

Annual Review **2019-20**

Preventing and Treating Child Abuse and Neglect

ACT FOR KIDS ANNUAL REVIEW 2019-20

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.

Board of Directors

Chairman	The Hon Dr David Hamill AM
Deputy Chairman	Mr John Manning (until February 2020)
Deputy Chairman	Mr Nigel Harris (from February 2020)
	Mr Thomas Rice
	Mr Emmanuel Pappas
	Mr Berkeley Cox
	Ms Zoe Newbury
	Dr Ryan Mills
	Ms Maria Rampa
	Ms Teleiah Bayfield

Executive team

Chief Executive Officer	Dr Neil Carrington
Chief Financial Officer	Mrs Leanne Dreves
Executive Director of Services	Dr Katrina Lines
Executive Director of Public Affairs, Partnerships and Advocacy	Mr Stephen Beckett
Executive Director of People and Culture	Ms Koni Hanlon

Patrons and ambassadors

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

Ambassadors

	Andrew Russell
	Angie Asimus
	Andy Sutherland
	Anomi Bruynius
	Bruce Morcombe
	Chantal Togany
	Denise Morcombe
	Karen Wilson
	Kim Skubris
	Jon Rouse
	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

Parent Ambassadors

Alecia Stevenson
Brian McGuckin
Chris Mountford
Gemma Mountford
James Lilley
Paula Lilley

School Principal Ambassadors

Andrew Pierpoint
Brett Shackleton
Claudine Moncur-White
Elizabeth Foster
Jan Maresca
Jenny Lewis
Kim McNamara
Lisa Morrison
Louise Wilkinson
Mark Breckenridge
Michelle Bond
Paul Zernike
Wade Haynes

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT THE FACTS

OVER 451,000 REPORTS

In 2019-20, there were 451,184 reports made to child protection authorities in Australia.

47,516 KIDS CONFIRMED

In that same 12 months, 47,516 children were confirmed to have suffered abuse or neglect. That's 130 kids every single day.



MOST COMMON SOURCE OF CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATIONS

Police 21%	School 20%	Medical professional 12%
Family 10%	Social worker 8%	Non-Government Organisation 10%



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

NATIONALLY, EMOTIONAL ABUSE

was the most common primary type of abuse suffered 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 12%

ABUSED OR NEGLECTED breakdown by state

VIC	18,883	SA	1,745
NSW	14,131	NT	1,167
QLD	6,047	TAS	578
WA	4,717	ACT	248

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remain

8X MORE LIKELY

to have received child protection services.

2 THIRDS

of parents are not confident their child knows what to do if they feel unsafe.

94% OF PARENTS

whose children have done a Protective Behaviours program said they found it was effective in helping their children identify safe and unsafe situations.

CEO AND CHAIRMAN REPORT

We are immensely proud to report that Act for Kids helped a significant number of families through one of the most challenging years on record, with nearly 45,000 children, parents and carers benefiting from our services over the 2019-2020 financial year.

A total of 29,135 children took part in the organisation's programs, including 3,617 kids who received therapy and 95 who spent time in our safe houses. This is an exceptional result, considering in the last quarter of the year we were required to enact our Pandemic Response Plan.

The global pandemic saw Act for Kids adapt to and operate off an entirely new model, one that ensured we could still help thousands of vulnerable kids every day, giving them a second chance at childhood. While we had experimented with telehealth in the past, the pandemic and the need for a new way of working fuelled rapid changes to ensure that we offered all children, young people and families telephone and video therapy and family support. Our teams worked hard to test and conduct due diligence on technology platforms, create procedures that ensured client confidentiality and trained hundreds of staff, all within the first three weeks of lockdown. Our team, when required, also visited children and families, following strict physical distancing and safety rules to ensure we had eyes on the most vulnerable kids. We surveyed both clients and our teams to see how they were faring in the midst of the lockdown. We share that information with you later in this report.

Although the numbers of clients we saw in 2019-2020 was slightly decreased from previous years due to the pandemic, some of our services experienced increased demand. Our Intensive Family Support (IFS) program worked with an impressive 31,922 people, an increase of 5% from the previous year.

