

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



AUSTRALIA WAS, IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL LAND.

WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EMERGENCY CENTRE (WAGEC) ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF COUNTRY AND RECOGNISE THEIR CONTINUING CONNECTION TO LAND, WATERS AND CULTURE. WAGEC WORKS ON THE UNCEDED LANDS OF THE GADIGAL, WANGAL AND DHARAWAL PEOPLE OF THE EORA NATION AND WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT.

WAGEC ALSO RECOGNISES THE INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND STRUCTURAL RACISM THAT COLONISATION HAS AND CONTINUES TO INFLICT ON FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE. WE ACKNOWLEDGE OUR POSITION WITHIN A SYSTEM AND NATION WHOSE HISTORY IS ONE OF RACISM, GENOCIDE, CHILD REMOVAL, DISPOSSESSION OF LANDS AND OPPRESSION OF CULTURES AND LANGUAGES. WE RESPECTFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESILIENCE AND SURVIVAL OF THE WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING CULTURE.

WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THE GENERATIONS OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN WHO HAVE LED, AND CONTINUE TO LEAD, THE WAY IN CREATING SAFE FUTURES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND SAFE SPACES FOR THE COMMUNITY. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR STRENGTH AND COMMIT TO LISTENING, LEARNING AND CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING OUR ALLYSHIP IN THE MOVEMENT FOR FIRST NATIONS SAFETY, EQUALITY AND JUSTICE.



Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre (WAGEC) is a public benevolent institution and an incorporated entity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). It is endorsed to access the following tax concessions: GST concession, FBT exemption, income tax exemption and is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient.

The activities of the organisation are regulated by relevant State and Commonwealth laws and the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre Constitution and it is governed by an elected voluntary Board of Management.

Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre (WAGEC) ABN 92622900342



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INTRODUCTION

WHEN THE BODY PERCEIVES A THREAT, IT TRIGGERS A SERIES OF PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS TO PROTECT ITSELF. CORTISOL LEVELS RISE, THE SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM FIRES UP, AND THE BODY BRACES ITSELF FOR HARM. ORDINARILY, THE HAZARD WILL PASS AND THE BODY, ALBEIT FATIGUED, WILL RETURN TO A STATE OF HOMEOSTASIS. BUT WHEN THE THREAT PERSISTS, THE NERVOUS SYSTEM ADAPTS TO IT. IN THE FACE OF CONTINUOUS CRISIS, THE HUMAN BRAIN READJUSTS TO THINKING THAT IT'S NORMAL - IT HAS TO, IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

Violence against women happens every day, from microaggressions and misogyny to much more sinister acts of cruelty but make no mistake - **it is not normal**. Losing one woman every four days at the hands of her current or former partner is not normal. Losing a child every fourteen days to domestic and family violence is a statistic to which we cannot become desensitised.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAS PRESENTED A THREAT TO THE SURVIVAL OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN THAT FAR PRE-DATES ITS DECLARATION AS A NATIONAL CRISIS.

While the threat shows no signs of passing, this past year we've seen mobilisation like never before. In calling it a crisis, we have finally seen response to what has always been an emergency. We've stockpiled resources and allocated funding. We are still in survival mode, but we've found safety in numbers, and power in collective action.

WAGEC has existed at the epicentre of the crisis that is domestic and family violence for the past 47 years - and here we will stay until the threat has passed.

We won't consider this crisis over until gender-based violence has been eradicated. Our hope is that one day, we can cease to exist as an Emergency Centre - that women and children will be able live free from violence. Until then, you'll find us on the frontline, driving systemic change and building safer futures for all.



WE'RE CREATING SAFE FUTURES FOR WOMEN AND FAMILIES

BY

**ENDING
GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE IN
A GENERATION.**

MEET THE BOARD

ELIZABETH WILKINS CHAIR

Elizabeth has worked as a company director for 25 years as well as a board member of other not-for-profit (NFP) organisations. Her previous business career spans senior executive roles in both publicly listed and private companies, and as consultant to other NFP organisations in aged care, disability services, family services, and community services. She runs her own business providing executive coaching to senior people, business facilitation and leadership development, strategic advice, change management and corporate communications consulting. Elizabeth holds a Master of Commerce (E-Commerce), an MBA and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



HELEN DEAS VICE CHAIR (AUGUST 2023 - CURRENT)

Helen has extensive experience across a diverse range of law enforcement areas. Key areas of her work have focused on sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence and engagement with vulnerable populations. Helen holds an Executive Masters of Public Administration, a Masters in Management and Leadership (Policing) and a Bachelor of Social Science. She is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She has served as a director on a diverse range of Boards, and has been on the WAGEC Board since 2016. She has been a member of WAGEC's Child Safe Committee since its' inception.



MEERA IYER OUTGOING TREASURER

Meera is a Senior Financial Services Executive and has broad experience in finance, operations and strategy with Citi, Westpac, and CBA. Meera is passionate about her involvement in the NFP sector assisting women. Meera's outstanding contribution to the financial governance of WAGEC was recognised in 2017 in the CBA's NFP Treasurers' Awards Honour Roll.



MADINA AZIZ INCOMING TREASURER

Madina is an audit partner at Grant Thornton Australia with over 18 years' experience in providing audit and assurance services to large multi-nationals, listed public companies and mid-size businesses. Madina holds a Bachelor of Economics (USYD) and is a chartered accountant and registered company auditor and is passionate about serving her clients, people and in particular the broader community through mentoring women leaders within her organisation and championing cultural diversity and inclusion initiatives. She looks forward to contributing her skills as incoming Treasurer at WAGEC. Outside of work, Madina is a mother of two boys and enjoys staying active and travelling.



MICHELLE BARCLAY ORDINARY BOARD MEMBER

Michelle is the Head of Sector Development and Engagement at the ACT Council of Social Services. Prior to this role, she worked as a senior lawyer at the National Indigenous Australian Agency where she specialised in commercial law. In 2020 Michelle was awarded the Westfield Local Hero Award to recognise her work with Street Law which involved providing free legal advice to women in prison and people experiencing homelessness. She also has a decade of marketing and communication experience in the not-for-profit, private and government sectors. In her spare time, you can find her in her garden, walking her dog or going on bush walks.



VAUGHAN STIBBARD ORDINARY BOARD MEMBER

Vaughan is a strategic leader and entrepreneur, with a career spanning banking, insurance, management consulting, construction and business transformation, consulting in the public and private sectors. Vaughan specialises in developing the strategic case for change and leading the change through to realisation. Vaughan's interest in the NFP sector formed whilst living in developing countries, and focused on the health, education and safety of women and children. Vaughan has a young family, an interest in travel and actively pursues ocean paddling and team sports.



CAROLINE STEWART ORDINARY BOARD MEMBER

Caroline is a philanthropic leader with over 25 years of corporate, legal, governance, diversity, and NFP experience. Caroline is the CEO of Ecstra Foundation, a grant making organisation committed to building the financial wellbeing of Australians. This work includes a strong focus on women's economic security. She previously led the UBS Australia Foundation and is a current board member of The Achieve Foundation. Caroline served on the board of Philanthropy Australia; the peak body for giving in Australia and was Chair of the Audit & Risk Management Committee.



CHARLOTTE GLANVILLE ORDINARY BOARD MEMBER

Charlotte is the Chief Financial Officer of Vudoo Pty Limited, a high growth data technology company. Charlotte brings a wealth of experience in executive finance with over 20 years experience both in and out of the Chartered Accounting world. With a background as General Manager of Finance at Quantum, and over 20 years with Grant Thornton both in Australia and the UK, Charlotte leverages her skills in data driven decision-making and cross cultural collaboration to drive financial strategy. Charlotte is a mother to three teenaged children who is passionate about the NFP sector and particularly supporting organisations who support women.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

ELIZABETH WILKINS



THIS PAST YEAR FOR WAGEC HAS BEEN ONE OF POWERFUL AND POSITIVE INTERNAL CHANGE AND SIGNIFICANT FORWARD PROGRESS FOR OUR ORGANISATION. SADLY, HOWEVER, THIS HAS COME AT A TIME WHEN SERVICES TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO ARE BEING IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS HAVE REACHED AN ALL-TIME CRISIS POINT IN AUSTRALIA'S MODERN HISTORY.

Most readers of this annual report will know of the trauma and depredations caused by the escalating rate of violence towards women and children during 2024 so far.

IT IS SIMPLY INCONCEIVABLE AND COMPLETELY HEART-BREAKING THAT EVERY FOUR DAYS ONE WOMAN HAS LOST HER LIFE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THIS YEAR.

This is a national crisis that requires every Australian, every government, every community group, to step up, lean in and be proactive in changing and calling-out behaviours which lead to these violent acts against women and children occurring in our communities.

This year, following an unacceptable number of tragic high-profile events, both state and federal governments have pledged to support organisations such as WAGEC with more financial resources. This money for the sector will be used to carry out prevention and crisis work and provide the services our clients need. Yet the flow of funds is too slow, the bureaucracy difficult to navigate, the availability of affordable housing exceptionally inadequate and the needs of our constituents is critical now.

WAGEC's strategic charter is to continue to broaden the reach of our services in Greater Sydney and New South Wales, where it is needed most. In 2016, when I first joined the Board, WAGEC was a grass-roots organisation serving Inner Sydney and Inner Western Sydney alone. In 2024, WAGEC provides services and support to clients in 14 different municipalities of New South Wales. WAGEC's client base is now 10 times the size as it was back then, our staff numbers have grown five-fold, and we have significantly expanded the number of services we provide. This remarkable growth is a product of purpose-driven focus, incredible hard work and the undying resilience of WAGEC's amazing management and staff.

Unhappily though, WAGEC's growth is predominantly a dreadful by-product of the greater need in our society, as more women and children fall victim to domestic, family and gender-based violence than ever before, and very often end up homeless as a result.

The work undertaken by WAGEC's team members is such that at times it can be emotionally difficult, sometimes physically dangerous and often unremitting. It takes special people to do the frontline work carried out at WAGEC.



THE BOARD WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE TO THANK OUR FRONTLINE CASE WORKERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, CLINICIANS AND THEIR MANAGERS WHO REGULARLY FACE TRAUMATIC AND HIGHLY CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES AS THEY GO ABOUT THEIR DAILY WORK. THESE PEOPLE ARE THE BACKBONE OF WAGEC'S MISSION AND SUCCESS.

WAGEC is so very fortunate to have Nicole Yade at the helm of our organisation, having been promoted to CEO earlier in the year from her previous role as Deputy CEO. Earlier in 2024, Nicole's leadership style and career trajectory was earmarked by the Chief Executive Women and she was chosen to receive the CEW's Not-For-Profit Scholarship to attend Harvard University – an amazing accolade given the quality and number of applicants that were in the running. Nicole's calm demeanour, vast sector expertise and collegiate communication style is providing WAGEC with exemplary leadership that sets the organisation up for future growth and development. Nicole is being most capably and diligently supported by Althea Mackenzie who has more recently joined WAGEC as Deputy CEO.

As we enter the last months of 2024, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all the staff, management, hundreds of volunteers, generous donors and suppliers, who, day in-day out keep WAGEC moving ahead positively. WAGEC will continue to provide housing, food, clothes, medical services, training and education, and trauma-informed clinical services to thousands of women and children. In a changing and sometimes harrowing environment, WAGEC's senior management - with backing and assistance from the Board - will continue to identify ways to increase our reach of services and support to help those women and children we serve.

CEO REPORT

BY NICOLE YADE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



ON 28 APRIL 2024, PRIME MINISTER ANTHONY ALBANESE DECLARED A 'NATIONAL CRISIS' AT A RALLY TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.

