

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019







Arrernte children practicing traditional dance during a Learning on Country session at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground Central Australia)

## Our Vision

For First Nations people to reach their aspiration for the next generation of children and families to have agency over their social, cultural, political and economic future

## Our Strategy

The Children's Ground Approach is a 25-year strategy that aims to create lasting change. It addresses key economic, social, cultural and political challenges facing First Nations communities. It is unique and radical because it is:

- Designed & delivered by First Nations people
- Based on decades of knowledge, expertise and international evidence
- Strengths-based and celebrates First Culture and knowledge in parallel with Western practices
- Focused on prevention so that each child can enjoy a life of opportunity and wellbeing
- Building an evidence base of impact and outcomes to compel systems reform

**"We've been following government nearly all our lives - this is a new beginning. We are following a new path, our own path as First Nations people for the future of our children. At Children's Ground, the community are taking the lead. We are very proud of that. We are the government of ourselves."**

**MK Turner OAM, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director**



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## Our Commitment to First Nations People

Children’s Ground acknowledges and honours First Nations people, and pays respect to Elders past and present as the traditional custodians of this land. In Melbourne we live and work on the land of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, in West Arnhem on the lands of the Bolmo People and in Central Australia on the lands of the Arrernte People. We recognise that these lands were never ceded by the First Nations.

Photography by Children’s Ground staff and families  
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Front cover image: Marthalias Scrutton during a Learning on Country activity at Mpweringke Anapipe  
Back cover image: Anthony Whitehurst on Country at Marlkawo



