

**communities**  
**at work**

**2024**

**2025**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

# Contents

## VISION



Our community is  
connected and thriving

## VALUES



Compassion | Quality |  
Collaboration | Learning | Safety

## PURPOSE



We are community-focused,  
and person-centred in meeting  
diverse community needs.

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& SUPPORTERS

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## PRIVACY STATEMENT

Communities at Work respects the privacy and dignity of the people we assist, our members, volunteers and employees. For more information about how we manage privacy information, please refer to our Privacy Policy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Communities at Work acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

## 01

# Our Organisation



## What We Do

Communities at Work is a leading provider of children's services and one of the most trusted not-for-profit organisations in the region. We have a proud long-term history of providing a diverse range of community services and making significant positive contributions to our community.

We employ 568 employees across four diverse program areas, engage 53 self-employed Family Day Care educators and harness the dedicated commitment of around 140 volunteers to help us carry out our mission of enriching the lives of people in our community.

### CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We are a recognised leader within the children's services sector with 11 Early Education and Care Centres, 19 Out of School Hours Care services, 13 School Holiday Programs, and 53 Family Day Care educators throughout the Canberra region.

### GALILEE SCHOOL

We run a registered, independent secondary school designed specifically for disengaged and young people in Years 7-12 who have yet to thrive in mainstream education. We support students to re-engage with their education, family and community, transition into the workforce or further study, and find a sense of purpose.

### CPLE

Our registered training organisation (RTO 88148) delivers nationally recognised qualifications in business and early childhood education. These include Certificate II in Workplace Skills, Certificate III in Business, Certificate III and Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care, and customised and on-request professional development workshops.

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

We provide essential community support to people in need through our two community pantries, a clothing program, and a crisis support service.

We also support people living with disability with centre-based social and skills development programs that enable people to maintain their independence and wellbeing.

Our community development team works with people, local groups, services, government, and businesses to support projects that build social connections and improve quality of life.

Our community minibuses provide supported transport to groups and individuals to maintain their connection in community.

Our highly valued volunteers support our programs, where they find opportunities to give back to their community and build new skills and friendships.

### ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

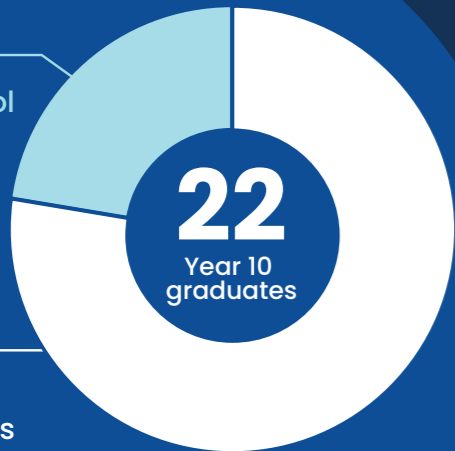
Our program areas rely on our 'behind-the-scenes' team to provide essential organisational support across all business areas of Communities at Work including Marketing, HR, Finance, Assets, IT and Infrastructure.

# Our Impact

## GALILEE SCHOOL

5 High School Records

17 Year 10 Certificates



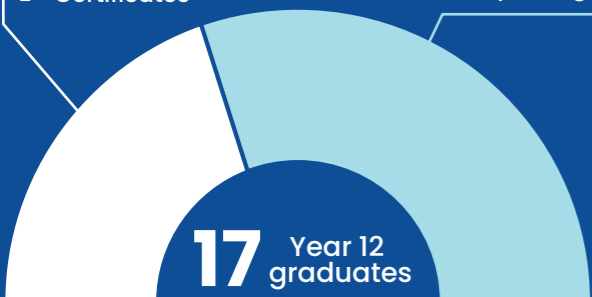
# 25

Celebrated our 25th anniversary (Sept 2024)

Launched the South Canberra Community Markets (with Lions Youth Haven)

7 Year 12 Certificates

10 completed senior secondary college



## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**A** **1,422** children attended  
**B C** **11** Early Education and Care Centres

**3,686** children attended  
**19** Out of School Hours Care

**281** children attended  
**53** Family Day Care services  
**475** educators provided education and care



## COMMUNITY PANTRIES

**24,543** times people shopped in our pantries.

**1,202** times clients used our pantry with Foodbank cards.

**8** supermarkets gave us excess food each week to stock our pantries

## CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Raised **\$16,147** to help people in need  
Enabled **3,029** people to select gifts and food for their families

WINTER APPEAL  
Raised **\$16,555** to help people in need

## CRISIS SUPPORT

Helped **907** clients get food support  
**2,580** times

## DISABILITY

**33** educators provided **91** participants

**33,224** hours of support while attending our centre-based disability programs

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Helped people connect through Infusion 'cuppa and chats'

**531** people attended in Gungahlin  
**761** people attended in Tuggeranong

## WINDOW INTO WELLNESS PROGRAM

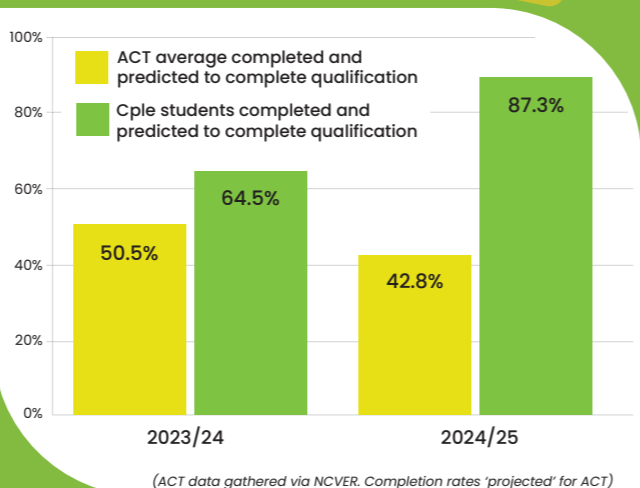
Increased participants' wellbeing levels

**5%** pre-event TO **100%** post-event

through Nature walks, Nature Journal Circles, Harp Yoga

## CPL

Added new course **BSB20120 Certificate II in Workplace Skills** (July 2024)





We continued to deliver high-quality education and care across our Children's Services. This year, we celebrated the achievement of two Exceeding ratings - an affirmation of the exceptional quality of our services, the strength of our processes, and the expertise and dedication of our educators.

Our Community Services Program responded to growing demand, with record numbers accessing our food pantries and crisis support.

Meanwhile, the rebrand of our Centre of Professional Learning and Education - now Cple - delivered growth and stronger recognition as a leading, flexible training provider.

I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members for their expertise and leadership, and warmly welcome our newest Director, Trixie Makay. My gratitude also goes to Michelle Colefax and the Executive Team for their leadership and commitment to the Canberra community, and to our staff and volunteers for their exceptional service delivery.

Finally, I also acknowledge with gratitude the substantial and continued support from our supporters and funders, including the Australian and ACT Governments, businesses, community organisations, schools and individuals. Your contributions underpin our ability to meet community needs.

The Board remains committed to sustainably providing high quality services with integrity, accountability, and purpose as we continue to build a stronger, more inclusive Canberra.

**ALAN GREENSLADE**

*Board Chair*

## Board Chair's Message

The 2024-25 year has been one of achievement and responsibility for Communities at Work. In a climate of continued cost-of-living pressures for the community and stretched funding sources for the sector, the organisation has remained committed to delivering high-quality services, advocating for vulnerable groups, and strengthening community connections. We also remained focused on uplifting our workforce, recognising their wellbeing and development as key to our ongoing success.

We launched our new 2024-2029 Strategic Plan in October 2024. This plan emphasises the importance of our workforce, innovation, sustainability, collaboration, and advocacy, and will ensure the organisation remains financially sound, strategically focused, and accountable to the community we serve.

There were many significant highlights during this year. This year we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Galilee School - a significant milestone in our proud history of supporting vulnerable young people. The opening of its Hospitality and Events Centre will further strengthen the school's ability to enhance opportunities for students to gain skills and confidence.

## Meet Our Board

Communities at Work is a public company limited by guarantee and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.



**ALAN GREENSLADE**

*Chair*

Alan has extensive experience in leading financial management and governance roles in the public and private sector, including the Department of Finance.



**KAREN CURTIS**

*Deputy Chair*

Karen was the inaugural CEO of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), the Australian Privacy Commissioner, and the Executive Director of the Australian Made Campaign.



**DOMENIC STRAMANDINOLI**

*Treasurer*

Domenic is a partner in a chartered accounting firm with over 28 years of demonstrable experience with taxation, business advisory and governance, servicing a range of government, private sector, and not-for-profit clients.



**JAMES SELKIRK**

*Director*

James is a qualified Chartered Accountant with over 26 years' experience. He has a proven track record of commercial success in a broad range of diverse leadership roles with organisations undergoing significant growth, change, or both.



**BERNICE ELLIS**

*Director*

Bernice is a partner in a national law firm, specialising in commercial litigation and insolvency. She has a background in tax and commerce and is a board member of a Canberra disability support-service provider.



**JOANNE GARRISON**

*Director*

Joanne has led and influenced significant education reforms in her many and various roles within the ACT Education Directorate and currently works for the ACT Association of Independent Schools



**WAYNE HARRIDEN**

*Director*

Wayne has 35 years' experience at the elite level of the Australian real estate and property development industry and currently runs a high-profile National Project Management and Marketing business.



**TRIXIE MAKAY**

*Director (started 6 Dec 2024)*

Trixie has 35 years' experience in the public and private sectors - 20 years in senior Government roles and over 16 years as a leader in Canberra at KPMG - in recent years as a partner focusing on the delivery of health and human services and program reforms.



“

*Communities at Work will continue to lead with compassion, innovation, and purpose, ensuring every child, family, and individual has the opportunity to thrive.*

— GEORGE KADMOS —

”

## CEO's Message



Following positive feedback from last year's participants, we continued to roll out our Emerging Leaders Program to embed good leadership skills across the organisation.

Our Christmas Appeal was another success, raising \$16,147 and helping over 3,000 people to collect gifts and food for their families. A huge thanks once again to Mix 106.3 and Transport Canberra for their hugely successful *Pack the Bus* fundraising drive.

In October 2024 we launched our new 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. This is our roadmap for the future, ensuring that we remain focused on providing exceptional services and support to our community. It emphasises the importance of our workforce, innovation, sustainability, collaboration, and advocacy.

In closing, I want to express my deepest appreciation to all those who have supported us in our mission this year. Our achievements would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication and hard work of our staff and volunteers, the guidance of our Board, and the invaluable contributions of our partners and donors.

It is your generosity and belief in our cause that allow us to have a lasting impact. Thank you for being part of our journey toward a brighter future.

**GEORGE KADMOS**

*Interim CEO*

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with an immense sense of pride and gratitude.

There were many great achievements during 2024-25. Galilee School proudly celebrated its 25-year journey of transforming the lives of Canberra's at-risk and vulnerable young people. The latest events in that journey were the opening of its new Hospitality and Events Centre in December and the launch of our South Canberra Community Markets (in partnership with Lions Youth Haven).

Our registered training organisation Cple, underwent a brand refresh to overcome barriers to growth and raise its profile as a flexible and inclusive RTO. Since the innovative refresh, we've seen new student enrolments increase by 38%.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, I'm thrilled to announce that two of our Children's Services were awarded a rare *Exceeding* rating in the National Quality Standards ratings and assessment audit. Congratulations to Taylor Child Care & Education Centre and Emmaus OSHC!

# Strategic Plan | 2024 - 2029

In October 2024 we launched our new 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. This is our roadmap for the future, outlining strategic priorities and goals that align with our vision and purpose.

