



Annual Review
2018-19



Giving kids a second chance at **childhood**



ACT FOR KIDS ANNUAL REVIEW 2018-19



ABOUT ACT FOR KIDS

Act for Kids is a 'for-purpose' enterprise providing free evidence-based 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.



EXECUTIVE TEAM

Chief Executive Officer	Dr Neil Carrington
Chief Financial Officer	Mrs Leanne Dreves
Executive Director of Services	Dr Katrina Lines
Executive Director of Service Development	Mr Stephen Beckett
Executive Director of People, Culture and Infrastructure	Ms Koni Hanlon

PATRONS AND AMBASSADORS

Patron	His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland
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Founding Ambassador	Dr David Wood
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Lifetime Ambassador	Kay McGrath
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Ambassadors	Andrew Russell
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Angie Asimus

Anomi Bruynius

Bruce Morcombe

Chantal Togany

Denise Morcombe

Karen Wilson

Kim Skubris

Lesley Dobson

Lesley-Anne Houghton

Maxine Horne

Michael Wilkins

Pedro Gondim

Quentin Flannery

Ram Kangatharan

Sammie O'Brien

Sascha Chandler

Shane Parkins

Sue Clarke

Volunteer Ambassador	Helen McGrory
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Parent Ambassadors	Alecia Stevenson
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Brian McGuckin

Christ Mountford

Gemma Mountford

James Lilley

Paula Lilley

School Principal Ambassadors	Andrew Pierpoint
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Brett Shackleton

Claudine Moncur-White

Elizabeth Foster

Jan Maresca

Jenny Lewis

Kim McNamara

Lisa Morrison

Louise Wilkinson

Mark Breckenridge

Paul Zernike

Wade Haynes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	The Hon Dr David Hamill AM
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Deputy Chairman	Mr John Manning
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Mr Thomas Rice

Mr Emmanuel Pappas

Ms Zoe Newbury

Ms Maria Rampa

Mr Nigel Harris

Mr Berkeley Cox

Dr Ryan Mills

Ms Teleiah Bayfield

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT THE FACTS

OVER 396,000 REPORTS

In one year alone there were more than 396,000 reports made to child protection authorities in Australia.

158,612 CHILDREN RECEIVING CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

One in 35 children received child protection services, and nearly three quarters (72%) of these children were repeat clients.



MOST COMMON SOURCE OF CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATIONS

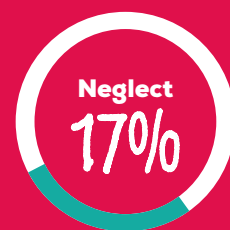
Police 23%	School 19%	Medical professional 13%	Family 9%
Non-Government Organisation 9%	Social worker 8%	Other 7%	



Nationally, only 0.2% of notifications came directly from the child involved.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

was the most common primary type of abuse experienced by 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 110%

ABUSED OR NEGLECTED

breakdown by state

VIC	17,245	NT	1,744
QLD	5,884	TA	702
WA	4,530	ACT	277
SA	1,649		

*Excludes NSW, which provided limited data.

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
8X MORE LIKELY
to have received child
protection services.

CEO AND CHAIRMAN REPORT

It gives us great pleasure to report that this past financial year has seen Act for Kids deliver support, education and therapy services to 46,084 children, parents and carers nationally. This is a 339% increase over six years and we are immensely proud of that achievement. This year, we have continued to focus on what we do best... giving vulnerable kids a second chance at childhood.

With a team of over 400 staff, Act for Kids now operates out of 26 dedicated centres across four states and we also provide remote outreach services. This growth has only been possible due to increasing support from our growing band of supporters, our success in achieving grants and winning tenders for service contracts, the commitment of our staff and strategic guidance from our Board.

Our social enterprise You thrive continues to gain momentum, and at the time of writing, we are preparing for the opening of our fifth clinic in Everton Hills. In the last six years, You thrive has helped over 3,800 children, offering fee-paying integrated therapy services with all profits returned to Act for Kids.

The Corporate Support team remain 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. A procurement team 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 new programs and services to broaden our reach and allow us to help more families. In 2018, we opened the doors to our first Victorian centre, delivering our Integrated Therapy Service to children and families in and around Broadmeadows in Melbourne's north.

We established three new Assessment and Service Connect (ASC) teams in Holland Park West, Townsville and Mackay. ASC works in collaboration with Child Safety to ensure children and families in crisis receive access to the right services at the right time.

Our corporate partners and sponsors remain the backbone of many of our initiatives, providing us with vital funds 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 and Friends program, helping us teach over

10,000 children how to keep themselves safe last year.