In many ways it made sense – every four days a woman was being murdered, domestic violence numbers we had never seen before in Australia. Rallies were being held, men and women were taking to the street to demand change and urgent cabinet meetings were underway in response to calls for additional funding. The team at WAGEC collectively held their breath while following the news closely.

What would the naming of a crisis mean for our services? What would it mean for the women and children we serve?

AT WAGEC IT IS HARD TO THINK ABOUT A 'BEGINNING' TO THIS CRISIS BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ALWAYS BE WITH US. CRISIS WAS THE GENESIS OF OUR ORGANISATION, AND WE'VE BEEN RESPONDING TO IT EVERY DAY SINCE.

Defined as a period of intense difficulty, a crisis is a time when an important decision must be made. Often, it marks a turning point leading to change.

Every day for the past 47 years, WAGEC has supported women and children at such turning points. When an individual woman is in crisis, her whole world feels like it is falling apart. She has nowhere safe to stay. Often, she is scared, confused and alone. She fears for her own safety and the safety of her children. She will have injuries – some seen, some unseen. She will be in survival mode doing her very best to make it through, not knowing what lies ahead or where to go for help.

WAGEC steps into every crisis ready to assist. From listening deeply to assess need, to connecting women with services, making beds in refuge, and planning for a safer future, the work of supporting women to understand their options is intensive and complex.

It takes working with the whole community for WAGEC to do its most effective work. With the support of government and corporate funding partners, trusts and foundations, and individual donors, this year we have driven genuine social impact. Even in the darkest of times, our community came together to raise over \$476,000 at our annual Walk for WAGEC – a record-breaking number for our organisation.

Such support has enabled us to expand our Primary Prevention efforts, working state-wide to stop gender-based violence before it starts. In listening to our clients and centring the voices of victim-survivors, we continue our commitment to delivering services that facilitate recovery after the immediate crisis has passed. Our focus is not only on evacuation but healing for everyone impacted by violence, and so we continue providing programs that ensure safer futures for the communities we serve.

This work requires collaboration and I would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution of our outgoing CEO, Helen Waters Silvia. For seven years, Helen led WAGEC through a period of immense change and growth with insight and integrity. WAGEC would not be the organisation it is today without her leadership, dedication and strategic wisdom.

The Board of WAGEC, led by our Chair, Elizabeth Wilkins, and Deputy Chair, Helen Deas, work in a voluntary capacity with deep commitment and attention. I would like to thank them for their expert governance and support as I have transitioned into the CEO role this year. I am extremely fortunate to work shoulder-to-shoulder with our Deputy CEO, Althea Mackenzie, and the Senior Leadership Team at WAGEC – their professionalism, flexibility, diligence, and feminist heart truly work wonders. I am deeply grateful for the entire team of staff at WAGEC, in every role across the organisation. It is with great pride that I witness their efforts to go above and beyond and to serve with determination and compassion.



DEPUTY CEO REPORT

BY ALTHEA MACKENZIE, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



AT WAGEC, OUR MISSION TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE REMAINS CENTRAL TO EVERYTHING WE DO. IT IS AN AMBITIOUS GOAL BUT WE ARE DRIVEN BY THE URGENCY OF NATIONAL CRISIS AND THE BELIEF THAT REAL CHANGE IS POSSIBLE.

Our focus is on supporting those facing the most significant barriers to safety and secure housing—women and children impacted by domestic and family violence, homelessness, and systemic disadvantage. In FY23-24 we continued to respond to these challenges with passion, innovation and collaboration.

We saw the fruits of our commitment to service when we gained a 100% result on our Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) Accreditation. The report showed that we are leading the sector in continuous quality improvement practice.

WE KNOW THAT IT IS WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION, THAT WE CAN DRIVE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL CHANGE.

This year, WAGEC also expanded its programs, services and workforce to address the complex needs of women and children in crisis. Some of the most significant developments included:

- The launch of 'From Now', a program to provide housing and holistic support to women with children and pregnant women who are leaving incarceration, delivering client-centred support to those experiencing significant marginalisation. The establishment of the 'Helping Children Heal' program to provide specialist support for children and young people impacted by homelessness and domestic and family violence. This program has been made possible by a grant from the Department of Social Services, and we look forward to launching it in the coming months.
- We welcomed Aunty Dixie Link-Gordon as our official Aunty-In-Residence to help us make our services more welcoming to and safer for Aboriginal women, children and families.
- We partnered with Community Housing to place people into 'meanwhile use' accommodation in response to the worsening housing crisis.



At WAGEC, we believe that secure housing is essential to long-term safety after crisis. We progressed advocacy work in this space in our formal submission to Housing Australia that stressed the need for secure housing as a critical component in addressing gender-based violence. Two members of our Lived Experience Advisory Panel presented at the 'Everybody's Home' People's Forum, advocating for systemic changes to address the housing crisis. We recognise that it is by listening to and amplifying the voices of lived-experience advocates that we can pave the best path forward.

The rising cost of living has presented an increasing strain on the communities we support. WAGEC has provided significant financial assistance to clients through brokerage funds to help meet their immediate needs. We've also partnered with organisations like Yours to offer microfinance loans, giving women financial control and our partnership with Two Good provides free meals to clients, including those who drop in for support.

LOOKING AHEAD, WE ARE MINDFUL OF THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE EVER-INCREASING DEMAND FOR SERVICES IN THE MIDST OF THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CRISIS. DESPITE THESE PRESSURES, WE ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT NEW OPPORTUNITIES, PARTICULARLY IN PREVENTION WORK.

We are focused on growing our client services, especially through increased access to both short and long-term housing. Additionally, programs like Staying Home Leaving Violence and Helping Children Heal will continue to provide critical early intervention and holistic support for families in crisis.

The interconnected challenges of domestic and family violence, homelessness, and the rising cost of living cannot be addressed by a single organisation. At WAGEC, we know that meaningful change requires collaboration. We remain committed to partnering with governments, businesses, and communities to strengthen support systems and make a difference for the women and children who have been marginalised in New South Wales.

By partnering on innovative solutions, advocating for policy reforms, and increasing funding for essential services, we can drive impact and make a tangible difference. We can and are working to create a safer, more equitable society where everyone has access to the protection, stability, and opportunities they deserve.

OUR IMPACT

74 different countries of birth represented across WAGEC's client group

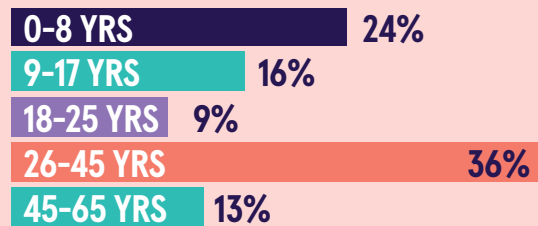


40 different primary languages were spoken by clients

62,773 bed nights provided

1973 CLIENTS WERE SUPPORTED ACROSS ALL SERVICES

CLIENT AGE BREAKDOWN



40% of clients are children or young people (aged 0 - 17)

22% of clients identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

75 CHILDREN & 20 PARENTS supported by Helping Children Heal

94 WOMEN were supported by From Now

227 WOMEN & CHILDREN were supported to continue living safely in their homes by the SHLV team, an **INCREASE OF 49% FROM LAST YEAR**

The ALL IN Program trained approx 135 educators across 16 centres, **IMPACTING 717 CHILDREN**

The ACCESS Program supported **194 MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS**

127 MENTEES COMPLETED the ACCESS Mentoring Program

142 PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED

OUR SERVICES WHERE WE WORK

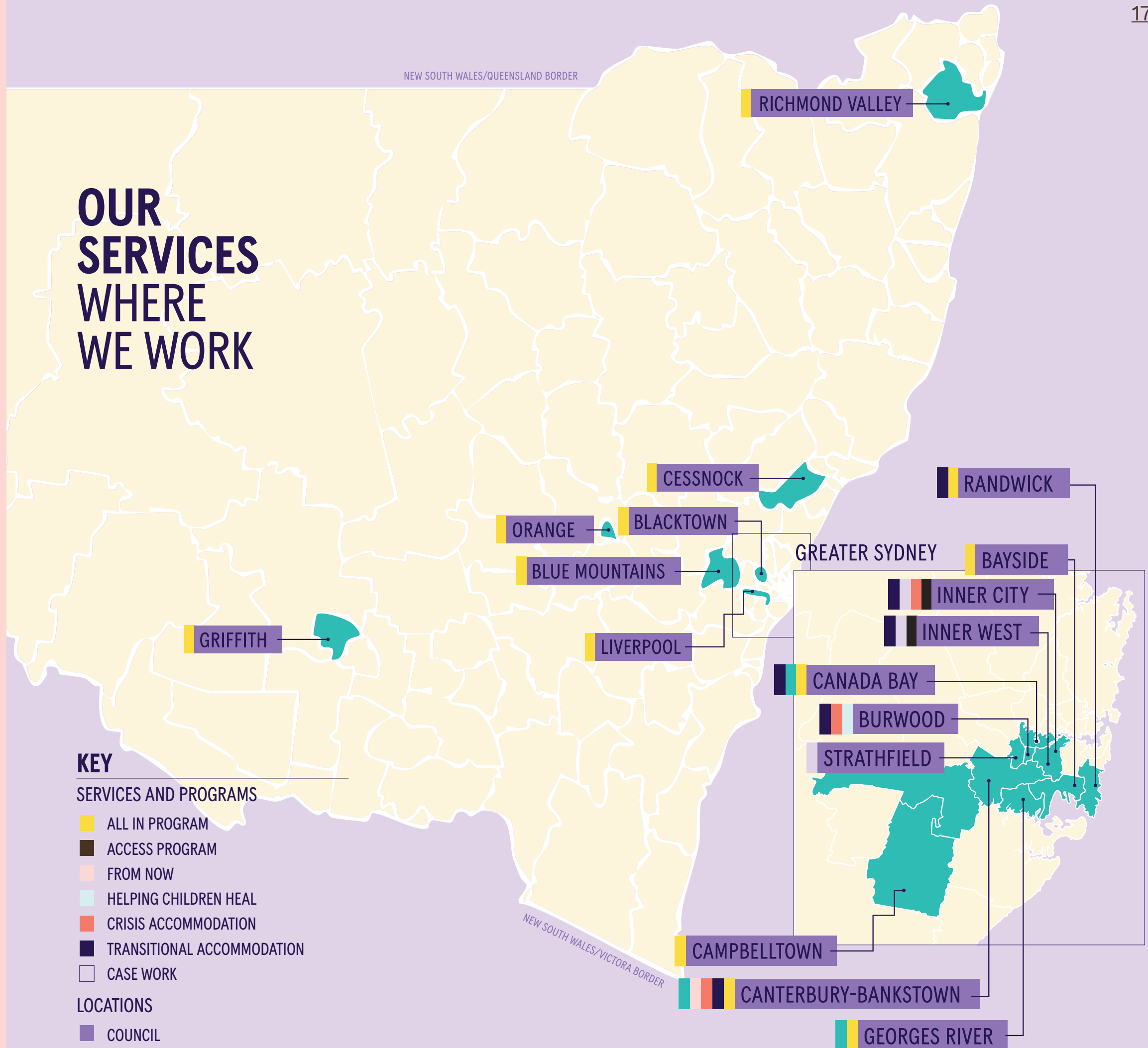
KEY

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

- ALL IN PROGRAM
- ACCESS PROGRAM
- FROM NOW
- HELPING CHILDREN HEAL
- CRISIS ACCOMMODATION
- TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION
- CASE WORK

LOCATIONS

- COUNCIL



HER STORY IS THE TRUTH

BY KATIE WYNNE, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES



EVERY DAY AT WAGEC, OUR CLIENT SERVICES TEAM IS THE FIRST POINT OF CONTACT AFTER CRISIS. IT IS AT OUR REDFERN DROP-IN CENTRE THAT WE WELCOME, TRIAGE AND SERVE WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO ARE ESCAPING SOME OF THE WORST THE WORLD HAS TO OFFER – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, HOMELESSNESS AND OTHER SYSTEMIC DISADVANTAGE.