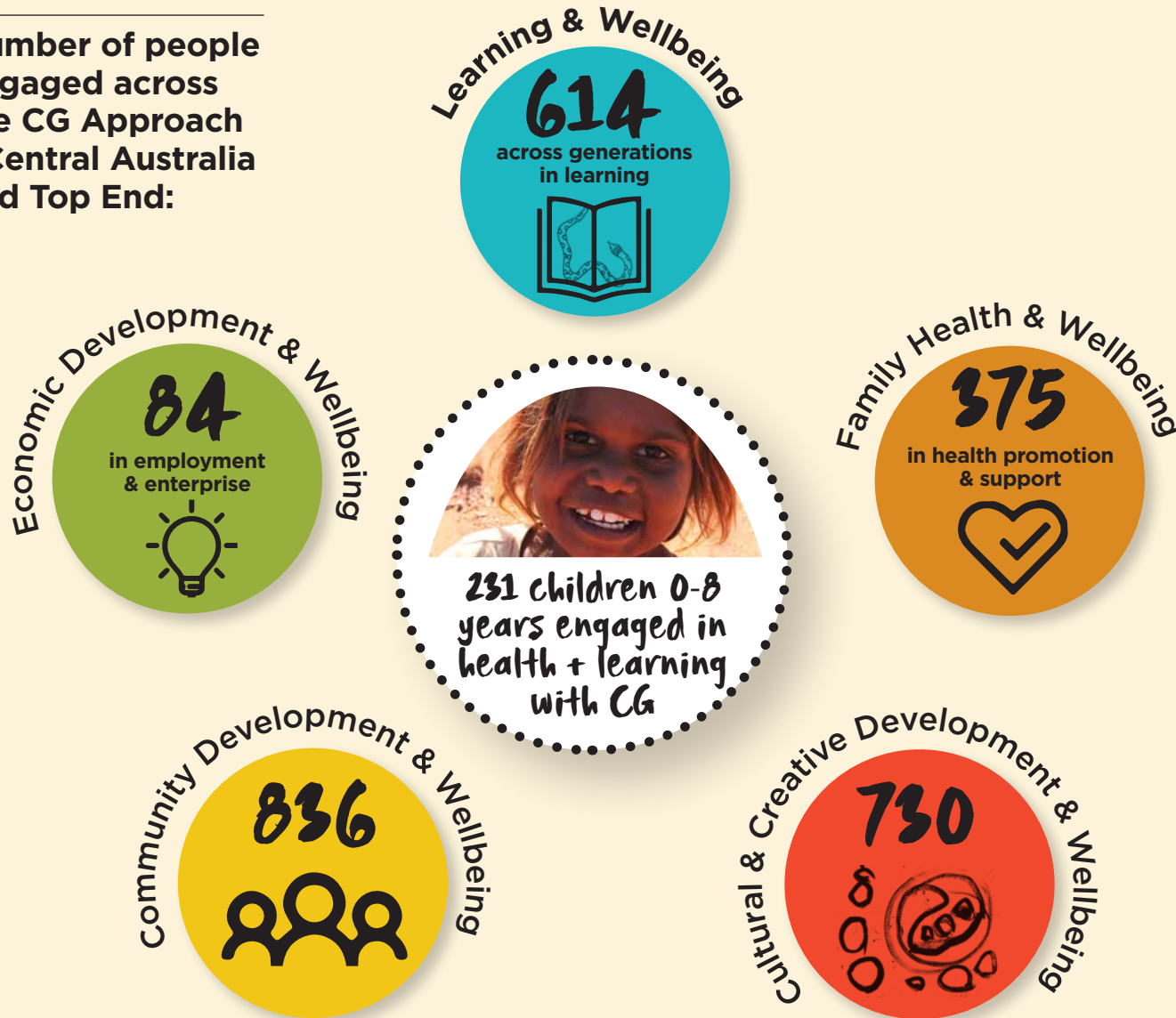


# 2019 Highlights

Within communities, Children’s Ground works with all children and their families. At the centre of the Children’s Ground Approach (CG Approach) are all the factors that influence how each child experiences culture, learning, health, safety and wellbeing – from birth through to adult years.

The CG Approach starts with children in their earliest years; as they grow, the system grows with them – ensuring that the learning, health, voice, wellbeing, economic, social and cultural life of each child and their family is supported by Children’s Ground and led by families and community.

Number of people engaged across the CG Approach - Central Australia and Top End:



216 children 0-8 years engaged in cultural and Western learning alongside their family – with health promotion integrated into all learning sessions.

In Central Australia, overnight learning on country sessions began from August 2019.

In the Top End, 100% of learning was on country in remote Arnhem Land, with a strong focus on social/emotional wellbeing, preventative health, cultural learning and English literacy and numeracy.



Family continued walking alongside their children with 270 family members (18+ years) engaging in learning, and 236 engaged in health promotion and support focused on their individual and family’s health and wellbeing.

In Central Australia, 120 people engaged in a health and healing cultural camp run with Akeyulerre (the Arrernte Healing Centre in Alice Springs).

In the Top End whole families engaged in preventative health - learning about germs including scabies and implementing whole of community responses.



110 First Nations elders, leaders and families engaged in community governance.

Every day, First Nations leaders and families are using their voice and making decisions about the operations and strategy of Children’s Ground for their children and community.

In Central Australia and the Top End, families and communities are creating safe and engaging intergenerational spaces for learning, health, employment, social and cultural connection and capital.



## In My Blood It Runs

Children’s Ground and *In My Blood It Runs* documentary embarked on an impact campaign, designed by the Arrernte and Garwa families, to align with the film’s release. Building support for a First Nations-led education system and raising the age of criminal responsibility took Djujan and the team all the way to the United Nations.

“Everyone is always saying that we need to make our kids ready for school, but why can’t we make schools ready for our children.”

MK Turner OAM, Ampe-kenhe Abelhe Director



## First Nations Educators’ Network

In 2019, Children’s Ground organised two First Nations Educators’ Network meetings, bringing together over 50 educators from 15 different nations across Australia. These meetings enabled First Cultural educators to discuss education reform and establish their own collective – Utyerre Apanpe – to push for formal government recognition of a First Nations education system.



# Message from the Chair



We are in the business of hope. I see it in the faces of children, adults and our Elders. Our voice is leading solutions and bringing about the change that we thought we may never live to see. It is something that we always believed should be possible. We still have a very long way to go, but what I am seeing through

Children's Ground is the winds of change – a ripple that is beginning to make waves – gentle, but growing stronger each day.

At Children's Ground I am seeing the drivers for long term change emerge – kids in early childhood, parents working, Elders leading and young people at risk becoming inspiring leaders. We are seeing change in the most difficult realities and we are learning all the time. I am watching people who have lived their lives on the margins, now front and centre taking control and leading their communities.

I want to thank all of our Governance members who together bring extraordinary expertise to lead our work. We have two arms of Governance at Children's Ground. The Children's Ground Board holds the responsibility of Western Corporate Governance and our Local Governance authorities hold the responsibility for Cultural Governance standards. It is the integrity of both that is critical to our success. Both are equally recognised at Children's Ground. Ultimately it is our Elders and community leaders who provide our direction and vision. The whole organisation ensures that we can fulfill this vision with quality, accountability and integrity. On behalf of them I also thank our partners. What we do cannot be achieved without your incredible support. This includes our philanthropic partners, our corporate and Government partners and our organisational partners on the ground.

This year I am particularly proud of our progress towards evidence and research. I have long said, 'we as Aboriginal people have been researched to death and we need to research ourselves back to life'. I am grateful to our esteemed Research Advisory Group who oversaw the completion of the long-awaited final report from Kakadu West Arnhem. This report shows the impact of the Children's Ground Approach in early years learning and wellbeing, employment, local Governance and culture. This evidence shows that we are on the right track – the outcomes are promising and the evidence will be built upon in 2020 with the first evaluation report from Central Australia.

