first time should be an exciting milestone. But for the thousands of young people who exit the out of home care system each year, independence doesn't translate to excitement and fun.

Studies show that within a year of leaving care, 35% will be homeless, 46% of young males will have been involved with the justice system, and 65% will have accessed mental health services.

Moving from the relative security of a residential care home poses significant challenges for young people: they quickly need to learn basic living skills – how to cook a meal, find a job and somewhere to live. Coupled with a trauma background and little parental guidance growing up, it's easy to see why so many struggle to make their way.

To better support our young people prepare to transition from care to community living, MacKillop has partnered with food rescue organisation FareShare to deliver an exciting new work experience opportunity. The partnership is part of a broader leaving care initiative that aims to give young in residential care the skills and support they need to successfully move into adulthood and secure meaningful employment.

Thanks to philanthropic funding from State Trustees Australia Foundation, the initiative saw 10 young people living in residential care undertake a six-week work

experience program at FareShare's Alphington kitchen, where they were taught a range of culinary skills from how to cook nutritious meals to understanding food hygiene.

For participant Olivia*, the program taught more than cooking: her carers said the structured and collaborative nature of the program improved the 16-year-old's social interaction skills. Working alongside her peers gave Olivia the chance to safely mix with others, easing her social anxiety and increasing her confidence.

"I got so much out of the FareShare Cooking Program! Arnel and Emma, who were in charge, made the whole thing chill, fun, and interesting. But my absolute favourite part was when we all sat down at the end of each cooking session and got to eat all the food we made together! This was a nice way to connect, making each session even more enjoyable," she said.

MacKillop TCP Case Manager, Kerry Heaven said the trial was an exceptional initiative that taught essential culinary skills and fostered personal growth, self-confidence, and empowerment.

"This transformative program has provided young people, who often face various challenges due to being in out of home care, with a nurturing and supportive environment where they can learn and develop."

*name changed to protect privacy



Young people learning new skills at FareShare

Strategic goal 5

Strengthen organisational and financial sustainability.

“ The Paw Pals program is such an easy fit for our values, that we don't need to think much about it. The shared purpose has driven our support. ”

– Jess Curtis, Charity and Events Lead, Petstock Foundation

Historically, MacKillop has always had a heavy reliance on government funding, but with a challenging economic environment and issues such as an ageing population putting increasing pressure on government budgets, it is important we remain focused on diversifying income streams to remain financially sustainable into the future.

One of our most important strategies to drive income diversification is through building a robust fundraising and philanthropy program, and this continues to be a focus of our work.

Our **philanthropy program** has been particularly successful over the past five years, growing almost three-fold during this period. More importantly, the funding secured from trusts and foundations eager to support the development, trialling and evaluation of new programs, has made some of our most impactful programs possible. This includes: the partnership with **Strong Brother Strong Sister** to deliver cultural mentoring to young Aboriginal people in Geelong; the development of the **Power to Kids program**; and a partnership

with **FareShare** to provide cooking skills and employment readiness skills to young people preparing to transition to independent living (see story on p26).

Our **fundraising program** has also grown significantly during this period, providing critically important untied funds that can support the areas of greatest need, such as the growth in our clinical program to ensure that every residential care home we offer has access to a therapeutic specialist to provide advice and reflective practice.

A key focus for the next five years is to deepen our engagement with our donors through bespoke events that bring our programs – and the impact of our donors' financial support – to life. We also hope to engage more corporate supporters, who can assist us not only with funds, but with volunteer support and awareness of our work (see our partnership with Museum or Play and Art on p29).

The MacKillop Institute is another component of our financial sustainability strategy, with the aim of generating revenue through training and consulting services, whilst building the capacity of organisations in service delivery. We are also focusing on strategies to drive efficiencies in programs such as **MacKillop Seasons** (see story on p26) and our **Disability Support Coordination team**.

