



MacKillop
Family
Services



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Annual Report | 2021-2022



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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 (LGBTIQIA+) have the right to be safe.

Chair Report

“Something entirely new emerged from the ‘fusion’, while all that was of value from each Congregation melded into a rich new entity. Nothing was lost while so much was gained.”



These words from a Sister of St Joseph who was present at the formation of MacKillop Family Services in 1997, were shared with me on the occasion of our 25th anniversary earlier this year.

It is a common refrain from those who were involved in overseeing the extraordinary process of merging seven child and family services agencies into the one entity we know today. Their motivations were about achieving economies of scale and ensuring their services would continue in an increasingly challenging economic environment. But through careful planning and the creation of a shared vision, they created a whole that has proven to be so much greater than the sum of its parts.

It is a wonderful foundation story, and I feel privileged to be given the opportunity to help shape the next chapter of the MacKillop story. This year we have achieved a number of significant milestones that we hope will set MacKillop up for success for its next 25 years.

I would particularly like to note the following:

- For the first time we commenced service delivery in the NT, where we are supporting Aboriginal families to thrive in the face of intergenerational trauma. Our partnership with Danila Dilba Health Service reflects the progress we have made in enhancing our culturally-responsive service delivery, which we hope to continue as we embark on our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan;
- We are preparing to open our first school in NSW in 2023, as part of a strategic focus on growing our Education program;
- We have been reaccredited in the Sanctuary model for a further three years, and secured Rainbow Tick accreditation, which will help

to ensure that MacKillop is a safe, welcoming, trauma-informed and inclusive environment for all of our staff and clients; and

- We have consolidated the newly-established MacKillop Institute, which will enable us to impact more children, young people and families by sharing the knowledge gleaned from our frontline work and our academic partnerships, to build the capacity of organisations nationally in best-practice service delivery.

That these significant milestones have been achieved in a year in which COVID-19 has continued to ravage our community and challenge our staff and clients alike, is testament to the extraordinary workforce we have at MacKillop. I cannot thank you enough for your commitment.

I would also like to thank my fellow board members for the time they give voluntarily to govern the organisation, and return a strong financial surplus in a very challenging economic environment. Thanks in particular are due to Matt den Elzen and Kerry Brettell, who resigned from the board during the reporting period. Kerry continues to be involved in supporting the transition to a new governance structure in 2024.

I hope you enjoy this account of the highlights of our year, and I thank each and every one of our MacKillop family for the support you have given to make these outcomes possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Brian Keane'.

Brian Keane
Chairperson

What drives us

We are driven by an unwavering commitment to the wellbeing and safety of all children, young people and families. We know the best place for a child is in a safe, supportive home where they are loved and nurtured. We therefore strive to connect with families as early as possible, to help them create an environment in which children and young people can thrive.

Our work is trauma-informed and respectful of cultural safety. We understand the impact of trauma, and we use this knowledge to guide our responses to the children, young people and families we support. We are deeply committed to helping children to heal from the adversity they have experienced, and to rebuild their trust in the world around them. We also understand the healing power of culture. We are deeply committed to cultural safety and to Aboriginal self-determination.

We listen to the voice of the young people and families we work with. We know they are the experts when it comes to their own lives, and only through deep and respectful listening to their needs can we deliver the outcomes they deserve.

We are passionate about learning and have a sophisticated approach to the collection and analysis of data to inform continuous improvements in the quality of our work. Furthermore, through our partnerships with academic institutions, we are developing innovative solutions to entrenched systemic challenges, and building the evidence base about what works best for the sector as a whole.

We embody the spirit of the three Catholic congregations that came together 25 years ago to become the organisation we are today and we continue their legacy of large-heartedness, compassion and hospitality.

Our commitment to inclusion

We celebrate and draw strength from diversity and respect the dignity of all people. Every person at MacKillop has the right to be safe and to be treated justly. We value every person's ability, cultural or linguistic backgrounds, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, relationship status, religious or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, and age.

Our values



Justice

We believe in the right of all people, regardless of belief or culture, to be treated justly and fairly



Hope

We commit to foster a hope that assists people to find meaning



Collaboration

We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through co-operation, co-ordination and partnership



Compassion

We seek to foster compassion, an attitude of the heart and a response to suffering



Respect

We seek to act with respect with regard to each other, the earth and all creation

We bring our values to life with the **Sanctuary model**, an evidence-supported, whole-of-organisation framework that is trauma-informed, focused on safety, and guides how we respond to our staff, the children, young people and families we work with, and all other organisational stakeholders.

CEO Report

“ The strong spirit and commitment of our staff to best practice, ongoing learning, continuous improvement and teamwork has been essential to not just surviving, but thriving despite the challenges we have faced. ”



This spirit of community and innovation has been a hallmark of our work over the last year. This teamwork was reflected in the results of our Staff Engagement Survey, that produced the highest level of engagement MacKillop has ever achieved, despite being conducted at the end of a long period of pandemic restrictions. It was well beyond the industry benchmark, and an incredible result.

I am so grateful to lead such a strong team of passionate staff and carers and thank them for the resilience and commitment that has contributed to the stories shared in this report. We will be continuing to draw on this spirit in the year ahead, with many challenges on the horizon.

One example where this spirit was on display was a recent campaign in which we asked all staff to take a few minutes out of their day to do one action to promote the urgent need for foster carers within their community, and post a photo of their activity on an online noticeboard. By the end of the day, the board was filled with over 100 photos of staff doing letterbox drops, placing posters in schools and cafes, and setting up stalls in local markets. It was a remarkable demonstration of what can be achieved when we all work together to tackle a big need - the recruitment of more foster carers.

We work hard so that our young people are safe and continue to develop to their full potential and this year we have continued to implement a range of initiatives detailed throughout the report to enhance safety and wellbeing. These have resulted in the strongest outcomes and lowest rate of critical incidents we have experienced at MacKillop.

It was heartening to see the results of this work recognised in audits across all States, which included several commendations for MacKillop for its attention to safety. We also received a number of sector Awards. Our staff and carers work so hard for children and families, and I am delighted they have been recognised in this way.

We also have 17 evaluation and research programs on the go so we can better understand “what works” and the impact of our innovative programs. This is part of our commitment to continuous improvement, both within MacKillop and across the entire service system. For example, our Power to Kids program, which focuses on the prevention of sexual abuse and violence, is having a national impact with over 30 agencies participating in training; and our evidence-based disaster response work through Stormbirds and Seasons for Growth has had a greater impact than ever before, supporting flood and bushfire-affected communities.

The work we do is not for the faint-hearted. But as we celebrate 25 years of service, we will continue to draw on the example of our founders, who encouraged us to “go where the need is greatest” and ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow and thrive in a safe and loving home. I am so grateful for the support of our dedicated board, and my deep appreciation extends to the broader MacKillop community that stands alongside us as we go about our work. Thank you all so much for your support.

Dr Robyn Miller
CEO

Our 25 year journey

The story of the formation of MacKillop Family Services begins in the early 1990s, when the leaders of the seven child and family services operated by the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of St Joseph and the Christian Brothers in Melbourne and Geelong (Victoria) at that time, came together to discuss how their services could thrive into the future.

The three congregations shared a passionate commitment to social justice, and all shared a long legacy of helping those most in need. Through their work, they were recognised for going above and beyond to support the most marginalised children, young people and families in their communities, and driving innovation to deliver the best outcomes for their service users.

Over the first 10 years, our services focused on Victoria. In 2009, we began operating in NSW, taking over the operations of two Edmund Rice Community Services programs based in Sydney and Wollongong. Four years later, in 2013, we began operations in Western Australia.

Today, we embody the spirit and ethos of the founders of these congregations – Mary MacKillop, Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice – as we continue to support and stand up for children, young people and families through evidence-based practice; lead innovation at a program and system level, to enhance outcomes; and collaborate with communities, agencies and government to create positive change.

In addition to our service delivery, we promote the national development of skilled responses to trauma and loss, and advocate for the rights of marginalised people. In 2019 we launched The MacKillop Institute to give renewed focus to this work, and build the capacity of governments, schools, community organisations and businesses across Australia that are responding to trauma, loss and change.

This work is grounded in our belief that the greatest impact is achieved through genuine collaboration and knowledge sharing. It is a belief that was integral to the formation of MacKillop Family Services 25 years ago, and is just as important to the way we work today.

MacKillop Family Services launches with 200 staff under the leadership of CEO Paul Linossier

1997



Launch of our foster care program in Port Hedland, working in close collaboration with partner agency, Wirraka Maya

2014



Dr Robyn Miller commences as our third CEO

Certified as an accredited Sanctuary organisation

Cara in the East of Melbourne transfers its services to MacKillop

2016



Heritage and Information Service is established.
The Substance Abuse Family Support Service Commences

1998



MacKillop begins hosting reunions for past residents and staff of the seven founding agencies. These reunions continue today

2001



A history of MacKillop's founding agencies, Holding onto Hope, is published

2004



MacKillop opens a Family Relationship Centre in Melbourne's West, in partnership with Relationships Australia and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre

2008



Begin delivering out of home care services in WA
Open refurbished site at Cecil Street (former St Vincent's Boys' Orphanage) including the Heritage Centre

2013



Start of journey to implement the Sanctuary model
Launch services in Warrnambool with three residential homes

2012



St Augustine's and St Helen's specialist schools, located in Whittington, amalgamate to become MacKillop Specialist School, now known as MacKillop Education

2011



Micaela Cronin is appointed as our second CEO
Former Edmund Rice ministries join MacKillop, expanding our footprint into NSW

2009



MacKillop exceeds 1,000 staff and NSW services double in size
MacKillop Rural Community Services, Good Grief and St Joseph's Cowper transfer their services to MacKillop

2017



Inaugural conference: Child Safe Organisations: Prevention and Practice beyond the Royal Commission
South West Emergency Care for Children in Bunbury WA transfer their services to MacKillop
Commenced Outcomes 100, a deep dive case review process of every child in care

2018



Lead the Way Towards Wellbeing conference
Initiated Paws4Kids
Launched The MacKillop Institute

2019



Read stories and watch videos that bring these milestones to life:

mackillop.org.au/celebrating-25-years



Began training the sector in Power to Kids, a model co-designed with University of Melbourne to better protect young people from sexual exploitation.
Expanded to Northern Territory

2022



Continued our focus to support staff to deliver services under COVID-19 restrictions

2021



Launched first Reconciliation Action Plan
Opened new school campus in Caulfield

2020



Highlights

2021-22 was a year of growth from a financial, geographic, and service delivery perspective, with new services established in NSW, Victoria and WA, as well as the establishment of services in the Northern Territory for the first time in partnership with Danila Dilba Health Service and funded by the NT government.