Over the past year we have also worked on higher level systems change bringing together educational experts at the community level from many parts of the country. They have formalized a new Network of First Cultural Educators

called Utyerre Apanpe. We are working together to achieve First Nations led education reform in Australia.

Over the past few years Children's Ground has been closely involved in bringing the film *In My Blood It Runs* to life. It is a story told by a young Arrernte boy Djuwan Hoosan and directed by Maya Newell and Djuwan's family. Over my life I have found it hard to explain the many layers that make it so difficult as an Aboriginal person to break the history of colonization. The film is amplifying the voices and truth of our children and families. We are sharing it widely with partners and services across the country to raise awareness, to bridge divides and to develop a greater understanding of the challenges our children face every day. *In My Blood It Runs* exposes the ecosystem of fears and barriers as seen from the perspective of a 10-year old child. My own experiences were similar to Djuwan's. Fifty years on and we still see children walking a fine line between survival and welfare, incarceration, school failure and long term economic and social pain. I encourage you to see this film.

Djuwan's family includes many of the Arrernte people who lead Children's Ground in Central Australia. The film speaks to why Children's Ground is so important. It speaks to why investing in prevention is critical. Children's Ground is working with *In My Blood It Runs* to promote systems reform in education and juvenile justice. This is our story.

My people don't desire to be second class citizens, 'unwanted problems' on the landscape, drifting with the currents of prescribed solutions. My people don't desire or deserve educational and economic failure. My people desire truth, equity and respect. We desire our voices and solutions to be heard.

I can't stress enough how grateful I am to our philanthropic family who hold these voices and solutions with esteem and back them every day. You have made dreams a reality. Philanthropy has allowed us to be responsive and innovative leaders. This year you gifted us a home in Alice Springs – something that will change our lives and our work. Your leadership and commitment have allowed us to grow strong relationships with the Australian Government through the National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Health Department. The work of Children's Ground is becoming more widely known as we work towards bipartisan support for reform.

I want to acknowledge the tireless leadership of all of our staff including our CEO, Jane Vadiveloo. I thank them for their amazing work. As always it is the children who inspire us all and whose voices should always speak the loudest.

I look forward to this coming year as we together compel the tides of change.

Thanking you all again,

**William Tilmouth**

# Message from the CEO



Throughout 2019, Children's Ground was inspired by the brilliance of children and the talent and leadership of communities. Despite living with profound and complex trauma, families and Elders were relentless in their efforts to create a new reality against tides of injustice.

While Closing the Gap outcomes are failing nationally, the communities of Children's Ground are shifting the status quo, slowly but in profound ways, and hope is growing. We are creating a pathway for long term prevention of disadvantage by transforming the system. We are beginning to evidence impact in areas that have been intractable for generations. Our strength has been our vision and strategy, shared across the organisation from the communities, staff, board and our incredible partners.

We have achieved financial stability, with a focus to scale income to implement the full model in our regions. This is critical if communities are to replace the deep history of inequity with conditions to achieve long term sustainable change. In 2019, we adopted the new accounting standards (AASB 15), which affects when income is recognised. This required an adjustment to the opening retained earnings to accurately reflect revenue for the 31 December 2019 financial year.

In Central Australia, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground) is seeing a new generation of children excited and active in learning with a focus on their culture, identity and wellbeing. Families and communities are growing in safety and strength. The knowledge and expertise at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is sought by many. Our phenomenal philanthropic family helped us to secure a permanent home impacting our capacity, quality and staff wellbeing. We have growing interest from communities who wish to establish Children's Ground.

In the Top End, we have been assessing the viability of an outstation model to achieve equity, access and economies of scale with small populations. There is little access to education and other essential services in the many remote homelands in the Northern Territory. In 2019, the families of Marlkwaw outstation delivered outstanding learning on country over the dry season, however sustainability remains the major concern. Partnerships in Maningrida and in Darwin have led to new opportunities where there is phenomenal need. I thank our partner organisations who share and contribute to our vision.

In 2019, our work included the establishment of a national network of First Nations educators, Utyerre Apanpe, to lead national reform in education. We progressed the long standing human rights issues of the Irrkerlantye community and released our first evaluation report. The film, *In My Blood It Runs* was released into festivals winning awards and accolades ahead of its 2020 cinema release. The film tells

the compelling true story of ten-year old Djuwan Hoosan, from Alice Springs, and highlights the daily risks children face. Directed by Maya Newell and Djuwan's family, Children's Ground has been a key partner of the film since its inception. The film underscores the critical need for Children's Ground's system reform. Thanks to Good Pitch, we are able to mobilise the film to support social justice and policy reform.

We thank the many people and partners who make what we do possible. We recognise our Elders, in particular Aunty Joy Murphy and MK Turner. This year, we are thrilled to welcome The Cat Empire and The Teskey Brothers as ambassadors. They join our existing wonderful ambassadors in providing outstanding support to Children's Ground. We also thank Archie Roach, recognising his national contribution and his support of Children's Ground and the Black Rock Band.