It is in this waiting room that many women tell their story for the first time. It is within the safety of WAGEC's walls that her truth will finally be heard and importantly, believed.

The needs of the women and children accessing our support can be unpredictable. Our clients are navigating complex situations, of which no two are the same.

For some, a friendly cup of tea and some material aid may be sufficient to get them back on their feet. For others, they may require tenancy support, advocacy, or a safety plan to facilitate the safe evacuation of them and their children from a home where a person uses violence. For many, what they really need is access to a secure place to live.

Regardless of the situation, every single contact is a step away from crisis and into a brighter future.

“Drop-ins come in ebbs and flows and come with unique challenges and stress. However, this is balanced with seeing how immediate crisis intervention, holding space for someone to be heard and the impact of the little things – such as material aid or a cup of coffee – can make such a big difference in the lives of the people who come through our doors each day.”

– WAGEC Case Worker

COMMUNITY CONNECT

Community connection and the development of new skills are vital for women to achieve longer term goals of financial independence, education, employment and wellbeing after crisis.

Every Tuesday, our Community Connect lunch invites the women in our Redfern community to enjoy a hot nutritious meal, connect with each other and engage in a wide range of activities, including art therapy. Many of the women attending are experiencing housing and food insecurity, so the importance of having a safe space to have a cuppa and sit for a while cannot be understated. With bellies full of food prepared by our wonderful volunteers, women and children who attend also have the opportunity to connect with case workers and link in with other WAGEC supports.

“I am kind, I am faith, I am enough, happiness, love, safe, joyful”

– Community Connect Participant

WOMEN IN TOUCH

Our Women in Touch program offers ongoing assistance and education opportunities for clients throughout their contact with WAGEC. Each week, Women in Touch delivers a variety of presentations, inviting guest speakers to cover a range of topics including online safety, family law and financial literacy. To promote a holistic approach to recovery, the group also engages in wellness activities such as yoga, art therapy, self-defence lessons and even a much-loved pampering day.

Since attending Women In Touch, participants share that they feel more knowledgeable about their legal rights and finances. They also report feeling more empowered to keep themselves and their children safer online. The wellbeing activities have enhanced mental health, increased self-assurance, and created a feeling of belonging in the group environment.

STAYING HOME, LEAVING VIOLENCE

When a woman escapes a violent partner, it's more than a house that gets left behind. Evacuation and relocation can cause disconnection from community, support and self. WAGEC is proud to deliver a Staying Home Leaving Violence program in the St George Local Government Area. This program aims to prevent women and children from facing homelessness and works to avoid the need to move away from family, friends and community following experiences of domestic and family violence.

WAGEC provides a range of support for victim survivors including safety planning, improving home security, providing support for children, financial management support and assistance for women navigating complicated legal processes. This high risk form of case management focuses on maximising safety and security through ongoing practical and emotional support.

LAST YEAR, WAGEC'S STAYING HOME LEAVING VIOLENCE PROGRAM SUPPORTED 227 WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO CONTINUE LIVING SAFELY IN THEIR HOMES, AN INCREASE OF ALMOST 50% FROM THE PREVIOUS PERIOD. AS THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CRISIS PERSISTS, WE CONTINUE DELIVERING PRACTICAL AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO ENSURE WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN CAN STAY IN SECURE ACCOMMODATION.

ACCOMMODATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT

Each night WAGEC accommodates 200 women and children across 5 refuges and 50 transitional housing properties. Last year, WAGEC provided 62,773 bed nights to women and children in crisis.

Our crisis accommodation services are tailored to meet the needs of specific cohorts of women and families. Refuge accommodation sites vary in size and deliver support to single women, women with children and pregnant women, and families. Our transitional housing offers women and families the stability of affordable housing before they move on to a more permanent home. Women in transitional housing are typically engaged in study or employment and are actively working towards long term housing goals.

LAST YEAR WAGEC'S SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS SERVICES, INCLUDING REFUGE ACCOMMODATION, SUPPORTED 1751 WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO TRANSITION FROM CRISIS TO SAFETY.

PROGRAMS FOR CHANGE

In addition to crisis response, case management and refuge accommodation, WAGEC delivers four key programs that aim to break the cycle of violence and work to end gender-based violence. From mentoring, support for children and young people and safe accommodation for mothers leaving incarceration to a state-wide primary prevention education program, WAGEC is working to ensure positive outcomes for our clients and community.

HELPING CHILDREN HEAL PROGRAM

EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE AT HOME. EXPOSURE TO DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE, WHETHER WITNESSING THE ABUSE OR BEING HARMED DIRECTLY, CAN HAVE A LASTING IMPACT ON EVERY ASPECT OF A CHILD'S LIFE, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

In recognition of the unmet needs of children who have experienced violence, the Department of Social Services has funded Helping Children Heal to provide trauma-informed healing and recovery services to young people. WAGEC has been providing specialist services for children and young people for many years, and are looking forward to expanding our impact with Helping Children Heal.

This pilot program launched in 2024 and aims to improve social, emotional and educational outcomes for children and young people aged six to twelve and works to restore the relationship between parent and child after crisis. We are excited to continue ensuring children have the tools they need to recover from experiences of violence and go on to lead healthy, happy lives.

LEARNING SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

With support from Burwood Council, Helping Children Heal delivers a weekly Learning Hub. The Learning Hub is a safe, engaging space where tutoring and homework help is available during the term and therapeutic activities are run during the school holidays.

Our aim is to help children who have experienced domestic and family violence maintain a sense of normalcy, connection and fun while supporting their educational needs. It also provides a valuable pathway to connect families with much needed access to Allied Health services.

PARENTING AFTER VIOLENCE SUPPORT GROUP

Following experiences of domestic and family violence, it is common for a parent to have lost confidence in their caregiving abilities. Peer-support is an effective way of helping parents feel connected and helps to reduce the stigma that is often associated with experiences of domestic and family violence.

This year, the Parenting After Violence Support Group was delivered in Dhari for refugee parents who had recently arrived in Australia, in partnership with SSI International. **The group supported 11 mothers and 7 children to reflect, reconnect and rebuild a sense of trust.**

SEASONS FOR GROWTH

Seasons for Growth focuses on helping children to recover from adverse childhood experiences and go on to live rich, rewarding lives. The program is run in partnership with local schools and seeks to strengthen the emotional and mental wellbeing of children and young people who are adapting to experiences of change, loss and grief in their lives, such as death, separation and divorce.

SEASONS FOR GROWTH HAS SUPPORTED 37 CHILDREN ACROSS FIVE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS, PROVIDING VITAL PEER AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT TO FACILITATE RECOVERY FROM TRAUMA.



CASE STUDY: ADAM'S STORY

When Adam's mum told him to pack a bag of his favourite things, he didn't know what to choose. He didn't want to leave behind any of his toys, but he wouldn't be able to fit them all in his backpack. His mum seemed upset, so once he zipped up his bag, he helped his little brother, Zayne, pack his too. With their mum by their side, they zipped up their winter jackets and left their home in the early hours of the morning while their dad was still asleep.

Once the family arrived at refuge, the WAGEC team got to work straight away finding all the essentials to help them settle in – food, clothes, toiletries, warm blankets and toys – but moving into the refuge was a big transition for them all.

Not long after they moved in, the boys started to act out by kicking, spitting and hitting people to get them to go away. Adam and Zayne had both seen their mum endure physical and sexual abuse, extreme isolation and coercive control. The boys' behaviour made sense, given the awful things they had seen and heard at home.

The WAGEC team slowly got to know Zayne and Adam. When the boys refused to speak, their caseworkers asked them to draw pictures of how they were feeling. The drawings they made that first week were dark and scribbly. They drew rain clouds and sad faces and tears. But as the team started to build trust with the boys, the pictures changed. Slowly, they started to reach for brighter colours.

A few months later, the family were ready to transition back into the community and leave the refuge. Adam and Zayne were sad to leave the WAGEC team behind, but they were excited to have a new place to call their own.

The boys left cheerful and chattering, with hugs, high fives and a restored sense of trust in their mum. As they left, their mum carried a stack of the drawings the boys had made in the refuge – both the sad ones and the happy ones – to remind them all how strong and brave they had been and how far they had come in just a few short months.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

To maintain a sense of normalcy and play, Helping Children Heal also delivers activities that encourage families to connect and have some fun together. In collaboration with local community partners, the program has facilitated drumming circles, reptile shows, slime making, arts and crafts and even a superhero party.

Fast-tracking access for children who have missed out on important supports also helps to improve social, educational and emotional outcomes. To ensure that no child gets left behind, Helping Children Heal has established partnerships with two private psychology practices and Lifestart to offer funded screenings, assessments and ongoing therapy by psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists.



FROM NOW PROGRAM

FROM THIS MOMENT AND ALWAYS IN THE FUTURE.

MOST WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN PRISONS ARE MOTHERS. AFTER SERVING THEIR TIME, WOMEN ARE RELEASED FROM CUSTODY INTO A SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES VERY LIMITED ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING, FORCING THEM TO FACE HOMELESSNESS, RECIDIVISM OR RETURN TO A VIOLENT PARTNER.

From Now, delivered in partnership with the Judith Neilson Foundation, is a pilot program tailored to meet the needs of women exiting prison, with a focus on pregnant women and those with children, so they can build brighter, safer futures together. Launched in January 2024, the program provides women leaving incarceration with access to safe and stable accommodation, so that they can focus on their recovery and prevent re-entry into the criminal system.

With particular focus on parenting and domestic violence education, From Now supports reconnection with children, culture and community. It also facilitates access to services including childcare, Medicare, Centrelink, health care (including pre-natal and drug and alcohol supports), legal services and more.

Clients are engaged in three to six months of intensive case management and supported to transition into alternate accommodation, employment, and education pathways. By facilitating family restoration wherever possible, enhancing relationships between women and their children, and improving family, community, and cultural connections, From Now aims to significantly reduce the risk of recidivism.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are incarcerated at 27 times the rate of non-Indigenous women, often for non-violent crimes. From Now also ensures that First Nations women have access to the culturally safe, ongoing support and accommodation they deserve following trauma, imprisonment and violence.



CASE STUDY: CLAIRE'S STORY

REBUILDING TRUST

A knock came at Claire's front door late one Friday night. It was the police. This wasn't the first time they had paid her a visit, but she could sense that this time was different. After experiencing legal and financial abuse at the hands of her ex-partner, Claire's house had been sold and she and her children were facing homelessness. Until the age of 40, Claire had never interacted with the police – she didn't have so much as a parking fine on her record – but this was her eighth arrest in two years. After being misidentified as the primary perpetrator of domestic violence, Claire was accused of breaching an AVO that should have been placed for her instead of against.

During her period of incarceration, Claire was disconnected from her children. Her children were split between youth refuges and living with her ex-partner, the perpetrator of the violence.