In addition to the new programs we established, many of our existing services expanded, particularly those focused on supporting families to stay together, in furtherance of our Strategic Goal to grow high quality, inclusive services to prevent harm, to support healing and to respond where the need is great.

We also deepened our commitment to leading innovation and building the evidence base for future service delivery by collaborating with universities to progress 17 research projects. These projects either seek to evaluate our programs and clinical interventions or engage our service users – families and young people – to improve our practice.

We continue to regularly review the outcomes of the children and young people in our care. In our most recent 6-monthly survey of staff caring for young people in residential care, we learned that over 75% of young people have increased their general and mental health during their placement in a MacKillop home; and 79% have regular family contact, with a significant proportion having improved quality of contact as a result. Pleasingly, this data is trending upwards.

We also continue to monitor our engagement with families accessing our early intervention programs through quarterly surveys, and regularly review this data to inform how we can further improve our practice. This data shows that 96% of families were satisfied with their overall experience with MacKillop and felt listened to and respected. This includes families who have been mandated to work with us through the Family Court, or their local Child Protection Department.

96%

of families are satisfied with their overall experience with MacKillop

94

young people at risk of homelessness provided with accommodation and therapeutic support

1,200+

children and young people in foster and home-based care

152

children enrolled in our MacKillop Education schools



1,101

former residents supported to access their records

8,200+

families supported to stay together



650+

young people in residential care



995

foster carers

400+

families with a disability supported to achieve their goals

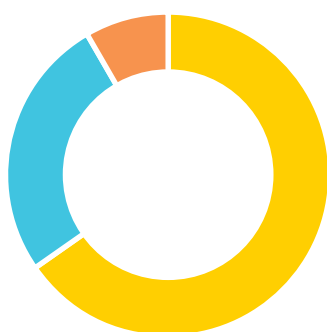
443

young people supported with Education and Engagement programs

Our footprint

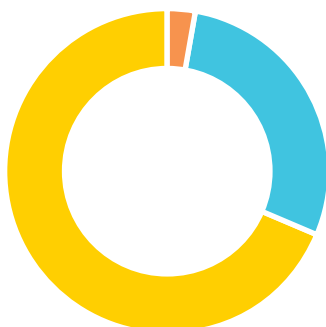
25 years ago, MacKillop Family Services began its operations with 200 staff located across Melbourne and in Geelong. Today, we have over 1,500 staff operating nationally from 45 offices, 112 homes and three schools, providing services to children and families, and training across the sector.

Foster Carers



VIC 645 **NSW** 268 **WA** 82

Staff



VIC 68.6% **NSW/ACT** 28.8% **WA/NT** 2.5%

Our places



Victoria

South Melbourne	Footscray	Mildura
Bendigo	Forest Hill	Preston
Broadmeadows	Geelong	Swan Hill
Caulfield	Hamilton	Wangaratta
Cobblebank	Maidstone	Warrnambool
Dandenong	Melton	Wodonga

New South Wales

Sydney	Coonabarabran	Nowra
Balranald	Coonamble	Nyngan
Bateman's Bay	Dubbo	Tweed Heads
Bega	Goulburn	Queanbeyan
Bourke	Grafton	Walgett
Brewarrina	Gulargambone	Warren
Cobar	Lightning Ridge	Weilmore
Condobolin	Lismore	Wollongong
Cooma	Murwillumbah	

Western Australia

West Perth
Bunbury
South Hedland
Roebourne

Australian Capital Territory

Holt

Northern Territory

Darwin

Our national and international footprint

We deliver training programs such as Sanctuary, 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.

Our commitment to cultural safety and Reconciliation with First Nations Peoples



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. ”

– Excerpt from MacKillop Family Services Statement of Reconciliation, 26 May, 1998

For the last five years, our Aboriginal Service Development Team has guided MacKillop on a journey to strengthen cultural safety across all our services. Critical to this has been the delivery of our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which was launched in 2020 after an extensive period of consultation with Traditional Owners, elders, Aboriginal Community-Controlled organisations, community members, service users and our workforce.

In 2022, we finalised our first RAP, and we are preparing to launch our Second Innovate RAP, which articulates our vision for Reconciliation. Some of the key achievements over the past year as we work towards this vision include:

- Transitioning Aboriginal children to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations wherever possible
- Appointing Vicki Clark, a Mutthi Mutthi Wemba Wemba woman, to the MacKillop Family Services Board, and establishing a Board RAP subcommittee.
- Delivering cultural awareness training to 338 staff
- Providing Cultural Care Packages to Aboriginal children and young people in MacKillop's care, and enhancing the Cultural Support Plans required for all Aboriginal children and young people
- Launching an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy, with a target of a 5% increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees over the next two years
- Partnering with over 35 Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations across Australia.

Our Vision for Reconciliation


Our vision for reconciliation is a nation that embraces equity and unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians, and that recognises Aboriginal culture as a generous gift that enriches us. We are driven to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with opportunities to access the same life chances and choices as non-Aboriginal children.

Truth-telling is critical to reconciliation. There can be no reconciliation without listening to each other's stories. Prevention and healing – key themes identified for our second Innovation Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) through our truth-telling process – are critical to reducing the numbers of Aboriginal children coming into care and the reunification of Aboriginal families.

Our RAP actions acknowledge and respect the customs, protocols, languages, knowledge and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The best outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are achieved when they grow up in their own communities connected to culture and mob and we actively support these connections for the children, young people, families, and communities we work with.

By using this vision as our guiding light, we seek to embed cultural safety into our practice in ever stronger ways, so that we are seen as a welcoming and safe organisation which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities choose to connect with.



Aboriginal
children, it's
a lifeline.

The healing power of culture

In Australia in 2019–20, one in six children from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background received child protection services, compared to one in 32 non-Aboriginal children. This over-representation is particularly pronounced in the Barwon region of Victoria, where we have a valued partnership with Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative.

This year, MacKillop secured a three-year grant from the Anthony Costa Foundation to establish a mentoring program in partnership with Strong Brother Strong Sister, an Aboriginal youth-led organisation.

The partnership will ensure all children and young people in our residential care, foster care and education programs in the Barwon region will have the opportunity to

access a mentor who will support them to make cultural connections, strengthen pride in their identity and create a sense of belonging.

The mentor program acknowledges the unique experience of intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation and policies such as the removal of Aboriginal children from families leading to the stolen generation. It also recognises the healing power of culture.

We currently support over 30 Aboriginal children and young people to access the program.

Program participant Nick* said, "Culture to Aboriginal young people is integral to our wellbeing. It provides connection, strength, identity, healing, and learning."

*Name changed to protect privacy

Research and advocacy

The second of the five Goals in our Strategic Plan: 2020 – 2027 is “to be an innovative and responsive leader by developing best practices and advocating for social justice.”

This goal expresses our commitment to evidence-based practice and ensuring that 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 building evidence for the most effective strategies to deliver positive outcomes for children, young people and families across Australia.

Our CEO, Research and Clinical teams have led this work, which involves collaborating with Universities and other academic partners to gather evidence, evaluate programs, measure the impact of our services and advocate for social policy change. This work has led to a number of academic publications this year, which provides a platform to build the evidence base at a sector level.

One of the key highlights in the past year was receiving acknowledgement in the Minister’s Award for Innovation in Protecting Children at the 2021 Victorian Protecting Children Awards. This acknowledged our work in the design and development of the Power to Kids program, in collaboration with the University of Melbourne.

Power to Kids responds to the high risk of child exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and dating violence for young people in out of home care. In the past year, we have trained 257 residential care workers across Australia in this important program, through The MacKillop Institute, and we are about to scale up the program across our foster care program following a successful pilot (see case study).

Our Client Outcomes team has a critical role to play in assessing the impact of our programs, ensuring all our programs are underpinned by a clear Program Logic, which identifies key metrics against which we assess performance. The team conducts biannual audits of the young people in our residential care program to measure program outcomes, and our CEO chairs the Governance Committees that advise our Residential Care and Foster Care programs on service performance. The team also coordinate Outcomes 100, a deep-dive case review process which has deepened our understanding of every child in our care; provided critical on-the-job professional development for all case workers; and strengthened collaboration between all stakeholders involved in the care teams that support our children, young people and families.

Over the past 12 months, our extensive body of work in research and evaluation includes the following projects that were either completed or are underway:

Research projects

Research partner	Project
University of Melbourne	Grief & Loss: Impacts of placement transitions on foster carers and their children
University of Melbourne	Disrupting Child Sexual Exploitation – the DICE project
Southern Cross University, University of South Australia, Flinders University, University of Otago and University of Lancashire	Ethical Practice Involving Children (EPIC) project
Monash University	The use of Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR) in the response to critical incidents in residential care
University of Melbourne	Power to Kids: Respecting Sexual Safety program – residential care
University of Melbourne	Power to Kids: Respecting Sexual Safety program – foster care
Western Sydney University	Upholding the right to cultural connection for children in care: Understanding current strategies and impactful practices

Program evaluations

Research partner	Project
University of Melbourne	National Roll-out of Power to Kids: Respecting Sexual Safety program
University of Melbourne	Evaluations of the Seasons for Growth and Stormbirds programs
Southern Cross University	Evaluations of the Seasons for Growth and Stormbirds programs
University of Melbourne	In2School@school: Re-engaging students with school attendance problems
Monash University	Evaluation of ReLATE model
Deakin University	Evaluation of the Seasons for Growth for out of home care program - MacKillop Barwon and South-West Pilot
Monash University	Evaluation of the Paw Pals program
Monash University	Evaluation of the Family Preservation and Reunification Response Program (Vic)
RMIT University	Evaluation of the Safe Relationships program
Monash University	Sanctuary model PhD projects – residential care and education (Vic / NSW)

Supporting carers with Brave Conversations

In 2021, MacKillop partnered with the University of Melbourne to adapt its successful Power to Kids program for the foster care context.

At the launch of the program by the Hon Colin Brooks, Victorian Minister for Child Protection and Family Services, foster carer Kellie Addicoat emphasised the need for Power to Kids, saying, "Often the young people that come into our care have no idea about what safe relationships look like, so it's important we have the confidence to be able to role model that for them."

She said the program gave her the skills to have "brave conversations" with young people, and this in turn ensured the young people in her care knew they could ask any question about sexual safety, "knowing they would get an honest answer".

Team Leader Mal McKay said doing the program in collaboration with foster carers gave case workers a shared language and enhanced their teamwork. "This helps build the trust and collaboration required to get the best possible outcomes for our young people."

The program has been commended by sector leaders including Minister Brooks, the Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People Liana Buchanan, and the CEO of the Foster Care Association of Victoria Sam Hauge. Our current focus is to adapt the program for schools.

