



Annual Review 2017-18



Giving kids a second chance at childhood



ACT FOR KIDS ANNUAL REVIEW 2017-18



ABOUT ACT FOR KIDS

Act for Kids is an Australian charity providing free professional therapy and support services to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect in Australia.

Through prevention, treatment, research, education and advocacy, we are committed to supporting thousands of children, young people and their families.

OUR PURPOSE

To prevent and treat child abuse and neglect.

OUR VISION

All kids have a safe and happy childhood, free from abuse and neglect.

OUR VALUES

We are a professional, ethical team who is caring, courageous and collaborative.



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CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT THE FACTS

379,459 REPORTS

In 2016–17 alone there were 379,459 reports made to child protection authorities in Australia.

49,315 KIDS CONFIRMED

In that same 12 months 49,315 children were confirmed to have suffered abuse or neglect.

That's one child every 11 minutes.



MOST COMMON SOURCE OF CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATIONS

Police 21%	School personnel 19%	Social workers 13%	Medical/health personnel 12%
Family 10%	Local services 6%	Friend/ neighbour 17%	Other 17%

Less than 1% of reports came directly from the child involved.

NATIONALLY,

emotional abuse was the most common primary type of abuse substantiated for children



CHILDREN UNDER 12 MONTHS

were most likely to suffer abuse or neglect

The number of children receiving child protection services in the last 5 years.

risen by 25%

ABUSED OR NEGLECTED

breakdown by state

NSW	18,919	SA	1,526
VIC	15,488	NT	1,910
QLD	5,767	TA	755
WA	4,633	ACT	317

27% OF AUSTRALIANS

are not confident they could spot the signs of abuse and neglect

1 IN 10

have admitted to ignoring a potential abuse situation and not doing anything

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remain

7X MORE LIKELY

to have received child protection services.

CEO AND CHAIRMAN REPORT

We are humbled to report this past financial year has been one of our busiest yet as we not only celebrated our 30th anniversary, but also a 17% increase in the number of kids and families we've been able to support. During 2017-18, we worked with 40,128 children and families and delivered vital therapy, intervention and education services to help us work towards our collective goal – to keep all children safe from abuse and neglect.

Act for Kids now operates out of 26 dedicated centres and provides remote outreach services nationally, with a team of over 380 staff providing support for vulnerable kids and families. This growth has largely been possible due to an increase in funding from sponsors, successful grants and tenders and strategic guidance from our Board. We have expanded our footprint on the Gold Coast to include Coomera and Nerang and opened a new Intensive Family Support (IFS) service in Rockhampton on behalf of the Queensland Government. Most recently, we have opened the doors to our first Victorian centre, where we will be delivering our Integrated Therapy Service to children and families in and around Broadmeadows.

Our social enterprise Youthrive continues to gain momentum, operating out of four sites with 25 team members and undergoing an organisational restructure to support future growth. In the last five years, Youthrive has seen over 2,800 children, offering fee-paying integrated therapy services, with all profits returned to Act for Kids.

The Corporate Support team remains committed to running Act for Kids efficiently and productively, with a strong focus on achieving our strategic initiatives aligned to a changing and growing business. The appointment of a Compliance Coordinator to improve compliance frameworks and systems will ensure we are able to maintain our high standards of protecting children and operating child safe centres. A Procurement and Support Services Manager has been engaged to deliver, manage, review and enhance Act for Kids' procurement and business infrastructure support to ensure optimal operational efficiency.

On the front line, we have introduced a number of new programs and services to broaden our reach and allow us to help more families. In partnership with the Queensland Government, we are running the SafeCare pilot program on the Gold Coast to provide in-home support to first-time parents and young families. We have established three new Assessment and Service Connect teams in Queensland to work in collaboration with Child

Safety Services so that children and families in crisis receive access to the right services at the right time to ensure children are cared for, protected, safe and able to reach their full potential.

Our corporate partners and sponsors remain the backbone of many of our initiatives, providing us with vital funding to employ the best therapists to deliver our services. The Vita Foundation – the philanthropic arm of Vita Group – continues to fund the national delivery of our *Learn to be safe with Emmy & friends* program, helping us teach over 9,600 children vital protective behaviours skills last year. In addition, Vita Foundation was the naming sponsor at our 30th Anniversary Gala Ball and their input allowed us to create a night that was truly unforgettable.