Despite the last part of 2019-2020 being difficult for us all, Act for Kids continued to grow beyond expectations. We increased our capacity to help through the commencement of new youth sexual abuse services in Gladstone and Rockhampton. The Gold Coast team moved into a new facility in Varsity Lakes in August 2019. We also reached a six-year milestone of helping children and their families in Adelaide, and a five-year milestone of helping children in Ipswich. In an Australian first, we implemented Functional Family Therapy – Therapeutic Case Management, which is an evidence-based model, at the Gold Coast and in Townsville.

Our social enterprise Youthrive grew once again, with the opening of our fifth clinic at Everton Park. The team provided more than 20,000 assessment and therapy sessions this financial year, which is a huge achievement.

Our protective behaviours program, Learn to be Safe with Emmy and Friends was completed by 7,690 grade one children, each more confidently equipped with the tools to identify when they don't feel safe.

Our continued growth in service delivery despite the limitations of COVID-19 was made possible because of an increase in the number of successful grants, tenders, fundraising efforts and sponsorships. The Corporate Support team remained committed to running Act for Kids efficiently and productively achieving strategic initiatives with optimal outcomes for business growth. Unfortunately, the global pandemic meant we needed to rapidly adjust our fundraising events and campaigns with some significant cancellations, including our Annual Gala Ball and all other events.

We were up to the challenge however and we still had great fundraising outcomes. One of our biggest milestones in the 2019-2020 financial year was the I Love Mondays campaign. This was our most successful campaign to date, raising almost one million dollars for children who have suffered abuse and neglect. This was an outstanding result, and the funds raised helped significantly after our annual Gala Ball was cancelled.

Our One Less Present Christmas campaign was also a huge success and raised enough money to provide 1,063 hours of therapy to kids. This campaign was so successful that it was recognised during the Queensland Child Protection Week Awards.

Act for Kids also received the Child Safe Organisation Award for the outstanding implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations at the Queensland Child Protection Week Awards.

Our partnership with the Daniel Morcombe Foundation continued to flourish, with our collaboration on the Walk Tall program. Through Walk Tall, the Daniel Morcombe Foundation funded us to provide crucial counselling and emotional support to hundreds of at-risk children and adolescents.

Our long-term relationship with Auto & General (trading as Budget Direct and Compare the Market) remains one of our strongest partnerships. This financial year they generously donated \$750,000, including a \$500,000 contribution to our I Love Mondays campaign, representing the largest single donation ever received by Act for Kids to help heal little hearts. The majority of the funds they provided helped us to continue to deliver Integrated Therapy Services in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Ipswich, which we usually fund through fundraising activities and events such as the Gala Ball.

The Mental Health Super Summit, a project delivered in conjunction with the Mental Health Academy was also well received in 2019. Over the past 5 editions, 10,000+ mental health professionals have attended the Summit, helping raise \$632,754 for Act for Kids.

The Future Generation Investment Fund was another major supporter of Act for Kids, contributing over \$279,000 in 2019-20. All Future Generation funds go to helping us deliver Integrated Therapy across the country.

This financial year also marked the end of an era, as Act for Kids farewelled Chief Executive Officer Neil Carrington. Neil had been the leading force behind the achievements of Act for Kids for over a decade. He was instrumental in driving the organisation's growth, building strong foundations in the community and with employees. His passion for helping vulnerable children will remain his legacy for many years to come, and we wish him all the very best with his future endeavours.

In May 2020, the Board announced the appointment of Dr Katrina Lines as CEO, to commence in the role on the 31 August 2020. Katrina has been Executive Director of Services for the last ten years and with Act for Kids for 14 years in total. Katrina brings in-depth knowledge of the organisation and children's development and wellbeing, along with credibility and respect within the sector.

In summary, 2019-2020 has been a year of great change for Act for Kids. A beloved leader departed and we weathered one of the greatest storms the world has seen – a once in a hundred year event. Our team has not just overcome the challenges that came our way; we have thrived, grown and matured as an organisation.

We have shown that our dedicated team of more than 450 employees are committed to ensuring the safety and protection of kids across the nation and to helping as many kids as possible have a childhood free from abuse and neglect.

This year especially, we wouldn't have been able to deliver our vision without the invaluable support of our partners, sponsors, volunteers and supporters. We send our biggest heartfelt thank you to each and everyone one of you. We truly appreciate your ongoing support as we continue our purpose to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect.