Our visionary philanthropic family is our life force. You give beyond the financial. You are an integral part of who we are – you empower us and you enable us to empower others. Your support is backed by the Australian Government through the National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Department of Health. This critical collective partnership enables our work. Now that the opportunities for real change are emerging, we require growth to achieve long term and deep reform. We need your support to continue and we need others to join us.

I love this organisation and the people. Our staff are committed experts in their fields. Our Governance is strong, stable and talented. Our Ambassadors are passionate and our Research Advisory Group is top class. Our fabulous volunteers give generously of their time and skills, supporting key areas of the organisation. Our funders and our supporters are simply brilliant, providing not only funding, but strategy, advice, talent and care.

In 2020, the COVID-19 crisis has impacted us all. It has placed our Elders and leaders at great risk. It has amplified the profound risks of overcrowding, ill-health, poverty and the lack of basic services and food security in homelands. The work of Children's Ground is more important now than ever. It is evident that this outbreak will have an impact on the Australian economy for a sustained period. I expect Children's Ground to continue as a going concern in 2020. However, I recognise that the financial constraints on Government and philanthropy present future risks. We will be supported by the Government stimulus and we will adjust our financial management to mitigate risk. Importantly, we wish you all safety and wellbeing.

In closing, it is the children, families and Elders who hold our vision, passion, strategy and hope. This report celebrates their vision coming to life. We can never accept the status quo at Children's Ground until that status quo delivers dignity, equity and justice.