See our website for the full Strategic Plan



# Strategic Priorities



# Our Commitment to Sustainability

One of our strategic priorities is to promote sustainability in our local communities and incorporate sustainable practices in our operations. Here are some examples of our commitment to sustainability.

## SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES



### Cleaning in a Greener Way

Centralised our bins for better recycling and switched to PVA cleaning sachets, cutting plastic bottles by 90% and lowering carbon emissions by 98%.



### Smarter Printing

Introduced cloud-based printing to reduce waste and track usage.



### Planning for Sustainability

Abacus Child Care and Education Centre created a Sustainability Action Plan, helping families and educators embed eco-friendly practices into daily life.



### Worm Farms and Composting

Centres built worm farms, composted, did litter audits, and explored nature to teach children responsibility for the environment.



## GREENER OUTDOOR SPACES

### Growing Gardens Together

Early childhood centres turned their outdoor spaces into living classrooms by planting bulbs and exploring biodiversity through Community Floriade activities.

### Turning Trees Into Play Spaces

Pruned timber from Galilee School was repurposed into a natural playground at Richardson Child Care and Education Centre.

### Safer, Greener Playgrounds

Five early education centres upgraded outdoor areas with native plants, natural features, and safer play surfaces.

## RECYCLING & REPURPOSING

### Learning About Recycling

Raised awareness of the importance of recycling through diverse initiatives, including partnering with environmental group Eco Koala Gang to teach children about recycling paper and repurposing materials through creative art.

### Giving Furniture a Second Life

Repurposed surplus items and fitted out a new office with donated furniture.

Estimated savings: **\$20,000**

### Keeping Clothes Out Of Landfill

Best Dressed Store saved around

**4,000 kg**

of clothing from landfill by reselling and recycling.



### Bottle Recycling Projects

Early childhood centres recycled bottles through *Return it Express*, using the savings for new sustainability projects.



### World Environment Day Action

Children and students joined global efforts to fight plastic pollution and protect the environment.

# Our Reconciliation Journey

Communities at Work is proud to be working on Ngunnawal Country.

As a part of our reconciliation journey, we recognise and embed Indigenous perspectives in our daily practice. This is an essential part of building inclusive, respectful, and culturally safe early learning and work environments.



## RECONCILIATION WEEK

At Amaroo OSHC, a family with Indigenous heritage led a workshop where children painted boomerangs and learned about culture and history in a hands-on way. The family's generosity gave us a meaningful and memorable experience.

## CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY

Children, families, and educators joined cultural workshops, Sorry Day Bridge Walks, NAIDOC Week, dreamtime stories, and dancing with Wiradjuri Echoes. Activities like storytelling and nature walks helped weave these experiences into everyday learning and reflections on Country.

## YERIBEE INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES TOUR

Our Managers and Educational Leaders joined the *Yeribee: Indigenous Experiences of Parliament House* tour. The visit deepened our understanding of First Nations histories, stories, and contributions to Australia's democracy.

## NAIDOC WEEK

Family Day Care educator Sonia shared her knowledge of Ngunnawal land, taking children to the Scar Tree – a significant landmark. They learned how bark was used to make canoes, containers, shields, and shelters, fostering respect for our deep cultural heritage.

## ABORIGINAL STORY TELLING

Ngunnawal storyteller Larry Brady visited our centres, sharing stories, artefacts, and knowledge. Children explored traditional tools and artworks in respectful, hands-on sessions that sparked curiosity and strengthened cultural awareness.

## PLAYGROUND MURALS

With a \$5,000 Community Services Directorate grant, our Taylor Child Care and Education Centre worked with local Aboriginal artists to create a set of playground murals. They now stand as a vibrant symbol of Taylor's reconciliation journey. *(see photo above)*

## NARRAGUNNAWALI EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

Taylor hosted a workshop with the Narragunnawali team, helping fellow educators deepen their understanding of reconciliation and connect children with Aboriginal perspectives through play, art, and storytelling. Several centres then went on to develop their first RAPs.

## RECONCILIATION SYMPOSIUM

One of our Educational Leaders received a grant to attend the Reconciliation Symposium in Cairns, returning with renewed vision and practical ideas for truth-telling, inclusion, and embedding First Nations perspectives in daily practice.

# Corporate Services

Our organisation relies on our Corporate Services team to provide essential organisational support in human resources, information technology, financial management, quality assurance, marketing and communications, infrastructure, facilities, and administration.



## ASSETS & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Adopted greener cleaning products and centralised our bins
- Reduced plastics and carbon with PVA sachets
- Repurposed equipment, saving \$20,000
- Reused pruned timber from Galilee School to create natural play spaces
- Upgraded five playgrounds with safer, greener features



## ICT & CYBERSECURITY

- Introduced cloud-based printing to cut waste and support greener practices
- Strengthened governance, data protection, and incident response
- Upgraded role-based access, endpoint protection, and monitoring
- Embedded cybersecurity into ICT operations, procurement, and training, aligned with NIST and ISO 27001 standards



## STRATEGIC PLAN

- Launched 2024–2029 Strategic Plan in October 2024
- Progressed workforce retention and ICT integration
- Developed five-year CAPEX budget
- Advanced fundraising and marketing through new events
- Led building utilisation planning and commissioning tenders
- Supported Cple growth through rebrand and partnerships
- Updated risk management and expanded Emerging Leaders Program



## MARKETING

- Rebranded Cple and launched new social media platforms
- Partnered with Galilee School to develop South Canberra Community Markets
- Supported planning for inaugural Galilee School Black Friday Ball
- Ran Winter and Christmas Appeals, raising \$32,702 for people in need



## FINANCE

- Delivered budget planning, forecasting, and five-year cashflow for our assets and infrastructure projects.
- Developed revenue diversification and new overhead allocation model
- Created financial strategy for staff recruitment
- Strengthened long-term organisational sustainability

# Children's Services



# 02

Communities at Work is a leading provider of Early Education and Care Centres, Out of School Hours Care, School Holiday Programs, and Family Day Care across the ACT region.

## OUR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE

**11** Centres | **237** Educators | **1,422** Children

### OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

**19** Services | **185** Educators | **3,686** Children

### FAMILY DAY CARE

**53** Services | **53** Educators | **281** Children

## COMMITMENT TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

### SHARED VISION FOR QUALITY

In 2025, our Educational Leaders worked together to create a shared vision for quality, aligned with our strategic plan. Three pillars—Respect, Intentionality, and Reflective Practice—now guide our work, building curiosity, professionalism, and child-focused decisions. A workshop with Anthony Semann further strengthened this journey.

### SUPPORTING INFANT LEADERS

We launched professional development for team leaders working with infants (0–2 years). The first session helped educators slow down, value daily routines, and create responsive experiences that build secure relationships and early development.

### QUALITY AUDITS

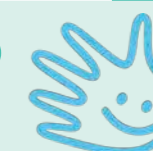
We run regular internal and external audits to support continuous quality improvement.

Over **30%** of our services are rated as

**EXCEEDING** National Quality Standards

## PARTNER PROVIDER THREE-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

We believe all children should have the right to access quality, free early childhood education, regardless of their circumstances. It's the most cost-effective means to positive lifelong outcomes. That's why we're a partnered provider of the ACT Government's Three-year-old Preschool Program.



**Three-year-old preschool**  
an ACT Government program  
PARTNER PROVIDER

# Early Education and Care

We provide high-quality care from birth to preschool age for over 1,422 children across the Canberra region through our 11 Early Education and Care Centres.

## CENTRE SNAPSHOTS

### ABACUS

Launched a Sustainability Action Plan, with training from *Local Impact Sustainability*. Educators set room-specific goals and shared them with families. The plan boosted environmental awareness, built team purpose, and encouraged educators to model sustainable behaviours children and families can use at home.

### APPLETREE HOUSE

Visited Birrigai's *Connecting to Country* program to explore Ngunnawal and Ngambri culture. Children learned new Acknowledgements of Country, listened to stories, and built branch shelters. The experience blended cultural learning, history, and play, building respect and connection to Country.

### CAPITAL HILL

Presented at the first ACT Early Childhood Australia Showcase. Shared how children created handmade wrapping paper sold at Parliament House to raise funds for the Giving Tree appeal, highlighting collaboration and community impact.

### GREENWAY

Celebrated National Simultaneous Storytime with live-streamed reading and related activities. The event sparked discussion, supported cultural understanding, and promoted creativity, identity, and belonging.

### ILLOURA

Started a plastics recycling program using the Container Deposit Scheme. Families and children collected bottles and lids, turning them into resources to improve outdoor spaces while learning about recycling and reuse.

### NARRABUNDAH

Joined the school preschool community for Birrigai's *Welcome to Country* program. Children went bushwalking, made a campfire with natural materials, and cooked damper, combining culture, nature, and practical learning.

### NGUNNAWAL

Promoted oral health with stories, songs, role-play, and brushing demonstrations. Games and visuals reinforced healthy eating and hygiene messages, building children's confidence, responsibility, and lifelong habits.

### RICHARDSON

Developed a bush tucker garden and outdoor space with a yarning circle, veggie beds, stepping stones, and plants donated by a First Nations family. The service looks forward to expanding the garden and strengthening ties with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

### TAYLOR

Participated in the national *Preschool Outcomes Measure trial* run by ACER, testing tasks in language, literacy, and executive function. Educator feedback helped shape national progressions, strengthened practice, and positioned the service as a leader in early childhood innovation, improving outcomes for preschool children.

### ISABELLA PLAINS CCEC

Embraced sustainability and community through raising tadpoles and frogs to be released in the Ginninderra Catchment, running a paper bag recycling program for our community food pantry, and contributing nearly 5,000 bulbs to a vibrant Community Floriade street display.

### ISABELLA PLAINS ECS

Centre educators became educators in research, with deep Critical Reflection leading to the formation of critical friends' books in each of the learning spaces. The books allowed for educators, families, and children to question "common" practice and elevate roles, learning, and mindset to best practice.



## Story

In March 2025, our Taylor Child Care & Education Centre proudly achieved an 'Exceeding' result in all seven National Quality Standards following its national Assessment and Rating process.

This exceptional outcome reflects the Centre's unwavering commitment to quality education, strong leadership, inclusion, sustainability, and meaningful community partnerships. The result is a testament to the daily dedication of its educators and the culture of critical reflection and continuous improvement it fosters.

Taylor celebrated this milestone with its children, families, and the broader community, reinforcing that excellence is not a one-time achievement, but a mindset they embody every day.

Achieving 'Exceeding' in all seven Quality Areas positioned Taylor as a leader in the early childhood sector. As Centre Manager Farah Junaid said: "This recognition has increased our service's visibility, staff morale, enrolments, and community pride. It validates our shared vision of high expectations, innovative pedagogy, cultural responsiveness, and authentic relationships with our children and families".

Well done, Taylor!

# Out of School Hours Care & School Holiday Programs

We deliver high-quality, engaging and inclusive before and after school care to over 3,686 children through our 19 Out of School Hours Care Services and 13 School Holiday Programs.

## EDUCATOR TRAINING

Educators took part in training on behaviour support, building confidence to manage challenging behaviours and create inclusive, supportive environments. They also completed restrictive practices training, learning how to respond safely while respecting children's dignity and rights. These programs strengthened high-quality care and support and boosted children's wellbeing and development.



## SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

Our holiday programs offered a wide range of exciting activities, including zoo trips, inflatable playgrounds, movie making, rock climbing, circus events, Gecko colour races, magic shows, science shows, cooking, drama, music, and more.



