

It's about you. Always!
Communities@Work

creating better futures

Annual Report 2013-14



...for our clients

and our organisation



It's about you. Always!
Communities@Work

Our Vision

A resilient and socially inclusive community that cares for the well-being of all.

Our Mission

To deliver quality community services of social value and practical benefit.

Our Values

Trust, Integrity and Transparency:

We earn the confidence of the community by embedding these qualities throughout Communities@Work.

Respect for All:

We respect everyone we deal with, care about everyone in the community and value difference and diversity.

Flexibility and Responsiveness:

We are adaptive and agile in pursuing the vision of Communities@Work, with a proactive approach to change and progress.

Quality and Innovation:

We are committed to excellent service delivery, underpinned by continuous improvement and innovation.

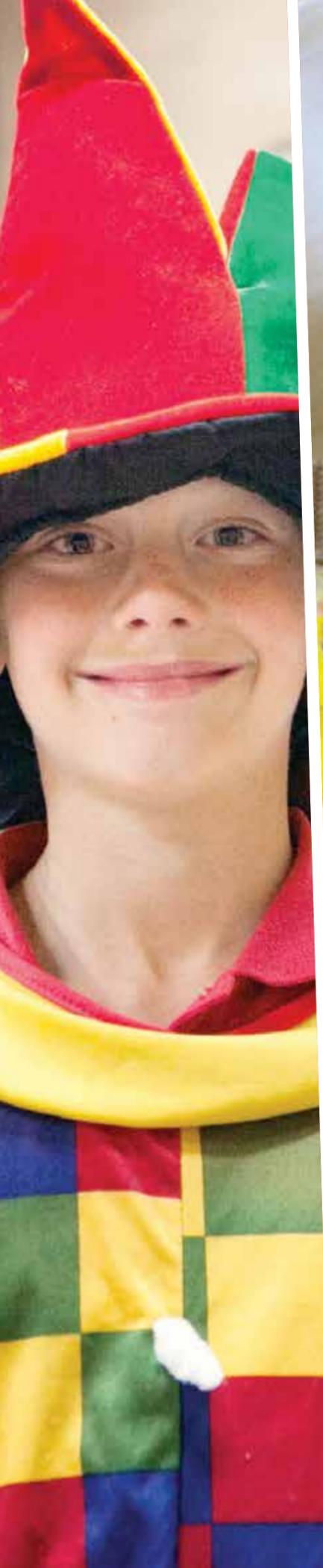
Affordability and Sustainability:

We ensure our services are relevant and appropriate as we build our capacity for a sustainable future.



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From the Chair

On behalf of the Board and management team, I have pleasure in presenting Communities@Work's Annual Report for the 2013-14 financial year.

The past year has been characterised by significant evolution and opportunity for the organisation. The merger of Communities@Work with the Gungahlin Regional Community Service on 1 July 2013 provided for the expansion of Communities@Work's services in the rapidly growing Gungahlin region. At the same time, major reforms in the children's services, disability and seniors sectors have resulted in substantial changes in the organisation's operating environment and created opportunities for the further development of high quality, client-centred services.

In response to emerging community needs and evolving policy settings, the Board has focussed on building a sustainable future for Communities@Work through the development of its *Strategic Intent 2014-16*. This plan is based on a framework which focusses on the needs of clients for the ongoing development of the organisation's services (see Figure 1 opposite) and articulates the nature of its resources, programs and geographic reach going forward. It also highlights key strategic themes and a model for balancing sound business acumen with empathy for those in need.

Communities@Work has embraced a highly professional, innovative and progressive culture which will ensure that it remains at the forefront of new approaches in the development and implementation of quality community services which have significant social value and practical benefit. Its values are fundamental in gaining the trust and support of the community it serves and it is committed to ensuring that every client is treated with respect and dignity.

I would like to thank all Board members for their dedication and skills in providing sound governance and laying the foundations for strong organisational performance. I would also like to thank our CEO Lynne Harwood and the executive team for their inspirational leadership, but most of all I wish to acknowledge the passionate staff and volunteers of Communities@Work for their wonderful achievements in serving the community.

I look forward with confidence to the year ahead as Communities@Work continues to build on the resources and expertise required to create an environment that cares for the well-being of all in our community.



Archie Tsirimokos
Chair



“ The past year has been characterised by significant evolution and opportunity for the organisation. ”

Figure 1: Client Centred Framework



From the CEO

“...Communities@Work is now positioned to serve the whole of the Australian Capital Territory across all program areas...”

As Communities@Work continues to respond to the needs of the Canberra community and beyond, its innovative culture and preparedness to embrace change is a driving force behind its success.

Over the past year, substantial effort has been devoted to expanding services in new growth regions, ensuring all programs are placed on a sustainable footing, upgrading our facilities, implementing best practice policies and procedures, enhancing our education and training capacity and preparing the organisation for significant policy reforms impacting on the community sector.

Following the merger of Communities@Work with the Gungahlin Regional Community Service in July 2013, the geographic reach of the organisation has expanded considerably. Communities@Work is now positioned to serve the whole of the Australian Capital Territory across all program areas and is also exploring the scope of delivering more services to clients within the Greater Capital Region.

Consistent with the release of Communities@Work's *Strategic Intent 2014-16*, the organisation's operations are grounded on a highly professional approach to program development and implementation. Each program area is required to develop annual business plans to drive their day-to-day operations. As illustrated by Figure 2 opposite, these plans provide detailed information on each program's rationale (program logic), key performance indicators, budget and short and long term priorities.

In addition, we have adopted an ISO Quality Management System to ensure that all our management processes are based on best-practice policies, on-going risk assessment and continuous improvement processes. This approach is based on a firm belief that our vision, mission and values must be backed up by strong internal processes which are fundamental to our future sustainability and success.