Upon her release, she learned that the extreme stress of living in refuge away from his mother was causing her eldest son to struggle with his mental health. Claire was under daily pressure from DCJ to find a place for them both to live, but with no income or assets this proved an impossible task. Eventually she secured crisis accommodation in a local shelter, but this was only temporary.

When her Parole Officer referred her to From Now, she had 'no trust left to give'. It was hard for her to trust caseworkers when she had been let down by systems so many times before.

During her interaction with the program, she was supported to seek education and employment opportunities. Claire described her interaction with From Now as the '**sliding doors moment that saved my mental health from complete disintegration**'. Entry into From Now was the first step in her healing, recovery and eventual re-entry into the community.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

From Now has built strong partnerships with many organisations and government agencies. A big thank you to ReLove, Dulux and Koala for turning an empty house into a home, and to Dillwynia Correctional Centre for the continuous support and client referrals. We are also proud of our partnerships with the Community Correction Offices, Drug Health Services from Canterbury and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Community Restorative Centre, Aboriginal Legal Service, SDN Service, Bridge Housing, Thread Together, Two Good, Riverwood Community Centre, Justice Health, Women's Bail Advocacy Program, Warringa Baiya, and Canterbury Interagency Family Services Network.

94 WOMEN WERE SUPPORTED BY FROM NOW.

WOMEN'S
AND GIRLS'
EMERGENCY
CENTRE

ACCESS PROGRAM

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN.

FOR MANY WOMEN, THE JOURNEY TOWARD FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE AFTER CRISIS IS FILLED WITH SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES. DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE, COMPLEX CARING RESPONSIBILITIES, LANGUAGE BARRIERS, AND RESTRICTIVE VISA CONDITIONS ALL CREATE OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL. DESPITE IMMENSE CHALLENGES, THE WOMEN WHO COME TO WAGEC ARE RESILIENT AND DETERMINED. ALL THEY NEED IS SOMEONE IN THEIR CORNER.

The ACCESS Mentoring Program is dedicated to helping women and non-binary people overcome these barriers. ACCESS is a one-on-one mentoring program that supports participants in gaining confidence, setting goals, and working towards financial independence. This year, ACCESS expanded and developed new initiatives to empower women and non-binary people to engage in safe, stable, and secure employment.

THE ACCESS MENTORING PROGRAM HAS SUPPORTED OVER 500 WOMEN AND NON-BINARY PEOPLE TO DATE AND HAS EXPERIENCED SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH OVER THE PAST YEAR.

This expansion has been driven by the incredible dedication of our mentors, community partners, and the strength of our mentees.

“Through my interactions with my mentee, I've observed several strengths—her kindness, enthusiasm, and genuine care for others shine through every time. She approaches our sessions with a positive attitude and an eagerness to learn.”

– ACCESS Mentor

“My mentee is becoming more confident in her abilities and more patient with herself. This growth is positively affecting other areas of her life.”

– ACCESS Mentor



138

MENTORS SUCCESSFULLY TRAINED TO PROVIDE TRAUMA-INFORMED SUPPORT

194

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS NEARLY TRIPLE THE NUMBER SUPPORTED TWO YEARS AGO

PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

This year, ACCESS launched the Employment Pathways pilot program in partnership with four key community and corporate organisations: Hanes Brands Inc, Humans for Purpose, Two Good Co, and Weldon Children's Services.

Each pathway is designed to provide trauma-informed, supportive training and employment opportunities, giving mentees the chance to gain work experience and build their skills in a safe environment. These partnerships have been pivotal in providing employment opportunities that are accessible and considerate of the experiences of women who have faced domestic violence and other barriers.

Employment Pathways have provided 27 mentees with skills and work experience, alongside 15 workshops that were delivered to enhance mentor support. To ensure mentees had the tools they needed to access digital training and employment opportunities, the WAGEConnect initiative distributed 31 laptops.

In addition to Employment Pathways, ACCESS provided two rounds of scholarships to mentees this year, made possible by the generosity of the Rotary Club of Darling Harbour and the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation. These scholarships helped cover costs related to their studies, such as tuition fees, technology, study supplies, childcare, and travel for 13 mentees. This financial assistance was particularly crucial for women who face barriers in accessing education, such as those on temporary visas and those with young children.

As each year goes by, the contribution of our volunteer mentors continues to be nothing short of extraordinary. **Valued at over \$236,000, our mentors demonstrated their deep commitment to empowering mentees by providing 5,044 hours of one-on-one support.**

A YEAR OF EXPANSION

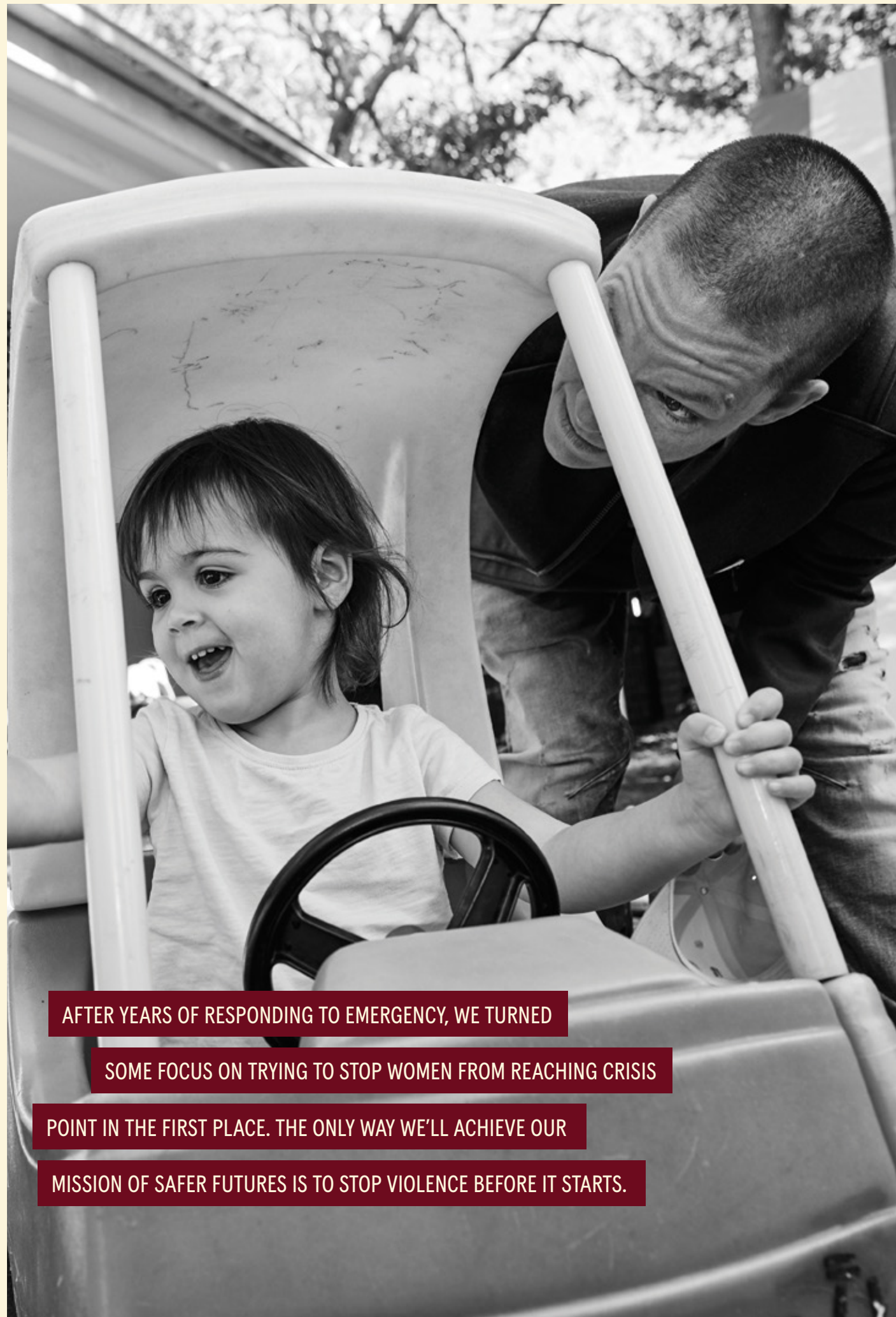
The 2023-24 financial year was one of significant growth for ACCESS. The number of mentee applications increased to 193, highlighting the rising demand for support among women seeking to rebuild their lives. Of those applicants, 127 mentees completed a six-month mentoring relationship. Mentor applications also increased to 211, with 138 mentors successfully trained to provide trauma-informed support. These mentors played a key role in the success of the program, supporting 194 mentoring relationships—nearly triple the number supported just two years ago. The number of referring agencies also increased to 28, helping ensure that more women could access our services.

With thanks to our community partners - Good Shepherd, Weldon Children's Services, Women's Housing Company, TAFE, TAFE Digital, Asylum Seekers Centre, ACON, Dress for Success, Thread Together, The Freedom Hub, Refettorio OzHarvest, CABL, OzHarvest Waterloo Market, Success Works, Weave, and the University of Sydney—we have been able to provide critical resources, support, and opportunities to the women and children in our programs. These partners have made it possible for us to offer tailored support and new opportunities, ensuring that our participants can build brighter futures.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to expanding the ACCESS Program, building more partnerships, and continuing to support women and non-binary people as they overcome barriers to financial independence. **The progress made this year is a testament to the resilience of the women we serve and the power of community support.**

“I am highly thankful to ACCESS for all the support they provided me and for matching me with an excellent mentor.”

– ACCESS Mentee



AFTER YEARS OF RESPONDING TO EMERGENCY, WE TURNED

SOME FOCUS ON TRYING TO STOP WOMEN FROM REACHING CRISIS

POINT IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE ONLY WAY WE'LL ACHIEVE OUR

MISSION OF SAFER FUTURES IS TO STOP VIOLENCE BEFORE IT STARTS.

STOPPING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT STARTS

BY MOO BAULCH, DIRECTOR OF PRIMARY PREVENTION



FOR THOSE OF US WORKING IN THE SECTOR, WE KNOW THAT PUBLIC OUTRAGE AND POLITICAL ATTENTION IS CYCLICAL. IT COMES IN WAVES. THE SPOTLIGHT ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE USUALLY FOLLOWS THE TRAGIC DEATHS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND UNFORTUNATELY, WE SAW THE PATTERN REPEAT THIS YEAR.

In April, we saw that outrage spark collective action. National marches for women's safety were followed by sustained media attention, legislative reform and importantly, promises of action by politicians and authorities. **Finally, after decades of raised voices and rallying, gender-based violence was declared a crisis.**

EACH TIME GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAS ITS MOMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT WE MOVE A LITTLE CLOSER TOWARDS MAKING LASTING, GENERATIONAL CHANGE.

Gender-based violence is not inevitable. It's a preventable public health issue, and a crime that shatters so many lives in our communities every year. That's why WAGEC started doing primary prevention work in our communities in 2019. It required bold vision and a leap of faith from leadership to start this unfunded work. **After years of responding to emergency, we turned some focus on trying to stop women from reaching crisis point in the first place.** The only way we'll achieve our mission of safer futures is to stop violence before it starts.

Primary prevention addresses the intersecting drivers of gender-based violence with a particular focus on challenging gender inequality. Our partnerships with workplaces, local government, communities and in the education space have continued to thrive as we expand our reach in this sphere.

In 2024, we saw progress and commitment to evidence-based primary prevention. In May, NSW

Premier, the Hon. Chris Minns MP, the Hon. Jodie Harrison MP and Women's Safety Commissioner, Hannah Tonkin, met with Rosie Batty to hear about the 2015 Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence. This sparked significant change which has led to increased investment in better coordinated responses, early intervention work with people at more risk of experiencing or using violence, and primary prevention - which until now has had little focus in New South Wales.