**Jane Vadiveloo**



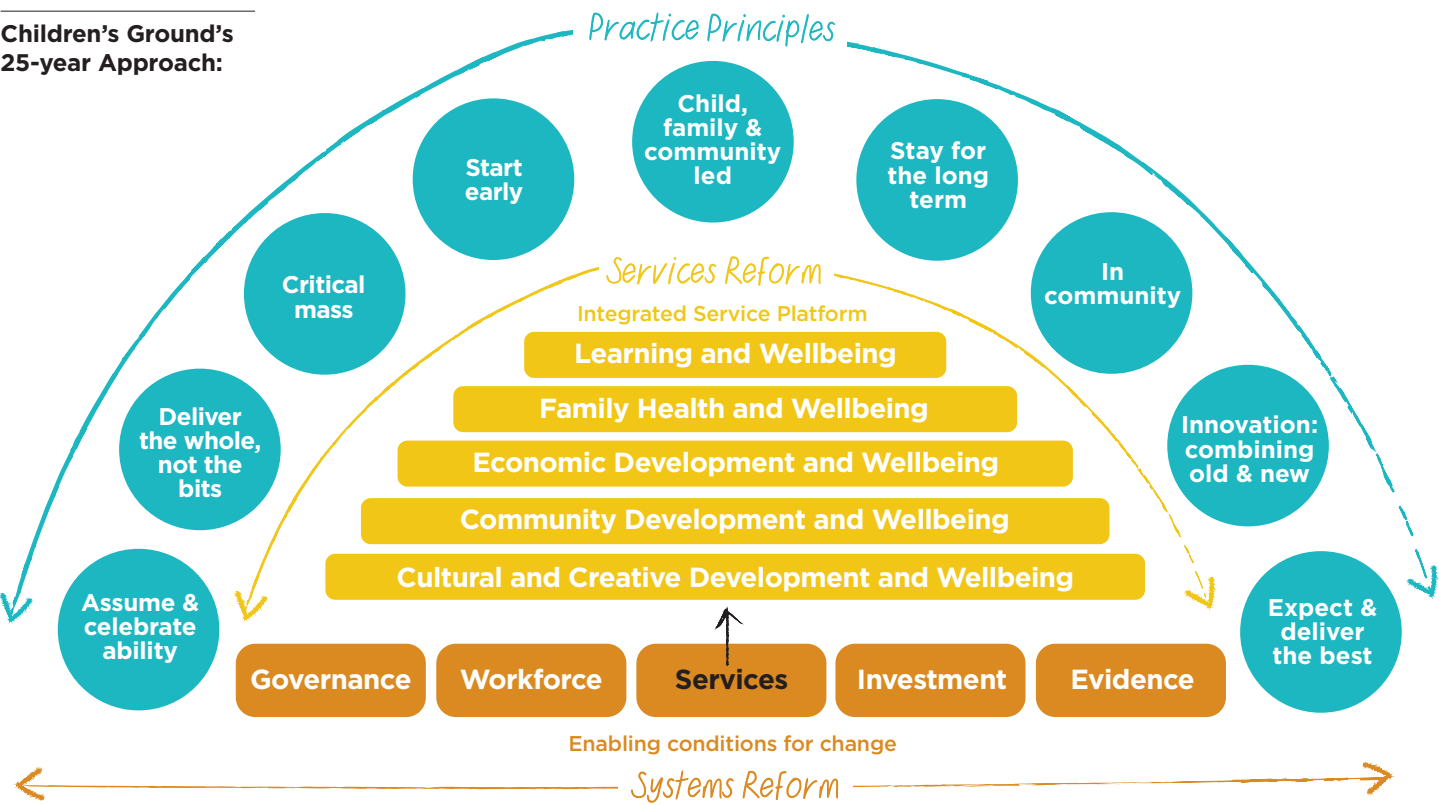
# Changing the System

**“We will never accept the status quo at Children’s Ground until that status quo delivers dignity, equity and justice.”**  
Jane Vadeloo, CEO

Too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children across Australia are born into a life where economic poverty, child protection, prisons, hospitals, funerals and racism are the norm. For the Elders and families who lead Children’s Ground, it is a relentless battle. Their lives are impacted daily by the history of Australia and the failure of successive Governments to deliver them with the respect and dignity they deserve. They have lived through policy changes that have controlled their lives and delivered constant grief and trauma. Our leaders know the solutions but hold little political power. They are visionaries and knowledge holders of the oldest living cultures in the world.

Children’s Ground was created to change the status quo - to implement a system that recognises First Nations governance, solutions and systems of knowledge. Our community leaders have long fought for recognition of such a system. This is complemented by global leading practice in the inclusive solution-based practices of community. Families want the very best for their children and grandchildren. They want them to have the very best opportunities in life, while ensuring that their identity and culture are at the heart of life.

### Children’s Ground’s 25-year Approach:



Children’s Ground recognises and celebrates the strength and ability of people. We focus on prevention, early intervention and empowerment rather than crisis and deficit. We recognise the brilliance of all children and know that it is the environments within which they live that will allow them to exercise their brilliance.

Children’s Ground exists to create and evidence systems change that disrupts the status quo. The Children’s Ground Approach responds to decades of recommendations. We are creating a new reality so that children can live a life that delivers opportunity, dignity, safety and empowerment. We aim to achieve this for all children in a community - to invest in their future and in turn see communities celebrate and enjoy social, cultural and economic wellbeing over the long term. This will take a generation. It will take a deep commitment in time and money. This is not a short term project; it is long term reform.

The CG Approach is reforming:

- ‘How’ services are delivered and governed (Practice Principles);
- ‘What’ services are delivered (Integrated and culturally responsive Service Platform); and
- System structures that are ‘enabling conditions for change’.

# Theory of Change and action

In each community, First Nations leaders and families are governing Children’s Ground. They are planning, delivering and evaluating the CG Approach so their children and grandchildren have the opportunity to grow and learn in environments that enable their identity, First Language, culture and connection to Country. In addition, they are empowering children as global citizens and creative thinkers

with proficiency in mainstream social and economic structures irrespective of where they and their families live. Our longitudinal evaluation is contributing to the critical evidence base for change. The Children’s Ground Approach and its challenges and learnings are leading to improved outcomes and changed circumstances for First Nations children, families and communities.

### Children’s Ground’s Theory of Change is that...



The Children’s Ground Approach is designed to achieve change at the local and national level. Our daily, community-led work is building the evidence base. Our research and leadership is using this practice and evidence to establish the case for national policy and practice reform.

Change by communities focuses on implementing the CG Approach, led by each community to change the daily experience and long-term outcomes for the current generation of children - working and walking with children from pre-birth until they are raising their own families. We aim to work with enough communities to build the evidence base for national systems change.

Through our work, we are contributing to changing the public narrative to build respect for First Nations people, cultures, histories and aspirations. We seek to dispel the negative stereotypes that persist. We celebrate the strength and leadership of First Nations people and knowledge systems.

### The journey so far

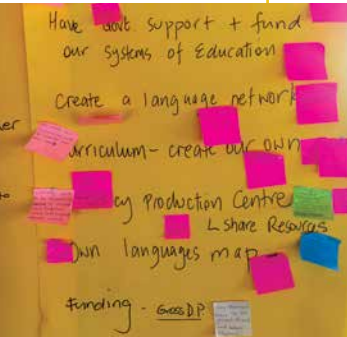




# Key achievements and events



- First meeting of **Utyerre Apanpe** (First Nations Educators' Network) to begin planning for a First Nations-led education system (see pg 28)



- **Pat Cash** visits **Felicity Hayes** and her family at Irrkerlantye to continue his advocacy for tenure rights and support the work of our Arrernte Educators (see pg 16)



- **Five cultural learning resources** published in **three languages** and launched at the NT Writers' Festival with a presentation from eight of our First Nations educators, authors and illustrators

- Ewypenper Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp) begin delivery of Early Years activities at their community centre to much enthusiasm and engagement