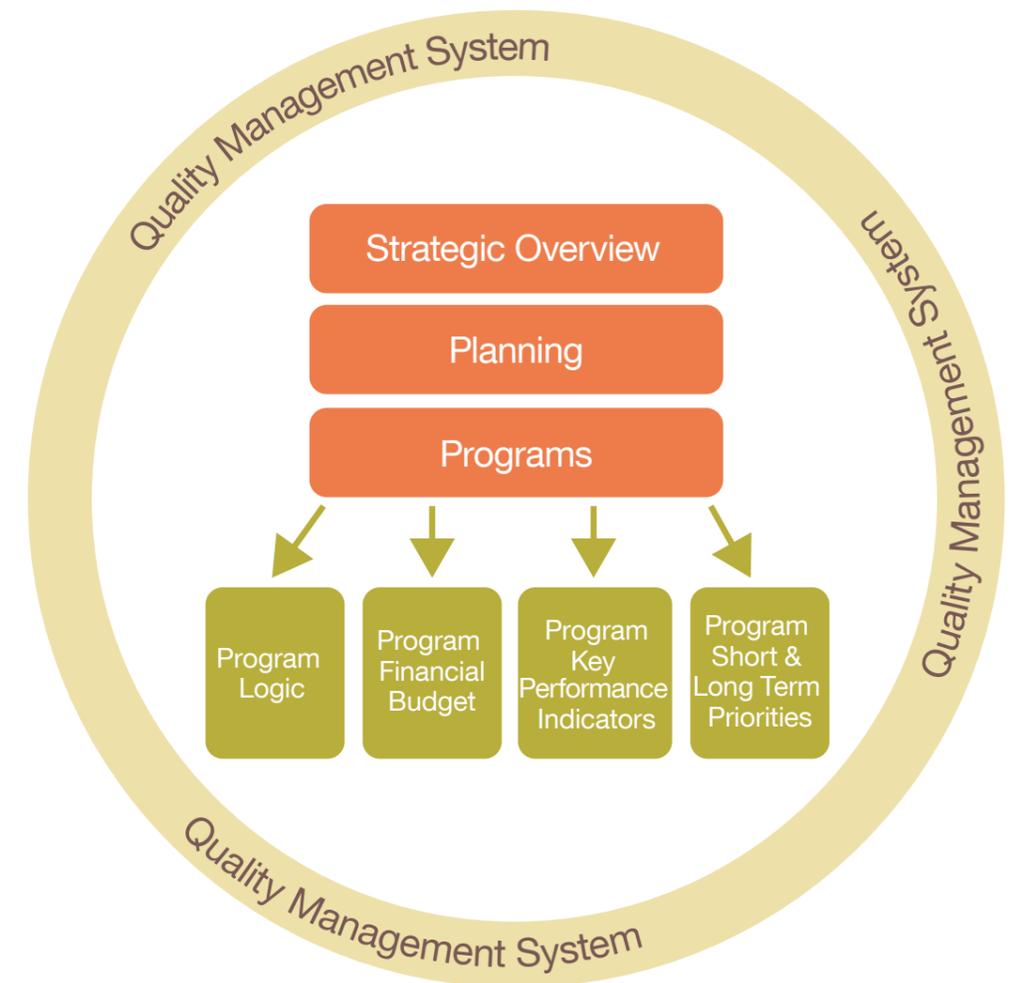
I wish to thank the Board for its outstanding governance and all our staff and volunteers for their dedicated commitment to delivering quality services to the community. I am also grateful for the support of our many partners who share our vision and augment our endeavours.

It is a privilege to lead this organisation and to witness the positive impact it is having on the well-being of many people in the community.

L. Harwood

Lynne Harwood
Chief Executive Officer

Figure 2: Business Plan Model



Board of Directors



From left to right:

Archie Tsirimokos
Chair
 Managing Partner
 Meyer Vandenberg
 Lawyers

John Runko
Director
 Chief Executive
 Officer
 Independent
 Property Group

Gail Kinsella
Treasurer
 Principal
 Kinsella Partners
 Chartered
 Accountants

Lynne Harwood
Company Secretary
 Chief Executive
 Officer
 Communities@Work

Mike Sullivan
Director
 Consultant

Caron Egle
Director
 Managing Director
 SAGE Thinking

John Nicholl
Vice Chair
 Principal Lawyer
 Nicholl & Co
 Lawyers

Ayesha Razzaq
Director
 General Manager
 ActewAGL Retail

Clinton White
Director
 Senior Adviser
 Vicki Dunne MLA
 ACT Legislative
 Assembly

Eoghan O'Byrne
Director
 General Manager
 Canberra FM Radio

The Future Road Map



One of Communities@Work's key values is to be adaptive and agile in pursuing its vision by adopting a proactive approach to change and progress. We confidently embrace reform and adjust to new operating environments in a flexible and responsive manner. While change can sometimes bring challenges, it can also create exciting new opportunities.

We are well positioned to develop and shape our services to meet the emerging needs of our clients over the coming years. In particular, we will:

- * construct a new multi-purpose community facility in Holder which will provide a central location for the delivery of community services to clients in the ACT and beyond;
- * ensure that rigorous research and credible data provide a sound basis for informed and optimal decision making;
- * ensure that all programs are fully integrated and based on sustainable financial models to help realise efficiencies and deliver holistic services to clients;
- * seek to achieve International Standard Organisation certification of our quality management system;

- * explore options for sustainable social enterprises that provide meaningful employment opportunities for disadvantaged people and have the potential to generate revenue streams;
- * strengthen the capacity and sophistication of our fundraising activities for our charitable programs;
- * seek to expand our geographic reach within the Greater Capital Region, consistent with our capacity to provide improved services to more and more people;
- * strengthen connections with, and develop further, our valued volunteer resource base;
- * continue to enhance the qualifications and skills of all employees through relevant educational programs and professional development opportunities;
- * strengthen our client-centred approach to the delivery of services for people with a disability, consistent with the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme;
- * develop a client-focussed and sustainable business model for transition from the National Home and Community Care Program to the Commonwealth Home Support Program and the introduction of consumer-directed care;
- * consider the implications of the national review of community transport for the delivery of community transport services;
- * aim to exceed the National Quality Standards in child care and education by continuing to develop the skills of our child care educators and invest in first class facilities;
- * carefully consider the best operational model for our family day care scheme in the absence of future national funding arrangements;
- * consider opportunities for broadening and strengthening our partnerships with schools which host our school age care programs; and
- * forge productive partnerships with other individuals, organisations and businesses that are aligned with our strategic intent and can add value to our endeavours.





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CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**IN 2013-14, OUR
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
PROVIDED SERVICES TO**

**5,318
CHILDREN**

Early Education and Care



(Abacus Child Care and Education Centre)



(Illoura Child Care and Education Centre)

Communities@Work's child care and education centres provide more than child care - they are unique caring environments in which our qualified and experienced educators encourage learning. The centres are places where relationships between educators, children and families are formed and education and well-being are valued.

Spread across the Canberra region in thirteen locations, our centres (including two early childhood schools) offer choices ranging from a small, family-grouped centre to a large, employer-sponsored centre. It's all about providing the best possible options to meet the needs of each family.

Our centres are assessed and rated against the National Quality Standard and comply with rigorous health and safety requirements. Our relatively high educator to child ratio ensures that all children receive individual care and attention.

“ I just wanted you all to know how grateful we are for the wonderful care of our little girl Elizabeth. I personally know that she would not be the child she is today, ready for challenges, open to learning and growth, and happy in friendships if it was not for your brilliant work. ”
 (Parent, Richardson Child Care and Education Centre)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Seven centres assessed and rated under the National Quality Framework, with results significantly above the national average. Two centres received the rare and highest rating of 'Exceeding National Quality Standard'.
- * ICT systems upgraded in all centres to provide more flexible learning environments for educators and children.
- * Many educators have attained, or are working towards, formal qualifications through our Centre of Professional Learning and Education.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * High level representation on Children Educators ACT Forum (Deputy Chair) and the Early Childhood Australia ACT Branch Committee.
- * Worked with Habitat Personnel to provide indigenous traineeships and with Gugan Gulwan and Yaama Indigenous Personnel to embed indigenous cultures into programs.
- * Provided opportunities for Australian School Based Apprenticeships and student placements.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Opened new Taylor Child Care and Education Centre in Kambah with state-of-the-art facilities.
- * Extension of Greenway Child Care and Education Centre to include new infants' room.
- * Significant refurbishment of Kambah Child Care and Education Centre with a focus on family groupings.
- * Approval granted for extension of Appletree Child Care and Education Centre to provide an additional 14 places for infants.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * ANU students completed a report on how to embed sustainability practices into our centres, including curriculum ideas and a plan for food and water wastage.
- * SITA Australia donated Waste Sorting Systems & conducted waste audits of centres.
- * An online platform to integrate the waiting lists of each centre was introduced to provide a better service to families and maximise centre utilisation rates.



Water Wall Thrill

Our friends at Bunnings Tuggeranong constructed and donated an amazing water wall at the Isabella Plains Child Care and Education Centre. It looks sensational and the children and educators were very excited when it was unveiled. Thank you Bunnings!