Key to financial sustainability is the efficient use of our assets, and this was a key factor in the sale of our Helen Street site in Geelong – which had been home to our Barwon services since the formation of MacKillop in 1997 – and the relocation to more fit-for-purpose accommodation in the Federal Mills project precinct. This move has been embraced by our staff and carers, who are thriving in the state-of-the-art premises which provide a welcoming environment for work and family access alike.

Another significant development in terms of financial sustainability was achieved towards the end of 2022-23, when the Victorian Government agreed to introduce a set indexation formula to calculate community sector funding increases this year and into the future. The rate of indexation has been a contentious issue for some time, and we are grateful that the government has provided this certainty, following a collaborative advocacy effort led by the Victorian Council of Social Services and its member organisations.

Looking more broadly, we have recently developed our first **Sustainability Strategy**. This important document – which is informed by both the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the principles outlined in *Laudato Si* by Pope Francis – outlines our commitment to making a positive impact in four key focus areas:

1. Deepening our commitment to Aboriginal self-determination, reconciliation and cultural safety
2. Nurturing a diverse, inclusive and culturally safe organisation
3. Acting on climate change and reducing our footprint
4. Building sustainability into our procurement and financial management.

This strategy will incorporate more specific strategies such as our **Modern Slavery Statement** and our **Reconciliation Action Plan**, and ensure we hold ourselves accountable to our commitments to support a more just society, a more environmentally-responsible approach to our work, and a financially sustainable organisation, so we can ensure we are creating a better future for the children, young people and families we support both now, and for many years to come.

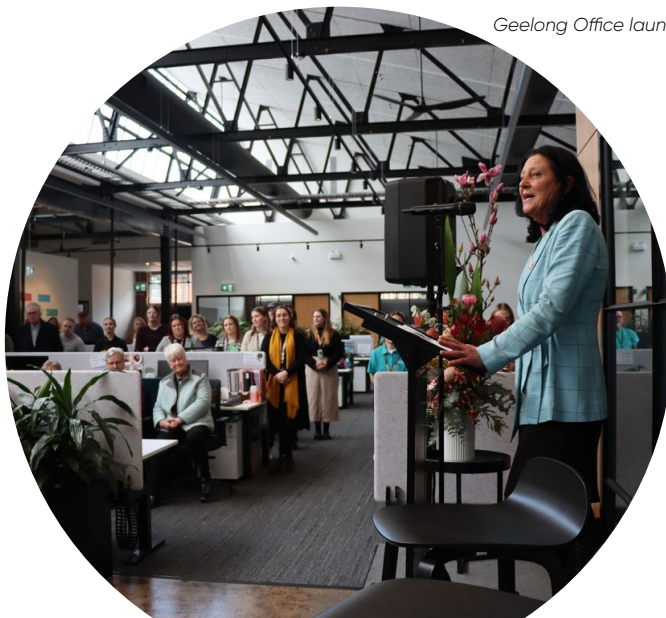


School student fundraises for MacKillop



Tee-Up for Kids fundraiser

“ MacKillop Family Services has a commitment to sustainability and sees itself as a custodian of the future of the children, young people, and families it works with. ”



Geelong Office launch

Supporting foster carer retention

Foster carers provide love, safety and new experiences for children in their care. They often seek to provide special memories for children for the temporary time they're in their care, and facilitate opportunities for them to connect to their community and their peers.

This can come at a cost, and while foster carer subsidies seek to cover the cost of care, the reality is that the expenses can outweigh the subsidy provided.

A new partnership with the Museum of Play and Art (MoPA) seeks to alleviate this pressure by providing MacKillop foster carers with free access to its museums across Melbourne and Geelong.

MoPA Director, Thomas (Tom) Mahon, said the partnership will provide an opportunity for foster carers to provide new experiences and memories for children in care, without the additional financial burden.

"We founded MoPA to create opportunities for children and carers to play together, to assist with the development of emotional and social wellbeing, and to aid early learning through play and creativity – these are all things that foster carers nurture daily.