The MacKillop Institute



Throughout our 25-year history, we have learned the best way to achieve meaningful impact is to share our knowledge and skills and collaborate with like-minded organisations. We therefore established The MacKillop Institute in 2019 to draw on our frontline experience to deliver training programs that promote wellbeing and resilience, based on our deep understanding of the impact of change, loss, grief and trauma.

We know what works best, because we apply our knowledge every day in our schools and our child and family services, and we frequently evaluate and refine our programs through our academic partnerships.

Throughout the past financial year, The MacKillop Institute delivered four key programs at a national and international level.

Power to Kids

Our award-winning Power to Kids program was developed in partnership with the University of Melbourne, to enhance the skills of residential care staff to prevent and intervene early where there was a risk of harmful sexual behaviour in a residential care setting.

A key focus over the past year has been delivering the program to residential care providers across Australia, with the support of the Westpac Safer Children, Safer Communities program. In the past 12 months, we have delivered the program to over 30 agencies working in residential care.

The Institute also launched a partnership with the Department of Child Protection (DCP) in South Australia, to deliver Power to Kids to all residential care employees.

Late in 2022, we launched an evaluation of an adaption of the Power to Kids program in foster care (see case study on p13). We look forward to making the program available to carers across MacKillop and beyond in the next financial year, to provide further protections from harm for some of our most vulnerable young people.

ReLATE

The last 12 months have been extremely disruptive for young people trying to stay connected to education, and this has increased the need for the Institute's Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE) model. ReLATE helps school communities to create safe environments and manage the challenging behaviours that are often caused by trauma and other significant upheavals.

The ReLATE program grew significantly over the past year, with 68 schools committed to the program, enabling us to reach 1,495 school staff and 9,184 students across Australia - and more schools are requesting this service.

Strategic partnerships have flourished, including a partnership with Hume City Council to support communities rebuilding from the impact of lockdowns; a partnership with Melbourne Catholic Education to pilot the program in 7 of its schools; and a partnership with Catholic Education Ballarat to deliver the program to 55 schools in the Diocese of Ballarat over the next three years.

The Institute is eager to continue to expand its reach nationally and provide more safe learning environments for school teachers and their students.

“Something ReLATE taught me is not to underestimate those moments of real connection with people, and it's a moment of joy in my day.”

Dr Helen Healy,
St Mary Magdalen's Parish Primary School

Sanctuary model

The Sanctuary model is a workplace culture-change program designed to build safe communities that help people to heal from trauma and cope with workplace stress.

The Sanctuary team made a mark this year by delivering the model to Anglicare South Australia and establishing a 3-year implementation program with Southern Cross Support Services Bundaberg, Victims of Crime NT and IFYS Ltd Queensland.

Creating a culture of safety at school

Before introducing ReLATE at St Pius X Parish School in Warrnambool, students were missing out on learning opportunities due to challenging behaviours in the classroom.

Looking to address school refusal and physical and verbal aggression, the school leadership team engaged ReLATE to help drive a healthy change agenda across the school.

"We recognised that we needed to create a learning environment that integrated research-informed and evidence-based theories and practices that delivered positive outcomes for students," explained Deputy Principal, Stacey Atkins.

"Since we started working with the ReLATE team, there has been a broadening of what it means to be safe. Safety plans have become an important tool for students in times of heightened emotions, and regular check-ins through the ReLATE Circle have helped staff be more in-tune with the goals, needs and feelings of students. We've found that students are always eager to begin their day with a ReLATE Circle, and Safety Plans empower them to personally relate to others and identify their strengths and resilience."

St Pius hopes to build on the foundations of the ReLATE model in their school and to develop a shared language to support students who are having challenges with their education journey.

"We look forward to seeing the continued benefits of ReLATE for all the members of our school community."



We also delivered a wide range of training, including bespoke training to the Department of Justice and Communities NSW, which included our first 3-day online training to participants across Australia.

Helping inform future practice, evaluation from Monash University is underway exploring the impact of Sanctuary in an out of home care setting. Its application has also been featured in our Aged Care Conversation Paper which highlights the benefits of Sanctuary for residents and their families, and those involved in the provision of aged care.

In the year ahead, we hope to expand Sanctuary to other states, to grow its presence in aged care and increase the suite of professional development modules.

“What most people want is to feel safe, to feel connected and to belong and the Sanctuary model gives us tools to do that.”

Training participant from the Department of Child Protection SA

Seasons for Growth

2022 saw unprecedented demand for the Seasons for Growth suite of programs, with a particularly pressing need for the Stormbirds program in regions such as northern NSW, which suffered the compounding effects of once-in-a-generation floods in communities that were already reeling from the impact of bushfires.

Fortunately the team has become adept at mobilising quickly and delivering training programs online, with over 1,200 community leaders trained in our programs over the last 12 months. Our training was enhanced by the development of several new online resources, such as the Rockhopper Toolkit in collaboration with the Centre for Children and Young People, and the Loss, Grief and Healing video series created in partnership with the indigenous Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (iPEPA) to support Indigenous health workers. Our capacity was also helped by the appointment of two Community Resilience Officers, with the support of Resilience NSW.

We continue to strengthen our commitment to research, including an evaluation of our disaster and bushfire recovery work and evaluations of pilots of our program in foster care and residential care settings.

A key focus for the next three years will be delivering a unique national initiative, in partnership with Headspace Schools, to build the capacity of 500 school communities across Australia to prevent and respond to youth suicide.

A young woman with red hair tied back, multiple piercings (nose, lip, ear), and a black necklace with a gold pendant is holding a young child with red hair. The child is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt. They are outdoors with a blurred background.

Supporting reunification of families

Ethicah had a traumatic childhood, most of which was spent in care. She experienced poor mental health and struggled with drug addiction. Five weeks after she became a mother at the age of 18, Ethicah's daughter Lilah* was removed from her care.

Ethicah was intent on being reunified with her daughter and breaking the intergenerational cycle of child protection involvement. However, the odds were not in her favour, and she was told she was unlikely to succeed in seeking custody of her daughter.

Ethicah needed someone to genuinely believe in her and support her to address her barriers to parenting. She found this in

MacKillop's Family Preservation and Reunification Response (FPRR). Our staff gently addressed her worries, giving her the confidence to lead her own pathway to reunification.

Lilah was 18 months old when she returned to live with Ethicah, at which point she could safely and confidently parent her daughter. Ethicah had also developed the self-advocacy she needed to continue thriving and growing as a mother.

The FPRR service extended their support to ensure Ethicah achieved her parenting goals and Ethicah says that without this support, "I wouldn't have been able to be reunified with my child. That's a fact."

25 years of...

Support for at-risk families

Mackillop's deep commitment to supporting families is grounded in the work of our founding congregations. Our values of hope, justice, respect, collaboration and compassion are lived in every interaction we have with families, as we provide non-judgmental, consistent support that enables families to heal from past trauma and empowers them to thrive.

Families today are experiencing more complex issues than ever before. Across our programs, we are supporting families who continue to experience isolation following COVID-19 lockdowns, which has been compounded by a range of additional factors: from the increasing impacts of natural disasters through to rising costs of living, which are placing additional pressures on at-risk families.

To respond to these ever-growing complexities, we have expanded our family support programs. In 2021, we introduced the **Family Preservation and Reunification Response (FPRR)** to 11 regions across metropolitan and rural Victoria. FPRR provides 240 hours of intensive in-home support for families identified by child protection as being at risk of family breakdown. The program supports parents and advocates for the children, working in collaboration with organisations and systems involved in the child and families' lives, such as schools and childcare centres. In 2021-22, our 11 FPRR teams supported over 500 families across Victoria.

Through this work we've been able to keep families together, and support reunification when children have been temporarily removed.

Reunification is also a focus of our **Targeted Care Package** program in Victoria, which continues to grow substantially; the **Functional Family Therapy** and **Family Preservation and Restoration** programs in NSW; the **Family Strengthening Service** and **Indigenous Parenting Services** also in NSW; and our **Family Support Services** in WA and NT.

A highlight of this year was introducing our family support services to the Northern Territory. Delivered in partnership with Danila Dilba Health Service, our **Family Support Service** works with vulnerable families involved in the child protection system to support parents to maintain a safe environment for their children, or reunify children safely to their parents after a period of time in out of home care.

The work is tough, with many Aboriginal families impacted by years of intergenerational trauma. Sadly, we are seeing the consequences of this in some communities, through an increase in requests for support from families impacted by suicide, particularly in the Pilbara region where there are limited preventative support and after-care services. To support families through this grief, our **Indigenous Healing Service** is consulting with community and local organisations to explore training in **Seasons for Healing**, a program co-designed with Aboriginal communities to respond to the impacts of loss, grief and trauma.

Another highlight this year has been the establishment of a new access point for the **Orange Door Network** in the Brimbank Melton region of Victoria. The Orange Door is a free service for adults, children and young people

Overcoming all barriers to being a dad

Mick was determined to regain custody of his children after they were taken into foster care, but the odds were against him. Mick had left school at the age of 13 and spent time in youth detention centres. He was sleeping on the floor in a share house, had limited life skills, and lacked direction.

When Mick was referred to MacKillop's Family Support Service in Darwin, his priority was to find suitable accommodation, but Family Support Service Practitioner Kerry Lane was determined to offer so much more.

Driven by the mantra, "I'll do whatever it takes", Kerry's first priority was to secure housing for Mick. Once this was taken care of, he taught him cooking skills, how to construct furniture from a flat pack, and how to mow the lawns, before progressing to developing a reunification plan for his children. Kerry's actions role modelled respectful ways that Mick could speak about the children's mother.

Mick's children have settled into their new routine beautifully. "The kids love Mick and are stoked to be with him. They're very happy and excited to live with their dad now," says Kerry. "He has reported an increase in his self-belief, self-confidence, and determination. He accepts praise and has goals and dreams for the future, safe in the knowledge he has what it takes to be an amazing dad.

*Stock image used



who are experiencing or have experienced family violence, as well as families needing support with the wellbeing and development of their children. We are delivering this service with GenWest, Western Health, the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, and the Victorian Government. This initiative will see a significant expansion from our pre-existing **ChildFIRST** program.

With approximately 80% of Child Protection notifications in Victoria being repeat notifications, it is critical that we provide services like the Orange Door to make it as easy as possible for families that are in dire need of support to access our services. We know that if these families are engaged and given the support they need early enough, we can prevent further harm occurring.

One of the best protective factors is building strong community connections, and this is a key focus of **Early Help**, a new program launched this year that supports families to strengthen community connections, taking an inclusive approach to support the health, wellbeing, education and development of children and families. MacKillop was awarded funding to provide this service in two Victorian communities: Broadmeadows and Pakenham.

Our new **Homes for Families** program in the Barwon region of Victoria is taking a similar approach, working closely with Homes Victoria to support families to move into social housing and build social connections within their new community.