The 'Stirling' Experience

“ Friday 31 January marks Rebecca’s last day at Communities@Work’s Stirling Child Care and Education Centre. For 3½ years you have been our hands and arms when we were not with her.

You have helped her to express herself, talk, count, write her name, feel pride in her artwork, share, play with others, listen, and sit still at meal times (no mean feat!).

You have nursed hurts, real and imagined, and encouraged her to get back up again literally and metaphorically.

You have made her feel safe and secure, given her a sense of belonging and helped shape her sense of who she is.

You have taken a genuine interest in her development, especially her emotional development, and given her books to understand her emotions, and words to help her name how she is feeling so someone can help her when she is at sea. This is evidence of the nurturing you do for each child, wherever they are in their development.

We have enjoyed being a part of the Stirling community. We have appreciated opportunities to contribute ideas and feedback, and to discuss Rebecca’s progress and needs.

Most of all, we have appreciated the care and genuine affection shown for Rebecca. You have helped to set her on a path of learning, sharing and participating which she now carries with her into big school.

” (Parent, Stirling Child Care and Education Centre)

“ I leave the centre each day knowing my child is being cared for by a team of amazing and professional educators. ”
(Parent, Narrabundah Early Childhood Service)

“ We have both been able to go to work with peace of mind, knowing that our daughter is in kind and caring hands and that she is being exposed to many different activities. We especially appreciate the staff letting us know how her day went when we pick her up – they are always friendly, welcoming and make an effort to speak to us individually. ”
(Parent, Taylor Child Care and Education Centre)

“ The hardest thing to do as a parent is leave your child with strangers.....we were lucky we never had to do that because the first moment we walked in the door at Appletree we felt like we were part of a family and knew this was the environment we wanted our son to be in. ”
(Parent, Appletree House Child Care and Education Centre)

“ My wife and I are so happy that Ethan is enjoying his time at day care. He is having a ball.....and the love and help he is receiving from your educators makes him feel like he is not far from his mum and dad. It’s all incredible! ”
(Parent, Ngunnawal Child Care and Education Centre)



(Abacus Child Care and Education Centre)



Family Day Care & In Home Care



(Family Day Care Picnic)



(Marie's Family Day Care)

Communities@Work has the largest Family Day Care Scheme in the ACT.

Consistent with the National Quality Framework, the Scheme offers quality child care and education in the private homes of approved educators. Alternatively, in certain circumstances our In-home care option provides for the care and education of children in their own homes.

Family Day Care is particularly suitable for families seeking child care and education in a small group setting or an environment similar to what their children may experience at home. Families who require child care to fit around shift work or irregular hours also appreciate the flexibility of Family Day Care.

Family Day Care educators approved by Communities@Work are self-employed, operating their own businesses from home. The Scheme supports educators in establishing their business, matches educators with children and families, and offers ongoing advice and professional development opportunities. The Scheme also supports educators with six play groups across the ACT.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Awarded ACT family day care scheme of the year at the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.
- * Provided Family Day Care educators with professional development pathways consistent with the National Quality Framework and the needs of families.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Hosted joint events such as the National Family Day Care Week to build relationships between services, educators and families.
- * Participated in the World's Biggest Playgroup Day to allow parents, carers and children to experience what Playgroups are all about.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * The number of approved Family Day Care educators increased from 110 to 150 educators, attracted by the flexibility of being able to establish a business and care for their own children at the same time.
- * Our Scheme was promoted at major events for children and in geographic growth centres.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Participated in Family Day Care Australia Consultative Group to consider the sector's response to changes to the Australian Government's Community Support Program, including future funding arrangements and possible new models for the operation of family day care services.



DURING THE YEAR OUR FAMILY DAY CARE SCHEME PROVIDED CARE & EDUCATION TO

1,125 CHILDREN + 936 FAMILIES



OUR IN-HOME CARE ARRANGEMENTS SUPPORTED

27 CHILDREN + 9 FAMILIES

“ We are very happy with the care Thomas is getting at Sarah's house. Sarah provides us monthly and weekly plans of what they will be doing. Thomas is enjoying care very much - he brings home little craft projects, learns new words and songs, and has a good amount of free play time. When I pick up Thomas, Sarah tells me about what Thomas did for the day and shares photos of him that she has taken. Sarah also sends home a folder with more detailed information every few weeks. I also like that she will give Thomas a cuddle when he wants one. ”

(Parent, Family Day Care)

School Age Care



(Monash School Age Care)



(St Thomas School Age Care)

Communities@Work's school age care programs provide safe environments in which children can develop physically, socially and emotionally. Operating from Bonner in the north to Bonython in the south, our programs function in accordance with the *My Time, My Place* Framework for School Age Care in Australia.

We operate fourteen Before School Care programs in which children enjoy a light breakfast and are supervised until their school day begins. We operate eighteen After School Care programs which provide unique environments in which children are provided with a nutritious afternoon tea and offered a range of games and activities to extend their leisure and social opportunities.

Our seven School Holiday programs provide high quality care with engaging and stimulating activities for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. Children are encouraged to make new friends, try new activities and pursue an active lifestyle through sports-oriented activities.

Our diverse range of age-appropriate activities is supplemented by excursions to local play grounds, swimming pools, museums or other attractions. Our 22 seat bus provides transport to programs and excursions.

Communities@Work's inclusion support services assist school age care programs to create inclusive environments for all children, especially those with additional needs.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Ten school age care programs assessed and rated, with outcomes consistent with national trends. Monash School Age Care program rated as 'Exceeding National Quality Standard'.
- * The knowledge and skills of educators were enhanced through a range of training and professional development programs.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Majority of our After School Care programs utilised the Australian Sports Commission's Active After School Communities program.
- * Partnership with Aboriginal Corporation for Sporting and Recreational Activities to enable Aboriginal traineeships in After School Care programs.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Our Malkara vacation care program for children with and without a disability demonstrates the success of models which integrate mainstream children in environments which support children with a disability.
- * New school holiday program commenced at Bonner Primary School.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * During closure of Malkara School for renovations, students were integrated into Monash Holiday Program utilising the autism unit within the school.
- * Asked to participate in national research on what school age care means for Australian children.

“ I would like to take this opportunity to thank all your staff for the wonderful care and service they provide to my children at Palmerston School Age Care. They absolutely love them and enjoy every single minute over there. I appreciate you all - many thanks! ”

(Parent at Palmerston)



(St Thomas School Age Care)

DURING THE YEAR,



2,556 CHILDREN
ENROLLED IN OUR SCHOOL AGE CARE PROGRAMS.



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SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**IN 2013-14, OUR SOCIAL
PROGRAMS ENHANCED THE
WELL-BEING OF AN ESTIMATED**

13,600

DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

Social Programs



Communities@Work's social programs empower people to create better futures and help foster independence, resilience and social connection. Key services include:

- * Food pantries in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin in which clients can 'shop' for healthy food and essential items;
- * A food rescue service, which rescues excess food from food retailers, event caterers and other institutions, and distributes it to over 40 charities/refuges/schools supporting 11,000 people in need;
- * A community cooking program, whereby volunteer cooks (often the staff of corporate entities seeking a community-focussed team building exercise) prepare nutritious meals for our pantries and other local charities;
- * A cooking mentoring program in which people can obtain nutritional information and learn to cook healthy, low-cost meals for themselves and their families;
- * The provision of free clothing, shoes and accessories for job interviews, re-entry to the workforce and special events;
- * Employment readiness education (e.g. assistance with job applications), skills training through a registered training organisation and referrals to employment agencies;
- * Home mentoring by volunteers in areas such as budgeting, meal planning and establishing routines;
- * The provision of bus tickets, phone vouchers and budgetary support;
- * The provision of swags, shower packs and meals for people who are 'sleeping rough';
- * Assistance to low-income households seeking to reduce their energy and water bills;
- * Social inclusion activities such as a walking group, coffee club and board games.