Our long-term relationships with Auto & General and Subway continue to deliver valuable financial support that has allowed us to expand and grow our Integrated Therapy Service nationally.

Our partnership with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation continues to thrive, through their generous support for the Walk Tall program. This enables us to provide counselling and emotional support to children and adolescents on the Sunshine Coast and in Ipswich – children and adolescents 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 \$250,000 during the financial year to support our services in Melbourne and Sydney. This significant contribution allowed us to increase our therapy hours and reduce the number of kids and families on our waitlists.

For the fourth time, the Mental Health Academy supported Act for Kids with profits raised from the Mental Health Super Summit. Over the last four years, over 10,000 professionals have taken part in the unique online conference and raised over \$500,000 to support the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

During 2018-19, we were delighted to host not one, but two Trek for Kids fundraisers. The first took seven trekkers to the untouched Bibbulmun Track in Western Australia; the second sent 27 everyday heroes on an emotional, physical and spiritual journey along the Kokoda trail within the dense jungle of Papua New Guinea. Together, these treks raised over \$281,000, or enough to fund 2,810 therapy hours for vulnerable kids.

Our DecoDANCE Gala Ball in May was truly a night of celebration. Styled by Skyline Landscape Supplies and The Prop House, over \$90,000 was raised on the night by over 410 guests. Thank you to our sponsors Vita Foundation, Mercedes-Benz Brisbane, Minor Hotels, Anthony's Fine Jewellers, Budget Direct, SRJ Walker Wayland and Remserv, as well as all of the volunteers and supporters who made this special night a huge success!

As child abuse and neglect remains one of Australia's biggest and most misunderstood social

problems, Act for Kids prepares to herald in a new era. With Chief Executive Officer Dr Neil Carrington having been at the helm for the past nine years, we are preparing to transition to a new phase of consolidation and growth with a new CEO in 2020.

To all of our partners, sponsors and pro bono supporters we offer 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.



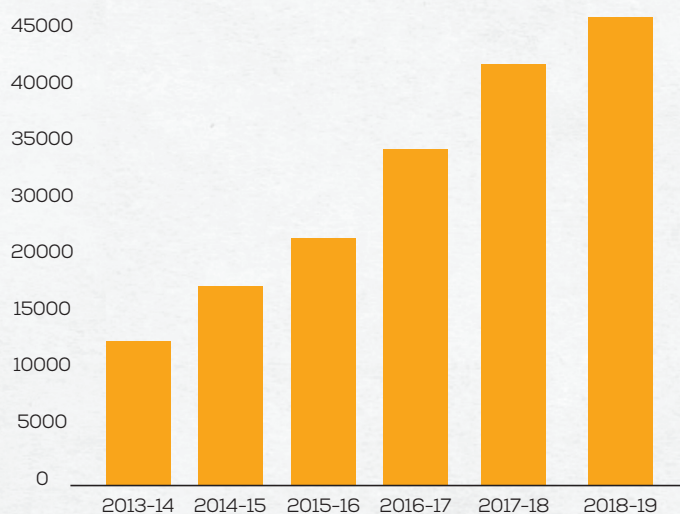
The Hon Dr David Hamill AM, Chairman




**Dr Neil Carrington
CEO**



**IN THE LAST
6 YEARS, THE NUMBER
OF SERVICES DELIVERED BY
ACT FOR KIDS HAS GROWN BY
339%**

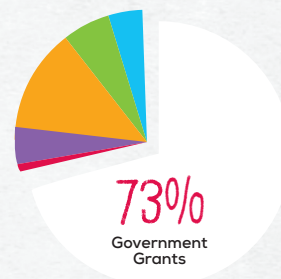
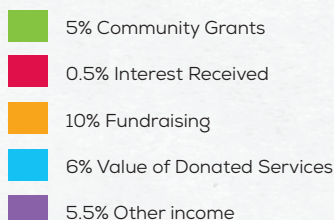


FINANCIAL STATS

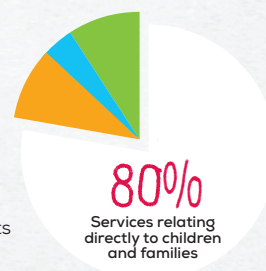
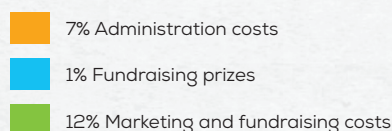


**80% spent directly ON SERVICES
RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Over \$2,799,000 IN PRO-BONO SUPPORT**

Revenue 2019



Expenses





AVA & ZACH

Homeless. Hungry. Helpless.