We have also expanded our **Functional Family Therapy** program in NSW, and our **Safe Relationships** program in Victoria to take referrals externally, outside of the State Child Protection Department. This allows flexibility for identifying families and intervening before the involvement of child protection, and enhances the prospects of keeping families together.

“ Saying thank you from the bottom of my heart is all I can say because what you did for my family could NEVER be repaid by nothing else. Your determination, kindness, support and help through the hardest time in our lives have made us what we are today. ”

A family supported by MacKillop in NSW

We initiated our **Safe Relationships** program through philanthropic funding to tackle adolescent violence. It works directly with young people and families who are using or are at risk of using violence in the home, or within a dating context. The program helps young people and their families to build the confidence and strength to advocate for themselves via open and safe communication. Designed by MacKillop and seed-funded by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, a recent program evaluation by RMIT University reported that program participants felt supported; had greater access to services; improved skills in effective communication and managing conflict; and had confidence they could manage family issues in the future.

Another feature of the work of our founders was going where the need is greatest. With this in mind, we recently established a **Supporting Families in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)** program in the Coonamble and Walgett Shires in north-western NSW. This program seeks to reduce the developmental vulnerability of children upon entering the school system by supporting children to access Preschool or other Early Childhood Education and maintaining their placement in these ECEC services. Funded for 15 placements, in its first year, the program supported 36 children, including 10 children who would not have attended Preschool had they not participated in the program.

In early 2022, we were delighted to receive funding to expand our **Aboriginal Families as Teachers** program to communities in Walgett and Brewarrina. The program aims to strengthen the ability of Aboriginal families to build a rich home learning environment. Like many service providers in remote communities, we have experienced challenges securing staff for the program, but we remain committed to scaling up the program in the year ahead.

A final theme across our early intervention services is helping families to overcome practical barriers to keeping themselves safe. A good example from the past year is a new program we established to help families overcome barriers they may be experiencing in obtaining a COVID-19 vaccination. The program provides

practical, localised and specialised support. Through this initiative, we seek to reduce COVID-19 vaccine misinformation and hesitancy and increase health literacy.

While COVID-19 presented many challenges, there were silver linings in the form of new solutions that may not have been developed had it not been for enforced isolation due to pandemic restrictions. For example, in rural NSW it is challenging to gain access to specialist appointments. In some communities, wait lists are over 12 months. Over the past year, MacKillop staff have supported families to engage with Telehealth/Telepractice services, allowing them to access professional specialists earlier via technology. Families who were previously hesitant to attend appointments have embraced this service, and are now accessing the support they need with the support of a MacKillop staff member by their side.





Guardian angels for children needing love

Described as loving, dedicated and compassionate, Lorraine and Sam Griffiths have been MacKillop foster carers for 20 years and clearly embody our shared values of hope, collaboration and respect.

During this period, they have cared for over 140 children and young people with special needs, while also caring for three young people in their permanent care and three adult children of their own.

In 2020 they welcomed a baby boy with serious, life-limiting conditions into their home. Lorraine and Sam have dedicated their lives to this boy, spending weeks at a time in hospital by his side and attending countless specialist appointments.

Thanks to their love, care and unconditional support, the now three-year-old boy is reaching developmental milestones the health professionals and wider care team never thought he would reach.

At an awards ceremony in 2022, eldest son Matt reflected on his parents' foster care journey with these beautiful words:

"All these kids ... had one thing in common. They needed to be loved, and that was one thing that my amazing parents had plenty of to give. They loved them like they were their own, protected them and gave them shelter. They gave them everything they had without hesitation... Congratulations on this Award mum and dad. You truly are angels."



25 years of...

Providing safe and supportive homes

Supporting vulnerable families and providing safe homes where children can flourish has been at the core of MacKillop's work for the last 25 years. Our extraordinary network of volunteer foster carers and residential care workers has enabled us to make sure that every child has the best chance to reach their full potential.

During the past year, many of our foster care families in NSW and Victoria dealt with unprecedented natural disasters, as rains kept coming and certain localities flooded multiple times. We are thankful and grateful that despite the challenges, foster carers did everything they could to ensure the children in their care continued to feel safe and supported. We are also very proud of our Lismore team, who ceaselessly provided emotional and logistical support to foster care families while some of their own homes were flooded or at risk of going under water. The MacKillop office became unusable because of the mould which meant our staff were dispersed and under more pressure. Their actions to put families first is the embodiment of the MacKillop spirit.

It has been a challenging time for our carers over the last few years and foster care enquiries to MacKillop reflect a concerning downward trend in enquiries across the sector. Of particular concern is the Foster Care Association of Victoria annual census which showed a two per cent year-on-year decline in active carers across all agencies, and an 18 per cent year-on-year decline in the number of newly accredited foster carers. We continue to be innovative and creative in our strategies to engage new carers to respond to

the ever increasing demand, and we are in awe of the commitment our existing foster carers make to do everything they can for the children and young people in their care. We particularly commend Toni and Paul Gauntlet, and Kellie Addicoat, who were recognised at the 2022 Victorian Protecting Children Awards.

“ It's hard for me to describe just how wonderful Kellie is. She's so warm and compassionate. She gives the best hugs and she always smells amazing - like a mother. ”

Extract from a young person's nomination for Kellie Addicoat for a carer Award

Striving to best support children in foster care who are transitioning to a new placement, our foster care program created **This is Us**, a foster carer story book which tells children about the foster carer they will be staying with. It outlines carers' interests, what their house is like, who lives there, pets that will be there - all the information that helps a child settle into a new foster care situation.

Foster carers are our experts, and they work with us to inform how we can improve foster care together. An Action Plan based on recommendations from our Annual Carer Survey is being developed to identify new initiatives to improve foster care, and a new Foster Care Governance Group chaired by our CEO is overseeing initiatives to establish best practice standards within our foster care program.



Thriving with therapeutic care

Life was spiralling out of control for Dana*, who, along with her siblings, had been through many different foster care placements, which left her feeling displaced and alienated. Aged 13, Dana was struggling with her gender identity and felt the world was against her. In the middle of this turbulent time, she was found guilty of arson and assault and spent time in Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre.

Dana was released in October 2020 and came to live in a MacKillop home as part of the Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) program. ITC delivers child and family-centred services and care for children and young people aged between 12 – 17 years, who are in the NSW Permanency Support Program.

Where previously Dana had been aggressive towards staff, over the last 12 months, carers began to see her stabilise. She responds beautifully to intensive therapeutic support, there has been no recent physical violence toward staff or property damage, and she has engaged in TAFE to complete a diploma in music production.

17-year-old Dana is now an emerging artist who enjoys composing in her music studio. She has enrolled in a CERT III music course and is impressing everyone with her talent for lyrics and creative writing.

*Name changed to protect privacy

In WA, MacKillop was commended in a Better Care, Better Services standards review with the Department of Communities for introducing a range of strategies to improve safety for children in our care. **Our Southwest Emergency Care for Children** program also underwent a review by the Department and was commended for its quality standards.

We were also commended by the Office of the Children's Guardian in its audit of our service delivery in New South Wales. In Victoria we passed our regular Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) audit with flying colours, with the auditors identifying six areas of exceptional practice, including our bespoke Family Journey case management software, which underpins all of our case work and reporting.

MacKillop's swift response to maintaining safe residential care homes during the COVID pandemic resulted in the creation of a groundbreaking **COVID Emergency Response for Children and Young People (CERCY) model** in 2020-21. Under the CERCY model, young people in residential care who are required to self-isolate are housed in homes exclusively for their use where they were supported by specially trained staff for the duration of their isolation period. The CERCY model implementation continued

throughout 2021-22, and our learnings are currently being shared with other states and territories. We were thrilled when the program was awarded the prestigious Robin Clark Making a Difference Award at the 2022 Victorian Protecting Children Awards.

In response to the increasing ethnic diversity of young people in our care, a pilot program to identify, train and support mentors within our residential care program has been established in partnership with the Centre for Multicultural Youth. Mentors will upskill colleagues in culturally responsive care for children and young people from Pacifica and African communities. This program has been made possible with funding from The R.M. Ansett Trust, managed by Equity Trustees, and the Scanlon Foundation.

Our **A Place to Go** program in NSW brings together a multi-agency team that works to break down the barriers preventing young people in contact with the juvenile justice system from achieving their desired outcomes. Advocating for assistance such as timely and appropriate mental health support for these young people, A Place to Go has made a significant impact on young people's mental health, safety, and educational outcomes, and enhanced their capacity to engage in community, and build healthier,

stronger and more resilient relationships with their families.

Deepening our connection to the region, MacKillop's residential care program in Victoria's East was selected to run a **Cultural Resource Pilot**. This pilot builds the capacity of staff when caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. To further strengthen the support that residential care staff provide to young people, we have created a national position to work across our residential care programs. This role will drive a child safe culture within residential care homes, integrate therapeutic strategies and provide a quick and flexible response as issues arise.

This year, our Permanency Support Program in Sydney created NSW's first **Therapeutic Sibling Option Placement**. Introduced as part of the **Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC)** reform, the funding for this type of placement sees young people cared for by permanent live-in carers who provide 24-hour care seven days a week. It is designed to support sibling groups to live together as a family unit and nurture the attachment bond between family and kin.

Acting as a 'circuit-breaker', our **Intensive Therapeutic Transitional Care (ITTC)** homes in NSW are designed for young people coming into care for the first time. They spend 13 weeks at the home before moving on to live with family, foster families, or residential care. The environment is carefully designed to have sensory and tactile fittings and young people are gently introduced to therapeutic care and Sanctuary model practices. One property is on a large rural block and young people are supported to attend equine therapy to learn self-awareness and self-regulation. The program is producing outstanding results, helping vulnerable young people readjust and preparing them for the transition to their future home.

In the spirit of MacKillop's tradition of supporting people when they are at their most vulnerable, our **Homeless Youth Assistance Program** assists young people at risk of homelessness in Sydney's western suburbs. The Sanctuary model and strategies such as **Power to Kids**, which strengthens young people's understanding of safe relationships, consent and sexual

exploitation, creates a foundation of safety and establishes an environment for therapeutic care. Young people have re-connected with family, education and community, and if they are unable to move back with family, MacKillop assists them to find alternate accommodation and supports them to independent living, fulfilling our cherished goal of setting them up to succeed on their own terms.

“ I used my safety plan today when I was at dad's. Instead of getting angry, I went for a walk.”

13 year old supported in the Homeless Youth Assistance Program



25 years of...

Clinical support to heal from trauma

Loss, grief and trauma is experienced by almost every child, young person and family we care for. The impact of their experiences can be profound, and the carers and staff who support them to be safe and heal can face significant challenges. With the support of our generous donors, MacKillop has invested in **Therapeutic Practitioners** to support staff and carers to help children, young people and families to heal from past trauma.