A full list of our social programs is available at www.commsatwork.org

“ I need to thank you for the support your team has offered me. I am welcomed with a smile every time I visit and I can now afford to feed my children three meals every day. Before your help, my children ate stale bread that I learnt to toast so they didn't notice. Fruit was never available and I could only do vegetables once a week. We are now all eating meat each night, the children have fruit and fresh bread for school, and we have milk and cheese in the fridge. The school teacher pulled me aside to tell me how great my child was doing at school - she is now awake, alert and wanting to learn. I only have Communities@Work to thank. ”

(Social Programs Client)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Increased space for display of clothing and construction of three dressing rooms in a safe, secure environment.
- * Our food rescue service won Community of the Year Award at the ACT/NSW Regional Achievement and Community Awards.
- * Specific induction program for social program volunteers introduced to ensure they have necessary knowledge and skills to undertake their roles.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Strengthened our relationship with the Tuggeranong Hyperdome which promoted various activities and launched a Care and Connect campaign to raise funds for our social programs.
- * Partnered with St Vincent de Paul to conduct Canberra Centenary Sleepout to raise funds for the homeless.
- * Developed relationships with a range of individuals and organisations to deliver extended and specialised support to clients.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Integration of all social programs to improve service delivery and expand our reach.
- * Clothing program expanded to provide assistance to men as well as women.
- * Expansion of food pantry in Gungahlin with new facilities and opening of clothing program.
- * Best Dressed clothing sales conducted three times a year to raise funds for social programs.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * New model introduced for operation of the food rescue service, resulting in a greater variety of food for charities consistent with their specific needs and a more sustainable cost structure.
- * The passionate commitment of 120 volunteers who provide in excess of 15,000 hours of volunteering support annually, is vital to the ongoing sustainability of our social programs.



Real Outcomes



(Maree Miller and Gai Brodtmann, Member for Canberra)

Maree Miller: Client

After a traumatic breakdown of her marriage, Maree found herself unable to pay the mortgage, her joint account empty and two young children in her care.

“That period in my life was so devastating to me and my family. Things were so overwhelming and I didn’t know what to do next,” explained Maree.

A friend referred Maree to Communities@Work’s social programs. Maree said when she walked through the doors, she knew she had come to the right place.

“When your head’s a bit confused and you feel like everything is on top of you, and someone is there to smile and listen, it’s fantastic. I got a feeling of warmth, niceness and kindness. That’s what you need when you’re not thinking straight.”

Maree and her children began shopping for food at Communities@Work’s pantries and for the first time in months, they were eating fresh fruit and vegetables.

“I had a lack of money and had a few major things coming up in my life like court appearances, appointments and a funeral,” said Maree. “I needed a hand to spruce myself up to get myself out there in the community and actually feel a part of it again.”

This is when Maree received a head-to-toe outfit from Communities@Work’s clothing service. “I actually got a handbag, shoes, the full outfit with a few different tops and a jacket. I felt like a million dollars,” exclaimed Maree.

Just recently, Maree went to her first volunteer induction with Communities@Work. “Although I haven’t got through to see the sunshine fully yet, volunteering is another step for me,” said Maree.

“What Communities@Work did for me, I want to do for someone else who’s feeling like everything’s weighing them down and there’s nothing left in life.”

Holistic Support

A long-term unemployed and single mother with two children was living in circumstances where she could not meet her rent commitments, pay for utilities or adequately feed her children. She was referred to our social programs and her situation was assessed by one of our intake officers who considered the holistic support that she, her children and possibly her family, required. A program of support was designed for her, including:

- * Membership of our food pantry, providing access to food and essential services;
- * Referral to crisis accommodation and mental health services;
- * Assistance with preparing her CV for job applications, the provision of suitable clothing for job interviews and guidance on interview techniques;
- * Financial budgeting support by qualified bank staff who volunteered their services.

The progress of this family was tracked by our social programs and family support staff, utilising data base information and face-to-face periodic reviews of their situation. Over time, the family was not just provided with a ‘hand-out’, but a ‘hand-up’ as they moved from a situation of vulnerability and social exclusion to a position of opportunity through paid employment and the capacity to meet basic needs such as food and shelter. This is just one example of how we empower people to create better futures.



Our social programs rely on strong community, corporate and philanthropic support



Communities@Work is grateful for the support provided to our social programs by many volunteers and individual donors.

In addition, we wish to thank the following major supporters who have provided substantial assistance to ensure the ongoing success and sustainability of our social programs.



Grants and Foundations:



Media:



We also thank the following organisations which have provided valuable support through sponsorships, partnerships, grants, fundraising, volunteering or financial/in-kind donations:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ActewAGL | Cliftons Canberra | Hall Markets | Super Toyworld Fyshwick |
| ACT Women's Grants | Coffee Guru | Hands Across Canberra | The Deck Regatta Point |
| Advance Personnel | Coles | Hoban Recruitment | The Heart Foundation |
| AECOM Canberra | Costco | John McGrath Ford | Tuggeranong Community Council |
| Ainslie Football Club | Country Valley Milk | Lions Club Kambah | US Embassy Scout Group |
| Aldi | Department of Employment and Education | Medibank Private | View Club |
| Allbids | Department of Human Services | Molonglo and Bendigo Bank | Well Sorted |
| Australian Ethical Investment | Desiree's Fine Foods | National Council of Women | Woolworths |
| Australian Institute of Sport | Discount Chemist | People's Choice Credit Union | Wrapped in Paper |
| Australian Tax Office | Dr Thomas Nielsen | Peter Blackshaw Real Estate | Ziggy's Fyshwick Markets |
| Bakers Delight | Erindale Cakery Bakery | PricewaterhouseCoopers | Zouki Cafe |
| Baptist Church Tuggeranong | ERM Power | Poachers Pantry | Schools |
| Belconnen Markets | Federal Golf Club | Queanbeyan City Council | Alfred Deakin High School |
| Ben Thanh Restaurant | Fiji High Commission | Rotary Club Nth Canberra | Canberra Girls Grammar |
| Bidvest | Foodbank | Southside Farmers Market | Gungahlin College |
| Brumby's Bakeries | Ginger and Spice | Spar Supermarkets | Marist College |
| Canberra Institute of Technology | Government House | StreetSmart | Merici College |
| Capital Frozen Foods | Gourmet by Design | St Vincent de Paul Canberra/Goulburn | Radford College |
| Care Financial Services | Gungahlin Community Council | Supabarn | St Claire's College |
| CBRE Canberra | Gungahlin Market Place | | St Edmund's College |



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DISABILITY & MENTAL HEALTH

IN 2013-14, OUR DISABILITY
& MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
PROVIDED SUPPORT TO
197 PEOPLE

Disability & Mental Health



Communities@Work's disability and mental health programs cater for a broad range of age groups:

- * **Teens** is an after school and vacation care program for young people aged 12-18 with a diagnosed disability, which seeks to enhance the social and living skills of participants, build peer networks and provide opportunities to engage in recreational activities.
- * **Young adults** is a post school program for young adults with a disability which aims to enhance participants' social skills and build peer networks through music, sport and fitness, cooking, shopping, computers and the development of general life skills.
- * **Adults** is a living skills and leisure program for adults with a disability which provides a range of activities including cooking, computing, craft, sport, music, dance and outings to places of interest.
- * **Malkara** is an integrated vacation care program for children with a disability or for children who have high support needs, with a focus on individual needs, interests and well-being.
- * **Respite Options ACT** provides flexible and supportive services to carers and care recipients, with a focus on persons experiencing severe mental illness.