Our long-term relationships with Mercedes-Benz Brisbane, Auto & General and Subway continue to deliver valuable untied funds, allowing us to expand and grow our Integrated Therapy Services nationally.

Our partnership with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation continues to thrive, as they generously fund the Walk Tall program. This enables us to provide counselling and emotional support to children and adolescents on the Sunshine Coast and in Ipswich who have experienced or are at risk of physical, emotional and sexual harm.

The Bryan Foundation continued to provide funding for therapists in Brisbane and Townsville, allowing us to deliver counselling services across both regions. The Future Generation Investment Company (FGX) provided over \$185,000 during the financial year to support our services in Adelaide and Ipswich. This significant contribution allowed us to increase our therapy hours and reduce the number of kids and families on our wait lists.

Our Blacktown Integrated Therapy Service in Western Sydney is approaching three years of operation thanks to the ongoing commitment from the Wilson Foundation. We are also delighted to have received additional funding for therapy hours from the Property Industry Foundation. In the last financial year, our Blacktown therapists have seen 87 children and worked with them to address their individual complex needs related to trauma, abuse and neglect.

For the third time, the Mental Health Academy supported Act for Kids with profits raised from the Mental Health Super Summit. Over the last three years, over 6,500 professionals have taken part

in the unique online conference and raised over \$365,000 of untied funds to support the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

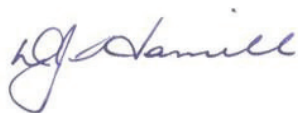
During 2017-18, we were delighted to host not one, but two Trek for Kids fundraisers. The first took eight trekkers half way across the world to tackle the Great Wall of China; the second sent ten inspirational business leaders to the South Australian Arkaba Trail for our inaugural 'Women in Business' Trek. Together, these treks raised over \$155,000 which is enough to fund 1,550 therapy hours for vulnerable kids.

This year, we commemorate 30 years of working to treat and prevent child abuse and neglect and our 30th Anniversary Gala Ball in May was truly a night of celebration. Proudly presented by the Vita Foundation, over \$100,000 was raised by over 630 guests in attendance. Thank you to our sponsors Mercedes-Benz Brisbane, Minor Hotels, Xennox Diamonds, Budget Direct, Brisbane Arts Theatre and Expose Media as well as all of the volunteers and supporters who made this special night a huge success!

To all of our sponsors, partners and pro bono supporters we say a heartfelt thanks. What a difference you have made in thousands of children's lives. We truly appreciate all those who volunteer their time and resources to help us make a difference. To our Ambassadors who network, fundraise and educate on our behalf, we thank you. Finally, to our committed staff and Board who continue to ensure Act for Kids remains a successful 'for purpose' organisation, working together in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect across Australia, we thank you. Now, let's do it all over again.



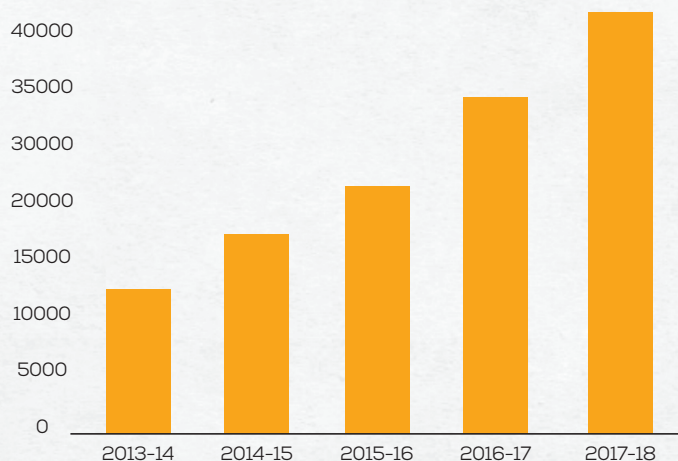
Dr Neil Carrington
CEO

Dr David Hamill AM,
Chairman



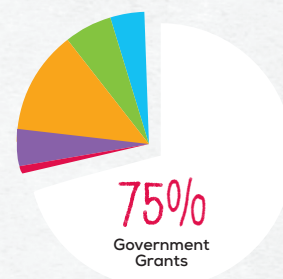
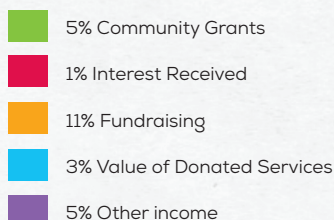
IN THE LAST 5 YEARS, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVING ACT FOR KIDS SERVICES HAS GROWN BY 2820%