## DENTAL CARE & POSITIVE HABITS

At Ngunnawal and Monash, a local dentist ran fun sessions on oral health. Children learned about brushing, healthy eating, and hygiene through discussions and hands-on activities, encouraging positive, lifelong habits.

## RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Children at Amaroo OSHC created a vibrant Rights Tree, showing every child's rights. Through discussions, they learned about fairness, respect, and safety, while expressing their own views in an inclusive, creative way.

## PERSONAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

At Amaroo, a midwife and parent taught children about hygiene using videos, games, and discussions. Children practised handwashing, sneezing, and coughing etiquette while learning how to stay healthy and prevent the spread of germs.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Services celebrated the rich cultural diversity of its families with activities acknowledging important days. For Vesak Day, for instance, children made lanterns with the Buddhist community, learning about culture and respect.

## Story

We are proud to share that Emmaus Out of School Hours Care has achieved an Exceeding rating against the National Quality Standard (NQS) in its most recent Assessment and Rating (November 2024). This outstanding result reflects the dedication, professionalism, and collaborative spirit of the entire team.

Emmaus was recognised for its strong commitment to children's wellbeing, learning, and inclusion. Particular strengths included building respectful relationships, creating safe and engaging environments, and embedding reflective practice across all areas of service delivery.

The assessment highlighted how the service's educational program is deeply informed by the *My Time, Our Place* framework, which supports children's sense of belonging, being, and becoming. Our educators were commended for their ability to respond to children's voices, promote their choices, and create a safe, inclusive, and stimulating environment that nurtures each child's unique identity and potential.

"This achievement is a testament to the team's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, strong partnerships with families and the school community, and a shared vision of quality care and education," explained Manpreet Kaur, Senior Manager - Out of School Hours Care.

"Congratulations to the entire Emmaus OSHC team on this well-deserved recognition!"



# Family Day Care

We deliver high-quality small group care to 281 children, tailored to individual families' needs.

## OUR EDUCATORS

In 2025, we received

**21**

(19 educators, 1 coordinator, 1 FDC Manager).

nominations in the National Excellence in Family Day Care Awards

We proudly support 53 educators in delivering high-quality care in their homes. Our educators are self-employed professionals who are committed not only to children's education but actively engaging in their own professional learning. They offer a nurturing, natural and flexible learning environment, offering many benefits.

Each year, our educators, our team and the service receive nominations demonstrating our commitment to providing high-quality outcomes for children.

## OUR COORDINATION TEAM

Our coordination unit supports Family Day Care educators with their daily business operations, curriculum, and professional learning. We guide educators in their pedagogy and practices, and provide professional development opportunities.

## PLAYGROUPS

Our weekly playgroups give children and educators opportunities to connect through STEM, nature play, gardening, and community activities. Playgroups support children's social and emotional wellbeing and enable both educators and children to connect with their community.

## HARMONY WEEK

During Harmony Week one of our Family Day Care educators led a playgroup to celebrate Nowruz, the Persian New Year. Children and educators learned about traditions and history, while sharing and cooking Persian food together—a great way to celebrate culture and diversity.

## FDCA EXCELLENCE IN FDC AWARD

|                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Regional Winner             | <b>Sonja Radonjic</b>  |
| Perpetual Star Award Winner | <b>Theresa Roberts</b> |

## COMMUNITIES AT WORK FDC EDUCATOR AWARDS

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Educator of the Year                       | <b>Kathryn Howie</b>   |
| Perpetual Star                             | <b>Sonia Ellem</b>     |
| Supporting Children's Holistic Development | <b>Ramatu Williams</b> |
| Inclusive Education and Care               | <b>Diane Hunia</b>     |
| Emerging Star                              | <b>Kamaljit Kaur</b>   |
| Creating a Holistic Learning Environment   | <b>Jasmeet Kaur</b>    |

## Story

We are proud to recognise Kathryn Howie (Cassie) as our 2024 Family Day Care Educator of the Year. Cassie creates a warm, inclusive space where children feel safe and supported to thrive emotionally, socially, and cognitively. She uses recycled materials, nature play, and daily practice to teach sustainability and environmental care.

With a child-led approach, she embeds First Nations perspectives, celebrates diversity, and nurtures creativity, curiosity, and resilience. Families describe Cassie as "like family," valuing her warm and supportive care. Beyond her program, she builds community connections through playgroups and events. Her passion and reflective practice enrich children's learning and our community.



## Story

In 2024, we proudly celebrated Theresa Roberts, Manager of our Family Day Care service, who received the Perpetual Star Award from Family Day Care Australia. Reserved for coordinators with 15+ years of service, it recognises her outstanding dedication and long-term impact in the sector.

Theresa began in 2004, running family day care from home while raising her two sons. Her authentic child-focused approach quickly built her reputation as a dedicated educator. She recalls: "You become an extended part of families, experiencing their first discoveries. It's amazing."

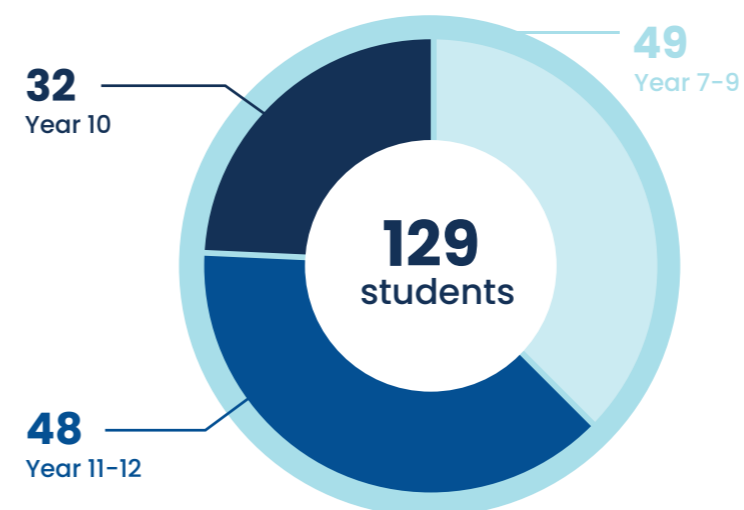
Now leading Communities at Work's Family Day Care, Theresa continues to support educators and families with the same passion.



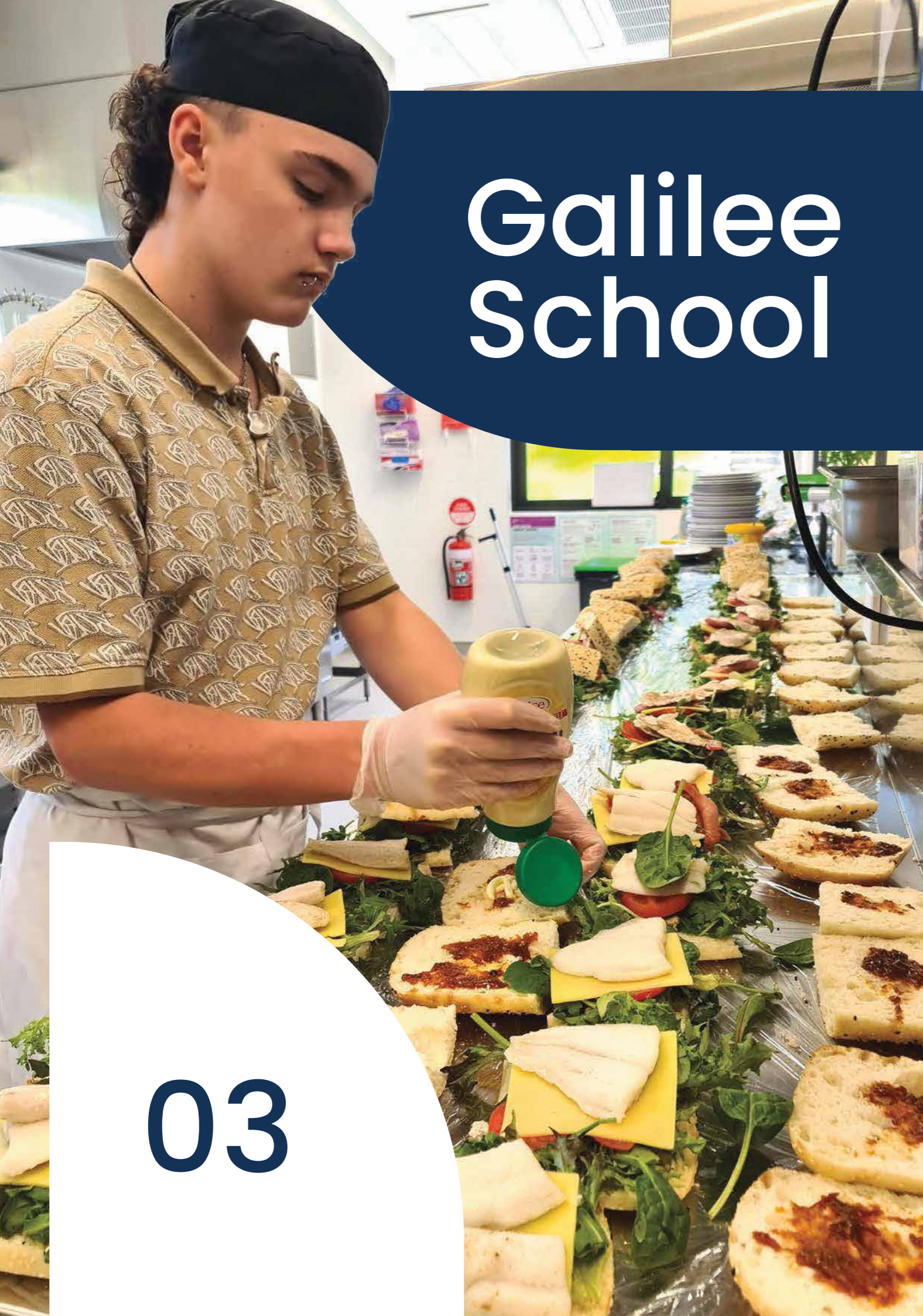
# Galilee School

Galilee School is an independent specialist school for Year 7-12. It fills a unique niche in our local community by supporting the learning of young people who have struggled in mainstream school environments. Here, at Galilee School, these people can find an alternate – and often their best – path to success.

## 2025 STUDENT ENROLMENTS\*



\*based on a gross figure across the calendar year



03

## OPENING OF THE FOOD STUDIES BUILDING

On 22 November, David Smith MP, Federal Member for Bean, officially opened the Galilee School Hospitality and Events Centre. This new facility, part of Stage 4A of the Kambah Campus Master Plan, marks the school's first purpose-built specialist curriculum building.

The Centre will significantly enhance food studies delivery across all year levels with particular benefit for Years 11 and 12. Food studies is central to both learning and social development at Galilee School; it fosters connectedness, vocational skills, and life skills. It supports students' positive transitions beyond school, equipping them for future opportunities and building confidence in practical, meaningful ways.

“  
I'm not only alive because of Galilee, but truly living.  
– EX STUDENT  
”



## Story

In 2024, Galilee School proudly celebrated 25 years of supporting Canberra's most vulnerable young people. Founded in 1999 with the support of Lions Youth Haven, the school has grown into a unique place of learning, care, and hope through strong community partnerships.

Founding Director Craig Webber reflected: "Together, over these past decades, we have worked with one focus: to give young people doing it tough a pathway to a more positive future. To extend hope."

The anniversary featured two events in September: a student celebration and a formal gathering with alumni, staff, and supporters. Alumni stories highlighted Galilee's life-changing impact. As one former student movingly reflected, "I'm not only alive because of Galilee, but truly living."

To mark the milestone, we unveiled a Commemorative Garden, hosted our first Open Day, and launched a special anniversary logo.