WAGEC are excited to see greater investment in primary prevention and look forward to continue our work building partnerships with allies in the private, public and community sector. **Together, we can stop violence before it starts.**

PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING

Prevention highlights from 2023-24 included partnerships with:

- City of Sydney; delivering Active Bystander and Ally training for our local communities.
- All About Women Festival; delivering three gender-based violence workshops at the Sydney Opera House.
- Bras N Things and Hanes Australasia.

We delivered workplace response and prevention training with:

- Lockton
- I-Med
- Allens
- Lendlease
- City of Sydney
- Burwood Council
- National Transport Commission

ALL IN
PROGRAM

STOPPING GENDER STEREOTYPES STARTS WITH US

GENDER INEQUALITY IS THE PRIMARY DRIVER OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE – IT IS THE FUEL THAT INFLAMES THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS. BY CHALLENGING RIGID GENDER ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS, WE CAN RAISE THE NEXT GENERATION TO INHERIT A SAFER, MORE EQUITABLE FUTURE.

All In launched in May 2023, and works to do just this. By engaging with early childhood educators, directors, education leaders, and families in a 'whole of centre' model, All In empowers influential adults to challenge harmful gender stereotypes at a critical time in children's development. The program provides participants with tools to support children aged up to five to develop healthy, respectful relationships so they can be nurtured, safe and encouraged to reach their full potential – regardless of their gender.

The curriculum of the program is comprehensive, covering:

- The concept of gender inequality, gender stereotypes and the important role of early years educators in promoting equal, respectful and healthy relationships;
- First Nations ancient ways of Belonging, Being and Becoming, and First Nations childrearing practices, and their influence on the Early Years Learning Framework; and
- Practical steps to embedding gender equality and primary prevention principles in practice so educators have the skills and confidence to address resistance within their communities.

Interactive activities are also utilised throughout the workshops to prompt thought-provoking discussions between participants and facilitators. These discussions have helped to strengthen educators' understanding of gender inequality and its relationship to gender-based violence, connecting it to existing anti-bias approaches in the early childhood education curriculum.

EVALUATION AND BEYOND

UNSW's Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN) was engaged to conduct an independent evaluation of All In. The evaluation identified significant and positive impacts on participant's understanding of gender inequality, identified key measures of success, and suggested opportunities for improvement. Given its potential to scale, expansion of the program and its resources was recommended to enhance reach and impact.

This work has involved collaboration and so All In extend gratitude to their Project Reference Group experts, the GVRN team and the All In production team who created a spectacular series of short videos. Special thanks also to Mike Mascarenas, Kimberly Engqicht, Dr Red Ruby Scarlett, Stephanie Wu, Matt Balane, Aunty Cilla and the Sonar Music team for supporting.

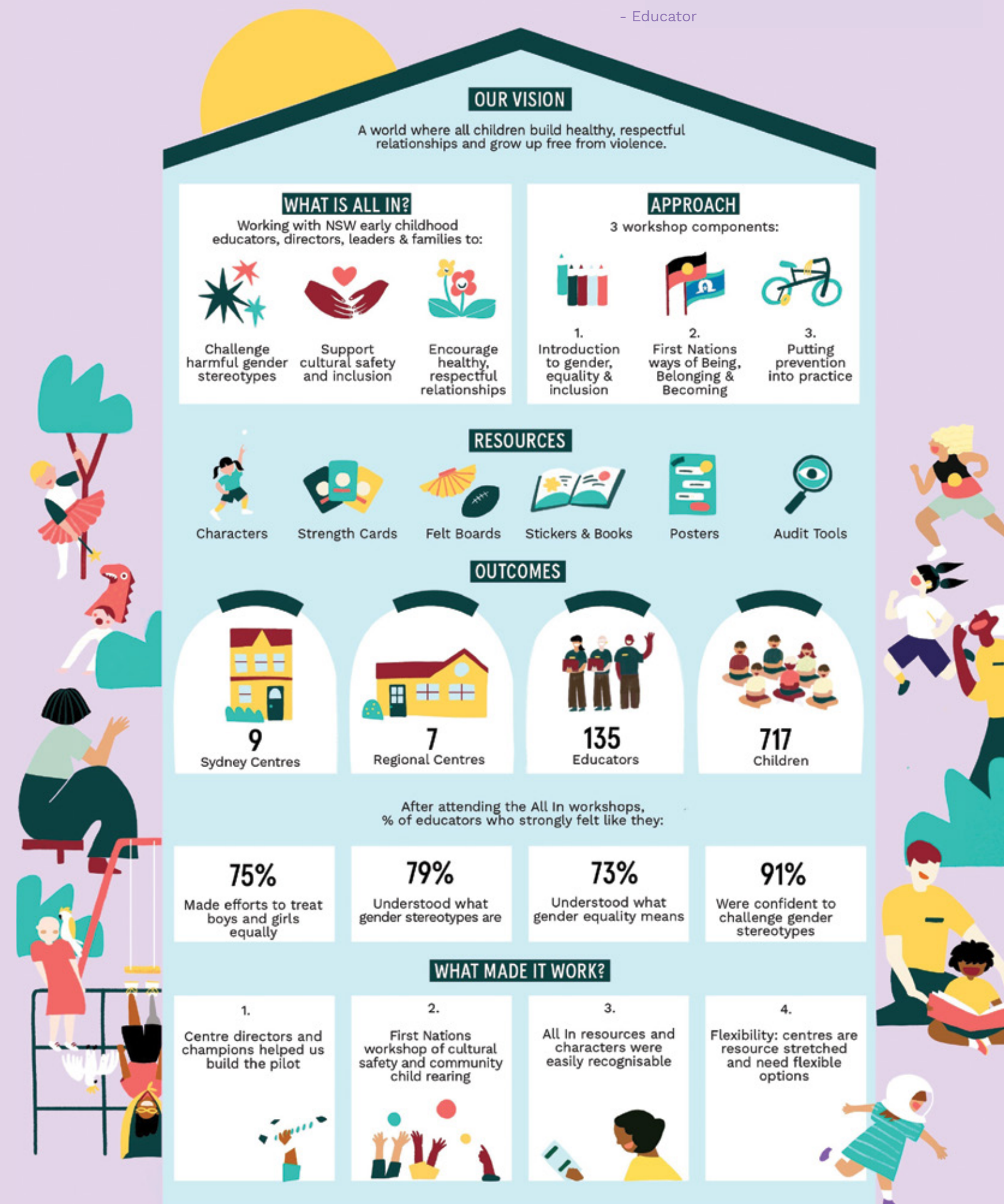
"Part of development for children is understanding their own gender and what that means to them. [...] we still get the conversations around "only boys can do this". But the educators feel more confident to say "in our place everyone is invited, it's a safe space for everyone, girls can do that too, girls can be part of this space too". So it's just changing the dialogue and giving boys an understanding that, for everyone, it's about inclusion. "

- Educator

ALL IN SUMMARY

"We feel more confident to challenge and take action against bias when necessary."

- Educator



IT TAKES ALL OF US

BY RACHAEL PHILLIPS, DIRECTOR OF FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNITIES



IN THE FACE OF CRISIS, WE ARE STRONGEST WHEN WE STAND TOGETHER. IT IS THROUGH OUR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS THAT MEANINGFUL CHANGE IS POSSIBLE, AND WE ARE INCREDIBLY PROUD TO STAND SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH ALL OF YOU.

Community is the heart of WAGEC - each contribution has moved us closer to a future where every woman and child can feel safe and thrive. The progress we've made this year has been driven by your generosity, commitment, and belief in the work we do. Thank you for being part of this movement. Your partnership, trust, and dedication continue to inspire everything we do at WAGEC.

A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT AND THE RISE IN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This year, we saw growth in individual giving, community fundraising, and corporate partnerships—a clear reflection of our community's response to the gender-based violence crisis. Our 2023-2024 fundraising revenue reached **\$2,205,100**, which is a significant achievement given the ongoing impact of the rising cost-of-living. This powerful response from our community underscores a shared commitment to ensuring safety, support, and hope during this challenging time.

Alongside financial support, we were grateful to receive **\$203,183** in material aid and **\$63,576** worth of volunteer support. Contributions from corporate partners (\$272,175), philanthropic donations from trusts and foundations (\$921,178), workplace giving (\$70,354), individual giving (\$189,758), and community fundraising (\$89,090) have enabled WAGEC to:

- Empower women through employment opportunities and mentoring;
- Foster children's resilience through specialised wellbeing and development programs;
- Provide essential material aid to women and children in crisis;
- Support pregnant women exiting incarceration with personalised services;
- Offer trauma-informed healing and recovery spaces;
- Strengthen gender-based violence prevention efforts;
- Expand support services for marginalised women and families; and
- Build sustainability to continue our vital work.

Building community takes time, and so we'd like to thank Chloe Sarapas, WAGEC's outgoing Director of Fundraising and Communities, for her marvellous contributions to this space over the past seven years. The WAGEC community wouldn't be what it is without her hard work.



COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Some of the remarkable achievements made by our community this year include:

- **Walk for WAGEC 2024** was our biggest yet with a 46% increase in participation. Over 1,500 incredible supporters joined us despite the rainy weather. We raised **\$476,857**, far surpassing our initial goal of **\$300,000** to support women and children leaving violence.
- **"We Need To Talk"** continued into its second year, expanding into workplaces like **Bras N Things** and **MaCher** while continuing to engage the broader community in meaningful discussions about gender roles and stereotypes.
- **Community fundraising expanded significantly**, with 55 initiatives raising **\$89,090**. Some standout efforts included the ITS Management art exhibition, which raised **\$12,870**, and the SPEED Band donation of **\$10,000** from their sold-out show. These larger events, along with the efforts of many dedicated individuals and groups, played a vital role in supporting our programs.
- **Material donations valued at \$203,183** were received from **38 workplace groups and 58 individuals**, providing essential items such as electronics, furniture, and personal care packs.
- **Our volunteer program continued to grow**, with **1,196 hours** contributed by passionate individuals.

CORPORATE PARTNERS AND PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

Corporate partnerships and philanthropic contributions have remained an important pillar of our success this year. Contributions from **corporate partners** totalled **\$272,175**, with significant support from **Bras N Things, Pepper Money, Epoch Capital, and Stella Insurance, as well as 151 corporate supporters.**

New supporters like MESHKI donated **\$25,000**, while long-standing supporters such as **MBM, Westpac Group, Wilson Asset Management, and Fun Enterprises** continued their generosity. Additionally, **Trusts and Foundations**, as well as mid and major donors, contributed **\$921,178**, playing a pivotal role in sustaining and expanding our programs. Their contributions have ensured that WAGEC can continue to provide life-changing support to women and children in crisis.

Special thanks to the Siddie Family Foundation, Oranges & Sardines Foundation, the Hare Family, WeirAnderson Foundation, Sydney Community Foundation, MESHKI, George Pitt Wood Trust, Millett Family Foundation, The Palmdale Trust, Skrzynski Family Sky Foundation, Westpac Group, The Sesgo Foundation, and Judith Neilson Foundation. Their generous support has been pivotal in enabling WAGEC to continue providing trauma-informed care, critical crisis services, and opportunities for women to rebuild their lives.