"To provide foster families with ongoing and free access to our Museums is a genuine privilege," said Tom.

With a critical shortage of foster carers nationally, initiatives such as this partnership provide carers with additional support to ease the financial burden of caring.

Foster carers were placed under additional pressure during COVID-19 which resulted in record numbers of carers leaving the system. Three years after COVID, we're still seeing a 30% increase in the number of carers existing.

Combined with a lower number of people in the community enquiring to become carers, initiatives that support our existing carers can make the difference between a child staying within their community in a foster care home, or moving out of their community or into residential care.

We're so grateful for the support of MoPA, which allows us to create opportunities for children and carers while retaining funds to provide ongoing practical support to them and therapeutic support to the children in their care.

A family enjoying MoPA



Recognising Excellence

MacKillop Excellence Awards

Named in honour of our founders, we recognise teams, young people and families for the outcomes they achieve, and their commitment to our trauma-informed model Sanctuary, and our values of justice, hope, collaboration, compassion, and respect. Congratulations to the national recipients of the 2023 MacKillop Excellence Awards.

The Catherine McAuley Award for excellence in volunteering by a volunteer

Agnes Fatialofa

The Catherine McAuley Award for excellence in caring by a carer

Ann and David Connors

The Edmund Rice Award for excellence in practice by a member of staff

Natasha Bargeus, Manager
Pilbara & Northern Territory

The Edmund Rice Award for excellence in practice by a team

Woodend Road,
Residential Care Team

The Gerard Jones Sanctuary in Action Award for excellence in implementing the Sanctuary Model by a team or member of staff

Dr Kelly Thompson,
Principal Practitioner, Western
Australia & Northern Territory

The Mary MacKillop Award for 'Courage in Life', acknowledging the great endeavour exercised by a child or young person involved with MacKillop

Jayla, Residential Care,
North Metro, Victoria*

Lisa, Therapeutic Supported
Independent Living,
Clarence Coffs, NSW*

The Mary MacKillop Award for 'Courage in Life', acknowledging the great endeavour exercised by a family involved with MacKillop

Ayla Laruffa and family,
Family Support Services, Darwin

**Name changed to protect privacy*

Resi Rocks Awards



Victorian Protecting Children Awards

Sector Award Recipients and Finalists

National

Order of Australia Medal

Recipients

Sue Seletto, for Service to Youth

Victoria

Victorian Protecting Children Awards

Finalists

Keeping At Risk Young People Safe Award:

Barwon Residential Care team
Adrienne Walker, Case Manager
Targeted Care Package Team

Carer Award:

Amy Baudinette and Colin Cheater
Sue and Lee Wakeman

Robin Clark Making a Difference Award:

Woodend Residential Care team

Resi Rocks, Residential Care Awards

Recipients

Elannah Lino, Residential Care Award
Upper Road, Bendigo,
Healing Matters Award
Woodend Residential Care Team,
Healing Matters Award

Highly Commended

Morgan House, Healing Matters Award

New South Wales

NSW Resilient Australia Awards

Highly Commended

MacKillop Seasons, Mental Health and
Wellbeing Award

Western Australia

Pilbara Community Services Excellence Awards

Recipient

Rebecca Narrier, Inspirational Indigenous
Leader Award

Finalists

Natasha Bargeus,
Inspirational Senior Award
MacKillop Family Services,
Most Outstanding Large
Organisation Award



Celebrating inspirational practice

Putting people at ease when they are feeling vulnerable is one of the key skills that earned MacKillop's Family Support worker, Rebecca Narrier, the Inspirational Indigenous Leader Award at the Pilbara Community Services Excellence Awards 2023.

Rebecca and her siblings spent time in care when they were younger and Rebecca feels this enables her to easily connect with people who have experienced domestic violence, homelessness, or just need someone to listen to them without judgment.