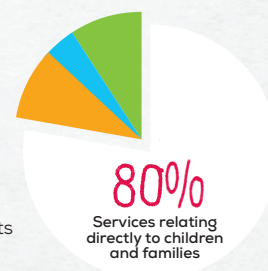
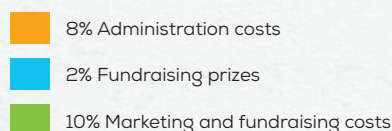
FINANCIAL STATS


OVER 80% spent directly ON SERVICES
RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OVER \$1,417,000 IN PRO-BONO SUPPORT

Revenue 2018



Expenses





Ryder's Story

Ryder was just 5 years old when we met him. He was living with his Aunt after experiencing severe emotional abuse and neglect at home. Ryder had never met his dad and his mum was experiencing extreme mental health challenges. One minute mum completely ignored him and the next, screamed at him and blamed him for anything and everything. As a result, Ryder's emotional responses were amongst the most poorly regulated we've ever seen...

In therapy, Ryder's behaviour was incredibly hard to manage and his therapists struggled to keep him engaged for longer than 20 minutes. Within one short therapy session, Ryder would be laughing and smiling, then screaming and provoking his therapist. He would also crawl on the floor and act like a dog for hours at a time.

The trauma he'd experienced in his short life had caused him to become hypervigilant to sound, and simple triggers, such as a door closing unexpectedly, would cause him to bolt. He also displayed troubling sexualised behaviours.

Ryder wasn't a 'naughty' kid, he was a triggered and neglected little boy, who just craved a connection but didn't know how to ask for it. As a result, he resorted to provoking those in his life to gain reactions...

Our therapists worked with Ryder using structured relationship building and tried to help him understand that his mistreatment was not his fault. We worked with his school and his teacher to try and manage his disruptive classroom behaviours.

We worked with Ryder and his Aunt for over 18 months and over time, began to observe little breakthroughs and big milestones. We were able to improve Ryder's ability to regulate his behaviours, which meant he was able to engage in sessions that lasted for an hour, as opposed to just twenty minutes. This was a big win for Ryder and this therapy team!

But the biggest breakthrough for Ryder happened one day in a session with his Psychologist. He grabbed a set of phones and gave one to his therapist, saying "Your mum's on the phone".

Our therapist answered and pretended to talk to 'Mum'. "Hi Mum," she said.

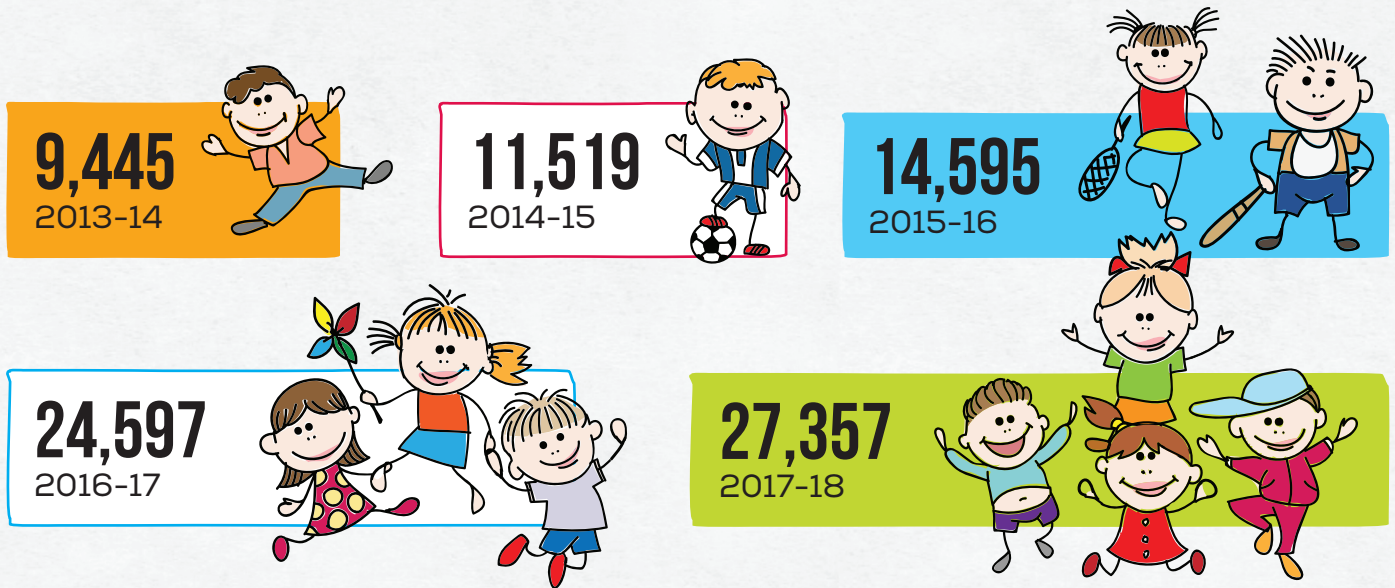
Ryder replied, "You can't live with me, you're naughty."