“

*My daughter is finding her place, her voice, her confidence and herself. Such a huge turnaround for her. So very, very grateful for a safe learning environment.*

– SCHOOL PARENT

”

## Key Achievements

### DEVELOPING BUSINESS SKILLS



Students took part in the Academy of Entrepreneurs *My First Business* program to gain invaluable insights and hands-on skills to run a real business. On Market Day, they ran stalls selling items like cupcakes, artworks, popcorn and 3D fidgets, and proudly donated 50% of profits to charity.



### SOUTH CANBERRA COMMUNITY MARKETS

In November we partnered with Lions Youth Haven to establish the monthly South Canberra Community Markets to raise funds and awareness for the missions of both organisations and provide a community connection for local small businesses.



### COOKING, GARDENING AND NUTRITION

Cooking, gardening, and nutrition are a key focus at Galilee School, building students' skills and understanding of healthy eating. Year 10 students participated in the ACT Nutrition Support Service FEED program, to help deal with atypical eating behaviours and gain hands-on kitchen experience.



### MOSAIC ART PROJECT

Students created a large mosaic art project to express gratitude and pride in our school. They planned, budgeted, and built it from scratch, developing teamwork, mindfulness, and social connections. More than art, the mosaic became a lasting symbol of growth and collaboration.



### CONNECTING THROUGH DOGS

The Dogs Connect program is an invaluable asset to our Galilee community, enriching the lives of both staff and students alike. Our therapy dog Halle has brought immense joy and positivity to our school and plays a pivotal role in helping students regulate their emotions.



### FEARLESS WOMEN

Inspired by her experience with the Fearless Women pilot program, a student actively promoted the program, encouraged petition signatures, and sold merchandise – modelling and fostering the respectful relationship skills she learned in the Fearless Women's mentoring.



### HORSES HELPING HUMANS

We partnered with Pegasus Riding for the Disabled for a pilot of their innovative Horses Helping Humans program. Students guided horses without words, helping build their self-confidence, communication, emotional control, respect and trust for others.



### BRIDGING LITERACY

Bridging Literacy, launched in ACT colleges in 2025, supports students to achieve Level 3 of the Australian Core Skills Framework. The course develops grammar, spelling, and real-world writing skills, building confidence for further education, employment, and daily life.

# 04

# Centre of Professional Learning & Education



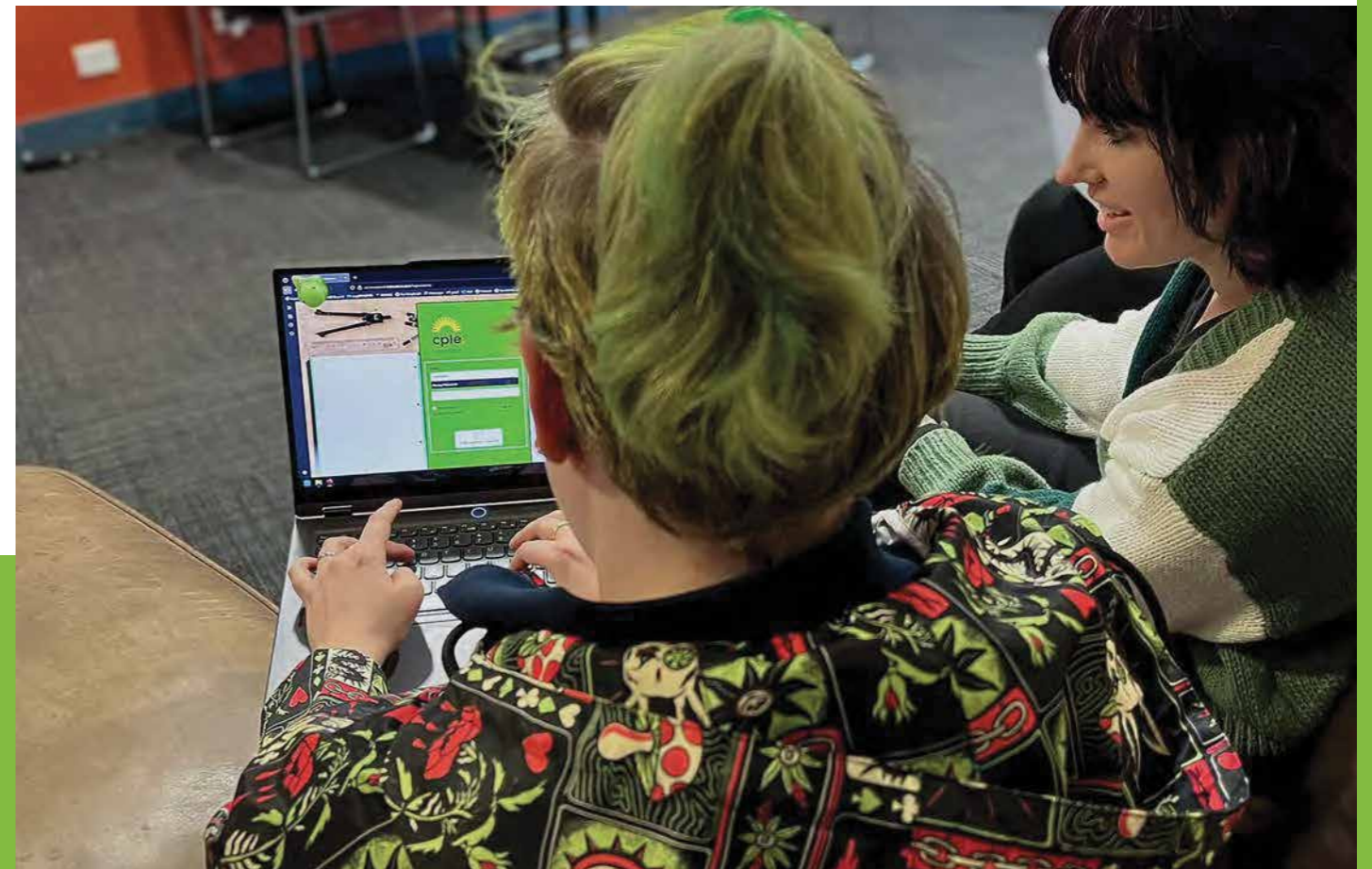
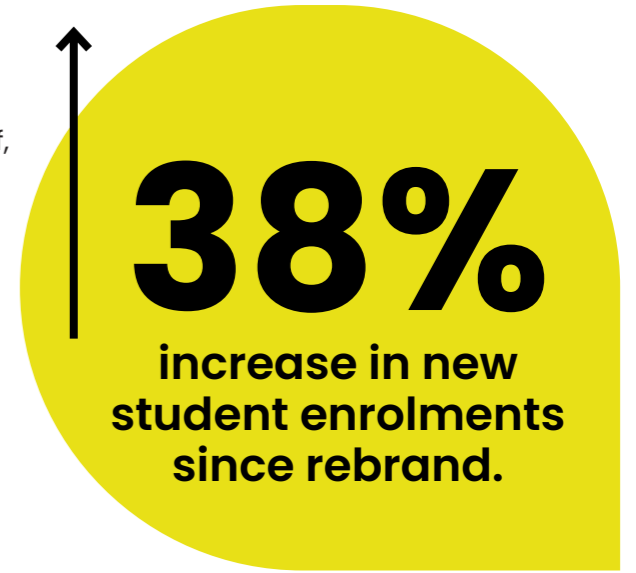
Cple (Centre of Professional Learning and Education) is our own Registered Training Organisation (RTO 88148) delivering high-quality vocational education and training.

## Rebrand and Strategic Growth

In 2024, we began a rebrand to overcome barriers to growth and raise our profile as a flexible, inclusive RTO. Many stakeholders were unaware of Cple or assumed it was limited to Communities at Work staff, classroom delivery, or early childhood qualifications.

Launched in April 2025, our refreshed brand clarified identity with a new pronunciation ("see-pull"), logo, and visual identity, reflecting flexibility, energy, and inclusivity.

We expanded our study locations to Tuggeranong and Gungahlin and grew our social media presence to increase awareness. Since the launch, we have seen a 38% rise in enrolments, strengthening our reach and impact across Canberra.



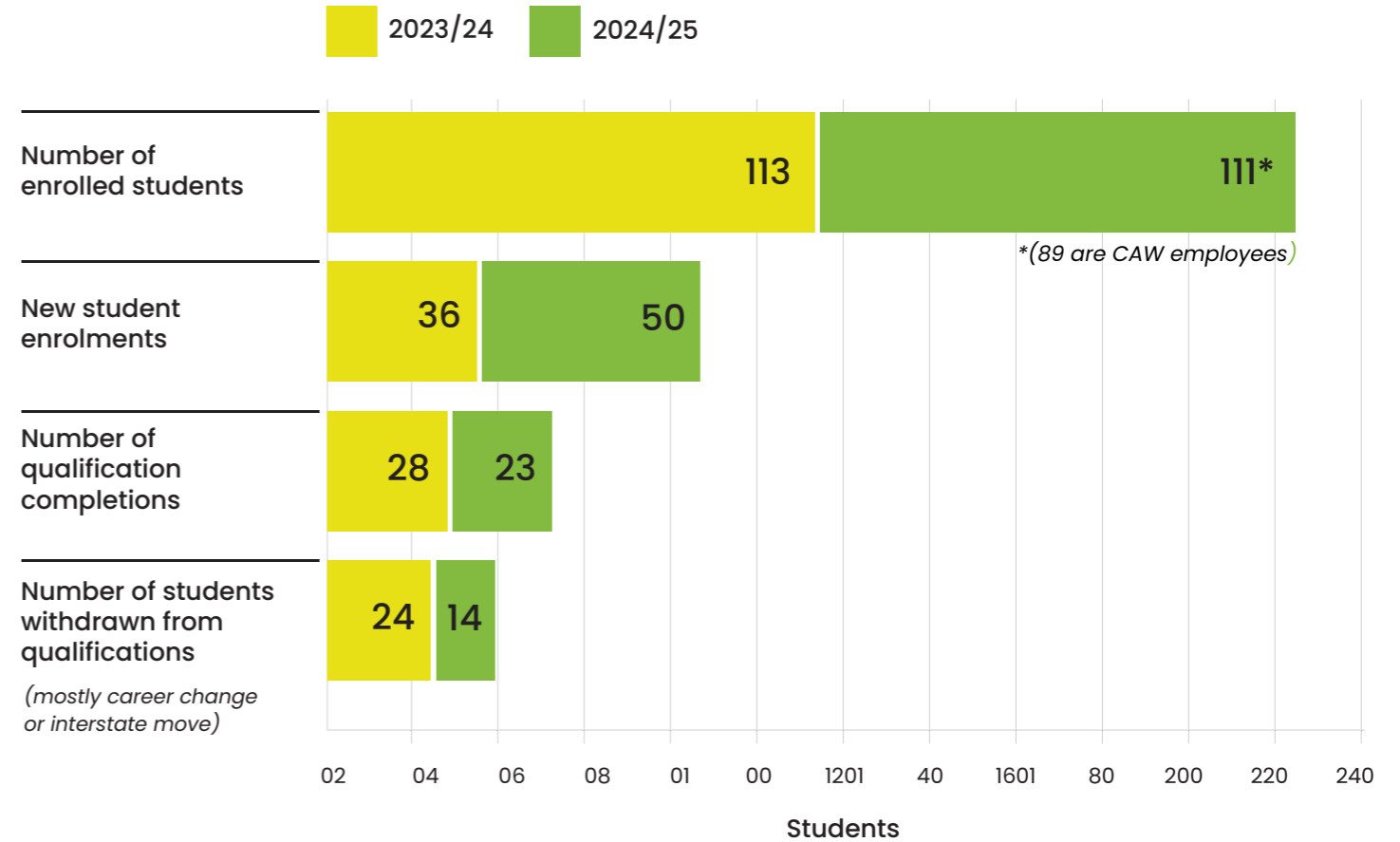
# Cple ASBA Model

We tailored our model to support Australian School-Based Apprentices (ASBAs) who often face barriers in mainstream classroom-based learning, including mental ill health or trauma. We pair each student with a Trainer, offering quiet study sessions and one-on-one support in a low-pressure environment. This more personalised approach helps students progress successfully.