"I've been there. I know what it is like to feel helpless when everything seems out of your control," Rebecca says. "After I get to know them, sometimes I share my story with clients and tell them, 'I know what you're dealing with – it will be OK.'"

Rebecca joined MacKillop Family Services in Karratha when she returned to WA after living in Queensland.

"I love my job and my colleagues are very supportive. Sometimes we deal with confronting situations, so it is great to work at a place where people will listen, encourage me to debrief and support me with ideas to help clients."

Rebecca adds, "MacKillop also encourages us to continue to grow and develop our knowledge allowing for study time during work and connecting us with the local college, where lecturers come to the office every week to help us with studies. Next year I will study for my Cert V in Community Services."

MacKillop's Manager of the Pilbara & Northern Territory, Natasha Bargeus, was also shortlisted for the Inspirational Senior Award for her work making a positive difference in the community and MacKillop was a finalist for the Most Outstanding Large Organisation Award, for providing outstanding positive and lasting difference to the community through the programs and services it delivers in the Pilbara.

MacKillop's services in the Pilbara and the Northern Territory have steadily grown over the last few years and 60 per cent of the staff we employ in Karratha and Port Hedland come from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background.



Governance

Our Board provides the strong governance required for our teams to operate high quality services that deliver best practice outcomes, so children, young people and families are empowered to heal and thrive.

MacKillop is governed by a Board of Directors comprising independent, non-executive Directors. The Directors perform their roles on a voluntary basis and exercise independent judgement, always acting in the organisation's best interests. Each Board Director accepts full responsibility for the governance of the organisation, in accordance with legislative requirements, best practice standards in corporate governance and community expectations. Where a conflict of interest is likely to arise, Directors will refrain from the decision-making process.

The Board sets the organisation's strategic direction and is responsible for its financial performance, compliance, and risk management. It has a number of committees to advise on key governance issues. These Board committees are: Governance; Audit and Risk; Ethos and Culture; Reconciliation Action Plan; Finance and investment; and Quality and Research. The Board delegates executive and operational responsibilities through formal delegated authorities to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Board's composition and performance is regularly reviewed to ensure it has an appropriate mix of skills and experience and is operating in an effective manner. New Directors participate in an organisational induction program, and all Directors are supported to be involved in ongoing formation and development activities.

Our Member

The Member of MacKillop is the owner of the company. As of 3 December 2021, our sole member is Mercy Community Services Australia Limited (MCSAL). The MacKillop Board of Directors is appointed by MCSAL.

Our Board

Brian Keane Chair	Robyn Fry Deputy Chair
David Beaver	Vicki Clark OAM
Elizabeth Clear	Janet Farrow OAM
Fiona Hastings	Peter Lavis
Dr Linda Mellors	Francis Moore
Anita Mueller (Resigned Nov 2022)	Prof Peter Steane (Resigned Nov 2022)
John Sutherland	

Financial Summary

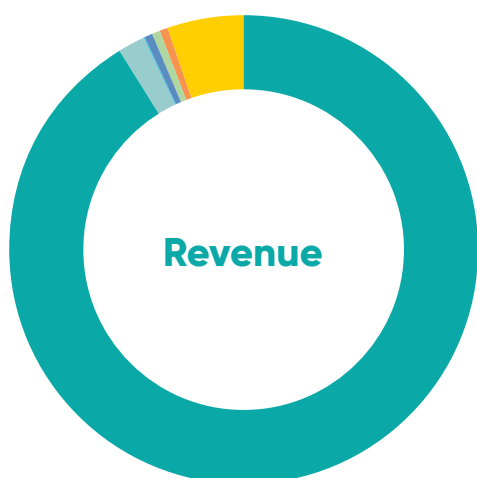
The financial information presented in this Annual Report has been derived from the audited Financial Report of MacKillop Family Services for the year ended 30 June 2023.