A COLLECTIVE EFFORT FOR CHANGE

TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED, VOLUNTEERED, RAISED FUNDS, CONTRIBUTED MATERIAL ITEMS, OR SPREAD THE WORD—THANK YOU. YOUR COMMITMENT TO ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAS CREATED A REAL AND LASTING IMPACT. WHETHER YOU'VE BEEN WITH US SINCE THE BEGINNING OR HAVE JUST JOINED THE WAGEC COMMUNITY, WE ARE INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL AND EXCITED FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD AS WE CONTINUE TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGE TOGETHER.



CORPORATE PARTNERS

CORPORATE INVESTMENT PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE IN ENSURING WAGEC CAN NOT ONLY NAVIGATE TIMES OF CRISIS BUT ALSO EMERGE STRONGER AND DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN. THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS ENABLES US TO DELIVER BOTH IMMEDIATE CRISIS RESPONSES AND LONG-TERM PROGRAMS THAT CHALLENGE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND BUILD SAFER FUTURES.

This year, WAGEC was fortunate to receive support from an incredible 155 businesses, both locally in Sydney and beyond, contributing a total of \$649,302.

We extend our deepest thanks to our longstanding partners Bras N Things, Pepper Money, Epoch Capital and Stella Insurance, and huge thanks to Westpac Group and MBM, whose continued generosity and commitment have been instrumental in our work. By partnering with WAGEC, these businesses help educate and empower their teams to challenge the root causes of gender-based violence, amplifying the impact beyond financial support.



BRAS N THINGS



In 2024, Bras N Things and WAGEC proudly celebrate four years of partnership. This partnership has been instrumental in driving long-term social change.

Every year, Bras N Things donate Comfort Packs, filled with cozy pyjamas, fresh underwear, and new socks, to the women and children in WAGEC's crisis accommodation, making their stay feel a little more like home.

Beyond this, Bras N Things actively support WAGEC's prevention work, helping to fund part of the prevention team that challenges gender stereotypes and addresses the root causes of gender-based violence. They also provide gender-based violence and healthy relationships training to new staff members on induction, further extending their impact.

Throughout our partnership, Bras N Things has raised crucial funds through in-store campaigns, festive gift cards, and supported our flagship Walk for WAGEC event, helping to sustain our ACCESS Mentoring program. In addition, Bras N Things have enhanced the reach of our public campaigns, including Homelessness Week.

As we reflect on the change we've made together, we are deeply grateful to Bras N Things for their commitment to supporting WAGEC's purpose and making a tangible difference in creating safer futures for women and children by stopping violence before it starts.

EPOCH CAPITAL



Epoch Capital partnered with WAGEC in 2024 and has quickly become a cornerstone of support for our programs, particularly through their generous donations towards our work supporting children and young people.

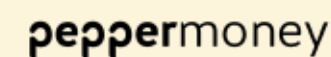
As one of our most substantial supporters through workplace giving, Epoch Capital has enabled their team to consistently contribute to WAGEC's efforts. They've also played a pivotal role in our Walk for WAGEC campaign through their own event and team, raising significant funds and rallying their network to support this flagship event, greatly expanding its reach and impact.

In addition to their substantial involvement, Epoch Capital has supported our Festive Campaign by leading an office gift voucher drive, providing crucial support to families in crisis during the holiday season. Their thoughtful contributions ensured that women and children could access essential items and experience some relief and joy during a challenging time of year.

Epoch's team has also actively participated in a WAGEC Working Bee, volunteering their time to beautify our Redfern Drop-In Centre, helping to create a warm and welcoming space for those seeking refuge and support.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue partnering with Epoch Capital to drive greater impact, especially for the children and young people in our community. Their substantial support, workplace giving, and hands-on involvement exemplify the powerful role corporate partnerships play in creating safer, healthier futures for families in crisis.

PEPPER MONEY



Pepper Money has been a valued partner of WAGEC since 2019, playing a key role in supporting women as they build financial independence and enhancing the development of children in refuge. One of their standout contributions has been matching \$80,000 in donations for Walk for WAGEC, doubling the impact of our community's efforts. They've also consistently led competitive fundraising efforts, with their team members securing the top spots year after year as the highest individual fundraisers.

Their donations support WAGEC's ACCESS Mentoring Program, providing crucial guidance and pathways for women striving to rebuild their lives. Pepper Money has also contributed skilled volunteering and advice to help WAGEC with a critical data project, furthering their impact by supporting WAGEC's operational improvements. Their team also actively participates in our corporate volunteering program, helping to maintain our refuge sites through Working Bees.

In addition, we are so grateful that each year during the festive season, Pepper Money generously provide hampers for every refuge site, bringing much-needed joy and comfort to families during a challenging time.

We are truly grateful for Pepper Money's continued partnership and are excited to keep working together, building financial security and independence for women so they can thrive as they move forward into the next chapter of their lives.

STELLA INSURANCE



Stella Insurance and WAGEC have been proud partners since 2021, united by a shared commitment to empowering women and ending gender-based violence. As part of this partnership, Stella donates \$5 from every car insurance policy sold, making them the primary sponsor of WAGEC's Material Donations Collective. This initiative is essential in providing women and children with vital items like non-perishable food, toiletries, and other necessities when they need them most.

The Material Donations Collective is critical to WAGEC's ability to coordinate community drop-offs, ensuring the smooth collection and distribution of goods. These donations are delivered across our four refuge sites, helping us meet immediate needs by providing women and children with the specific items they require, from personal care products to household essentials. This support not only addresses urgent needs but also uplifts the women, making them feel cared for and supported during a challenging time.

In addition to their sponsorship, Stella Insurance has participated in Walk for WAGEC and generously contributed gift cards during the festive season, giving our clients the autonomy to make personal choices for themselves and their families, which is so important in restoring dignity and control during difficult times.

We are incredibly grateful to Stella Insurance for their ongoing support, which allows us to continue delivering much-needed material support and positively impacting the lives of women and children in our community.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING



This year the WAGEC Community Fundraising program grew by an incredible 85%, with dedicated individuals, workplaces and community groups organising 55 fundraising initiatives and raising \$89,090 in support of women and children in crisis. We welcomed a number of new supporters to the WAGEC family, and wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to ITS Management and SPEED, who both fundraised over \$10,000 at their events. The team are also excited for the launch of our brand new Community Fundraising online portal at the end of 2024, making it even easier for our community to bake cakes, swim laps or dance the night away for the WAGEC cause.

ITS MANAGEMENT

Thank you to new supporters ITS Management who raised a whopping \$12,870 at their staff art exhibition.



SPEED BAND

Also new to WAGEC, SPEED band pledged \$10,000 from their sold-out December show to WAGEC. Thank you to the dedicated SPEED team for your generosity and advocacy.

SWEAT IT OUT

The amazing Sweat It Out team raised \$4826 for WAGEC at the 2024 Ricochet Ball, an entertainment industry charity netball tournament. Thanks for choosing to support WAGEC this year, Sweat It Out!

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S COLLEGE

The Women's College have been supporting WAGEC through their yearly Cake Auction for many years, and this was their best (and sweetest) year yet, raising an incredible \$4650. We're so grateful to continue to be supported by such a committed group of young women.

GINA BLOCK

A huge WAGEC thanks to Gina, who celebrated her 60th birthday by asking her friends and loved ones to donate to women and children in crisis, raising \$3535. What a milestone, and what an achievement!

BEVERLY

The wonderful team at Beverly restaurant and bar in Melbourne hosted an International Women's Day lunch and panel event in March, raising \$3000 for WAGEC. Thank you, team Beverly.



MATERIAL DONATIONS



The WAGEC Material Donations program, made possible by our partners at Stella Insurance, supports our clients and their children with the essentials that many take for granted. This year, WAGEC received \$203,183 in material donations from 38 workplace groups and 58 individuals in the community. Donors support the program by signing up to receive our monthly Donations Collective newsletter, and with subscriber numbers doubling over the course of the year, we wish to thank every material donor for their generous commitment to women and children in crisis.

CHOICE

Every year, CHOICE supports WAGEC clients by donating appliances and household goods. This year, the value of donations reached an incredible \$34,686. We are so appreciative of their generosity – and know our clients are too.



WESTPAC

Westpac supports WAGEC across the board, and this year donated a huge \$25,500 worth of laptops, phones, and IT support for the use of WAGEC clients.

BRAS N THINGS

Our wonderful partners Bras N Things donated \$17,692 in care packs for women this year, including winter pyjamas and warm robes. Thank you Bras N Things.

DESIGN NATION

New supporters Design Nation donated an incredible \$15,000 worth of brand new furniture and homewares across two of our crisis accommodation sites. We are so grateful to the team for this incredible contribution.



AESOP

Another long term supporter of WAGEC, this year Aesop donated \$11,119 in essential body and hair care products, as well as beautiful gifts. We are so thankful for the AESOP team for their ongoing commitment to WAGEC and to women and children in crisis.

BUNNINGS

Bunnings Rozelle offered to support our new From Now refuge with furniture, homewares, and plants. Thank you, Bunnings team!

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



OVER THE PAST FINANCIAL YEAR, WAGEC'S VOLUNTEERS CONTINUED TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR DEEP COMMITMENT TO CHAMPIONING THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN. WITH OVER 142 INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTING 1,196 HOURS OF SERVICE, THEIR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS HAVE STRENGTHENED OUR IMPACT ACROSS ALL AREAS OF OUR WORK AND OFFERED WAGEC'S CLIENTS A SENSE OF HOPE, OPPORTUNITY, AND A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

Our volunteers bring a range of diverse skills to WAGEC, enabling us to offer our clients a range of therapeutic and skill-building programs. Whether it's facilitating art therapy sessions, ESL lessons or yoga classes; providing one-on-one tutoring and learning support to children living in refuge, preparing home-cooked meals, beautifying our crisis accommodation sites, offering legal advice, or supporting our team to deliver signature WAGEC events - every contribution has been invaluable. Every hour volunteered has made a tangible difference to the women and children we serve.

Our volunteers consistently showed up with compassion, determination and an unwavering belief in WAGEC's vision. Their work this past year has not only provided direct support to our team and clients but has also strengthened the sense of community and solidarity that lies at the heart of our organisation.

To all our volunteers: our deepest thanks for each meal cooked, homework helped, and plant potted. We are so grateful for every second of time that you spent with WAGEC this year. Your contributions are not just acts of service; they're acts of love, strength and hope. Your efforts and passion continue to make a lasting impact in the lives of women and their families at WAGEC, and we feel unbelievably lucky to have you walking alongside us in the movement towards ending gender-based violence. We can't wait to dive into another year of incredible change-making with you to ensure every woman and child has the opportunity thrive.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS

We couldn't be more grateful to our corporate volunteers for their dedication and hands-on involvement this past year. Through your hard work, enthusiasm and commitment, your teams have helped us keep WAGEC's spaces safe, warm and welcoming. We deeply appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to the continued meaningful impact we can create together in the future.

WESTPAC

A million thanks to the wonderful team at Westpac, who loved their volunteer day at WAGEC so much in May that they came back for another one in June! The team worked hard across two WAGEC accommodation sites, building a truckload of IKEA furniture for women's rooms, giving our shared spaces a fresh lick of paint and planting herb gardens at our refuges. We're deeply grateful for our long-standing friendship with Westpac and their continued support and generosity. We can't wait to have them join us again soon!

"The Westpac team were incredible! They worked together beautifully to get the job done – it's not often you see a group of people divide and conquer a massive amount of flat-pack furniture so efficiently! Above all else, they demonstrated great respect for our refuge, our team and the women we serve. The collective efforts of the Westpac team help WAGEC continue to provide a safe, warm and welcoming space for women at a time when they need it most."