In 2024, **seven**

ASBAs engaged in their qualifications while thriving in the workplace.

This demonstrates Cple's role in ensuring ACT students are provided opportunities for growth outside of the mainstream classroom setting.



## Story

As a single mother and non-native English speaker, balancing study, work, and family was challenging. With the invaluable support of Cple, I built confidence, developed new skills, and continued my education without compromising financial stability or family commitments.

Their work experience opportunities were invaluable, allowing me to earn an income while managing home responsibilities. Affordable education for low-income groups like me, flexible study options, and access to free educational facilities made it possible to complete my Certificate III and Diploma in Early Childhood Education & Care.

Their continuous encouragement and support services helped me navigate my studies without stress, while encouraging me to pursue a higher degree and advance my career. I am truly grateful to Cple for making education accessible, supportive, and life changing.

- SHAHRZAD, CPLE STUDENT

# Community Services



Community Pantries



Crisis Support



Clothing



Food Rescue & Donations



Community Development



Community Centres & Hubs



Disability



Seniors

(closed Nov 2024)



Community Minibus



# 05

Our Community Services Program delivers a wide range of essential services to our community, from vital food, clothing, crisis support and community minibuses to activities and venues that provide opportunities for social and community connection.

# Community Pantries

Our community pantries provide affordable and free, essential food and household goods to individuals and families experiencing financial hardship across Canberra.

Open five days a week, people can access our pantries through membership, crisis support, or Foodbank cards given to them by our partner organisations (including Uniting Care Kippax, Vinnies, Companion House, Throughcare, Prisoners Aid ACT and MARSS).

Along with food and household products, our pantries provide choice and connection in a respectful, welcoming environment where people can select items that best suit their needs – like a regular supermarket.

## REPRESENTATION IN COMMUNITY

- \* Canberra Food Relief Network
- \* Food and Emergency Relief Advisory Committee



## HOW OUR PANTRIES WORK

### 1 Food is obtained through:

- \* **DONATIONS** from individuals, groups, food charities, businesses
- \* **PURCHASES** from Foodbank ACT/NSW
- \* **COLLECTIONS** through our Food Rescue Program

### 2 We sort and quality check food and other donations

### 3

Clients 'shop' for their food and personal care items at our pantries in 3 ways:

- \* Pantry membership
- \* Crisis support service referral
- \* Foodbank card

## OUR GENEROUS FOOD DONORS

We gratefully received free and subsidised food and essential items from:

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| Foodbank                         |
| OzHarvest                        |
| SecondBite                       |
| Communities at Work Food Rescue  |
| Community Donations              |
| Share the Dignity                |
| Canberra Organic Growers Society |

A big thank you to everyone who has supported the pantries this year! We can't do our work without you. A list of our supporters is available on our website.



# Crisis Support

Our crisis support program (emergency relief) ensures that vulnerable Canberrans can access immediate, practical assistance when they need it most.

We provide a range of essential items, such as food, sanitary products, cleaning products and/or personal care items like toothpaste or shampoo, information and referral to appropriate services. We know it's hard to ask for help and we want to make it as easy as possible for people.

## REPRESENTATION IN COMMUNITY

- \* Northern Region Network
- \* Cross Sector Networking Forum
- \* Social Recovery Subcommittee
- \* Roundtable ACT Health Care Consumers Network
- \* Queanbeyan Homelessness Leadership and Cross Border Working Group
- \* ACT Community Aged Care Forum
- \* Joint Pathways Network



## CONNECTING CLIENTS WITH COMMUNITY

We also recognise that support should extend beyond moments of crisis, so we host regular pop-up information displays and events in our Tuggeranong and Gungahlin spaces to connect people with a wide range of community providers. This approach not only meets urgent needs but also empowers individuals with the knowledge and connections to build longer-term stability and resilience.

## POP-UP INFORMATION DISPLAYS

Care Inc, Legal Aid ACT, Feros Care, Eyes for Life, Safe Homes, Tax Help, Orange Sky, Volunteering ACT, and Hepatitis ACT.

## BRING YOUR BILLS & AGEING WELL EVENTS

Care Financial, St Vincent de Paul, Centrelink, ACT Housing, ACTEW, Origin, Red Energy, Cota, Eyes for Life, Safe Home, Health Care Consumer Association.

Supported **907** people to access the pantry **2,580** times

*The help was immediate and practical—food, information, connection and other stuff. But most important of all, someone who listened. It turned a scary moment into a manageable one and gave me hope. I learnt about other options and support for me and found the courage to keep trying.*

- CRISIS SUPPORT CLIENT

# Best Dressed Store

## POP SHOP FOR WORK AND FORMAL WEAR

Our Best Dressed Store provides a welcoming retail space for high-quality, pre-loved business and formal wear donated by the community. Our volunteers carefully sort, price and merchandise each item so shoppers can find affordable wardrobe updates, unique pieces for special occasions, or sustainable options that reduce environmental impact.

We reinvest our shop revenue to support our other community services, and give clothing donations a second life, reducing textile waste and enabling more ethical, sustainable fashion choices across the community.

## FREE CLOTHING FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

Through our Best Dressed Store, we support people in need by offering them free business and formal wear so they can attend interviews, start new jobs, appear in court, or participate in formal events with confidence and dignity. This eases their immediate financial pressure while creating a safe, judgment-free experience, supported by skilled volunteers.

*I came in nervous about my interview and left feeling confident. A volunteer helped me choose a suit and shoes that fit perfectly, all free of charge. Walking in 'looking the part' made a real difference—I felt respected, prepared, and ready. I feel judged all the time and this was the help I needed to start looking forward to the future.*

- CLOTHING PROGRAM CLIENT





# Food Rescue & Donations

We collect food donations from grocery donors, workplaces and the community. Without these generous donations, we wouldn't be able to keep our pantries stocked. Thank you!

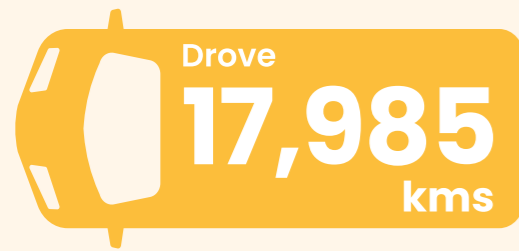
## FOOD RESCUE

Our Food Rescue van travels across Canberra three days a week, collecting surplus unsold perishable items from our eight grocery donors. A huge thanks to our biggest donors: Woolworths, SecondBite (Coles) and Aldi. SecondBite alone generously donated 23,592 kgs of food during the year! Our Food Rescue service not only helps meet the growing demand for pantry support but also, importantly, reduces food waste and diverts significant volumes from landfill.

Collected

# 23,529 kg

of surplus food from SecondBite to stock our pantries



picking up surplus food from 8 supermarkets

## FOOD DONATIONS

Each week our Volunteer Van Driver collects community donations from our partnering shopping centres: Calwell Shopping Centre, Cooleman Court, Gungahlin Village and Gungahlin Marketplace. We also receive food donations through workplace and community food drives, our Winter and Christmas Appeals, and drop-offs at our community centres in Tuggeranong, Gungahlin and Holder.



*I've been coming to the Communities at Work community pantry for a while now, and it's made a real difference. The volunteers know my name and always treat me with kindness and dignity. Being able to bring home essentials means I can keep the lights on and still put a proper meal on the table. It's a lifesaver!*

- COMMUNITY PANTRY CLIENT





# Community Development

Our Community Development Program facilitates, supports, and develops local activities that enhance community cohesion, connectivity, and resilience and builds community capacity. We identify the community's needs and aspirations through conversations and collaboration.



## INFUSION

Our Infusion initiative provides a relaxed space to connect over a cup of tea and a snack, fostering social connections. In 2024-25, we expanded from Tuggeranong and Ngunnawal to include Gungahlin.

Participants now build friendships outside of Infusion and access additional community activities suggested during those sessions.

*Thank you for facilitating this wonderful community activity group. I've lived in Ngunnawal for 34 years. This is the first time we've been able to come together in our neighbourhood centre with other locals and have a sense of belonging and connection.*

- NGUNNAWAL INFUSION PARTICIPANT

## INFUSION INITIATIVES



### TUGGERANONG

**761**  
people  
attended



### NGUNNAWAL

**531** people  
attended

**508** people  
exercised



### GUNGAHLIN

**82** people  
attended

## HUMAN LIBRARY CANBERRA

In March, we launched our first Human Library event with Libraries ACT and the University of Canberra. People shared their life stories as "Human Books," sparking conversations that promoted diversity and inclusion.

We also provided valuable internship opportunities to nine University of Canberra students studying their Bachelor of Psychology. The event was so well-received, all involved wanted a repeat.

"Being part of the Human Library project as an intern was one of the most rewarding experiences of my academic journey," said one of the students.



*The opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful, inclusive event allowed me to develop practical skills in community engagement, event planning, and creative design, all while working in a supportive and inspiring environment.*

*This experience not only helped shape my career goals but also reminded me of the power of empathy and human connection in creating social change through community development.*

- HUMAN LIBRARY INTERN

## A WINDOW INTO WELLNESS

Our Window into Wellness initiative gave people chances to try new activities that boosted social connections and emotional wellbeing. These activities included nature walks, Nature Journal Circle sessions, and harp yoga. Delivered in partnership with complementary therapists, they encouraged creativity, relaxation, and self-care.

Several participants recorded a rise from **5% to 100%** in their wellbeing level pre and post event.





## Community Centres & Hubs

Our community centres in Tuggeranong, Denman Prospect, Ngunnawal and Gungahlin strengthen local connections by providing affordable, flexible and culturally-safe spaces for community groups, not-for-profits and businesses.

Across these sites, rooms accommodating 6 to 140 people host meetings, training, workshops, events and a range of community activities and supports. These spaces are also the locations for our community pantries, crisis support and other community activities.

Our community hubs aim to remove the biggest barrier faced by local groups and services—access to safe, affordable, and well-equipped spaces close to where people live. By anchoring programs in these four locations, we make community support more welcoming and easier to reach. This increases participation, reduces social isolation, and enables earlier help-seeking.

These centres also give businesses and Government agencies a way to contribute to their local community as venue income is reinvested into our community services. The result is stronger networks and more efficient delivery of learning, wellbeing and support activities across the ACT.

### SOME OF OUR COMMUNITY CENTRE HIRERS

- ★ RSPCA
- ★ Department of Social Services
- ★ ADACAS
- ★ Volunteering ACT
- ★ Health and Community Services Directorate
- ★ Infrastructure Canberra
- ★ Women with a Disability ACT
- ★ NAVITAS
- ★ Alcoholics Anonymous
- ★ Enlighten Leadership

### SOME ACTIVITIES AT OUR COMMUNITY CENTRES

- English Conversation Classes
- Line Dancing
- Wellness Activities

*Denman Community Centre offers a modern venue with quality facilities and a dedicated support team, creating an ideal learning environment. The facilities are designed to cater to various training needs, from group sessions to one-on-one coaching. It's a highly recommended choice for those seeking a professional training venue.*

**- ENLIGHTEN LEADERSHIP**



### NDIS AUDIT

As an NDIS provider, we underwent the regular audit process. This is important for driving continuous improvement, building trust with participants and carers, and assuring the community that our services deliver high-quality, accountable outcomes.