A copy of the full financial and auditor's report is available at www.mackillop.org.au

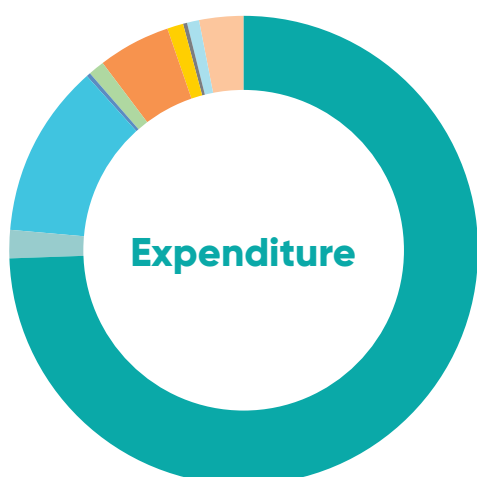
MacKillop recorded a gain from ordinary operating activities of \$7,245,767 (2022: \$22,499,545). Other income from non-ordinary activities, such as bequests, totals \$434,395 (2022: \$319,759), resulting in a net gain for the year of \$7,680,162 (2022: \$22,819,304).

The reported other comprehensive income' in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the published financial report is the recorded gain or loss in MacKillop's equity holdings within its financial assets, which is yet to be realised. After taking into account the gain in revaluation of financial assets for the year of \$1,636,527 the resulting total comprehensive income gain for the year is \$9,316,689 (2022: \$20,268,168).

Included in the comprehensive income gain for the year of \$9,316,689 is a gain from a property sale of \$7,023,240. Excluding this income and the gain from the revaluation of financial assets, the comprehensive income gain for the year is \$656,922.



Revenue	2023	2022
Government grants	\$230,075,651	\$217,308,558
Enterprise income	\$4,692,217	\$2,043,750
Bequests	\$434,395	\$319,759
Trust funds	\$1,141,275	\$1,117,485
Donations/fundraising	\$1,280,240	\$1,369,475
Investment income	\$1,718,809	\$2,752,697
Other income, includes transfer of assets from the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, WorkCover recoveries, profit on sale of property & vehicles and other minor income	\$12,820,300	\$13,722,991
Total	\$252,162,887	\$238,634,715



Expenditure	2023	2022
Employee benefits expense	\$182,304,193	\$157,319,768
Depreciation and amortisation expense	\$4,996,432	\$4,965,017
Client expense	\$28,996,660	\$28,712,902
Fundraising and volunteers expense	\$848,917	\$585,657
Occupancy expense	\$2,480,906	\$2,187,387
Property maintenance and equipment expense	\$12,595,102	\$11,216,525
Motor vehicles running expense	\$2,612,980	\$2,068,025
Audit and legal expense	\$188,656	\$151,911
Administration expense	\$2,358,331	\$2,167,785
Other expenses- includes business operation costs, finance costs, consultancies and depreciation on 'Right of Use' assets	\$7,100,548	\$6,440,434
Total	\$244,482,725	\$215,815,411

Our Community Supporters

Bequests

Estate of Megan Adair

Estate Margaret Conway

The Craighill Bequest

Estate of Maureen Daly

Estate of Mary Ann Edwards

Estate of WE & ME Flanagan

Estate of Patrick A Foley

Estate of Leo Byrne Halpin

The Martin Michael Healy
Charitable Trust

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The William and Mary Ievers and Sons
Maintenance Fund

Estate of Alexander Kekin

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Support us

By supporting MacKillop you can help empower children and young people in care, support those experiencing homelessness, provide children with a disability and their families with additional support, and help families impacted by trauma to heal.

Find out how you can support children, young people and families to live and grow in safe, nurturing communities.

Visit **mackillop.org.au/get-involved**

Stay connected

We'd love to share with you our latest news, initiatives, community events and some of the great differences our teams are making to those in need.

Hear more from us:

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-  Facebook /**[mackillopfamilys](https://www.facebook.com/mackillopfamilys)**
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