When authorities removed Ava and Zach from their parents, the siblings left with nothing but the dirty clothes on their backs.

The police reported the children had been living in an abandoned shed with their mother and father, who had both served time in prison for drug offences. There was virtually no food in the makeshift home and both children were malnourished. Drug paraphernalia was discovered throughout the shed, within easy reach of the young children.

Four-year-old Ava and three-year-old Zach were placed into the care of their grandmother, who had no idea the family had been homeless. Within weeks, Grandma would phone Act for Kids, desperately seeking help for the traumatised siblings. Both children had retreated into a world of virtual silence. Neither would look their grandmother in the eye and they barely uttered a word, aside from outbursts of anger and frustration. But, it was the way Zach treated his big sister that troubled Grandma the most.

On multiple occasions, she had seen the boy violently punch, kick and bite his sister. When Grandma would try to comfort Ava, she would scream in terror. She couldn't bear to be touched, even with kindness. Instead, Ava would retreat to a corner of the room and stay there, rocking back and forth, until she calmed herself.

After being assessed by Act for Kids, Ava and Zach met with Amanda, one of our Speech Language Pathologists for their therapy session.

Almost a year later, Amanda and our team are still working with the family.

"The trauma runs deep for these children," Amanda said.

"They had been left in a cot – day and night – and their parents, possibly due to their drug use, didn't talk to them, hold them, play with them or show them love."

"Failure to thrive" is a far-too-common result of childhood neglect. Poor nutrition and disturbed social interactions contribute to inadequate weight gain, delayed development, and abnormal behaviour. Ava and Zach displayed worrying signs of severe failure to thrive.

When Amanda first met Ava and Zach, she was struck by how underweight they appeared. "They were, and still are, very small for their age," describing Ava as looking 'like a little porcelain doll'.

Our integrated therapy team, comprised of speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists and psychologists, use their combined skills to look at the development and functioning of each child and their family.

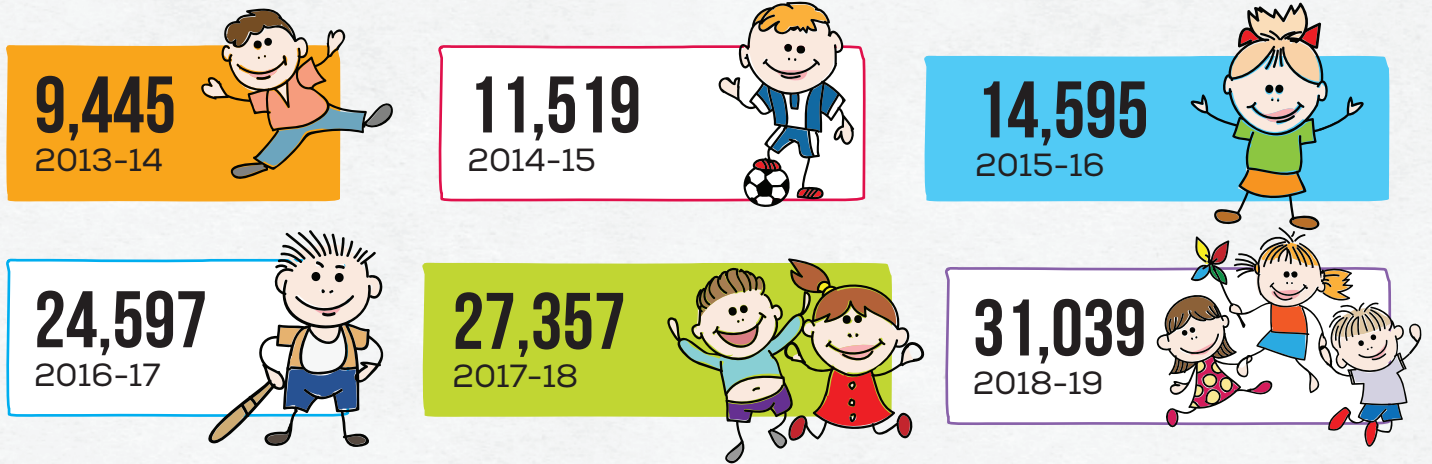
From speech and play therapy to psychological interventions and developing school readiness skills, Act for Kids continues to support this family as the children work their way through the damage caused by their traumatic early years.

Both children are making progress, but there is a long way to go. While they are still somewhat withdrawn, they have learnt new social skills, are now talking, and Zach is having fewer outbursts.