For the past four years, MacKillop is the only agency to provide this to all our residential homes, despite the level of funding provided..

Therapeutic Practitioners provide fortnightly reflective practice sessions for service delivery staff. The process began in residential care, and is now available to all our frontline service delivery staff. Reflective practice offers staff a safe space to reflect on the challenges of their work, their experiences, and to learn from each other. It provides the time and space to utilise Sanctuary tools, and engage in mindfulness and other strategies to promote self-care and enhance safety.

Building on this work, this year we introduced **Communities of Practice** across all residential care teams. The Communities of Practice seek to integrate the various trainings on four inter-related therapeutic frameworks that we provide: **Sanctuary**, **Power to Kids**, **HEALing Matters** and **Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)**. Goals are set for each residential care home, with ongoing evaluation. The aim is to motivate and share strengths across homes, and further promote and embed child-focused and trauma-informed practice.

Monash University and the University of Melbourne is evaluating the implementation of our Communities of Practice, seeking to explore staff perceptions of the initiative, and capturing feedback on how our award-winning **HEALing Matters** (and other models) influence routine and practice; and how changes implemented in the residential houses have been received. The evaluation is occurring in our Victorian Barwon Region and NSW Coffs/Clarence Region. The early positive results are very exciting.

Launched in July 2021, our **Neurofeedback** intervention supports young people in out of home care to heal from past trauma. Neurofeedback is a leading therapy to train the brain, helping to change unhealthy or undesirable brainwave activity into normal, healthy, and organised activity. It does this by measuring specific brainwaves on an EEG machine. The brainwaves are represented on a computer screen as lines, pictures, graphs, or a simple video game. The game, for example, might show a car driving or a ball rising and falling. The person is asked to make the line, graph or object move with their brain. As desirable brain activity increases, the video game moves faster or the ball rises. Undesirable brain activity slows the ball down. Gradually, the brain learns new patterns.

Through this process, our Neurofeedback clinicians target the deep brain structures which usually become altered, overactive or go 'offline' due to trauma. Neurofeedback has resulted in a reduction in anxiety, depressive symptoms, hypervigilance, sleep disturbance, and hyperactivity. We have also seen a reduction in significant incidents for our young people, and fewer incidents of property damage.

Healing from trauma with neurofeedback

When 10-year-old Leo* first entered MacKillop's care, he had a long history of exposure to family violence, leading to extreme risk-taking behaviours. He was jumping off buildings, running into traffic and at times, would suddenly punch and kick those around him. Leo had been an in-patient at a child psychiatry unit for three months and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing urgently sought our help as Leo's mum was struggling to cope.

The Neurofeedback team quickly recognised Leo's behaviour was a trauma response linked to his childhood experiences. Neurofeedback is a non-invasive, therapeutic intervention that teaches people with abnormal brain wave patterns due to trauma, to bring their brain activity into a normal range.

As well as being assessed for autism, our psychiatrist identified that Leo was experiencing frequent 'absent' seizures, leading to a diagnosis of epilepsy. Over the course of a year, Leo's challenging behaviours and emotional outbursts significantly reduced, and he was able to return home to mum.

"It has been so rewarding to see the change in Leo over the 30 sessions of Neurofeedback. Not only were we able to identify the underlying medical cause of his behaviour, but with the right medication, therapy, and a lot of support from mum, Leo has not only returned home, but also returned to school where he is thriving," said, Tyler Hitchens, Neurofeedback Clinician.

*Name changed to protect privacy



Building upon the existing evidence-base for this intervention, we have engaged Monash University to conduct an evaluation of the Neurofeedback intervention pilot. This 'Brain Gym' therapeutic intervention is delivered outside of program funding, so our challenge and focus for the future is to consider and design a pathway for this intervention to be offered more broadly to young people and families across MacKillop.

For the past four years, MacKillop has been delivering **Therapeutic Life Story Work (TLSW)**, a creative process to help young people in care express in pictures, words or colours, their feelings about how the loss of family and home has impacted their life. In 2019, MacKillop commenced a pilot program of TLSW in out of home care. Since then, we have worked with Deakin University to pilot the evaluation. The early results show the outcomes for young people and their carers include fewer trauma symptoms, fewer conduct problems and better mental health and wellbeing.

As well as the pilot, MacKillop has introduced three tiers of the program - All About Me/ This is Us; More about Me; and the full Therapeutic Life Story Work process, which can take up to 9 months to complete. The first step, **All About Me**, has been made available to

every child and young person in out of home care and Case Workers have been trained to facilitate this process. The All About Me Books offer a vital opportunity for young people to record their memories and stories of who they are. Over 1,000 staff have been trained in All About Me, and 144 All About Me books have been completed across NSW and Victoria.

More about Me strengthens the skills of staff and carers to support children, young people and adults to create a story of their lives, including information about their family, living arrangements, cultural connection, community, friends and interests, and express how they feel about various aspects of their lives.

Our clinical services across MacKillop have grown substantially over the past five years, as our service footprint increases and the complexity of issues faced by children, young people and families grows. This year, we introduced a Therapeutic Practitioner in WA, and we continue to grow the program.

25 years of...

Disability support

We are committed to supporting young people and families with a disability through our disability support programs in both Victoria and New South Wales.

In Victoria, our **Disability Support Coordination** program works closely with children, young people and families with an NDIS plan to access the services they need. The program recently formed a partnership with Carers VIC to strengthen the team's knowledge of supports available for carers outside of the NDIS space. In 2021-22, we supported 147 families with Support Coordination.

We have expanded our support for families with a disability in Victoria by introducing a Specialist Disability Practitioner, and a **Children with Complex Disability Support Needs** program. The program seeks to prevent children with complex disability support needs from requiring care outside the family home, by building family and parenting capacity.

In NSW, our **Balranald Disability Service** has been operating in the local area for 23 years. In 2021-22 the service was able to support a further 10 adults with a disability to live independently and engage in activities to improve their quality of life.

As well as regular weekly activities, last year the team organised a volunteer artist to run a monthly art class for participants. These art classes teach a variety of mediums including rock art and sketching to build confidence and self-esteem while creating beautiful and unique artworks.

In rural NSW, our **Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)** program supported children on NDIS plans, and those requiring short-term interventions. The team continued to advocate for the needs of rural and remote communities and the delivery of NDIS services in the area.

In 2021-22 the ECI team worked with Necessity Kids to support the development of the therapy assistant model within the Bourke Public School and the Bourke District Children's Service. The introduction of the model allows staff to deliver supports during telehealth sessions, ensuring children with a disability or developmental delay receive timely access to improve outcomes.

This support is vital in rural communities where wait times for face-to-face NDIS services are extremely long. Families are also supported to access NDIS appointments via telehealth while their children are at school.



25 years of...



**MACKILLOP
EDUCATION**

So much more
than a school

Delivering alternative Education options

Our founders held a shared belief in the importance of education, a belief that lives on through MacKillop Education. Our group of schools and educational programs have continued to support young people disengaged from mainstream learning environments, throughout the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic deepened the vulnerabilities faced by young people in our programs, and MacKillop Education experienced a growing need for support. Our **MacKillop Education schools** in Geelong, Maidstone and Caulfield embodied their motto of being “so much more than a school” by remaining open throughout the lockdowns and providing vital stability for young people with learning challenges such as disability and trauma. Our outreach programs also adapted to students’ needs by delivering group programs online and wearing full PPE for individual sessions where online support was ineffective.

We maintained a strong focus on wellbeing and healing from trauma, which has been more important than ever during the pandemic. The **ReLATE model** is very much in action across all campuses and provides a solid foundation for supporting young people in education settings who have experienced trauma. We recognise that young people cannot learn unless they feel safe, so we prioritise providing safe and welcoming learning environments. This approach continues to drive increases in student wellbeing data, demonstrating the effectiveness of using trauma-informed practices.


Our Caulfield school held its inaugural retreat for parents and carers to strengthen their self-care practices. The retreat was attended by 12 mothers and grandmothers in Queenscliff, with overwhelmingly positive feedback received. It provided a much-needed opportunity to connect and reflect on many modes of self-care.

“ This space has been a wonderful gift we will carry with us until we can meet and connect again and share our stories. ”

Parent talking about retreat

In Geelong, students benefited from a Sporting Schools Grant which increased opportunities for physical activity within the curriculum and school holidays. Aboriginal students were supported with culturally appropriate mentoring and holiday programs thanks to our partnership with **Strong Brother Strong Sister**. Music continues to be a healing modality for Geelong students with rhythm being a key feature of our **music program**.

Students at Maidstone took part in diverse activities to support their wellbeing, from gardening to martial arts. **Garden therapy** has been a grounding activity for students to refocus their minds and bodies on purposeful tasks that promote calmness and positivity. The program also supports students’ readiness to transition to high school. **Martial arts therapy** has been transformative for many students, providing a new outlet for physical activity, while upholding core values like respect, patience, self-control, and integrity.



Student leadership initiatives continue to provide rich opportunities for student empowerment across our schools. Geelong's **Student Leader Program** gave young people a stronger voice and input into school events. Maidstone's Student Voice Committee has enabled students to actively shape their education by contributing to decision making processes, while the Student Pride Committee has been improving experiences for LGBTIQ+ students with a focus on pro-active programs, conversations and practices.

One size does not fit all, especially in MacKillop Education. Data-driven interventions form a key part of our strategy to support our students. Our team used research-based assessments to work with young people most at risk and inform professional development strategies accordingly. This tailored approach resulted in significant literacy improvements for students and a corresponding decline in challenging behaviour.

Our Geelong campus partnered with Melbourne University on the **In2School@school** pilot; a program aimed at increasing school attendance. The targeted intervention program and has been helping eight students since the start of 2022 to change attitudes of school refusal and increase attendance.

Our Caulfield school has been focused on establishing and strengthening their new school community after opening in April 2020. Whole school events to develop community and belonging such as Book Week, Mini Olympics and Who Dares Wins have been received with enthusiasm, along with dinners for parents and guardians each term and a Christmas market to engage the wider community.

“ I was in awe of what you have achieved in such a short time and what you have to offer our special students. You are all to be commended on the great work you are doing. ”

Mainstream school principal.

VCAL classes in Geelong expanded from 16 to 24 students, to meet growing demand and ensure students have access to the best vocational pathways. Our Caulfield campus commenced its first VCAL class, Certificate II in Kitchen Operations.

At the request of the Good Shepherd board, who hold very similar values to MacKillop, we are preparing to take over operations of Good Shepherd's **Waranara School** in Marrickville, Sydney. The school will move into to a new, larger premises in the next 12-18 months, at which point the official transition will occur, marking our first school in NSW. MacKillop has extensive experience delivering therapeutic and trauma-informed education and is well positioned to respond to the school's needs in these areas.