David Hamill

The Hon Dr David Hamill AM, Chairman



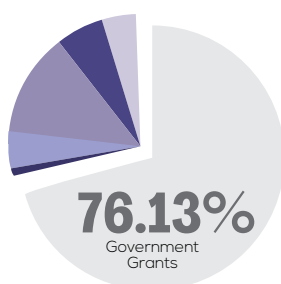
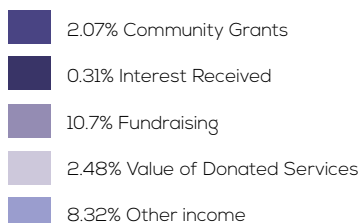
Katrina Lines

**Dr Katrina Lines
CEO**

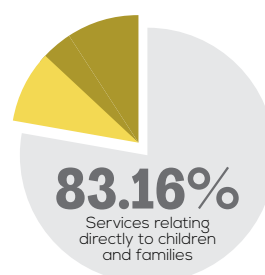
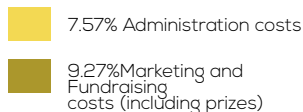
FINANCIAL STATS

83% SPENT DIRECTLY ON SERVICES RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES **OVER \$2,799,000** IN PRO-BONO SUPPORT

Revenue 2020



Expenses



WE WORKED WITH 44,894 PEOPLE DURING 2019-20

13,349
2013-14



15,868
2014-15



21,698
2015-16



34,324
2016-17



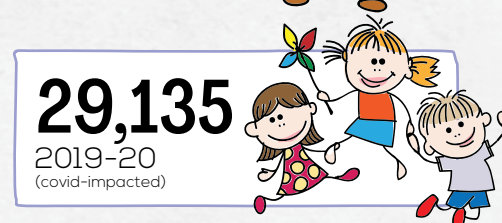
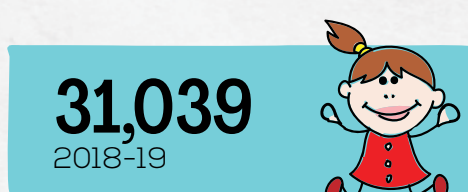
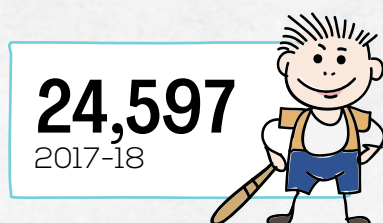
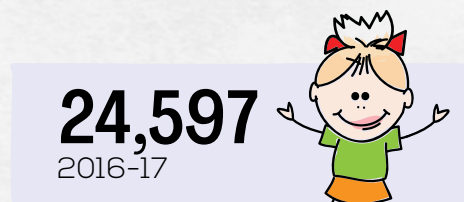
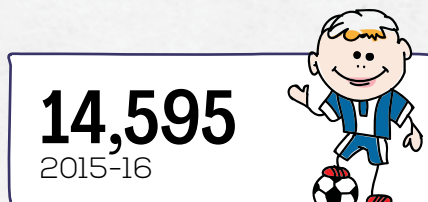
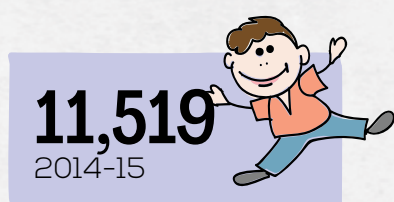
40,128
2017-18



46,084
2018-19



IN 2019-20, WE WORKED WITH 29,135 KIDS



WE DELIVERED INTEGRATED THERAPY TO 3,617 KIDS ACROSS ACT FOR KIDS AND YOUTHRIVE IN 2019-2020.

In 2019-2020, we continued to deliver our high-quality services to almost 45,000 people including over 29,000 children through:

- Integrated Therapy Services in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. This included on average 546 contacts with clients per week, during the peak of Covid-19. A total of 19 per cent of these were delivered via telehealth.
- Specialist Sexual Abuse Counselling Services in Queensland.
- Family Support Programs including the Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women funded Intensive Family Support, Family and Child Connect and Assessment and Service Connect services. We had on average 699 client cases per week during lockdown. 44 per cent of client contacts were made via phone and 4 per cent via telehealth.
- Learn to be safe with Emmy and friends protective behaviours program in schools for children in grade one.
- Playgroups for young children funded through Queensland Education Department's Pathways to Early Learning and Development program.
- Out-of-home care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Cairns, Napranum, Aurukun, Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama and Doomadgee.