- Angkwerre-lwetyeke (Healing Camp) with Akeyulerre saw over **120 First Nations adults and young people** over 3 days engage in cultural health and wellbeing practices
- First Nations Educators deliver two presentations at SNAICC - one about Children's Ground and one on the *Anwerne Ingkerrekele Mpwake: By Us, For Us* enterprise



- Fair Tradie project underway at Marlkawo to upgrade housing and infrastructure so families could stay during the wet season

January February March April May June July August September October November December

- First Cultural Camp is held at Spotted Tiger: birthplace of our Director **MK Turner OAM**. Children and their families spent three days and nights on Country visiting important cultural sites, picking bush medicine, hunting for bush foods and exchanging stories



- Senior Arrernte Educators **Lorraine Gorey** and **Felicity Hayes** speak alongside CEO **Jane Vadiveloo** at Progress 2019
- **Kumi Naidoo**, Secretary General of Amnesty International, visits Children's Ground to speak with Governance Committee and Chair **William Tilmouth**



- Biniŋ (First Nations) families returned to their traditional lands of Marlkawo with the support of Children's Ground, ready to lead and deliver Children's Ground for their children and community



- **Igniting Change** visits Marlkawo



- Visit from actor **Miriam Margoyles** to film TV show 'Almost Australian'



- Second Meeting of Utyerre Apanpe - First Nations educators from 15 nations (see pg 28)

- Meeting with **NT Chief Minister Michael Gunner** at Irrkerlantye to discuss land tenure



- A small group of families (15 people) choose to remain living at Marlkawo over the wet season – a significant decision for their children and families



# Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe

## Children's Ground Central Australia

## Activity and progress in 2019

2019 has been a year of growth and action for Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground - Central Australia). More and more families are engaging with us, whether at an Early Years session in community, a Learning on Country trip, a community celebration at our Central Hub, a health promotion activity, a resource development workshop, a Men's and Youth project, a Governance Committee meeting or a community development discussion. First Nations families are coming to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe because they can see we are doing something different and important: privileging First Nations language, culture, and decision making and backing First Nations leadership.

Everything is growing – more learning sessions, more First Nations and Western-trained educators joining the team, communities developing their own Early Years spaces in the places where they live, the beginnings of delivering Early Years learning in a new location (Ewyenper Atwatye - Hidden Valley Town Camp) and requests coming in from other communities. We have seen girls performing anthepe (Arrernte girls' dance) and boys performing Itharte (Arrernte boys' dance). We have run multiple overnight learning sessions, integrating Health and Wellbeing, and Men's and Youth projects while extending Early Years learning.

The growth of our Health and Wellbeing platform over 2019 is providing further integration of health not only into Early Years learning, but across everything – as directed by a First Nations view of health and wellbeing. Visibly promoting the importance of health each day in the context of culture, language and daily life is empowering people through both knowledge and behaviour. Good nutrition, regular hearing tests and follow up, repeated dental checks and fluoride treatments are just the start of what is developing. Listening to families, deeply listening, takes commitment and patience. Our principle 'Expect and deliver the best' ensures this is done with quality.

All the kids love Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, whether they are on Country, at their learning centres or at the Central Hub, jumping off the bus and running to their play spaces. They feel an attachment and familiarity with these places that the Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe teams have created with families, increasing their sense of belonging and security. Families sit with the children, guiding and prompting their imaginations. Educators continue the cultural learning that occurs on country, teaching language and participating in hands on learning activities with the children and adults.



### Community leading the way

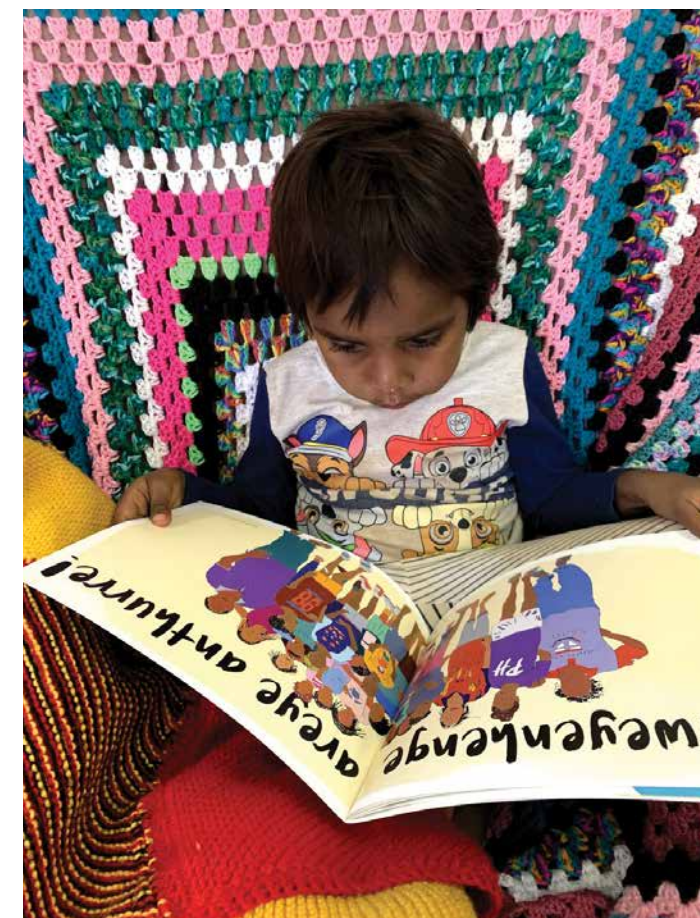
Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is directed by the community, the families and the people. Our Governance structure is determined by Arrernte kinship across four sites in Central Australia: Irrkerlantye (Whitegate Town Camp), Yarrenyty Arltere (Larapinta Valley Town Camp), Mpweringke Anapipe (Northern Outstations) and Ewyenper Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp). In 2019, we have continued to follow the leadership and guidance of our Elders and cultural leaders, while supporting the younger generation to find their voices.