A major focus during the year was preparation for the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the most significant reform in the history of disability service provision in Australia. The NDIS will give people with a disability more choice and control over their lives. The NDIS trial commenced in the ACT on 1 July 2014.



“ Thank you for the great care you take of Tom. He loves it here and it makes me feel so much better when he is attending. ”
(Tom's Mum)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Participated in the NDIS Readiness Toolkit process that included NDIS Readiness Workshops, Self-Assessment Tool, Gap Analysis and the development of an NDIS Readiness Development Plan. The National Disability Service confidentially assessed our material and provided an aggregated Benchmark Report.
- * Reviewed policies and procedures to align our operations with the revised National Standards for Disability Services endorsed in December 2013.
- * Upgraded our facilities to better accommodate the needs of clients and improve the quality of services.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Strengthened relationships with our participants and their natural supports (family, carers and friends).
- * Actively engaged with the leadership of the ACT National Disability Insurance Agency, Disability ACT and the National Disability Services, and participated in forums which disseminated and discussed NDIS relevant information.
- * Engaged with the Planning Future Pathways Expo, I-Day Expo & Market, Connect & Participate Expo and the Choice & Control Expo.
- * Partnered with Carers ACT, Greening Australia, Koomari and Tandem to deliver Six Seeds social enterprise projects for young people with a disability.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * To assist persons with a disability prepare for the NDIS, the ACT NDIS Taskforce made available funds under an Enhanced Service Offer. Successful applicants commenced their exploration of a better life and we provided our understanding of how to negotiate directly with fund recipients and to fine-tune business administration.
- * Employment of a mental health professional to provide clinical sessions under the Access to Allied Psychological Services program for persons with anxiety and depression.
- * Six Seeds social enterprise projects enabled disability program participants to engage in meaningful opportunities and increase their awareness of workplace expectations.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Full integration of disability and mental health programs and their consolidation into the Gungahlin and Tuggeranong hubs to create capacity for future growth.
- * The NDIS has broadened the definition of disability to “significant and permanent disabilities (physical, cognitive, neurological, sensory, intellectual or psychological condition)”. This will enable persons with mental health issues to be eligible for funded supports and we are well positioned to deliver integrated services.
- * To prepare for the roll-out of the NDIS, we initiated the transition to a person-centred approach to service delivery which will create more choice and control for clients.



Australian Government





Real Outcomes:

The Adults Group travelled to Sydney to see the stage production of the Lion King. We attended the matinee and had an early start to make sure we arrived on time for the show. It was a long day and required everyone to look out for each other and be patient and cooperative.

The show was fantastic, with amazing costumes and puppets. Full sized elephants paraded down through the aisles, colourful birds flew overhead and a whole African savannah appeared on stage. The production is very close to the Disney movie which the group is familiar with, which allowed everyone to sit back and let the production 'wash over' them in a spectacle of colour and music.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the show and on the way back we discovered that this was some people's first theatre experience. Some of the comments from the group were:

"So excellent, the best thing I have ever seen."

"It was awesome, would love to go again."

"I loved the introduction, especially the elephant."

All the staff, volunteers and group members worked as a team to make this event a success and everyone is looking forward to another show.



“ My best day was when I could go buy my lunch on my own.
 (Young Adults participant who successfully completed personal training on Road Safety and Community Awareness). ”

“ My favourite thing to do is to use the computer and the Dance Machine.
 (Teens participant) ”





It's about you. Always!
Communities@Work

SENIORS

IN 2013-14, OUR SENIORS
PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

1,085
CLIENTS

Support Services for Seniors



Communities@Work helps seniors live independently and provides services to promote their social inclusion in the community. In particular, we provide:

- * centre-based day care at the Centre4Seniors in north and south Canberra, including opportunities to participate in quality recreational and exercise programs, make new friends and enjoy a hot lunch;
- * transport to medical/shopping/social appointments;
- * visits by volunteers to individuals receiving Home Care Packaged Services under the Commonwealth Community Visitors Scheme;
- * support to residents of Aged Persons Units to help them become more engaged in their communities and participate in regular activities;
- * a Memory Lane program for those with early stage dementia;
- * mateship and social activities at the Lanyon Men's Group;
- * craft, needlework and quilting at the Women's Neighbourhood Group;
- * a creative space for men to engage socially and share skills at the Tuggeranong Men's Shed;
- * opportunities for social interaction, activities and support at the Gungahlin Men's and Women's Groups.



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Successful application for funding under the Community Visitors Scheme which will enable volunteers to visit the recipients of community aged care packages who are socially isolated.
- * Co-location of seniors and transport functions has provided a more holistic and coordinated service to clients.
- * Transport telephone system upgraded to provide a more responsive client service.
- * With support of ACT Historic Places, new space provided for Lanyon Men's Group.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Strong relationships developed with aged care package providers in readiness for roll out of Community Visitors Scheme.
- * Productive partnership with YMCA through participation in ACT Seniors Sports Carnival.
- * Alzheimer's Australia ACT provided staff with valuable training on dementia and health issues.
- * Participated in COTA Seniors Expo and showcased our Centre4Seniors exercise program.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * New home for Tuggeranong Men's Shed opened and Steering group established to consider the potential for a Men's Shed in Gungahlin.
- * Centenary Garden created at the Chapman Aged Persons Units and innovative 'No Dig' garden created at the Wallington Aged Persons Units.
- * Scope of Lanyon Men's Group broadened to encompass health and educational issues.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Consistent with aged care reforms, research and planning undertaken to prepare for 'Consumer Directed Care' model.
- * Participated in the HACC Transport Working Group to consider sustainable transport options for older Canberrans and participated in the ACT Community Transport review.
- * Fee-for-service models considered to ensure sustainability of health/fitness and home maintenance programs.

“ If I didn't come to the Centre4Seniors, I would be stuck at home isolated and very lonely. I enjoy the great company and everyone is very helpful. Playing scrabble also keeps my mind active and the exercises keep my body going. ”
 (Centre4Seniors client)





Centenary Garden

This garden was created at the Chapman Aged Persons Units as a positive response to communal frustrations about not having a community room, communal seating or adequate gardens in the complex. The garden was created with lots of support from local businesses who donated both time and resources to make this garden a reality. Residents, staff and volunteers worked side by side to develop this beautiful space. The garden has become an important part of this community as it provides a space where residents can now get together to connect, relax and share. The Centenary Garden project is a wonderful example of how the community can support those who sometimes just need a helping hand.



New Tuggeranong Men's Shed

During the year, a highlight for Communities@Work's Tuggeranong Men's Shed was the opening of its new and permanent purpose-built facility attached to the Indoor Sports Complex at Greenway. The new Shed provides a separate workshop area as well as space for social and recreational activities. The workshop has continued to evolve as machinery and related tools have been installed to provide a well equipped and functional work area.