Along with these services, we implemented two new Youth Sexual Assault and Abuse programs in Gladstone and Rockhampton. The teams worked hard to get the new services off the ground.

In addition to new services, we have been trialling two evidence-based programs, SafeCare and Functional Family Therapy – Therapeutic Case Management.

Our SafeCare pilot program was delivered in partnership with the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and provided to 88 families during 2019-2020. SafeCare is a 20-week in-home, 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. The Program received excellent feedback on fidelity and model adherence in phase one of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women's external evaluation report of the Gold Coast pilot. The final evaluation report indicated positive outcomes for families, who engaged with the program, including fewer reports to Child Safety Services.

Another exciting result of the SafeCare pilot is that Act for Kids achieved agency accreditation with the USA based license holder Georgia State University, as part of the SafeCare team's accreditation process. We presented on the model and our Australian implementation process at the National Child Protection Conference in June 2019.

Functional Family Therapy – Therapeutic Case Management is an evidence-based family therapy intervention. We have two pilot sites located at Gold Coast and Townsville within our existing Intensive Family Support teams. Functional Family Therapy – Therapeutic Case Management is a systematic, evidence-based treatment model for families involved in the child protection and youth justice systems. It is early days in the pilot, but already in 2019-20 over 20 families participated in the program and developed skills to stabilise and work through daily family issues that impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

OUR CLIENT WORK DURING COVID LOCKDOWN

Outlined below is a snapshot of the results we achieved from late March to late May 2020 through our Pandemic Response Plan:

THERAPY SERVICES

459

average number of open client cases per week

546

average number of open client contacts per week

4%

client contact via home visits

40%

client contact via phone

19%

client contact via telehealth

37%

client contact via meetings, text & email

62

enquiries for assistance during lockdown

ASSESSMENT & SERVICE CONNECT

148

average number of open client cases per week

421

average number of open client contacts per week

8%

client contact via home visits

31%

client contact via phone

4%

client contact via telehealth

57%

client contact via meetings, text & email

27

enquiries for assistance during lockdown

INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT

699

average number of open client cases per week

2740

average number of open client contacts per week

3%

client contact via home visits

44%

client contact via phone

4%

client contact via telehealth

49%

client contact via meetings, text & email

1742

enquiries for assistance during lockdown

FAMILY & CHILD CONNECT

466

average number of open client cases per week

934

average number of open client contacts per week

4%

client contact via home visits

54%

client contact via phone

0%

client contact via telehealth

42%

client contact via meetings, text & email

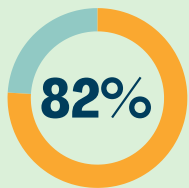
727

enquiries for assistance during lockdown

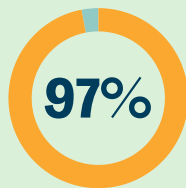
WE CARED FOR AN AVERAGE OF **18 CHILDREN** PER WEEK IN OUR SAFEKIDS PROGRAM

COVID-19 SURVEY - CLIENT & STAKEHOLDER

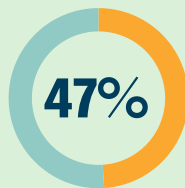
We surveyed our clients about how they felt about the transition of our services to Telehealth during the COVID-19 crisis. Here are our findings:



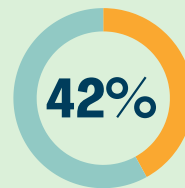
have been worried about COVID-19 for themselves and their family



said Act for Kids has been able to help with their worries



had at least one video session with their practitioner



said they would like the option of video in the future

What have we done well that has worked?

- Explained what was happening
- Virtual sessions
- Stayed connected
- Asked what I needed

What could we have done better?

- More face to face visits
- More support
- More sessions

What were your video sessions like?

- Strange but got used to it
- Technical issues
- Loved it

How could your video sessions be improved?