Each community has its own leadership, governance structures, resources and strengths. Each has a unique vision for the future. We are listening and backing people's vision with cultural governance prioritised at every step of the journey.

**"We have a vision to keep growing with these kids. We want them to know everything - about culture and country and language, as well as the Western way. We want to see our children succeed - to live a healthy life and maybe even run the place! If we see their dreams come true, our dreams will come true too."**

- Ingkerrekele Arntarnte-areme Governance Committee

While technically a highlight of early 2020 – we are excited to share that Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe has secured a permanent home, which will be our intergenerational hub of safety, learning and wellbeing. This was made possible in 2019, with a lot of work, negotiations, planning and the support of some of our incredible philanthropic partners and families. From mid-2020, this will be our central hub based in Alice Springs, from which community and place-based operations will be managed and supported.



**"I feel really empowered working as part of the Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe health team. We can actually make a difference for families when we listen to what people want."**  
- Shirleen McLaughlin, First Nations Health Promotion



- **149 children** aged 0-5 engaged in Learning and Wellbeing supported by **229 family members** (18+ years)
- **541 people** of all ages engaged in formal learning
- **581 people** of all ages engaged in formal and informal learning – including early learning sessions on Country, in community, at the centre, at family nights and during community celebrations
- Overnight Learning on Country sessions were introduced to extend cultural learning activities
- A fourth site (Ewyenper Atwatye) began delivering Early Years learning – both in their community and on Country
- Two communities now deliver all centre-based learning in their own community
- **Five cultural learning resources** published in **three languages** and launched at the NT Writers' Festival, building foundations for early literacy in First Language and English



**"Our language is so important to us. We know that if children learn in their First Language, they will become more able to acquire English. This is leading educational practice. We want our kids to be strong both in Arrernte and English, mastering both languages. We are making sure our children have culturally appropriate educational resources they can relate to."**

- Felicity Hayes, Senior Arrernte Educator

- **47 children** aged 0-5 years have engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- **147 family members** (aged 18 years+) have engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- Nutritious meals for children and families were provided daily as part of Early Years learning, Governance meetings and community celebrations
- Ongoing partnership with Akeyulerre (Arrernte Healing Centre) embedded Arrernte health practices into Early Years learning. Collaboration on a Healing Camp saw **120 First Nations adults and young people** engaging in and teaching cultural health and wellbeing practices over three days. Health team expanded to include positions across Nutrition, Child and Maternal Health, Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Health Promotion and Environmental Health
- Focus on dental health with support of the 'Toothfairy' from the local community health team attending Early Years activities and providing fluoride treatments each term
- Health promotion integrated into Early Years activities with a particular focus on hand washing, nose-blowing and cleaning faces





- **48 First Nations people** were employed across Children's Ground operations
- **31 First Nations staff** engaged in professional development and training in First Aid, Light Rigid Vehicle operation, food handling, digital illustration, Intellectual and Cultural Property rights and compliance
- **37 First Nations staff** were involved in enterprise conversations, planning, training and development
- **Five cultural learning resources** published in **three languages** and launched at the NT Writer's Festival, beginning the *Anwerne Ingkerrekele Mpwareke: By Us, For Us* enterprise. These children's books, developed by our Arrernte Educators and illustrators, are now available for sale in leading bookstores and arts institutions
- Indigenous Literacy Foundation ordered 2,015 of our books for inclusion in their remote literacy packs
- Following the publication of the books, two of our Educators were commissioned to develop original illustrations for Indigenous Community Television (ICTV)
- New Business Development Coordinator joined the Enterprise team



*"It's all about listening and walking alongside people to realise their aspirations for their own community."*  
- Dom Mercuri, Men's and Youth Support Worker