### DISABILITY EXPO

2024 was our first year of attending the Disability Expo as a stallholder. As one of the few providers offering continuous, centre-based supports across childhood to adulthood, we received strong interest, new referrals and partnership leads, along with volunteer and employment enquiries.

### REPRESENTATION IN COMMUNITY

NDS Communities of Practice  
NDS Insights into Action



## Disability Program

Our Disability Hubs in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin support teenagers and adults to build friendships, develop essential life skills and increase independence in a safe, non-judgmental environment. But most importantly, we have fun!

Our programs develop capabilities across six key areas for daily living—self-care, home, community, leisure, interpersonal and basic work skills—alongside social activities, workshops, exercise and community engagement.

Our programs remove barriers to inclusion and empower people to build the skills and confidence they need to live more independently. They reduce participants' isolation, foster dignity, and strengthen community engagement. With a person-centred approach, we work alongside participants and their families to ensure our support reflects personal goals, preferences, and strengths. Families gain reassurance that our participants can set meaningful goals and achieve practical outcomes such as travelling independently, preparing meals, managing routines and contributing to their community in ways that matter to them.

As one of the few providers in the ACT offering centre-based disability programs, we fill a critical gap in the community.



## Seniors and Community Transport

In November 2024, we made the difficult decision to close our Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services, including the Seniors Social Programs and Community Transport, as our funding levels did not cover the true costs of service delivery. Despite our best efforts to sustain these programs, we were unable to continue. We worked closely with clients to ensure a smooth transition to a new provider, and we made our existing program locations available to support continuity of services.

We did, however, retain our Community Minibus service, which had previously sat under the community transport umbrella. This program's funding is adequate and ensures we still assist in the transport space where feasible. Many of the clients we supported in the transitioned-out programs use this service.

We acknowledge the dedication of our staff during this challenging time, who supported these programs and were part of clients' lives over many years. We remain committed to exploring new ways to support older members of our community, such as using the space for community development activities, including board games, exercise classes and morning teas. Some clients who attended the transitioned-out programs are part of these new activities.

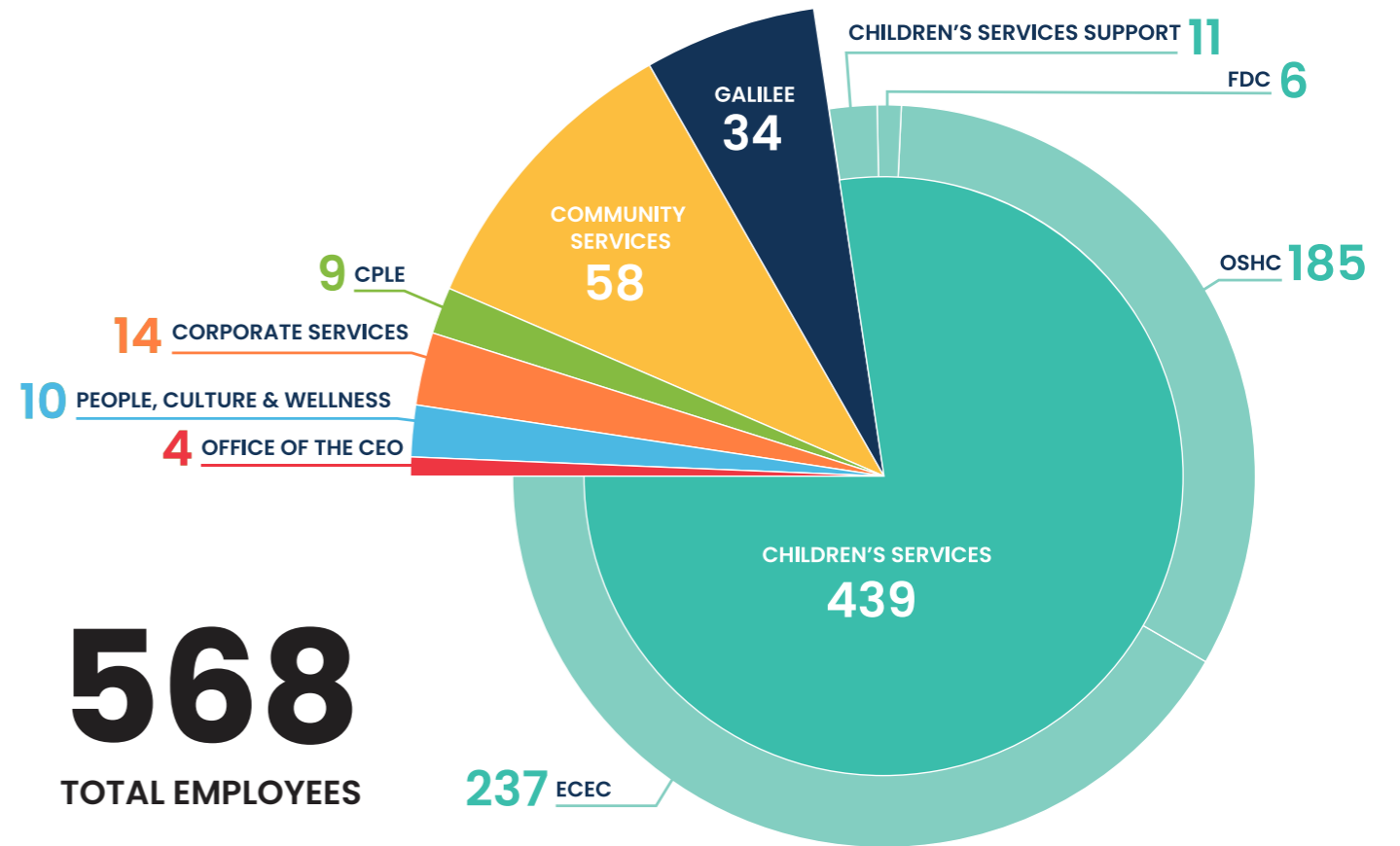
We spent  
**33,224**  
hours  
helping  
**91**  
participants  
with disability  
support.





06

### OUR EMPLOYEES



**568**  
TOTAL EMPLOYEES

# Our People

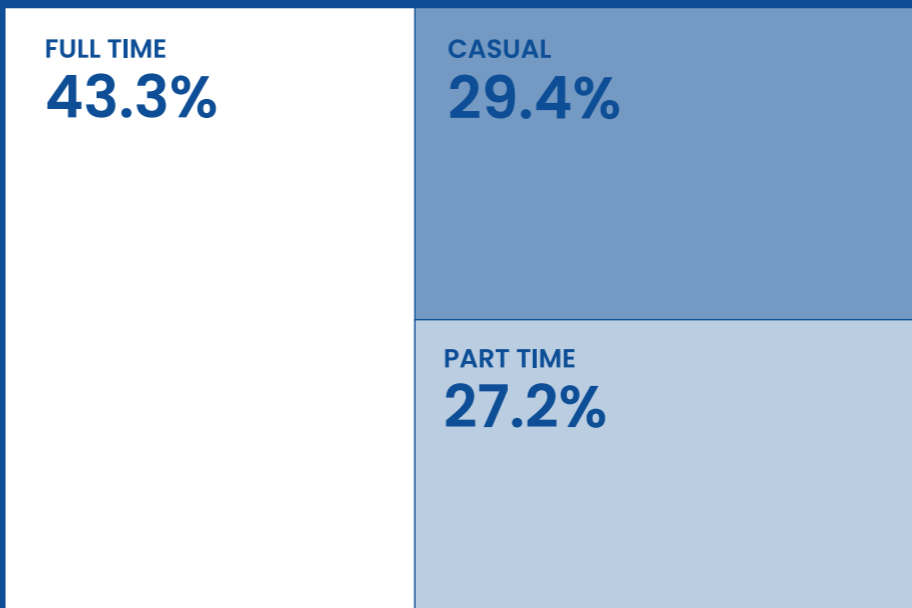
Our employees and volunteers are the core of the Communities at Work community. We are dedicated to ensuring our community is happy, healthy and resilient, so we continually seek to implement new and innovative ways to support our staff and volunteers and improve the workplace.

Our workforce brings a wide range of skills to our organisation that strengthen our relationships across the ACT and community sector. Staff shortages in a tight labour market made it hard to meet demand, but we streamlined recruitment and onboarding to improve the employee experience.

Several major achievements during the financial year have all contributed to attracting and retaining skilled staff. This year, we continued the Emerging Leaders Program to build good leadership skills and introduced DocuSign to speed up onboarding and fill vacancies faster. We also refined policies and procedures under our three Enterprise Agreements.

We remain committed to a safe, inclusive workplace, supporting managers and staff to resolve complex grievances in a sensitive and timely way.

### OUR WORKFORCE BY WORK TYPE



**568**  
Employees

**142**  
Volunteers

# Our Exceptional Employees

We're so proud of our employees' exceptional commitment, dedication and positive impact they have on the lives of those around them. Throughout the year, our employees were acknowledged by their sector, being winners, finalists or nominees at numerous ACT and national awards.

## 2024 COMMUNITIES AT WORK STAFF AND VOLUNTEER AWARDS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| CEO Award                                    | <b>Farah Junaid</b> , Taylor ECEC                      |
| Executive's Choice Award                     | <b>Melita Pendergast</b> , Capital Hill ECEC           |
| Teamwork Award                               | <b>Educational Leader Network</b>                      |
| Communities at Work Values Award             | <b>Rebecca (Bec) Leader</b> , Richardson ECEC          |
| Unsung Hero Award                            | <b>Grace Wilson-Dennis</b> , Assets and Infrastructure |
| Employees' Choice Award                      | <b>Thi Ngan Ho</b> , Abacus ECEC                       |
| Community Services Support Award             | <b>Community Centres, Reception Teams</b>              |
| Volunteer of the Year                        | <b>Karen Mcqualter</b>                                 |
| Learner of the Year Award                    | <b>Kajal</b> , Taylor ECEC                             |
| ECEC Educator of the Year Award              | <b>Kristine Pedraja</b> , Taylor ECEC                  |
| OSHC Educator of the Year Award              | <b>Chloe Warwick</b> , Bonython OSHC                   |
| Children's Services Support Award            | <b>CSET Team</b>                                       |
| Galilee School Employee of the Year          | <b>Olivia Wells</b>                                    |
| Organisational Support Award                 | <b>Kahly Dean</b>                                      |
| RTO Trainer of the Year                      | <b>Navjot Sidhu</b> , CPLE                             |
| Safety Champion Award                        | <b>WHS Committee</b>                                   |
| Children's Services Quality Commitment Award | <b>Charles Weston</b> OSHC                             |



## Story

Farah Junaid embodies Communities at Work's purpose: "We are community-focused and person-centred in meeting diverse community needs." Her compassion, commitment, and dedication make her a truly deserving recipient of the 2024 Communities at Work CEO's Choice Award.

As Centre Manager at Taylor Child Care & Education Centre, Farah ensures a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for colleagues and families. She goes above and beyond to support her team's growth, instilling confidence and unity. Farah also works closely with families, connecting them to resources and support networks, fostering strong, trusting relationships.

Her passion for children's learning shines through every interaction and program, creating an environment where children feel safe, loved, and engaged. Farah's warmth, leadership, and focus on quality exemplify the very best of Communities at Work. She is an invaluable asset to her centre and our organisation.