Our therapist responded, "No Mum, you can't look after me."

Ryder whispered to his therapist, "It's not my fault?"

Realising that his mother's mental health challenges and his not being able to live with her anymore had nothing to do with him was a turning point for Ryder. It wasn't his fault and he wasn't a 'naughty boy'. From that moment, Ryder made amazing progress in therapy, at home and at school. His disruptive behaviours decreased and he learned how to seek connections with those around him in socially appropriate ways. Ryder will still need some support along the way, but thanks to the support and generosity of people like you, he will go on to have a safe and happy childhood.

IN 2017-18, WE WORKED WITH 27,357 KIDS! THAT'S AN INCREASE OF 11% ON THE YEAR PRIOR



The Integrated Therapy Service (ITS) is for children, young people, their families and/or carers who have behavioural, emotional and/or developmental difficulties due to trauma from abuse and neglect. A full integrated team comprises speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and psychologists. Our multidisciplinary approach offers children a wraparound service to address all of their developmental delays, provide in-school support and help them achieve the best possible outcomes to go on and live a safe and happy childhood.

Our Integrated Therapy model continues to be a highly sought-after service due to the unique nature of our program. We currently deliver it from five centres nationally and it is philanthropically funded.

Our long-term relationships with Mercedes-Benz Brisbane, Auto & General and Subway continue to deliver valuable untied funds, allowing us to expand and grow our Integrated Therapy Services nationally.

We'd like to acknowledge the many kind organisations that support the work we do, including the Wilson Foundation, the Property Industry Foundation, the Property Council of Australia, the Courier Mail Children's Fund, and the Commbank Centenary Grants program, to name just a few.

We also continue to work in partnership with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, which so generously funds the Walk Tall Program.

Walk Tall provides counselling and emotional support to children and adolescents who have either experienced or are at risk of physical, emotional or sexual harm. We also specialise in working with victims of crime and trauma.

**WE DELIVERED
INTEGRATED THERAPY
TO 3,165 KIDS,
AN INCREASE OF
60%
ON THE YEAR BEFORE.**

WE WORKED WITH **40,128** PEOPLE DURING 2017-18,
AN INCREASE OF **170%** ON THE YEAR PRIOR.

13,349
2013-14



15,868
2014-15



21,698
2015-16



34,324
2016-17



40,128
2017-18



2017-18 saw a huge expansion in our early intervention programs. Thriving government relationships and many successful tenders have enabled us to open new centres in Queensland and pilot new programs, allowing us to make a greater impact in the lives of Australian children and families.

The Intensive Family Support (IFS) program continues to provide case management support to families at risk of entering the statutory child protection system. This year we opened our first centre in Rockhampton, delivering the IFS program to local families. The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women also committed to providing five-year funding for our IFS centres in Cairns and Roma. A special thanks to the Russell McKimmin Charitable Trust for their generous support this financial year.