Our outreach programs enable students beyond our schools to access vital support to engage and reengage with education. Since its inception in 2019, demand for our innovative **Paw Pals Animal-Assisted Education** program has grown beyond measure. This year the service expanded into Geelong, growing the team to eight staff and 10 therapy dogs. The service is now moving into the Ballarat region, following the success of our Paw4Kids fundraising campaign.

School Focused Youth Service is our outreach program that supports vulnerable young people within mainstream schools to engage or reengage with learning. By strengthening relationships with schools and stakeholders, the service was able to provide support earlier to students in need and extend the length of group support sessions. These changes contributed to improved learning outcomes for vulnerable students. Targeted group sessions were delivered to all 11 priority schools, supporting 128 students at risk of disengaging from school in Melbourne's Western suburbs.

We continued to provide targeted education support to young people living in foster and residential care through our **Thrive** and **AccessEd** programs. This year 96 young people were supported by the programs to enhance their learning outcomes. Creative modalities such as art and music tutoring have been used to increase engagement with young people.



Helping Hugo to flourish at school

Before coming to MacKillop Education, Hugo* found it difficult to engage with groups of students in a classroom and socially at his mainstream school. With moments of physical escalation when he was overwhelmed or anxious, and his social and emotional skills shut down, it was clear to MacKillop Education staff that Hugo needed one-to-one support at school.

During his time at MacKillop Education, the school psychologist facilitated assessments which provided Hugo with strategies that helped him settle, learn and feel safe in the classroom.

It wasn't long before Hugo's attendance at school began to increase as school staff felt confident that he could mix positively with other students. Through regular emotional literacy sessions, Hugo uses his newfound

knowledge and understanding to improve his communication and interactions with staff and students.

Hugo has embraced teachings about Safety Plans and is now able to independently self-regulate, should he feel overwhelmed in the classroom. He also now shows empathy towards others, and often provides support when there has been disharmony.

"The staff at MacKillop Education Caulfield are extremely proud of the efforts Hugo has made at school and believe that he has great potential to continue to grow as a well-rounded individual," comments Margie Mutimer, Hugo's teacher.

It is anticipated that Hugo will transition to a mainstream high school in 2023.

*Name changed to protect privacy



Finding her mob

“ I took my shoes off and my feet were solid on the red sand. I started singing in language. I just remember my whole body buzzed up. It’s like I was flying. It’s like the ancestors were talking to me and reminding me to stay strong to my culture. ”

Growing up in care with no memories of a link to her mob, Emily Mancell approached our Heritage and Information Service as soon as she turned 18 to help look for answers to the questions she had about her cultural identity and her time in care.

Now 19 years old, Emily is part of a new generation of care leavers contacting MacKillop’s Heritage and Information Service for help to collate and decipher information about their background.

Emily says working with MacKillop’s Heritage team has helped her to find and interpret the records about her early life, and better understand their meaning. This process underlines the importance of case workers being mindful that all the information they record today will have a huge impact on the young person receiving it, and to be cognisant of this when writing their case notes.

Emily is still looking for information about her mob, knowing that “everything will fall into place when a deep connection to my culture is established” and this connection will give her the belonging, strength and confidence for a bright future.



25 years of...

Supporting care leavers to access their records

Our Heritage and Information Service also marks its 25th Anniversary this year. It's one of MacKillop's longest running programs, and an integral part of our commitment to supporting people who have spent time in care.

In this time, almost 14,000 people have been supported to access their own records, or records of family members who had previously been in care. In the last year alone, we received 1,101 requests for records, an average of 21 requests each week. Enquiry numbers were boosted after the Heritage and Information Centre Manager, Jenny Glare, featured in an episode of the SBS program, *Who Do You Think You Are?*

The program demonstrates the importance of the sensitive release of records which has been pioneered at MacKillop by Jenny and the Heritage team. As the subject of the program, broadcaster Myf Warhurst was seeking information on her family ancestry and discovered that a relative had been in the St Vincent de Paul Girls' Orphanage, with records remaining in the care of MacKillop's Heritage Team.

Learning about the life of her ancestor was an emotional process for Myf and Jenny gently and sensitively helped her to interpret the reports contained in the records. The program gave us a glimpse of the work the Heritage team do on an almost daily basis to support people with information that can be confronting and counter to what they believed to be their past truth.

The role of the Heritage and Information team has grown and evolved over the years, and they are currently supporting a new cohort of people who are enquiring about records after undertaking DNA ancestry tests. This again calls

on the sensitivity and empathetic skills of the team, as frequently people are unprepared for how information contained in the records may impact them. They may have received a name as a match, discovered that person was previously in care with one of our founding agencies and come to the Heritage team for further information. The recent rise in popularity of ancestry searches, and the advance in forensic DNA is leading a new group of people seeking information on their past and who they are to the Heritage Centre.

Young people with a recent care history have also started to access their records through the Heritage and Information Centre. This presents a different challenge to the team, not only because of the volume of records that may apply but also because young people are seeking information about their very recent past and information is not always recorded or presented in a sensitive way. Sitting with young people who are reading their notes for the first time can be confronting and it is driving the Heritage team to look for ways to educate child protection, youth workers and residential care staff on how the information they are recording will be received by the young person reading their own life story notes.

Jenny Glare is a noted expert in the recording and release of records, and she has continued to share her knowledge, taking part in training for the Institute of Sisters of Mercy Archivists this year. She also joined our CEO, Dr Robyn Miller, in giving evidence to the Inquiry into Responses to Historical Forced Adoptions in Victoria, in recognition of her vast knowledge about historical records. This knowledge, gained over the last 25 years of record maintenance and release at MacKillop, will continue to shape and improve record keeping into the future for young people in care.



Creating a safe space

Passionate about cultural best practice, awareness and responsiveness, Simangaliso Brenda Nyoni, was drawn to MacKillop's new role of Cultural Advisor Coordinator which seeks to build on the cultural knowledge and expertise of our culturally and linguistically diverse staff and young people in out of home care.

Alongside her role as Cultural Advisor Coordinator, Simangaliso Brenda is also a Principal Practitioner and uses her wealth of experience in social work and the trauma field to support her new role.

"I have established a good position for this role as I already speak regularly to case managers, have developed good relationships and have made myself visible in that space."

"My counselling background allows me to have rich and deep conversations with staff and clients and my own lived experience affords me the curiosity to ask the right questions as well as navigate existing systems and policies for better change to ensure there are no gaps or blindspots."

Looking to influence best practice in cultural practice within the sector, Simangaliso Brenda hopes to continue to build on cultural safety for young people and staff within MacKillop.

"I look forward to creating change and seeing young people have positive outcomes, achieving their hopes and dreams, and being the best version of themselves outside of the trauma they have experienced."

Our People

An organisation like MacKillop Family Services is defined by its people, and we are fortunate to have a remarkable workforce, which has thrived in one of the most challenging years in our 25-year history.

This year, we were particularly in awe of the resilience demonstrated by staff during the devastating floods in northern and metropolitan New South Wales early in the year. Despite many staff being impacted themselves, they continued to show up day after day to support the children, young people and families they care for.

Our staff also continued to be impacted by the challenges of COVID-19. If true character is best revealed in times of adversity, the character of our staff is one of care, compassion and commitment. From 'MacKillop's Got Talent' evenings that showcased the talents of our young people and staff, to a MacKillop Live! Online music event to lift spirits, staff found innovative ways to stay connected and support each other.

The results of this were evident in our **Staff Engagement Survey**. Despite being conducted in early 2022, in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, the survey revealed the highest level of engagement in MacKillop's history, and a "Culture of Success" (as defined by independent consultant, BPA Analytics).

Key to this result is a commitment to empowering staff to drive cultural change within the organisation, and nowhere was this more evident than in the formation of the **MacKillop Pride group**. This group has helped to facilitate inclusive practice that is safe, welcoming, responsive and understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of LGBTIQ+ members of our communities, and was instrumental in our journey towards **Rainbow Tick accreditation**.

Workplace safety continues to be a high priority, and in 2022 we introduced a number of new initiatives to enhance the quality of our practice and staff safety, including **Communities of Practice** to share case studies of great practice, and **Colloquia** to listen to the voice of clients. We were pleased to see a significant reduction

in Occupational Violence over the year, and WorkCover claims have reduced by 42%, along with incident rates which are at 10-year lows. Despite these pleasing results, managing aggression continues to be one of our key challenges, and we will continue to focus on driving these incidents down in the year ahead.

We are also focused on staff wellbeing, and introduced two noteworthy initiatives in this regard this year. **The Health in Preconception, Pregnancy and Postpartum (HiPPP) Portal** was a collaboration between MacKillop staff and Monash University and provides useful information and resources to staff members preparing to start a family. We also delivered **Mental Health First Aid Training**, which helps staff identify psychosocial factors associated with mental health and workforce fatigue and manage behaviours at early presentation. We continued to offer **EMDR therapy** to staff who had been involved in workplace incidents. This has been welcomed by staff, and supported them to be able to return to work promptly after critical incidents.

Like many organisations, we are facing challenges in staff recruitment and retention. This year we focused on a number of initiatives to address these challenges.

A key recruitment focus was strengthening our **student placement program**, hosting over 70 students from over 20 universities and tertiary institutions, accommodating various disciplines from Cert IV, Diploma, Bachelor, Masters and PhD students. We also launched a **Leadership Development Framework** to support leaders to maintain our culture of success, and ensure staff feel supported. In 2023, we will launch a **Graduate Program** which will provide a pathway for new Social Workers and Psychology graduates to work at MacKillop.

Finally, we developed our **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy** to better engage, support and encourage Aboriginal people to apply for roles, and feel supported in their roles. This is critically important, given the importance of culture in helping Aboriginal people to heal from trauma, and is being shaped by our newly-established **Aboriginal Staff Network**, which will help continue to embed cultural safety across the organisation.

Awards: Celebrating Success

The outcomes we support children, young people and families to achieve have been recognised in sector awards across the country, with unprecedented success in the number of awards received by MacKillop staff, carers and teams.

Our staff, carers, volunteers, young people and families are also celebrated in our own MacKillop Excellence Awards. These awards recognise an outstanding commitment to our values, and excellence in practice.