Some of the many activities we engaged in included

- \* International Women's Day
- \* Harmony Week
- \* National Reconciliation Week
- \* NAIDOC Week
- \* Cultural awareness days
- \* Children's Week
- \* Neighbour Day
- \* LGBTIQ awareness.

## Inclusion and Diversity

Through our programs, partnerships, and workplace culture, we are committed to breaking down barriers, celebrating differences, and building a more inclusive Canberra. Throughout the year we celebrated diversity and inclusion across our organisation, creating safe spaces where everyone felt valued, respected, and supported to belong and thrive in our community.

## Workplace, Health & Safety

We strengthened our commitment to safety and wellbeing by improving controls for psychosocial risks, closing audit gaps, and boosting early risk identification. This helped us achieve over 90% WHS compliance, reduce serious incidents, and expand wellbeing and leadership initiatives.

We also improved emergency management through better facilities, training, and teamwork led by our Emergency Planning Committees and leadership teams. With new Board-endorsed WHS goals, we remain committed to keeping our services and teams safe and resilient.

Over  
**90%**  
WHS audit  
compliance

# Our Volunteers

Our volunteer program recruits, onboards and supports our volunteers in our wider programs.

Our 142 volunteers are an essential and highly valued part of many of our services, creating hope and a safe, welcoming space for vulnerable people. In 2024-25, these included our two community pantries in Gungahlin and Tuggeranong, van runs to collect food donations, Best Dressed Store op shop, Christmas Appeal and general support across our programs. We couldn't deliver these vital services without them – and we're so grateful!



## REPRESENTATION IN COMMUNITY

Volunteering ACT Sector Networking, including Innovation in Volunteer Management.

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

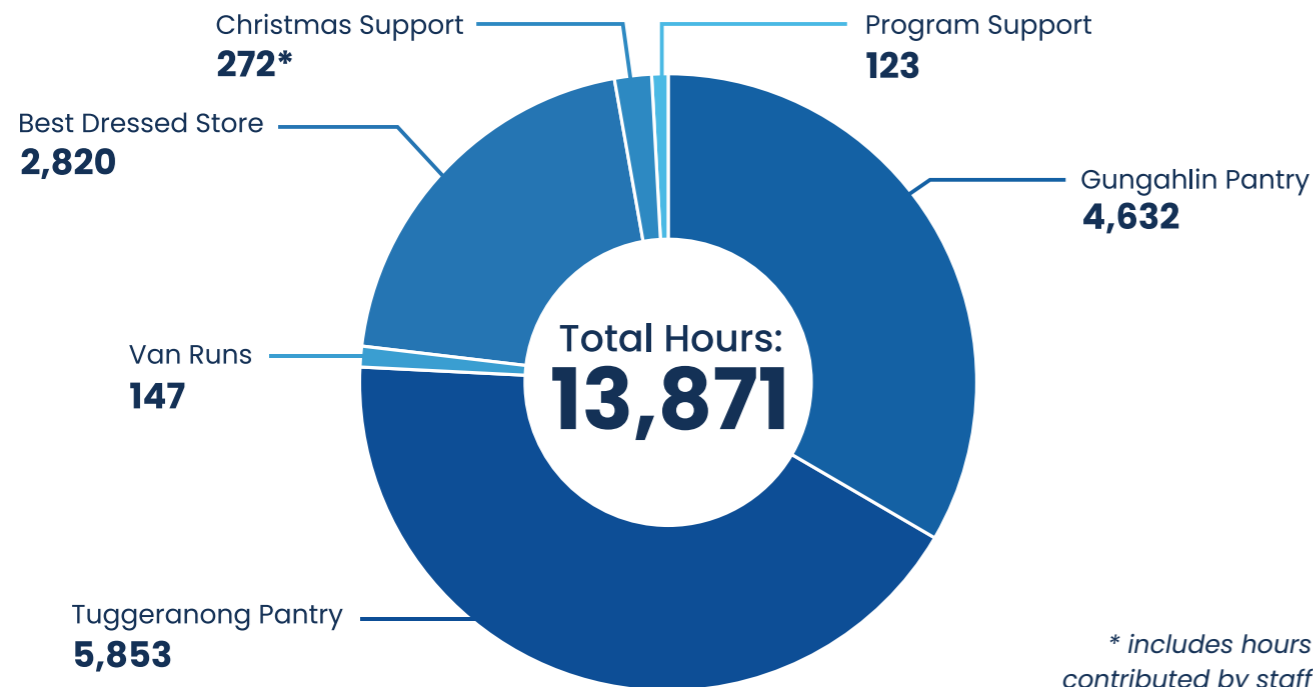
In May, we celebrated National Volunteer Week to recognise the generosity and impact of the volunteers who power our programs. We marked the week with heartfelt thanks in our programs through thank you banners, shout-outs, certificates and small gifts—alongside social events.

These celebrations honoured the time, skills and kindness volunteers contributed to our programs and reaffirmed our culture of gratitude.

To every volunteer: thank you for helping us reach more people, reduce isolation and deliver safe, welcoming services.

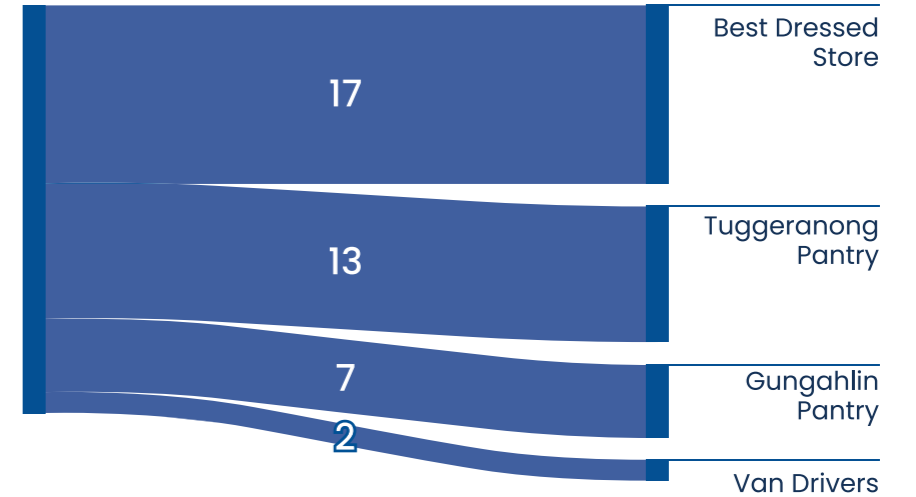
## INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

In December we celebrated International Volunteer Day through a social event to thank and celebrate the end of another great year.



## VOLUNTEERS ONBOARDED

We welcomed **39** new volunteers to Communities at Work:



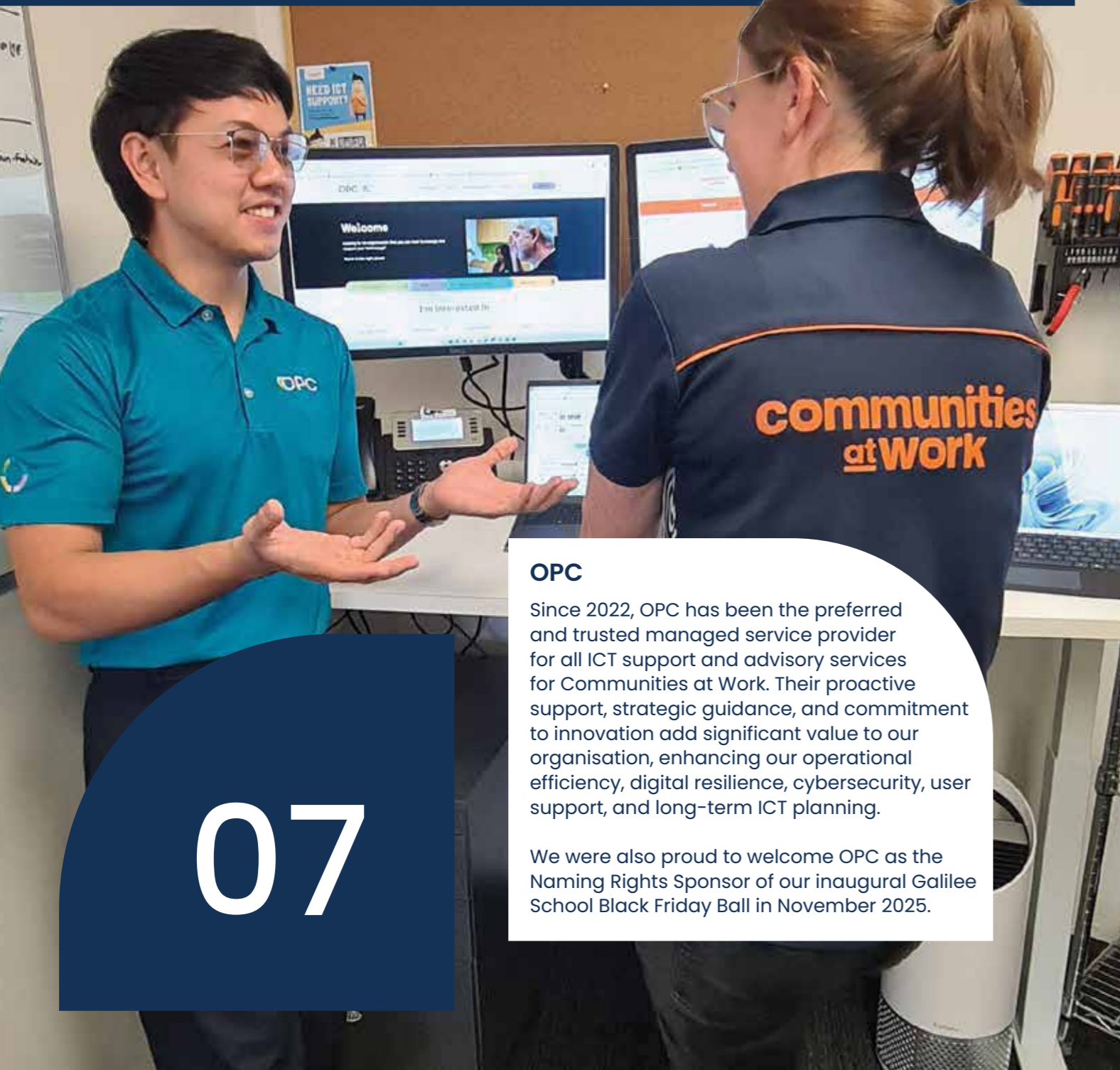
“Volunteers treat me like a person and are so friendly and know their jobs. They work really hard and nothing is a bother. I look forward to seeing them when I come in.”  
 – PANTRY CLIENT

**142** volunteers donated **13,871** hours to help run our services

That's **\$651,382** in-kind volunteer hours\*

\* based on Volunteering ACT website calculator

# Our Partners & Supporters



## OPC

Since 2022, OPC has been the preferred and trusted managed service provider for all ICT support and advisory services for Communities at Work. Their proactive support, strategic guidance, and commitment to innovation add significant value to our organisation, enhancing our operational efficiency, digital resilience, cybersecurity, user support, and long-term ICT planning.

We were also proud to welcome OPC as the Naming Rights Sponsor of our inaugural Galilee School Black Friday Ball in November 2025.

# 07

## Supporter Stories

Every donation makes a difference. We are very grateful to all our partners, supporters and donors who gave money, materials, time or advice during 2024-25 to help us continue supporting our community.

### EARLY LEARNING CONNECTION

This year Cple partnered with Early Learning Connection to offer Skilled Capital Funded places to eight of our Family Day Care educators eager to study the Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care. Early Learning Connection provided additional wrap-around support, including financial assistance to pay for the Government-stipulated enrolment fee. This support gave our Family Day Care educators a unique opportunity to overcome financial barriers to their educational career journey.