- Fix minor technical issues
- More set up help

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Parents
77%

Carers
14%

Child Safety Officer
13%

Child/Young Person
3%

Other Partner
3%

COVID-19 SURVEY - ACT FOR KIDS STAFF

We also asked our team to rate out of 100, how they felt about working during the peak of the pandemic. The results were positive:



How supported by Act for Kids are you feeling during the COVID-19 crisis?



How worried are you about your job security since the COVID-19 crisis?



How productive are you feeling during the COVID-19 crisis?



How well do you feel we are meeting the needs of children and families during the COVID-19 crisis?



How socially connected to your work colleagues are you feeling during the COVID-19 crisis?

What are we doing well?

- Communication
- Working from home
- Keeping Families together
- Flexibility

What could we do better?

- Clients support
- More technological support
- Less emails

What innovations should continue?

- Work from home
- Telehealth
- Virtual meetings



How do you rate your health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 crisis?



To what extent is the technology Act for Kids has provided meeting your needs during the COVID-19 crisis?



How safe are you feeling at work during the COVID-19 crisis?

91% of respondents were working remotely most of the time.
1 in 3 would like to continue this long term in some form.



MADDIE'S STORY

Anxious and afraid.

Five-year-old Maddie has lived through moments that we can only imagine. Her parents showed her very little love and affection and there were no games or learning experiences in her home. Most days, Maddie was left to her own devices, charged with feeding, entertaining and caring for herself.

Due to the abusive nature of her home, Maddie was removed from her parents and now lives with her grandmother.

"From birth, Maddie was physically, emotionally and verbally abused by her parents, witnessing severe domestic violence and substance abuse, including Ice."

Sadly, children who are abused and neglected can find it difficult to interact positively with other people or express themselves in words. They struggle to understand their feelings and frequently feel overwhelmed.

As a result of the ongoing trauma, her speech and language was severely delayed and later she suffered separation anxiety from her grandmother, and was unable to safely leave her side. Maddie only communicated her grandmother using gestures such as pointing, and very basic words.

She doesn't always understand her feelings, they're big, loud and overwhelming.

"Although she looks like any other girl, the trauma she suffered has left scars that will last a lifetime without ongoing therapy."

Every Monday, Maddie has been receiving speech therapy and psychological support from Act for Kids to build on her relationship with her grandmother to encourage safe separation and develop speech and language skills.

"After two months of intensive integrated therapy, Maddie had a breakthrough."

One Monday morning, the normally reserved and very anxious little girl greeted her therapist with a wide grin,

declaring that she loves Mondays because she can spend time with her therapists and grandmother doing fun activities and afterward everyone is really happy.

Maddie can now communicate using phrases and short sentences with a range of vocabulary and expression, resulting in improved outcomes at home and at school. However, due to Maddie's complex learning needs, her therapy has become more intensive from one session to the next.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that Maddie needed to transition from face-to-face sessions to online telehealth. Her therapists were concerned that the sudden change might disrupt her learning and stunt her progress. However, telehealth has provided Maddie with new opportunities and the potential to increase skill development within her own home. Through telehealth, our speech pathologist and psychologist can now have more frequent sessions with Maddie to support her development and continue the progress she has achieved within the last few months.

Mondays have become a day of learning, fun, and happiness, where Maddie and her grandmother engage in an online session together. Her grandmother reports they are really enjoying all the additional activities and resources as it keeps Maddie busy, interested, and entertained, while also promoting her language and overall learning. In a recent therapy session, Maddie said that every day should be like a Monday – full of smiles and laughter.

It takes a lot of hard play to heal little hearts. Although Maddie continues to improve, she still struggles with anxiety and will need long-term support to help her overcome the years of severe abuse and neglect. She's experienced a lot of trauma in her short life, but with continued support and positive reinforcement, Maddie will go on to express herself with confidence, engage in conversations, and no longer be filled with fear.

Thank you for helping us give kids like Maddie a safe and happy childhood, free from abuse and neglect.

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 during the 2019-2020 financial year. Thank you for every raffle ticket sold, Christmas present gift-wrapped and donation tin rattled! A special mention once again to our Volunteer Ambassador Helen McGrory.



THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS



The fantastic results we achieved in 2019-20 were not possible without the generous support of our sponsors and partners, who provide so much more than just financial support, but also pro-bono and volunteer services. We are genuinely grateful, thank you.