– Georgina, Quality & Operations Manager

EPOCH

A huge shout-out to our brilliant partners at EPOCH Capital, who participated in a working bee at our central support office in Redfern in November. The EPOCH team revamped our garden – weeding, potting plants and pruning hedges – and gave our storage areas and donation room a serious spring clean. If they hadn't already gone above and beyond, they arranged lunch for our clients and team, too, by having delicious paella cooked on-site! We cannot thank EPOCH enough for the time and care they put into this project and look forward to welcoming them back for another great day next year!

PRO BONO SUPPORT

A very special thanks to all those who assisted our team and clients with specialised legal support over the past year. We could not be more thankful to Chris Withers and the teams at Gadens and Lander & Rogers for their time, expertise and kindness. Whether helping us develop key documents or supporting us with subpoena requests, your contributions have made a world of difference to our team's workloads and service delivery.





"IT WAS AWESOME TO [HAVE] A TANGIBLE WAY OF SUPPORTING

WAGEC AND TO FEEL LIKE I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

IT'S VERY DIFFICULT WATCHING THE NEWS AND FEELING HELPLESS,

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING A WAY TO GIVE BACK AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"



WALK FOR WAGEC TOOK ITS VERY FIRST STEPS BACK IN 2019. THE INAUGURAL EVENT SAW 263 PEOPLE ATTEND AND COLLECTIVELY RAISE AN AMAZING \$82,000 TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CRISIS. WE'LL ALWAYS BE DEEPLY PROUD OF THIS INCREDIBLE EFFORT, AND KNOW THAT WITHOUT IT, WAGEC WOULD NOT BE WHERE IT IS TODAY.

Six years later, Walk For WAGEC continues to deliver phenomenal results for the women and children we serve, breaking the previous year's records each and every time – and this year's event was no exception. Walk For WAGEC 2024 delivered a turn-out of over 1500 people – either in-person or remotely – and the total amount fundraised stands at more than \$470,000.

This is an extraordinary achievement; even more so considering that the fundraising goal for this year's Walk was initially set at \$300k, as well as the fact that Australians continue to navigate the challenges of the current cost-of-living crisis.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE, HOWEVER, TO SEPARATE THESE WINS FROM THE LOSSES THAT DRIVE US TO DO THE WORK WE DO AT WAGEC. BY MAY THIS YEAR, 28 WOMEN HAD BEEN KILLED BY MEN KNOWN TO THEM, AVERAGING ONE WOMAN KILLED EVERY FOUR DAYS IN 2024 – A FIGURE ALMOST DOUBLE FROM THE SAME PERIOD IN 2023. IT WAS IN THE WEEK LEADING UP TO WALK FOR WAGEC THAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN WAS DECLARED A NATIONAL CRISIS, FOLLOWING NATION-WIDE RALLIES AND OUTCRIES FOR ACTION.

This year's Walk For WAGEC in Centennial Park perfectly captured the way in which our community continues to show up for women and children in times of crisis. Our wonderful friends at Two Good fuelled the crowd with coffee from Single O and delicious Sonoma pastries. Just before the Walk began, the fabulous Retro Sweat team ensured everyone was warmed-up and ready to go with an 80s-inspired jazzercise session. As hundreds of people side-stepped to Whitney Houston in the rain, Walk For WAGEC 2024 delivered the beacon of hope our team, clients and supporters truly needed.

We give our heartfelt thanks to Yvonne Weldon AM for her stirring Welcome to Country on event day, and to the Hon. Jodie Harrison MP for her wonderful words as our keynote speaker. We were honoured to be joined by several special guests on the day, too, including the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Senator Mehreen Faruqi, Allegra Spender MP, Jenny Leong MP, Alex Greenwich MP, Councillor HY William Chan, Councillor (Waskam) Emelda Davis and Kylie Kwong AM.





We express our deepest gratitude to our incredible partners at Pepper Money, who gave \$80,000 to this year's gift-matching initiative, without which we could not have exceeded our fundraising goal.

We appreciate the incredible kindness and help of our event sponsors and supporters: MBM, Centennial Parklands, The Safety Officer, Two Good, Primer, MaCher, Sydney Water, Single O, Sonoma, Lendlease and Sydney Direct. Walk For WAGEC 2024 could not have been the success it was without your collaboration.

"A wonderful experience from the start to the end. Violence against women is happening far too often, and I'm proud to support such a worthy organisation."

- Walk for WAGEC 2024 Participant

Last but by no means least: an extra special thanks goes out to our brilliant volunteers, whose hard work and big smiles helped to make this year's event an unforgettable day. From (a very early) start to finish, your support was key to ensuring everything went off without a hitch and we could not be more grateful for your unwavering dedication to WAGEC's cause.

To our brilliant WAGEC community – whether you rallied your friends, family and colleagues to donate, spread the word about the Walk on your socials or braved the drizzle to join us in Centennial Park – thank you. Your advocacy, optimism and strength, in all its shapes and forms, move us closer to safe futures for women and children every day. We can't wait to see you again in 2025!

"The WAGEC team are an incredible group who genuinely care and make a difference every day. The way they organised the 10km walk and encouraged everyone to show up for themselves and each other is amazing, and this is reflected in the amount of money raised."

- Walk for WAGEC 2024 Participant

\$476,856.54 RAISED

18.5% INCREASE FROM 2023



\$160,000 RAISED DURING GIFT-MATCHING

204 TEAMS PARTICIPATED



27 VOLUNTEERS

800+ ATTENDEES



1500+ REGISTRATIONS



WE NEED TO TALK

AS OUR NEWEST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE APPROACHES ITS FIRST BIRTHDAY, WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THE WONDERFUL PROGRESS IT'S MADE SO FAR!

We Need To Talk is an event series designed to connect our community and challenge harmful gender stereotypes through meaningful conversations. Participants split into groups and are provided with a deck of WAGEC-designed conversation cards. As the groups pull cards from their decks, they're given the opportunity to freely and safely explore gendered issues together, such as: Are there differences between "mother" and "father" roles? How does gender impact experiences of ageing? Should clothing be genderless?



We piloted We Need To Talk in October, and then, following its success, ran the event again in March to celebrate International Women's Day. In the early planning stages of We Need To Talk, our team spoke about wanting to offer the event to workplaces as an employee engagement activity. Thanks to the enthusiasm of our corporate supporters, we were proud to achieve in the event's very first year! We were delighted to hold our first workplace session for our friends at MaCher in March, and then again for our partners at Bras N Things in September. Coffee, pastries and conversations flowed freely as their team members took the morning away from their desks to discuss and dismantle the gender status quo.

We thank each person who joined us for We Need To Talk over the past year – it was such a privilege to hear the different perspectives and ideas you all so generously gave to the discussions. In a time where much of what we see, read and hear is polarised, it's more important than ever to know there are places where we can ask questions, listen deeply and give each other the space to express ourselves. In doing so, we can build shared understanding, strengthen our connections, and ultimately alter our perspectives to positively change the world around us. We look forward to delivering many more We Need To Talk sessions in the year ahead – watch this space!

"I cannot thank the WAGEC team enough for their wonderful facilitation of this session and for providing a space for us to talk about deeper topics surrounding women and real life. I would highly suggest that more teams get involved with this as it is so powerful and, in my opinion, connects us together as a team more."

- Bras N Things

INCREASING IMPACT

BY KELSIE HEDGE, DIRECTOR OF QUALITY & IMPACT



JEANNIE DEVINE OPENED WAGEC'S DOORS IN 1977 IN AN EFFORT TO BATTLE HOUSING CRISIS. EVERY DAY SINCE, WE'VE BEEN ADAPTING IN A CONSTANT EFFORT TO DELIVER THE BEST SUPPORT POSSIBLE TO THE WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY. AS THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS PERSISTS, SO DO WE.

Maintaining a strong foundation is essential to supporting WAGEC's long-term vision of ending gender-based violence in a generation. Embedding stability and accountability into our daily practices has ensured that we have remained steady in the face of the rising cost of living and housing crisis. **Our strong foundation has meant that despite endemic rates of domestic violence, we have remained a safe haven for those who need us.**

Our Quality and Impact team work tirelessly to ensure things at WAGEC are running smoothly, safely and securely. They take care of the not-so-little things, from repairs and maintenance to compliance, so that our caseworkers can take care of the women and children in our community. As our clients navigate broken systems, they shouldn't have to navigate broken bathroom doors.

With every step taken to improve our systems and operations, WAGEC grows stronger and so too does our movement to end gender-based violence.

"Thankyou so much for your help, could not have coped without you!! Every staff I came into contact with were very helpful, understanding and friendly. Thankyou again."

– WAGEC client

AUSTRALIAN SERVICE EXCELLENCE STANDARDS ACCREDITATION

WAGEC are proud to announce a 100% compliance score in our second cycle of accreditation for the Australian Service Excellence Standards. Our report noted that WAGEC has 'undertaken a deep reflective process and honed its strategic intent...there has been intensive work undertaken on recommendations and the organisation has navigated a period of difficult change to reach its current position, where it is well placed for expansion and enrichment of services'.

CHILD SAFETY

WAGEC is committed to the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of all children that we engage within our services and community, and we recognise that we must have a whole-of-organisation approach to uphold their rights and to prevent harm. To strengthen our response to child safety and protection concerns across the organisation, WAGEC appointed our first Safeguarding Coordinator in October 2023. With the support of the Safeguarding Coordinator, WAGEC continues to develop and implement our Child Safe Action Plan.



CENTRING LIVED EXPERIENCE

The Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) was recruited last year and began meeting in December. WAGEC sees LEAP as central to the improvement of our programs and services. By listening to lived-experience expertise and connecting survivors together, we have accelerated our involvement in systemic advocacy. LEAP consists of six advocates who have had diverse experiences with WAGEC since 2020. They have assisted with ASES accreditation, advocated for solutions to homelessness and provided feedback on how we can make WAGEC an even better service for all. Two members presented at the 'Everybody's Home' People's Forum, advocating for systemic change to address the housing crisis.

Survivors hold the solutions to safer futures. It is a privilege to walk beside them as we amplify their voices to drive impact and change.

"Thank you both so much for all your incredible DFV informed, client centred support and kindness the family, it was such a privilege to have worked with WAGEC"

– Feedback from sector professional

"Thankyou, A million thanks!! Very necessary service for people in need!! Fantastic organization - very helpful!!"

– WAGEC client

WAGEC'S MODEL OF CARE – CONNECTION, AGENCY, RECOVERY AND EMPOWERMENT

In 2021, WAGEC developed a therapeutic model of care to drive the Connection, Agency, Recovery and Empowerment of our clients. The CARE Model provides staff with the resources and capacity to assist clients as they build safer futures for themselves and their families. It builds on our values, four practice pillars: person centred, feminist, trauma-informed and strength-based CARE.

Every year since it's conception, WAGEC has strived to update and improve the framework to ensure our teams can deliver holistic and wrap-around support. This year was no different, with our Quality and Impact team working to translate the Care Model into our everyday practice via a series of community of practice sessions and team reflections.

CARING FOR OUR PEOPLE

BY ANDREA WATKINS, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE & CULTURE



WAGEC HAS A WORKFORCE LIKE NO OTHER. EVERY SINGLE DAY, OUR STAFF FACE INJUSTICE HEAD ON AND WORK PASSIONATELY TO HELP THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY. DESPITE UNRELENTING RATES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE CONSTANT NAVIGATION OF BROKEN SYSTEMS, OUR TEAM REMAIN UNYIELDINGLY CALM IN THE FACE OF CRISIS.