Membership and interest in the Shed continues to grow as the men come together as mates and make toys, repair furniture and undertake other projects for community groups or for their personal enjoyment.

“ When I retired, the wife said, 'Get out of here, go back to work, do something.' Once I found out what the Men's Shed was all about, I became hooked and now you can't get me away from the place. I come three days a week.

(Peter Roe, Member Tuggeranong Men's Shed)



Real Outcomes

Bill* approached Communities@Work indicating that he required transport 1-2 times per month to attend a Specialist Clinic at the Canberra Hospital. Bill explained that he had multiple health conditions, one that is a significant concern. Due to Bill's health, he is currently unable to drive and he needs to attend the Specialist Clinic for a regular exploratory procedure as part of his health monitoring plan.

Communities@Work advised Bill that its transport team would meet his needs by allocating him priority medical-related trips. Since accessing this service, Bill has expressed his appreciation to Communities@Work:

“ This transport service is fantastic. The drivers are wonderful – they always arrive on time and they are friendly and chatty. I am very grateful for this service which is ensuring that my medical needs are met and also helping to lift my spirits.

*Name has been changed to protect confidentiality.



DURING THE YEAR, WE PROVIDED:

* **19,561 HRS**
OF CENTRE-BASED DAY CARE
& SOCIAL SUPPORT

* **6,710 HRS**
OF IN-HOME SUPPORT

* **353,158 KM**
OF TRANSPORT TO MEDICAL, SHOPPING
AND SOCIAL APPOINTMENTS



It's about you. Always!
Communities@Work

SPECIAL PROGRAM AREAS

**IN 2013-14, OUR SPECIAL
PROGRAMS PROVIDED
SERVICES TO AN ESTIMATED**

**6,500
PEOPLE**

Centre of Professional Learning and Education



(Graduation Ceremony 2014)

Communities@Work's Centre of Professional Learning and Education is a leading Registered Training Organisation specialising in early childhood and school age care qualifications.

With decades of expertise, we are passionate about providing students with the skills and knowledge required to excel in an education and care career.

We believe in empowering students to recognise the significance of their work with young children and to understand how they can make a difference in the lives of children and families every day.

We specialise in the following qualifications:

- * Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care;
- * Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care;
- * Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care;
- * Diploma of School Age Education and Care.

In addition to delivering education and training to Communities@Work's children's services, the Centre of Professional Learning and Education delivered training to 77 other children's services during the year.

“ It has been many years since I had studied and the Centre of Professional Learning and Education facilitators were amazing - they helped me feel confident and comfortable with studying and learning again. They supported me through the whole experience, always encouraging me to keep going. It was great that they were only a phone call away when I needed their support or encouragement.

(Nicole Herd, graduate of Cert III in Early Childhood Education and Care)

”

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Introduced a new mixed delivery learning model, combining classroom and online learning to meet the changing needs of services and students.
- * Rolled out a new mandatory training calendar to all ACT education and care services, with a particular focus on keeping children and young people safe.
- * Audit of operations conducted, leading to the development of an enhanced model of training delivery and more relevant assessment processes.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Delivered many professional learning sessions on behalf of the ACT Professional Support Coordinator.
- * Collaboration with Trinity Christian School on the development of a Trade Skill Centre in the school grounds, where we will deliver the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care to Year 11 and 12 students.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Successfully tendered to provide an additional 29 Certificate III Early Childhood Education and Care Scholarships, under the ACT Government's Early Childhood Scholarship Program.
- * Worked closely with Communities@Work's Family Day Care educators to provide a specific training calendar incorporating distinct professional learning opportunities.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Participated in a professional learning experience facilitated by Learning Options to promote new thinking, with the view to providing students with creative, innovative learning and assessment strategies.
- * Introduced an online booking system to provide students with more direct access to services, to help realise efficiencies and to ensure environmentally sustainable practices.



DURING THE YEAR...

366 PEOPLE
ENROLLED IN FORMAL
QUALIFICATIONS



OUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
TRAINING SESSIONS ATTRACTED
2,169 PARTICIPANTS



ACT Professional Support Coordinator



The ACT Professional Support Coordinator (ACT PSC) is proudly delivered by Communities@Work's Centre of Professional Learning and Education. The ACT Professional Support Coordinator is funded by the Australian Government, as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP). The objective of the IPSP is to promote and maintain high quality, inclusive education and care for all children in eligible education and care settings.

The ACT PSC provides quality professional development and support to education and care services, with the aim of assisting services to build knowledge and quality practices that enable them to meet or exceed the requirements of the National Quality Standard.



(L to R: Claire Warden International Speaker for Growing Together; Carolyn Cousins Director Professional Learning and Education Communities@Work; Lynne Harwood CEO Communities@Work; Kirsty Liljegren Australian Speaker for Growing Together; and Lee Maiden Deputy CEO Communities@Work)

“The greatest benefit for us was to have someone knowledgeable to help us achieve our aims. Our PSC mentor had realistic expectations from her experience in the industry and was able to help us set achievable goals. Breaking down the approved learning framework also gave staff confidence in their own knowledge and abilities.

(Early Childhood Director)



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- Established the *PSC National Quality Standard Mentoring and Coaching Program* to assist services to further develop quality practices and to meet the National Quality Standard.
- Launched the *Transforming Practice Initiative* to provide opportunities for services to customise innovative learning opportunities that facilitate collaboration, shared understanding and positive change in pedagogical practices.

RELATIONSHIPS

- In strong collaboration with other State and Territory PSC providers, established the free IPSP Online Library which provides resources, digitized booklets, vignettes, and other sources of inspiration for those working with children and families.
- Strengthened our partnership with the Children's Policy and Regulation Unit through the establishment of a service referral process and jointly hosted the National Quality Standard Symposium to showcase services' achievements.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- Hosted the 2013 *Growing Together* Conference, sponsored by HESTA and the ACT Government, which brought together practitioners from a range of education and care settings to celebrate achievements and share empowering journeys of change.
- Enhanced social media and online communication through establishment of Facebook and Twitter pages, distribution of regular e-newsletters and growth in online bookings.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Developed a five part learning circle titled *Earthwise, Embedding Sustainability in Our Practice with Young Children*, to enhance educators' awareness and skills in helping children connect with and sustain the natural environment.
- The Australian Government introduced the Long Day Care Professional Development Program which will provide funds to approved long day care services for the training and professional development of their educators.



DURING THE YEAR, OUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT SESSIONS ATTRACTED

3,210 PARTICIPANTS

Galilee School



Communities@Work's Galilee School is a registered, independent secondary school designed specifically for disengaged and vulnerable young people aged 12 to 17 years in the ACT who, for a myriad of reasons, are unable to access the mainstream schooling system.

All students are involved in the care and protection and/or youth justice systems and may present with a spectrum of complex challenges including homelessness, family conflict or violence, physical and mental health issues, substance abuse, sexual, emotional or physical abuse and poverty. Such issues often result in significant educational disadvantage.

The Galilee School provides a quality education program consistent with the Australian Curriculum. In particular, the School offers a supportive learning environment which aims to meet the specific needs of each student. Holistic Educational Plans are developed for each student and delivered via an engaging and flexible support model that is client-centred, strengths based, relationship driven and restorative. To increase the education and employment opportunities for the students, the School also provides training, skills development and job ready support for students transitioning to further education or the workforce.

The program provided by the Galilee School does not focus on a 'quick fix', but rather on developing long-term resilience and resourcefulness. The objective is to promote respect and confidence, and inspire young people to realise their full potential by developing and utilising their unique talents and capabilities.