These days, the siblings are helping each other in sessions more, and are better able to identify and share their feelings. To Amanda's surprise and delight, Zach said something to his big sister at a recent therapy session she never imagined she would hear: "I love you!" he declared. That is an incredible emotional breakthrough for a little boy who didn't utter a single word during his first three therapy sessions.

With the help of generous donations and integrated therapy sessions, Ava and Zach are having a second chance at childhood, free from abuse and neglect. Thank you!

IN 2018-19, WE WORKED WITH 31,039 KIDS, AN INCREASE OF 13% ON THE YEAR PRIOR.



Our Integrated Therapy Model continues to be a highly sought-after service due to the unique nature of our program. In 2018, we opened our first Victorian Integrated Therapy Service. A needs analysis was conducted to find the ideal location to bring Act for Kids' services to Victoria and we selected Broadmeadows because it is an area of high need. Thank you to Lendlease and the Property Industry Foundation (PIF) who facilitated the refurbishment on the new centre. We currently deliver the service from six centres nationally and it is philanthropically funded.

The Integrated Therapy Service 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. An integrated team comprises speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and psychologists. Our multidisciplinary approach offers children a wraparound service. We address 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 long-term relationships with Auto & General and Subway continue to deliver valuable funds, allowing us to expand and grow our Integrated Therapy Service nationally.

We were successful in our tender for the Sexual Abuse Counselling and Early Intervention Youth Counselling services in Gladstone and Rockhampton, to provide individual, centre-based and outreach counselling to children

and young people who have experienced sexual abuse or who exhibit sexually reactive behaviour.

We continue to work in partnership with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, who so generously fund 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'd like to acknowledge the many kind organisations that support the work we do, including the Property Council of Australia, the Courier Mail Children's Fund, and the Commbank Centenary Grants program, to name just a few.

WE DELIVERED
INTEGRATED THERAPY
TO **3,878 KIDS**,
AN INCREASE OF
230%
ON THE YEAR BEFORE.

WE WORKED WITH **46,084** CHILDREN, PARENTS AND CARERS
IN 2018-19, A **150%** INCREASE ON THE YEAR PRIOR.

13,349

2013-14



15,868

2014-15



21,698

2015-16



34,324

2016-17



40,128

2017-18



46,084

2018-19



2018-19 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.

Our Intensive Family Support program continues to provide case management support to families at risk of entering the statutory child protection system. We established three new Assessment and Service Connect teams in Holland Park West, Townsville and Mackay. We work in collaboration with Child Safety Services so children and families in crisis receive access to the right services at the right time. This ensures children are cared for, protected, safe and able to reach

their full potential. The team on the Gold Coast were recognised for their contribution to the sector at the 2019 Domestic Violence Prevention Month Awards.

Our SafeCare team reached a milestone of 70 referrals in May 2019, almost 11 months after being operational. SafeCare is an evidence-based, training curriculum for parents of children aged zero to five who are at-risk of or have been reported for child neglect or physical abuse. Our certified SafeCare team continue to work with families in their homes to improve parents' skills in three areas: parent-infant/child interaction skills, health care skills, and home safety. Act for Kids delivers the program across 20 weeks and may be provided in conjunction with other services.

IN THE **EARLY INTERVENTION** SPACE, WE WORKED WITH
30,407 PEOPLE TO HELP THEM GET BACK ON TRACK.
THAT'S AN **180%** INCREASE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

IN 2018-19 WE TAUGHT **10,045** GRADE ONE STUDENTS HOW TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE!

Thanks to the support of the Vita Foundation, the *Learn to be safe with Emmy and 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. This research 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 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 and 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 five and six years old are readily able to learn protective behaviours, retain the information over time and utilise the knowledge if necessary.



LAST YEAR **109 KIDS** STAYED AT OUR SAFEKIDS SAFE HOUSES.

We are celebrating 10 years of keeping kids safe and connected to family, culture and country through our SafeKIDS Program in Far North Queensland. In 10 years, we have provided 62,347 individual nights of care to 461 children.

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. Since 2009, we have provided care to more than 10% of the population in these remote communities.



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! A special shout out to Helen McGrory who was named Act for Kids' very first Volunteer Ambassador.



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 extra sets of hands.

OFFICIAL PARTNERS & GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER SPONSORS



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- McPhees Distribution Services



For more information please call 1300 228 000 or visit our website actforkids.com.au

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To buy tickets in the Act for Kids Platinum Class Lottery call 1300 228 000 or visit platinumclass.com.au