OFFICIAL SPONSORS

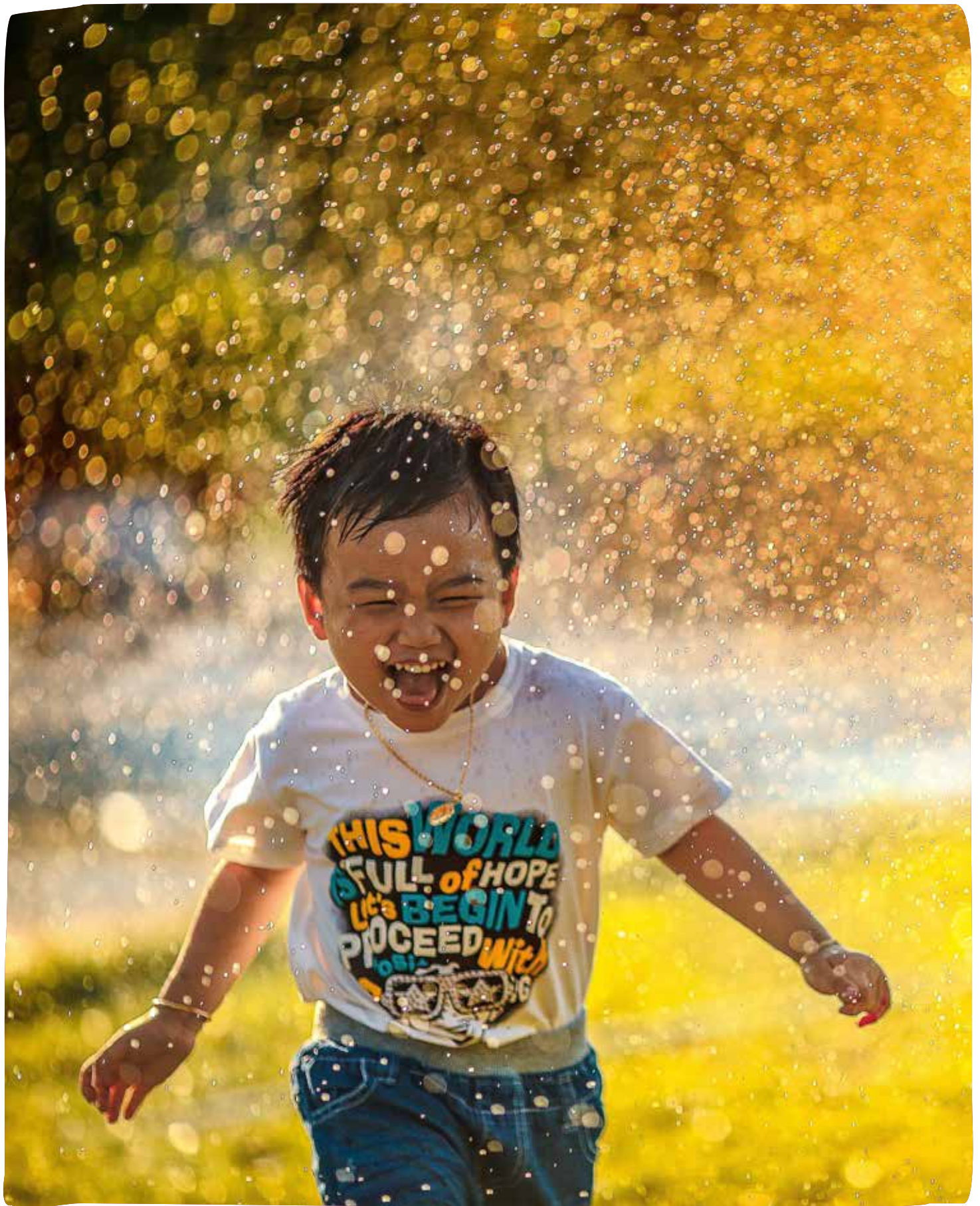


EVENT AND PROGRAM PARTNERS



PRO-BONO SUPPORTERS

- Elevate Communications
- SOAK
- Publicis Worldwide
- Expose Media
- Zenith Optimedia
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Messages on Hold
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For more information please call 1300 228 000 or visit our website actforkids.com.au

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ABN 98 142 986 767

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