DURING THE YEAR, THE GALILEE SCHOOL SUPPORTED 40 YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR EDUCATION

“ Mainstream school didn't work out for me. At first, I didn't want to leave as I thought Galilee was too different and only for dumb people. But once I got there and began to learn, I really started to appreciate my place. I initially had lots of ups and downs, but I got a lot of support from the staff who gave me a lot of chances. Once I realised that the staff really saw something in me, it helped me to get things on track. Galilee helped me find a school based apprenticeship and let me stay back a year to finish it off. I will complete it shortly and have applied for a full time apprenticeship next year. I feel more confident and happy with what I am currently achieving, and I am really grateful that Galilee stuck by me in that hard time of my life and schooling. I don't know what would have happened otherwise.....or where I would be.

(A graduating student)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Project Based Learning was introduced, whereby students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time on an individual project to investigate a complex question, problem or challenge.
- * The staffing structure was enhanced with the introduction of a Student Support Coordinator, a 3rd teaching position and an Operations Manager.
- * Professional development of staff continued with training in literacy development, youth mental health, cyber bullying, professional burnout, youth engagement, responsibility, pathways and first aid.

RELATIONSHIPS

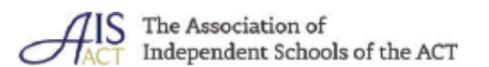
- * Shane Horsburgh, an ambassador for the School and a youth facilitator, discussed goal setting with students and worked with staff on team building and communication.
- * The Australian Independent School Association provided ongoing support and guidance on all aspects of curriculum, funding and quality improvement.
- * Alasdair Roy, ACT Children and Young People Commissioner, spent time with the students to obtain feedback on their schooling experience. They particularly liked their fun and supportive relationships with staff.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Work commenced on exploring options for the development of a new campus and learning space for students at the School. This will enable the segregation of years 7-8 and 9-10, resulting in more targeted educational programs for these age groups and enhanced learning outcomes.
- * Operations Manager, Braithe Thomson, received the Youth Coalition of the ACT's YOGIE Award for Outstanding Youth Worker, which recognises people who have advanced the rights and well-being of young people.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Working towards re-registration of Galilee School as an independent secondary school following expiration of the current registration at the end of 2015.
- * Engaged a consultant to advise on further improvements to the curriculum, consistent with Australian Curriculum standards.
- * Sustainability of ongoing operations enhanced by SITA sponsorship and grants from Snow Foundation, Coca Cola Australia Foundation and James N Kirby Foundation.



Buoyed Up



Based on Yachting Australia's grassroots Tackers initiative, Communities@Work's Buoyed Up is an introductory sailing program designed to provide vulnerable young people aged 7-12 years with a fun, confidence-building sailing experience.

In particular, the program helps disadvantaged young people build their self-esteem, develop motor skills, enhance their resilience, learn about the environment and value team work.

The program has been developed with the support of the Sir Thomas Lipton Foundation and Yachting Australia, and is facilitated by the Canberra Yacht Club (CYC).

In 2013 the University of Canberra evaluated the Communities@Work Buoyed Up program. The evaluation report, *From the Water to the Classroom*, concluded that providing out-of-the-box experiences for students is important in ensuring they remain engaged at school. In particular, the report noted that vulnerable children participating in Buoyed Up:

- * increased their gross motor skills – hand eye coordination, balance and agility;
- * improved their school attendance and developed positive attitudes towards learning;
- * gained increased confidence and self-esteem from understanding the technicalities of sailing;
- * enhanced their capacity to take responsibility for themselves and their team mates;
- * were better able to address anxieties and work through challenging issues;
- * were more likely to try new things, work with new people and take leadership roles;
- * made new friendships and connections through a common bond;
- * were able to link their sailing experiences to classroom activities.

Indeed, the program is helping to shape critical attitudes in young people as they mature into responsible young adults. With the strong support of Yachting Australia, the Communities@Work Buoyed Up model is now becoming the 'parent' program for several other Yacht Clubs around Australia seeking to implement similar programs in their communities.

“The confidence of the Buoyed Up students has increased dramatically. Many of these students had never been out on the water and the instructors helped them overcome their fears through fun and engaging lessons. Students progressed at a pace they were comfortable with and by the end of the term, those who were afraid to even look over the side of the boat were willingly jumping out! This confidence now transfers to the students' schooling and everyday lives. They are eager to engage in challenging tasks, knowing that the hard work pays off in the end.”

(Teacher, Richardson Primary)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * In recognition of Buoyed Up, Canberra Yacht Club received the Sports Promotion Award at the Australian Yachting Awards.
- * Buoyed Up's first scholarship was provided to a student from Richardson Primary School, including use of an Optimist boat, Youth Sailing Academy course fees, sailing clothes and life jackets, CYC membership and the opportunity to engage with CYC members.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * The University of Canberra evaluated Buoyed Up, demonstrating the positive impact of the program on vulnerable young people.
- * Assisted Noosa Yacht Club to adopt Buoyed Up model.
- * Olympic sailing gold medalist and Buoyed Up patron Malcolm Page OAM, and Volvo Round the World Sailor Chris Nicholson, delivered inspirational talks at the Buoyed Up Charity Dinner and Auction.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * 17 students from Richardson Primary School were the first to successfully complete the 3 levels of Tackers and graduate from the program.
- * Buoyed Up program model was showcased at the Linking Up for Kids conference presented by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Buoyed Up Charity Dinner and Auction attracted 230 guests and raised significant funds to help sustain the program.
- * Inaugural Buoyed Up Regatta conducted - Canberra businesses ditched their offices and suits for boats and life jackets to raise funds for the program.

“Buoyed Up has taught us the importance of listening to each other and working with people that you don't know.”

(James, student at Bonython Primary School)



Sir Thomas Lipton Foundation



UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL UNIVERSITY



Australian Government
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



ZURICH

IN 2013-2014, THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE BUOYED UP PROGRAM DOUBLED TO 204

25% OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED AS ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS OR FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS.

Reach Home



Communities@Work's Reach Home program provides tailored case management, supported accommodation and outreach services to strengthen and build self-reliance for families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, particularly women and children escaping domestic violence.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Increased focus on a client-centred approach to the delivery of best-practice services, enabling clients to 'lead the change' they are seeking for themselves.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Facilitated client referrals and championed other Communities@Work services through Firstpoint, and maintained active participation in Joint Pathways, comprising the ACT Government and a collaboration of services supporting homeless people.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Participated in Social Housing Outcomes Workshop to develop outcome indicators for the homelessness sector, consistent with the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Worked with the ACT Community Services Directorate to improve public housing infrastructure by upgrading insulation and implementing other environmentally sustainable measures.



IN 2013-14, WE PROVIDED
11,503
BED NIGHTS TO 67 PEOPLE

“ The Reach Home Program has not only given us a temporary home, but has also helped us with everything we need to do to get our own home. Having a space that is ours has made all the difference and I now have confidence in knowing that I will be able to do good things for me and my kids in the future.

(Reach Home Client)

Side by Side



Through Communities@Work's Side by Side program, volunteers work alongside Victim Support ACT case workers to ensure that victims of crime receive practical and coordinated support. This support includes, for example, accompanying victims to court proceedings and helping them navigate court processes, helping victims submit applications under the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme and providing general support and mentoring.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Improved processes for providing volunteer support under the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme, and helped refurbish the community room at the ACT Magistrates Court.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Continued a strong working relationship with Victim Support ACT and participated in community awareness activities during Law Week, White Ribbon Day and NAIDOC Week.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Participated in the program's first large trial and provided support to a number of people giving evidence.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Trained many committed and valued volunteers who are vital to the ongoing success of the program.