### LIBRARIES ACT

Our Community Development team partnered with Libraries ACT to create Canberra's first Human Library event, innovatively connecting people in our community. As Sarah Steed from Libraries ACT said: "The Human Library concept aligns so well with what public libraries do in sharing stories and promoting diversity and inclusion. Using one of our library branches as the venue made that connection clear, and we were pleased to be able to contribute to such a valuable community event".

### TOTAL PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

Galilee School has enjoyed a great long-term connection with Total Project Construction. Their project leadership has been instrumental in the Master Plan transformation of our Kambah Campus. The TPC team operate within a culture of excellence and generosity, often willing to do that little bit more when circumstances allow. Their generous Gold Sponsorship of our inaugural Black Friday Ball is invaluable in providing vital educational resources and services to our vulnerable students.



# Fundraising Appeals

Our annual Winter and Christmas Appeals show the power of community to care and support one another by donating food, clothing, and gifts to people in need. Just as importantly, these Appeals offer dignity, hope, and connection during tough times.

## WINTER APPEAL

Each winter, we launch a three-month appeal, calling for donations of money, food and warm clothing to help make winter a little easier for people in need. We use the financial donations to buy food and essential items for our community pantries and to provide emergency relief through our crisis support program.



*Today I had my Christmas present shop at Communities at Work. When I got home, I was nearly in tears with relief. I know my kids will absolutely love what I got from there! I even got myself a nice perfume. This year Santa won't be taking all the credit - it will be from Santa and Communities at Work!*

*The best part is that not once did I feel judged. The workers made it a nice Christmas-themed environment, explained what to do and off you went. They were so busy, yet they still had a smile. Thank you so very much.*

— CHRISTMAS APPEAL CLIENT



## 2024 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

**\$16,147**  
financial donations

**3,029**  
people received  
Christmas  
gifts across  
**716**  
households

**159**  
giving  
trees



## CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We raised \$16,147 in 2024 and received gift and food donations from 159 giving tree hosts and individuals across the Canberra region. Thanks to this generosity, we were able to help 3,029 people in need select food and gifts from our 'Christmas Rooms' at Tuggeranong and Gungahlin. A huge thanks also to our staff and volunteers for managing the large influx of donations.

A major contributor to our success was our wonderful partnership with Mix 106.3 and Transport Canberra. Their Pack the Bus fundraising drive, now in its fourth year, brought in 80% of our total donations. A huge effort - thank you!! Thanks also to the seven commercial partners of Pack the Bus. Without their support, the bus wouldn't have gotten on the road.

## THANKS TO OUR CHRISTMAS APPEAL DONORS

- \* Pack the Bus
- \* Shopping centres
- \* Government departments
- \* Businesses
- \* Community groups
- \* Schools
- \* Our Children's Services
- \* Individuals

## PACK THE BUS 2024

Drove **2,000 kms** to collect donations from **14** schools **over 3 weeks** and **63** businesses

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

- Alexander Watson Insulation
- Audi Canberra
- Blumers Lawyers
- Icon Water
- IGA
- Parbery Canberra
- Solace Creations

communities  
atWork

09

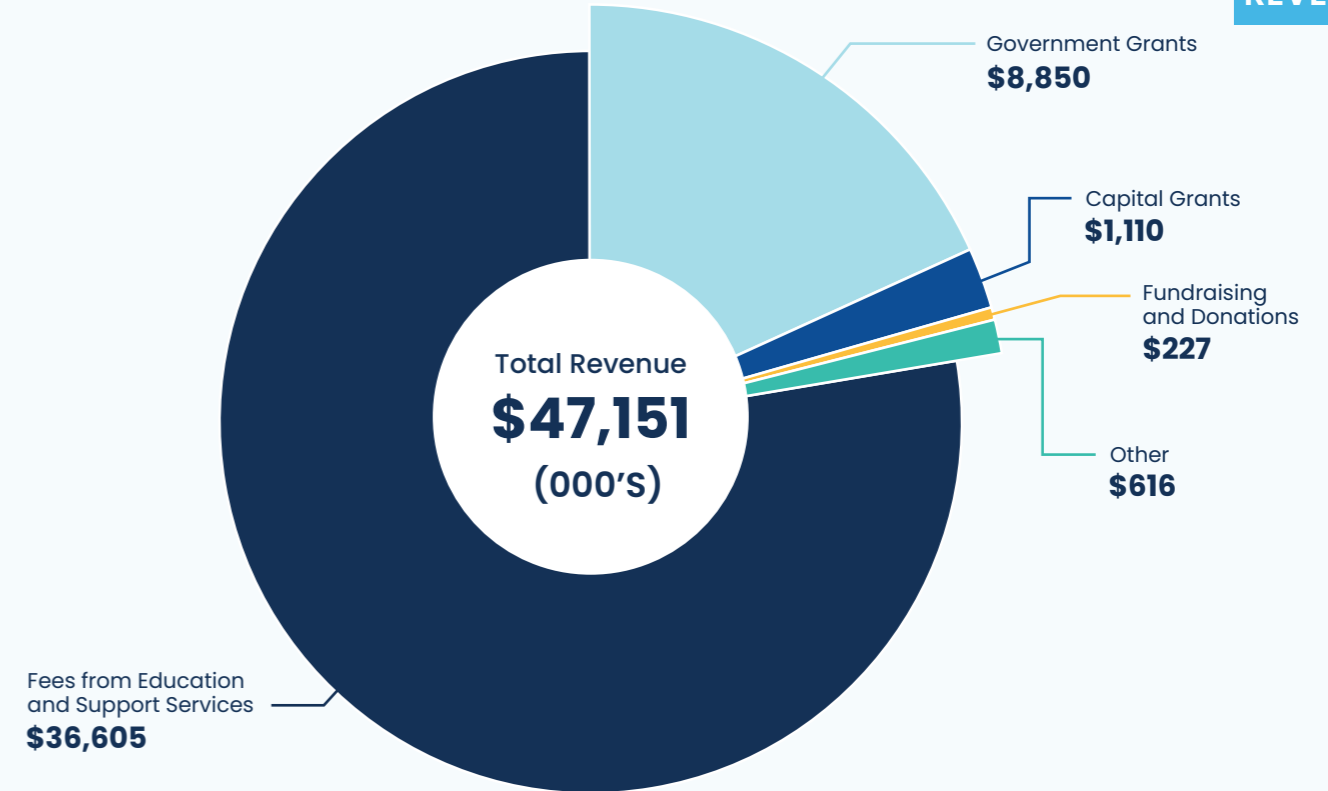
# Finances



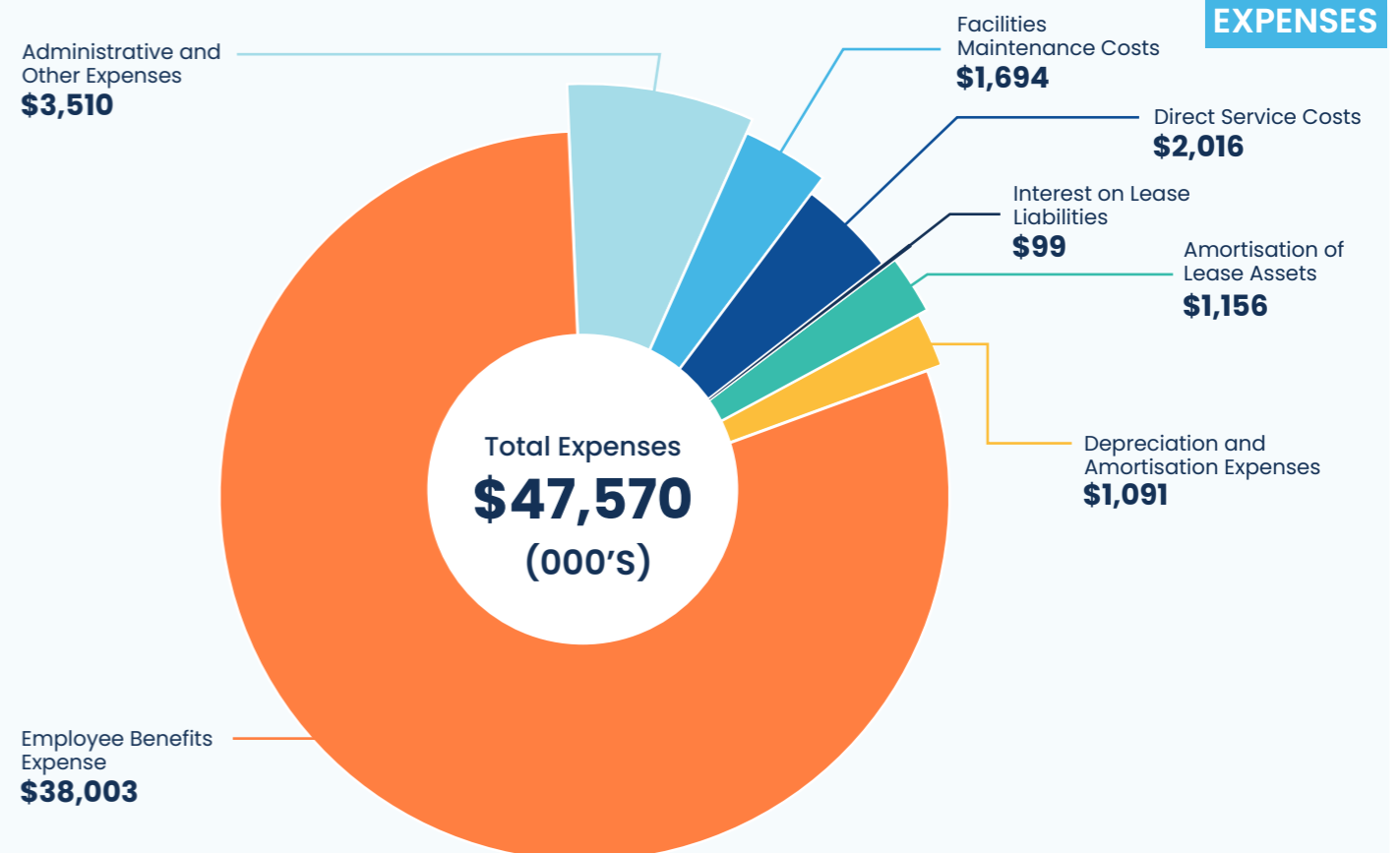
## Revenue and Expenses

Our full financial statements are available on our website at [commsatwork.org](http://commsatwork.org)

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES





# Get Involved!

## Fundraise

Fundraise by organising an activity through your business, work or school.



## Partner

Partner with us and enhance your reputation, build stakeholder loyalty and closely connect with the community.



## Donate

Donate with a tax deductible donation.



### Every little bit helps.

Together, we can make an even bigger impact on the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in need, and those with disabilities.



## Support

Support our Winter and Christmas Appeals.



## Volunteer

Volunteer and share your skills and experience, while doing and feeling good.



## Sponsor

Sponsor us financially or through in-kind support with goods and services.



**Tuggeranong Community Centre**

245 Cowlshaw St, Greenway ACT 2900

**Gungahlin Community Centre**

47 Ernest Cavanagh St, Gungahlin ACT 2912

**Denman Village Community Centre**

5 Felstead Vista, Denman Prospect ACT 2611

**Communities at Work – John Turner Building**

172 Dixon Drive, Holder ACT 2611

**communities  
atwork**

 (02) 6293 6500

 [commsatwork.org](http://commsatwork.org)

 [admin@commsatwork.org](mailto:admin@commsatwork.org)

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