MacKillop Excellence Awards

Catherine McAuley Award for excellence by a carer:

Rachel Wilding (Metro Sydney) and
Andrew Stuart (Metro Sydney)

Catherine McAuley Award for excellence by a volunteer:

Suzanne Paul
(Barwon)

Edmund Rice Award for excellence in practice by any permanent member of staff:

Treena Ellis
(Western NSW)

Edmund Rice Award for excellence in practice by a team:

Balranald Disability Services team
(Western NSW)

Mary MacKillop Award for Courage in Life (family):

Niesha Nelson
(Darwin)

Mary MacKillop Award for Courage in Life (young person):

Jamie Murphy
(MacKillop Education, Geelong)

Gerard Jones Award:

Michelle Brady (Western NSW)
and Brittini Davies (Metro Sydney)

Victorian Protecting Children Awards

Robin Clark Making a Difference Award:

COVID-19 Emergency Response for
Child and Young People (CERCY)

Carer Award:

Toni and Paul Gauntlett

CREATE Positive Impacts Award:

Kellie Addicoat

Leaving a Legacy Award:

Gerard Jones

Resi Rocks Awards

Leadership Award:

Sarah Ryan

Carer Award:

Mark Wilkins

Healing Matters Awards

First place:

Coppards Road (Barwon)

Third place:

Settlement Road (Barwon)

Highly Commended:

Helen House (Barwon) and Morgan House
(Eastern metro)

Resilient Australia Awards (NSW)

Mental Health and Wellbeing Award:

Stormbirds

The Gerard Jones Sanctuary in Action Award recognises staff or teams who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to trauma-informed care, supported Sanctuary practice within their program, demonstrated an understanding of culture as healing in their work, and lived the Sanctuary commitments in their daily practice.

We are pleased to introduce the recipients of this inaugural award.

Michelle Brady

Youth Case Worker, Western NSW

Michelle has dedicated many years to supporting children and young people in Rural NSW as a Youth Case Worker. She is committed to Sanctuary in all she does, from being a valued, long-term member of the Sanctuary Core Team, to using Sanctuary language and tools to support young people to identify the effects of past trauma.

Michelle lives Sanctuary and trauma-informed care through all her work, often going above and beyond in support of strong and safe relationships.

Michelle was critical in ensuring the collaboration of local Aboriginal Elders at the Reconciliation Action Plan consultation activities and was critical in facilitating a genuine and open conversation. Michelle is committed to cultural safety and has redefined the use of Sanctuary tools to ensure cultural appropriateness and safety for Aboriginal people.

Brittni Davies

Coordinator Youth and Families, Metro Sydney

Brittni embodies Sanctuary in all she does, she is committed to embedding Sanctuary and inspires others to champion and action Sanctuary in everyday practice. Brittni is the holder of hope, sharing her passion to build trust and motivation in those around her.

The residential houses that Brittni works with, have 'Sanctuary in the carpet'. She has supported her team to understand and apply Sanctuary in practical and meaningful ways, with psychoeducation part of the daily routine.

Brittni's commitment to social responsibility sees her generously provide support where needed and she has an unmatched determination to deepen Sanctuary practice wherever she can. For many people, when they think of Sanctuary, they think of Brittni.



Vale Gerard Jones

28 May 1955 - 25 Jan 2022

On Tuesday 25 January, Gerard Jones, former Deputy CEO of MacKillop Family Services, died peacefully at home surrounded by his loved ones. Gerard touched the lives of many people, and many were strengthened by his support and mentoring. His leadership, based on compassion and respect for all people, inspired MacKillop to invest in the Sanctuary model, and he remained a champion of Sanctuary, well beyond his retirement in 2019.

Gerard was also instrumental in MacKillop forming relationships with the Aboriginal communities in Western Australia which led to our growth in the Pilbara and laid the foundations for the partnerships we now hold with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations across the country.

He always had a passion for our MacKillop schools and education programs. He led the redevelopment and growth of our MacKillop schools and the trauma-informed approach to education which is now known as ReLATE. He championed access to education services for children and young people in out of home care unfailingly throughout his career.

Gerard has left a lasting legacy that has improved the lives of our most vulnerable children, young people and families and his passion to advocate for their human rights was remarkable. There is no doubt that the warmth and special way that Gerard engaged with people touched many hearts and has left a legacy. His humour and his mentorship of his colleagues, and love for the children and families we care for, was always at the heart of everything he did.

We therefore accepted his family's invitation to establish an annual Award in his honour this year - the Gerard Jones Sanctuary in Action Award, for excellence in implementing the Sanctuary model by a team or member of staff.

Vale Gerard. Your impact lives on.

Governance

Strong governance has been at the core of our organisation since we formed 25 years ago. Through strong governance, we can ensure an ongoing child-focused culture driven by quality outcomes.

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; 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 Board

Brian Keane
Chair

Robyn Fry
Deputy Chair

Vicki Clark OAM
(commenced 1 Oct 2021)

Matthew den Elzen
(resigned 17 Nov 2021)

Fiona Hastings
(commenced 24 Nov 2021)

Dr Linda Mellors

Anita Mueller

John Sutherland

Kerry Brettell
Deputy Chair
(resigned 17 Nov 2021)

David Beaver

Elizabeth Clear
(commenced 1 Oct 2021)

Janet Farrow OAM
(commenced 1 Oct 2021)

Peter Lavis
(commenced 1 Oct 2021)

Francis Moore

Prof Peter Steane

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.

Prior to this date there were three Members of MacKillop, being representatives of the three founding religious orders of MacKillop – the Sisters of St Joseph, Sisters of Mercy and Christian Brothers. These Members were:

Sr Elizabeth Moloney rsm, Sisters of Mercy
Sr Mary Davis rsj, Sisters of St Joseph
Br Gerard Brady cfc, Christian Brothers

The change in membership followed a decision by the three founding congregations to transfer governance of MacKillop to a lay leadership structure, being a Ministerial Public Juridic Person (PJP) known as Mercy Ministry Companions (which is sponsored by the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia & Papua New Guinea).

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 2022.

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

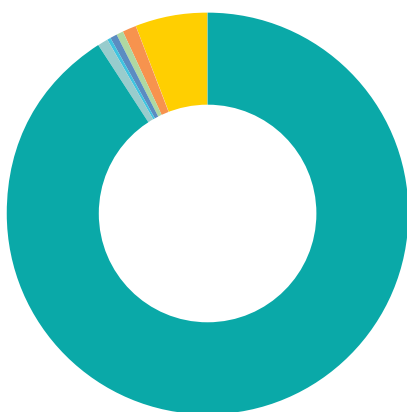
MacKillop recorded a gain from ordinary operating activities of \$22,499,545 (2021: \$149,983). Other income from non-ordinary activities, such as bequests, totals \$319,759 (2021: \$131,655), resulting in a net gain for the year of \$22,819,304 (2021: \$281,638).

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

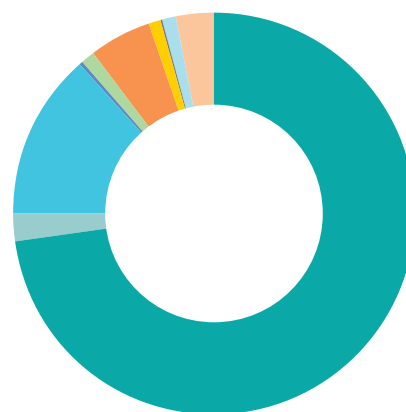
its financial assets, which is yet to be realised. After taking into account the loss in revaluation of financial assets for the year of \$2,551,136, the resulting total comprehensive income gain for the year is \$20,268,168 (2021: \$3,294,224).

Included in the comprehensive gain for the year of \$20,268,168 is a Trust transfer of \$8,439,098, a property sale of \$1,546,443 and income of \$8,505,321 which are grants and other income the organisation has made a commitment to expend in future years. Taking these matters into account, the remaining comprehensive gain for the year was \$1,777,306.

Prior year comparative figures have been reduced by \$1,173,289 from what was reported last year, which is the asset write down in accordance with AASB 138.



Revenue	2022	2021
Government grants	\$217,308,558	\$170,237,529
Enterprise income	\$2,043,750	\$2,474,817
Bequests	\$319,759	\$131,655
Trust funds	\$1,117,485	\$947,276
Donations/fundraising	\$1,369,475	\$1,347,469
Investment income	\$2,752,697	\$1,248,792
Other income, includes transfer of assets from the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, WorkCover recoveries, profit on sale of properties & vehicles and other minor income	\$13,722,991	\$3,717,971
Total	\$238,634,715	\$180,105,509



Expenses	2022	2021
Employee benefits	\$157,319,768	\$125,370,761
Depreciation and amortisation	\$4,965,017	\$4,352,960
Client expenses	\$28,712,902	\$25,901,313
Fundraising and volunteers	\$585,657	\$468,214
Occupancy	\$2,187,387	\$2,121,768
Property maintenance and equipment	\$11,216,525	\$10,783,109
Motor vehicles	\$2,068,025	\$1,683,184
Audit and legal	\$151,911	\$149,834
Administration	\$2,167,785	\$2,380,506
Other expenses, includes business operation and finance costs, consultancies and depreciation on 'Right of Use' assets	\$6,440,434	\$6,612,222
Total	\$215,815,411	\$179,823,871

A portrait of Dr. Angela Rutherford, an older woman with short white hair, wearing red-rimmed glasses, a blue cardigan, and a colorful beaded necklace. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting.

Support both now and into the future

"I decided to leave a gift in my will because I think the flexibility provided by a pot of money that can be freely invested where the need is greatest is very valuable for an organisation with such a strong role as MacKillop Family Services," said Dr Angela Rutherford.

With a family connection to the Josephite Nuns, Angela has been a committed donor for nearly 20 years. She says one of the things she finds impressive about MacKillop is its commitment to gathering evidence to inform decisions on service delivery.

"In my professional life as a GP, I have seen firsthand the importance of using evidence and feedback to adjust and improve programs. I am impressed by the fact that not

only do MacKillop's programs do immediate good for the community, but they are subject to rigorous feedback and academic research and evaluation."

Angela's wish for her bequest is to ensure all children are getting the best care possible and to be encouraged to reach their potential. "We're all aware that some children have overwhelming difficulties and sometimes a small intervention at the right time can make a big difference," she said.

With the support of her family, Angela and her husband are grateful to be able to give back to the community and are proud to support MacKillop now and into the future.

Community Support

In our 25-year history MacKillop's approach has always been to establish meaningful relationships in the communities where we work. This includes with the many individuals, schools, parishes, community groups, businesses and trusts and foundations who partner with us to make our work possible.

We're constantly inspired by our community of passionate supporters, who believe in and trust the work we are doing with children, young people and families. Thanks to the generosity of so many, with a combined total raised almost \$2.8million, 2021/22 was our most impactful year yet. We were able to raise more money, make a real difference, and change more lives than ever before.

Some of the highlights of the year included receiving multi-year funding from the Anthony Costa Foundation to support Aboriginal children and young people living in out of home care with culturally safe and appropriate mentoring opportunities in partnership with **Strong Brother Strong Sister** (see case study on p11). MacKillop is deeply committed to Aboriginal self-determination and we know the best outcomes for Aboriginal children occur when we create pathways for our young people to connect, know and celebrate their culture, with the goal of striving for better life outcomes.