Funded by the Queensland Department of Education, one of our newest services in Toowoomba, Roma and on the Gold Coast is Pathways for Early Learning and Development (PELD). Our littlest IFS clients aged 0 to 5 with multiple and complex needs (as identified by our

IFS Team) participate in a specialised playgroup along with a parent or carer. The PELD program focuses on supporting children and parents' social interactions and preparing them to transition to a mainstream kindergarten or prep.

We have established three new Assessment and Service Connect teams in Queensland to work in collaboration with Child Safety so that children and families in crisis receive access to the right services at the right time to ensure children are cared for, protected, safe and able to reach their full potential.

Finally, we are thrilled to be part of the innovative SafeCare pilot on the Gold Coast. SafeCare is an evidence-based, parent training curriculum for parents of children aged 0-5 who are at-risk of or have been reported for child neglect or physical abuse. Our certified SafeCare team work with families in their homes to improve parents' skills in three areas: parent-infant/child interaction skills, health care skills, and home safety. The program is delivered across 20 weeks and may be provided in conjunction with other services.

IN THE **EARLY INTERVENTION** SPACE, WE WORKED WITH
25,855 PEOPLE TO HELP THEM GET BACK ON TRACK.
THAT'S A **250%** INCREASE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

IN 2017-18 WE TAUGHT 9,600 GRADE ONE STUDENTS HOW TO ASK FOR HELP IF THEY FEEL UNSAFE

Thanks to the support of the Vita Foundation, the *Learn to be safe with Emmy & friends* protective behaviours program is delivered in schools to Grade One students nationally and teaches children:

- **HOW TO IDENTIFY THEIR EARLY WARNING SIGNS**
- **SAFE AND UNSAFE SITUATIONS**
- **PERSONAL AND PRIVATE BODY PARTS**
- **SAFE AND UNSAFE SECRETS**
- **WHAT TO DO IF THEY FEEL UNSAFE AND HOW TO IDENTIFY SAFE ADULTS.**

After the successful pilot evaluation of *Learn to be safe with Emmy and friends*, Act for Kids collaborated with Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology and James Cook University on an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant application for a full evaluation of the program.

The research conducted is the very first large, multi-site randomised controlled trial of a school-based protective behaviours program in Australia, and one of very few in the world to undergo gold-standard experimental

research on its effectiveness. This demonstrates our commitment to delivering a service that is proven to be effective and provide positive and long-term outcomes for kids.

Compared to children who have not participated in the program, children who completed *Learn to be safe with Emmy & friends* demonstrated increased knowledge of interpersonal safety, improved safety-related behaviours, retention of concepts learned during the program and most importantly, an increase of confidence in disclosing harm.

The findings demonstrate that children as young as 5 and 6 years old are readily able to learn protective behaviours, retain the information over time and utilise the knowledge if necessary.



LAST YEAR 113 KIDS STAYED AT OUR SAFEKIDS SAFE HOUSES!

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people under child protection orders or investigation are placed in care outside of their communities, making it impossible to maintain family, community and cultural connections. The Act for Kids Safe Houses operate in community to keep children safe whilst allowing them to remain close to family and build on their cultural connections. Our SafeKIDS program operates in Cairns, as well as in some of the most remote communities in Australia; Aurukun, Doomadgee, Kowanyama, Napranum and Pormpuraaw.

In 2016, Act for Kids began working with James Cook University (JCU) to realise our vision of embedding the Family Wellbeing program across our SafeKIDS safe houses. Our first group of Family Wellbeing facilitators were trained in 2017 and delivered their first workshop to Act for Kids SafeKIDS staff. The workshop was a huge success, delivering practical knowledge to improve the way

we support children and families for better life outcomes. In 2018, the JCU research team have begun reflecting on the learning outcomes from our workshops and evaluating the process of embedding the Family Wellbeing program practises at Act for Kids.



THANKS TO OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS



The contribution of volunteers in both economic and social terms truly can't be measured. We would like to acknowledge our dedicated team of individual and corporate volunteers, Board Directors and students who supported us this year. Thank you for every raffle ticket sold, Christmas present gift-wrapped and donation tin rattled!



THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS



Our generous sponsors give us so much more than money; many also provide pro-bono services and help us spread our message far and wide. Many of their amazing staff also volunteer to help us when we need an extra set of hands.

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mail@actforkids.com.au

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