“ I never thought that I would have to go to court. All I knew about the place is what I had seen on TV – and it's nothing like TV. The volunteer took me on a tour of the court space and that made a real difference. While the volunteer couldn't provide me with legal advice, she could tell me about court protocols. This helped me feel like I knew what I was doing. I didn't realise how much was involved and I'm so glad I had someone with me.

(Side by Side client)



DURING THE YEAR,

1,766
PIECES

OF EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION WERE DISTRIBUTED TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF CRIME RELATED ISSUES, INCLUDING HOW RESIDENTS CAN PROTECT THEIR HOMES, THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS

Family Programs



Emerging Communities



Communities@Work's Family Programs are designed to help parents maintain happy and healthy family relationships.

Our Parenting Matters program is for parents with children aged between 2-8 years and includes a weekly playgroup, community skills training and individual parenting support.

Our Family Links program focuses on the importance of early childhood development and provides activities such as playgroups, lifesaving skills and water confidence, infant massage, story groups and parenting programs.

As the population of the ACT continues to expand, Communities@Work is conscious of the need to ensure that the needs of emerging communities are adequately addressed.

Over the past year, Communities@Work has been active in the Forde and Molonglo regions of Canberra to assist residents make connections, build relationships and initiate projects.



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Introduced, in partnership with the Narrabundah Early Childhood School, a new supported story time group, *Stories and More*, to promote the importance of literacy in early childhood.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Enhanced relationships with ACT Child and Family Centres to improve services to vulnerable families.
- * Developed connections with a variety of child care centres and early childhood schools.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Expansion of Family Links into the Gungahlin region.
- * Enhanced multicultural resources, particularly Mandarin and Cantonese.
- * Parenting Matters Program Manager invited to be a member of the Families ACT Forum.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * Introduced a parenting reflection journey, *Bringing Up Great Kids*, which enables parents to pursue their preferred parenting journey.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

- * Regular consultation with communities led to the conduct of a range of activities including a fitness program, a Brumbies skills and drills event, tree planting and Carols by Candlelight.

RELATIONSHIPS

- * Worked closely with CIC Australia, the ACT Land Development Agency and Elton Consulting to deliver proactive community development programs in Forde and the Molonglo Valley.

GROWTH & INNOVATION

- * Based on the specific needs of each community, different methodologies were adopted to facilitate growth and development.

SUSTAINABILITY

- * The establishment of a Forde Residents Association was an important step towards the development of an engaged and sustainable community.

“ Before attending Parenting Matters, I never knew what ‘enjoying children’ was all about, but now I do. We can joke and have fun...and now I only yell when we are playing a game. We are much happier now.
(Parenting Matters client) ”



“ The ongoing support we have received from Communities@Work has been instrumental in helping to establish our community association. If every suburb had the support and encouragement of one of Communities@Work's Community Engagement Officers, Canberra would be the most inclusive and community-focused city in Australia.
(Forde resident) ”



DURING THE YEAR, OUR FAMILY PROGRAMS PROVIDED ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT TO

948 PEOPLE

UP **16%**

THE FORDE CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT EVENT ATTRACTED

1500

RESIDENTS WHO ENJOYED A VARIETY OF LOCAL TALENT & SHARED IN THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.

How You Can Help

Communities@Work relies on strong corporate, philanthropic and community support to deliver services to people in need.

Your support is valuable to us and the people we serve. By supporting our efforts, you will be enhancing the well-being of a wide range of vulnerable and disadvantaged people including low income families, the homeless, women and children fleeing domestic violence, at-risk youth, the frail aged and people with disabilities.

Our programs are focussed on giving vulnerable people a hand-up, not just a hand-out. We seek to empower people to create better futures by helping them acquire skills and build independence, resilience and social connections.

To help your dollar go further, we are a public benevolent institution endorsed to receive tax deductible donations. We welcome support for all our programs, but we particularly require assistance to deliver the following charitable programs:



SOCIAL PROGRAMS

- * Providing food and essential services to individuals and families who are experiencing hardship. (See page 27)



THE GALILEE SCHOOL

- * An alternative education program for disadvantaged and at-risk young people. (See page 52)



BUOYED UP

- * Providing vulnerable young people with a fun, confidence-building sailing experience. (See page 54)

There are many ways you can help:

- * **Financial Donations:** We welcome one-off donations and also encourage regular giving to ensure the long term sustainability of our programs.
- * **Workplace Giving:** This is the easiest, most tax efficient way for you to help us, as your donation is deducted directly from your pay and you receive a tax deduction as you give.
- * **Corporate Partnerships:** We can provide corporate sponsors with significant marketing and networking opportunities and help them build customer loyalty.
- * **Fundraising:** You can conduct fundraising events on our behalf (e.g. trivia nights, auctions, theme days) and even set up your own fundraising page on Everyday Hero.
- * **Bequests:** Bequests are a wonderful way to support Communities@Work and be remembered for making a difference to the community in which you have lived.
- * **Volunteering:** By becoming a volunteer, your community benefits from the skills and experience you share, and you will gain considerable personal fulfilment.
- * **In-kind Support:** You can help us reduce our operating costs by providing in-kind support through the provision of goods and services.

“By supporting Communities@Work's Galilee School and Social Programs, and installing bins for waste and recycling management in Communities@Work's child care and education centres, we hope to improve the quality of life of those in need in the local area.”
(Jason Stewart, SITA ACT Manager)

DOGGOOD

A wide body of research shows that giving to others is one of the strongest predictors of increasing our happiness and health. Giving to those in need achieves what the Greeks called 'eudamonia' - the meaningful life.

FEELGOOD REALGOOD

Studies show that charitable giving strengthens your immune system, boosts positive emotions, lowers depression, provides stress relief and adds years to your life! The happiness we get from giving lasts longer than the pleasure we get from chocolate, a hug or a holiday. It lasts a lifetime.

Giving produces really good outcomes for those who need it most in our community. Research proves that giving inspires the receiver to give to others. So when you give, you are producing a chain reaction of good across Canberra!

For more information on how to support our programs, visit www.commsatwork.org



WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

\$33.9 M

71% FEES & LEVIES
25% GRANTS
4% OTHER



WHERE THE MONEY GOES...

70% CHILDREN'S SERVICES
17% SPECIAL PROGRAM AREAS
8% SENIORS
3% DISABILITY & MENTAL HEALTH
2% SOCIAL PROGRAMS



COMMUNITIES@WORK'S AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2013-14 ARE AVAILABLE FOR RELEVANT PARTIES.

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AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

As lead auditor for the audit of the financial report of Communities@Work, for the year ended 30 June 2014, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of:

- (i) the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

RSM Bird Cameron Partners

RSM Bird Cameron Partners

GED STENHOUSE

GED STENHOUSE
Partner

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Dated: 15 October 2014

Liability limited by a
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Professional Standards
Legislation

Major Offices in:
Perth, Sydney, Melbourne,
Adelaide and Canberra
ABN 36 965 185 036

RSM Bird Cameron Partners is a member of the RSM network. Each member
of the RSM network is an independent accounting and advisory firm which
practises in its own right. The RSM network is not itself a separate legal entity
in any jurisdiction.



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