The work we do is intensive and confronting, but it is work that is necessary. We consider it an immense privilege to walk beside women and children as they transition from crisis to recovery. It is in listening to our clients that we learn the most about resilience, strength and perseverance.

To provide the highest quality of care, our teams need to be efficient, effective and adaptable in the face of systemic injustice. WAGEC not only recognizes but resources our people, who work tirelessly to keep women and children safe, and to end gender-based violence.

Our People & Culture team was proud to implement a number of strategic projects last year to care for our workforce so they can excel in their roles.



GROWTH

Growth has been a constant presence at WAGEC for several years now. In 2016, WAGEC had eight employees. In June 2024, we welcomed our 67th employee. This is an incredible growth of 737% in eight years. Last financial year alone, we saw a 22% growth in our workforce. This included 15 new roles, five of which were successfully filled by existing staff, offering pathways for development and leadership opportunities.

In FY23/24, we were proud to implement our core employee attraction and retention program, which includes:

- A comprehensive Wellbeing Policy, including paid leave, self-care plan and annual wellbeing allowance;
- Cultural supervision and ceremonial leave for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff;
- 12 weeks Paid Parental/Adoption leave;
- Monthly external supervision for frontline workers;
- Leadership development and coaching;
- Paid Professional Development leave;
- Access to internal training and development opportunities;
- Worker Management policies and procedures to structure management support and employee development; and
- Access to Sonder, a comprehensive employee care platform.

Compliance, technology, people-management process and culture were also major focuses for the financial year, culminating in the implementation of an online HR system to automate and streamline functions.



CULTURE, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Our quarterly staff wellbeing survey results have helped to shape and improve our People Strategy, while also providing tangible actions to implement and measure psychological safety and culture satisfaction. Of note we had an annual average of:

- 78.5% employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement “I feel socially and emotionally safe at work”.
- 95% employees ‘feel safe being honest about making mistakes at work.’
- 79% employees strongly agreed or agreed that ‘WAGEC has a positive culture.’

While these are strong first year results, we are committed to building on these practices to improve support, safety and care for our team.

In April 2024 WAGEC launched Sonder – a revolutionary Employee Assistance Program that offers our staff 24/7 health, medical, safety and wellbeing support. With features such as a GPS-enabled ‘Track my Journey’ to support our staff working in community settings, our ongoing partnership with Sonder promotes and enables a safe, supported workforce.



OF EMPLOYEES STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED WITH THE STATEMENT "I FEEL SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY SAFE AT WORK"



OF EMPLOYEES 'FEEL SAFE BEING HONEST ABOUT MAKING MISTAKES AT WORK'.



OF EMPLOYEES STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED WITH THE STATEMENT 'WAGEC HAS A POSITIVE CULTURE.'



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Every day we see homelessness and gender-based violence impact women and children from all backgrounds, and all areas of our communities. At WAGEC, we are committed to developing a diverse workforce that offers dedicated, ethical, and supportive services that are client-focused, promote dignity, and ensure support for the most marginalised members of our society.

We're proud to have a workforce where:

- 26% of our team were born overseas
- 34% of our team are multilingual, speaking 17 different languages
- 33% of our team are differently abled
- 34% of our team are LBGTQI+
- And 48% of our team have caring responsibilities.

I'm incredibly proud of our hardworking, talented, and dedicated team. Every day they put our feminist values into practice and stay true to our grassroots activist origins. I'm proud of the way our team look after themselves and each other, in order to do this work and to provide the best services for women and children.

OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS



Communities
& Justice

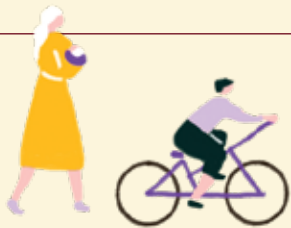
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| 3 Sisters Foundation | Epoch Capital | M Louise May | SCEGGS Darlinghurst |
| Abacus Funds Management | ERAN Pty Ltd | MaCher Australia | Shauna Murray |
| Adam Liberman | Ethical Jobs | Mark Green | Shaw & Partners |
| Aesop | Faith Hynoski | Mark Prendergast | Skrzynski Family |
| Andrea Seres | Finisar | Mark Willcocks | St Catherines School |
| APEX Tool Group | FLK IT OVER | Mary Papadopoulos | Stella Insurance |
| Art Aid | Frances Foster-Thorpe | MBMPL | Stephen Edwards |
| Australian Chinese Charity Foundation | Fun Enterprises– Nicholas Wright | Melanie Rhodes-White | Stoneturn |
| Australian Payments Network | Fusion Pilates | MESHKI | Strathfield Rotary |
| Better Future, a giving fund in the APS Foundation | Future Group Australia | Millett Family Foundation | Summers Family Stewardship Trust |
| BAC Insurance Brokers | Art of Flow | Mimi Cullen | Sydney Community Foundation |
| Barbara Bell | George Pitt Wood Trust (NSW) | Minter Ellison | Sydney University Women's College |
| Barbara Caine | George Zhang | Mirvac | Taylor Family |
| Beverly | Green Building Council of Australia | Moira Gatens | Terry Tzaneros |
| Bindu Narula | Hayden Muscat | Narelle Mottau | Tessa Boyd-Caine |
| Bloomberg | Helen Eager | Nerida Murray | The Acquire Group |
| Botica Family Trust | Hella Heels | Nexxen | The Everhard Industries Foundation |
| Bras N Things | Hive Bar | Olivia Mueller | The Myee Codrington Foundation for Homeless Women |
| Burwood Council | International Towers | Oranges & Sardines Foundation | The VGI Partners Foundation |
| Burwood Girls High School | ITS Management | Patricia Calvisi | Thomas Hare Investments Pty Ltd |
| Byora Foundation | IT'S Management | Pepper Money | Tim Trumper |
| Calvin Shyam | Jamie Raeburn | Peta Herschderfer | Tojali – Waterwheel Foundation |
| Canva Foundation | Jason Scally | Phil Drew | UBS Group AG |
| Chris Watson | Jess & Sam Laporte | Pip Rath | University of Notre Dame Sydney |
| Christie & Hood | Joanna Ryan | Primer | Valeska Bloch |
| SPEED Band | Judith Lee | Prue Liger | Valhalla Foundation |
| Christopher Vaughan | Judith Neilson Foundation | Rachel Emma Ferguson Foundation | Vaughan Stibbard |
| Claudia Graham | Judy Lau | Ready Enable | Vicki Liberman |
| CommBank Staff Foundation | Julie Ireland | Refinery29 (Pedestrian Group) | Waverley Council Staff Charitable Trust |
| Commonwealth Bank | Kambala | Reliance Rail | We Communication |
| Connie Wong | Karina Dowd | Reserve Bank of Australia | Wendy Hawker |
| Darling Harbour Rotary Club | Kay Tai Tay | Richard Sleijpen | Westpac Group |
| David Paradise | Keith Stevenson | Richardson & Wrench Marrickville/Hurlstone Park | Wilson Asset Management |
| Earl Evans | Kenzie Urquhart | Rick Millen | Yoon Jin Oh |
| Edward McCarthy | Kimia Jizan | Rotary Club of North Sydney | Zurich Foundation |
| Elizabeth Wilkins | King Baudouin Foundation | Sandip Ganguly | |
| Emalyn Foundation | Lee Husdon | Santalum Foundation | |
| | Lisa Chung | Sara Wilson | |
| | Lloyd Wallace | Sarah Bassiuni | |
| | Lorica Partners | | |
| | Lowenden Foundation | | |
| | Lynne Hancock | | |



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FY23 WAS ANOTHER SOLID YEAR OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR WAGEC.

We achieved a net operating surplus of \$422k (compared to \$1.95m in FY22). For FY24, the surplus after income tax amounted to \$880,888, showing significant growth from the previous year's result of \$421,718.

REVENUE AND INCOME

Our total gross revenue and other income for FY23 reached \$7.74 million, representing a \$379k decrease from the previous year, primarily due to the completion of one-off COVID-19-related grants. However, FY24 saw an upswing in gross revenue to \$9,443,114, demonstrating resilience and an overall growth trajectory across the past six years.

FUNDING COMPOSITION

WAGEC has successfully reduced reliance on government funding, which saw a reduction of \$880k compared to FY22 due to the conclusion of pandemic-specific grants. This shift aligns with our strategic priority of diversifying income streams, building a sustainable funding base, and ensuring greater financial resilience for WAGEC in the future.

The following financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the appropriate accounting standards and other mandatory professional standards and have been independently audited by Alison Swansborough, Associate Partner – Audit & Assurance, Crowe Australasia

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024	2023
CASHFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	\$	\$
Receipts from grants, donations, contracts and rental	9,208,011	7,707,278
Payments to suppliers and employees	(9,243,900)	(7,594,576)
Interest received	164,659	2,534
Interest paid on leases	(8,648)	(14,330)
NET CASH FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	120,122	100,906
CASHFLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	\$	\$
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(126,859)	(188,010)
Increase in other financial assets	(939,195)	-
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(1,066,054)	(188,010)
CASHFLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	\$	\$
Repayments of lease liabilities	(224,064)	(209,608)
NET CASH USED IN FINANCING ACTIVITIES	(224,064)	(209,608)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	(1,169,996)	(296,712)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	7,196,391	7,493,103
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	6,026,395	7,196,391
NON-CASH INVESTING AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES	\$	\$
Additions to the right-of-use assets	70,745	-

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	RESERVE FUNDS \$	ACCUMULATED SURPLUS \$	TOTAL \$
Opening Balance as at 1 July 2022	-	5,044,640	5,044,640
Restatement *	2,329,205	(2,329,205)	-
Surplus for the year	-	421,718	421,718
Transfers between reserves and accumulated surplus	(57,080)	57,080	-
Balance as at 30 June 2023	2,272,125	3,194,233	5,466,358
Surplus for the year	-	880,888	880,888
Transfers between reserves and accumulated surplus	568,739	(568,739)	-
BALANCE AS AT 30 JUNE 2024	2,840,864	3,506,382	6,347,246

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024	2023
CURRENT ASSETS	\$	\$
Cash	6,026,395	7,196,391
Other financial assets	939,195	-
Trade and other receivables	50,788	23,881
Other assets	43,731	-
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	7,060,109	7,220,272
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	\$	\$
Other assets	9,075	-
Property, plant and equipment	295,366	261,924
Right-of-use assets	79,710	259,818
Total non-current assets	384,151	521,742
TOTAL ASSETS	7,444,260	7,742,014
CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$	\$
Trade and other payables	246,950	365,400
Contract liabilities	375,355	1,371,549
Lease liabilities	82,037	189,462
Employee provisions	328,929	247,964
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,033,271	2,174,375
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$	\$
Lease liabilities	-	45,895
Employee provisions	63,743	55,386
Total non-current liabilities	63,743	101,281
Total liabilities	1,097,014	2,275,656
NET ASSETS	6,347,246	5,466,358
EQUITY	\$	\$
Reserve funds	2,840,864	2,272,125
Accumulated surplus	3,506,382	3,194,233
TOTAL EQUITY	6,347,246	5,466,358

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Cash	9,443,114	7,629,785
Other income	341,950	111,522
Other expenses	(1,269,615)	(1,153,025)
Depreciation and amortisation	(344,269)	(271,745)
Community supporter expenses	(1,629)	(7,249)
Employment costs	(6,500,983)	(5,169,119)
Property costs	(410,837)	(355,584)
Client costs	(368,195)	(348,537)
Finance Costs	(8,648)	(14,330)
SURPLUS BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE	880,888	421,718
Income tax expense	-	-
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	880,888	421,718
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	880,888	421,718