With significant philanthropic support received this year from the R.M. Ansett Trust and VCF George Perry Fund, managed by Equity Trustees, and the Scanlon Foundation - we were able to establish a **Cultural Leadership in Out of Home Care project** to ensure we are delivering culturally-responsive care to the 40% of the young people in our residential care program who come from culturally diverse backgrounds (migrants and refugees).

To improve our foster carers wellbeing and retention, we are grateful to the Fred P Archer Charitable Trust (Perpetual Trustees) for funding a program to reduce the number of carers leaving the system each year, by supporting them to process the grief and sense of loss that often accompanies the moment a child or young person leaves their care.

Education support has been made possible by the Mazda Foundation, who funded a **phonics-based literacy** program across all three MacKillop Education schools. One of the most profound impacts of school lockdowns has been a stark reduction in literacy levels, and to address this issue, MacKillop educators are undertaking training in an evidence-based phonic learning system that offers a fast, effective intervention for students who have fallen behind in their reading and spelling.

Thanks to the generosity of the community a record breaking \$410,000 was raised in support of the **Paw Pals** program, which helps children to heal and engage in education through the use of therapy dogs. We are hugely grateful to the Petspiration Foundation, our campaign partner, who matched donations to the value of \$100,000.

We extend this gratitude to all of our matching partners who supported us again this year, including Queensland Community Foundation and Gaudry Foundation and our new matching partners KLC Recruitment, Integrated Therapeutic Care (ITC) - Agency staff, Polished Man and the Catholic Development Fund. Together with a significant grant from the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Foundation, 2022 will see the launch of the Paw Pals program in Ballarat, enabling us to reach even more children across Victoria who are struggling with school.

On the schools front, this year we continued to build our relationship with school communities with a rejuvenated **social justice workshop** program aimed at secondary student leaders. The workshops outline the issues faced by marginalised children and families here in Australia through a social justice lens, and the role of MacKillop in supporting and bettering their rights. The workshops inspired the students to develop ideas about how they can play a role in enabling hopeful futures for those in our communities who are struggling with challenges through no fault of their own, and galvanised them to organise fundraising events.

In the year ahead, we look forward to deepening our engagement with the communities in which we work, and we also plan to launch a **major giving** program and a **corporate partnership** program, to provide further opportunities for people to collaborate with us to enhance our impact.

Our Supporters

Bequests

Estate of Margaret Conway
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
Estate of Michael Laurence Hyland
The William and Mary Ievers and Sons Maintenance Fund
Estate of Denis Klein
Estate of Patrick Peter Lacey
Estate of James McConnell Kerr
Estate of Patrick J McMahon
Estate of Edward O'Connell
Estate of John O'Loughlin
Estate of Leo Patrick Salter
Estate of John Michael Toohey
Estate of Ronald White

Major Individual Supporters

Mr Richard Aldridge
Mrs Rita Andre
Mrs Irene Ash
Martin Ashe
Mr Geoffrey & Mrs Baker
Mr John & Mrs Ellen Barnes
Mrs Suzanne & Mr David Beaver
Mr Graeme Blair
Mr Graeme Boden
Ms Therese Bradshaw
Mrs Patricia Brouwer
Mr Leo Browne
Mr Michael & Mrs Joan Bucknell
Mr Terry Cahill
Mr Neil Cameron
Mr Jeffrey & Mrs Judi Camilleri
Mr Paul Cannon
Ms Diane Carmody
Mrs Rose-Mary Cassin
Mr Peter Cesca
Mrs Christl Commins
Mr Kevin Cosgrave
Mr Francis Curtis

Mr Luke Duane
Sr Josephine Dubiel rsj
Mrs Anne Duck
Dr John Dwyer QC
Ms Carmel Edwards
Mr Michael Fenton
Ms Fiona Fisher
Mrs Paula Fox
Dr Prudence Francis
Mr William Frilay
Mr Raff Gangi
Mrs Jan Gladman
Ms Jenny Glare
Mrs Freda Gleeson
Mrs Margaret Grattan
Terry
Mrs Alayne Guerin
Mr Leslie Hardiman
Ms Susan Harris AM
Mrs Jo-Anne Harrison
Mrs Carole & Mr Leo Hart
Mr David Healy
Mr Raymond Healy
Mrs Patsy Heffernan
Mr Peter & Mrs Francene Howe
Mr Stephen Howlett
Greg Johnson
Mr Terry Jordan
Ms Maree Keating
Mrs Monica Knight
Mr John Lamberth
Ms Annmarie Lanteri
Mr Warren Larsen
Mr Lawrence Lavelle AM
Mr Peter Lewinski
Tom Ligeti
Mr Paul & Mrs Patricia Lightfoot
Mrs Helen Livsey
Elizabeth Loughnan
Mr Kevin Luscombe AM & Mrs Barbara Luscombe
Mrs Priscilla Mack
Mrs Nell MacQueen
Mr Angelo Maggiotto
Mr Stewart & Mrs Brygyda Maiden

Ms Florencia Marcella
Brian Marshall
Ms Althea Marvin
Ms Noreen & Mr Jim McCarthy
Mrs Gabrielle McDonagh
Mr Douglas McKay
Anne McKenna
Dr Linda Mellors
Dr Robyn Miller
Mr Eric Morgan
Mr Paul Muller
Mrs Marie Nailon
Mr Greg Noonan
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Dr Daniel O'Connor
Mr John Olle
Mr Russell Peters
Mrs Anne & Mr A Prowse
Mrs Janet Pruden
Mr John Ralph AC & Mrs Barbara Ralph
Emile Rochman
Mr Peter Rogan & Mrs Susan Rogan
Ms Eileen Rourke
Dr Angela Rutherford
Mr Tony & Mrs Elda Schiavello
Ms Jenny Scovell
Mrs Christine Sellar
Ms Helen Shek
The Hon Frank & Mrs Ann Shelton
Mr Richard & Mrs Joan Smith
Mrs Cisca Spencer
Mrs Sally Spencer
Mr Niel Spitzer
Mr Francis Sullivan
Mr Bernard Sweeney
Ian Tappe
Mr Carlo Tatasciore & Mrs Leah Tatasciore
Ms Annette Tynan
Joanne Van Buuren
Mr Peter Ward
Ms Patricia Watt
Mrs Patricia Webb
Mr Denis Wheelahan
Kylie White

Mr Andrew Whitehead

Mr Robert Williams

Sr Joan Wilson rsm

Ms Rema Winikur

Mrs Barbara Wouters

Anonymous - 34

Corporate and Community Supporters

4 Dimensions Building Contractors

Australian Red Cross -
Alstonville Branch

Betty Radford Discretionary Trust

Bob Stewart of Kew

Brophy Family and Youth Services

Caroline Chisholm Catholic College

Catholic Development Fund

Friends and Family of Margaret Lee

Gento Trust

Institute of Sisters of Mercy of
Australia & PNG

Kehilat Nitzan Synagogue

Ken & Wilma Strickland Fund

KLC Recruitment Pty Ltd

Kolbe Catholic College

Lions Club of Waverley Inc.

Loyola College

Mulhot Foundation Ltd

Petspiration Foundation formerly
PETstock Assist

Polished Man

Queens Park Golf Club Inc

Robert & Irene Gilbert Family Trust

St Kevin's College - Glendalough
(Junior School Campus)

Sunshine Magistrates Court

The Sparrow Foundation

Think Wink Pty Ltd

Toorak Ecumenical Churches
Opportunity Shop

In-kind Support

Ms Kalpana Ramani

APH Holding

Avila College

Aware Health

Brighton Grammar School

Iona College Geelong

Optometry Australia

Parade College

Salesian College

St Joseph's College Geelong

Toorak Ecumenical Movement
and Food for Friends

Trust and Foundations

RM Ansett Trust, managed by
Equity Trustees

The Fred P Archer Charitable Trust,
managed by Perpetual

Beswick Family Fund

Catholic Diocese of Ballarat
Foundation

Anthony Costa Foundation

The Craighill Bequest, managed by
Equity Trustees

The Danks Trust

Dimmick Charitable Trust

Gaudry Foundation

Give Where You Live Foundation

The Flora & Frank Leith
Charitable Trust

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation -
Senator Tadeusz Kobylanski Fund

Mazda Foundation

VCF George Perry Fund,
managed by Equity Trustees

Pethard Tarax Charitable Trust

Queensland Community
Foundation's Gordon Homes for
Boys and Girls Inc. Trust Fund

The Ross Trust

Scanlon Foundation

Otto and Elizabeth Schumacher
Trust, managed by Equity Trustees

Waratah Education Foundation

Westpac - Safer Children, Safer
Communities

Joe White Bequest

Government

Commonwealth Funding

Department of Social Services

Department of Education
Employment and Workplace
Relations (DEEWR)

Department of Health -
Primary Health Networks (PHNs)

Prime Minister and Cabinet

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Launch Transition Agency

ACT Government

Community Services Directorate

NSW Government

Department of Health -
NSW Kids and Families

Department of Communities
and Justice

Department of Industries

Department of Education

Northern Territory Government

Territory Families, Housing and
Communities

Western Australia Government

Department of Communities

Victorian Government

Department of Families, Fairness
and Housing (DFFH)

Department of Education
and Training

Ambassadors

Lara Shannon

Sam Docherty

Christie Whelan Browne

Cass Dunn

Allira Potter

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

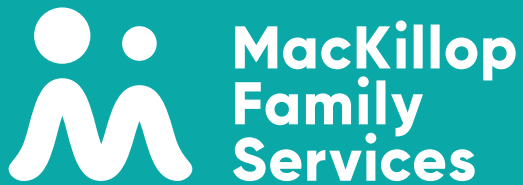
We'd love to share with you our latest news, initiatives, community events and some of the great differences our teams are making to those in need.

Hear more from us:

-  Sign up for our e-newsletter at mackillop.org.au
-  Facebook /[mackillopfamilys](https://facebook.com/mackillopfamilys)
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Victoria

237 Cecil Street
South Melbourne VIC 3205
(03) 9699 9177
enquiry@mackillop.org.au

New South Wales & Australian Capital Territory

Level 1, 38 Prince Street
Blacktown NSW 2148
(02) 8881 4800
nsw@mackillop.org.au

Western Australia

147-149 Colin Street
West Perth WA 6005
(08) 9250 1114
wa@mackillop.org.au

Northern Territory

3/4 Shepherd St
Darwin NT 0800
(08) 9160 4650
nt@mackillop.org.au



MacKillop Family Services Limited is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) as a company limited by guarantee (ABN 79 078 299 288, CAN 078 299 288). We trade under the name MacKillop Family Services and are subject to the MacKillop Family Services Act 1998 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act 2012.

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