- *Ingkerrekele Arntarnte-areme* Governance Committee continue to meet weekly – defining our direction in Central Australia, overseeing operations and monitoring progress
- Men's and Youth team established across three communities, supporting Early Years learning, traditional tool-making, community development projects and environmental health
- Yarrenyty Arltere established their own Children's Ground space at their town camp by turning an unused demountable into an active learning environment complete with a shade structure, sand pit, windbreak and mural
- While Children's Ground Central Hub continues as a place of safety and inclusion for all families in the region, delivery of activities in communities has increased, as per our 'whole of community, in community' principle



- First Nations cultural practice and expertise embedded across all areas of our work
- Learning on Country trips continued weekly
- Increase in practice and performance of anthepe (girls' dance) and ltharte (boys' dance) during Learning on Country and community celebrations
- Improved First Language literacy, supported by the development of language learning resources
- Weekly visits to Country: the stories and significance of these places is integral to the identity and wellbeing of Arrernte children and their families in Central Australia – and embedded in the Early Years curriculum
- Support continued for old people and families to get out onto Country, enabling families to meet cultural obligations while also providing a high quality learning experience for children
- Creative, healing activities supported by Creative Arts/ Social and Emotional Wellbeing position: painting, drawing, making things and working with clay provided therapeutic space for children and their families



*"We are teaching our kids on sacred ground. We are all working together proudly to teach our children in two ways - in their First Language first, and then English. We are teaching them to read their country - to learn about it, write about it and draw it. Children have so much creativity in their minds - the country is helping them bring that out"*

- Kwementyaye Ngwarraye Palmer, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director



#### We want to thank our key organisational partners who make this work possible:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Akeyulerre                             | • Connected Beginnings                  |
| • Arrernte Language Centre               | • Purple House                          |
| • Batchelor Institute                    | • Alice Springs Language Centre         |
| • Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation    | • St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre |
| • Tangentyere Council                    | • Larapinta Child and Family Centre     |
| • Central Australian Aboriginal Congress | • Yipirinya School                      |
| • Red Cross                              | • Yarrenyty Arltere Artists             |
| • Child Friendly Alice                   | • Ninti One                             |
| • ICTV                                   |   |



## Irrkerlantye



The safety of a home is at the heart of child, family and cultural wellbeing. In 2019, Traditional Owner of Mparntwe (Alice Springs and surrounds) Felicity Hayes and her

family continue to seek this fundamental right. They continue their work with the Northern Territory Government to secure social justice, human rights, tenure, water rights and cultural recognition of their Country at Irrkerlantye. They have a vision for their homes and a learning and enterprise centre to secure the future of their families.

Mparntwe (Alice Springs) is the second biggest town in the Northern Territory. Despite being recognised Native Title holders and traditional owners Felicity and her family continue to be denied the right and infrastructure to live with dignity on their lands.

For the last 40 years, Felicity's family has been living in tin sheds on the edge of Alice Springs with neither power nor water security. With permanent water and power available to the pistol club about 200m away, it remains a national outrage that these families live without the right to access permanent water or to build their own homes.

This year, we held regular meetings with Government, with some hope looming for the granting of tenure. Frustration continues however with the lack of real action. Felicity has shown nothing but dignity despite the demands for meeting after meeting. Children's Ground led the work on master plans to Government, surveying the land, water flows and housing areas. Regular meetings with the Department of Chief Minister occurred throughout the year. Coordination of this work has included the necessary time to explore the information being considered, 'translating' legal jargon and terms and coordinating meetings with the lawyers and the Prescribed Body Corporate Lhere Artepe, who have been very supportive.

Actions from Government this year have given us some belief that this longstanding injustice will be redressed. Historical breakthroughs have been heartening. A commitment to the process, regular meetings, initial funding and a personal visit from the Chief Minister to Felicity at White Gate were achieved, along with a verbal commitment to Felicity to deliver the housing and water infrastructure needed for her children and grandchildren and for old people. The Government announced \$500,000 towards a feasibility study

and temporary water security in late June. After months of discussion, lawyers eventually determined that the funding could not be approved for spending until the tenure decision had been made. Children's Ground was unable to access these funds in 2019. At the end of the year, before the searing heat of summer, Children's Ground paid for and installed three water tanks as a short term measure.

The family worked with Lhere Artepe and pro bono lawyer Sean Bowden to undertake critical family discussion in the process to establish Kweyenpe Aboriginal Corporation in preparation for the granting of tenure. With the support of Sean Bowden the Irrkerlantye families wrote a constitution and rule book with great hope and celebration.

While we continue to be thwarted by political process, we also want to recognise the significant commitment by Government representatives who have worked tirelessly to progress tenure for Irrkerlantye. The Chief Minister's department has shown respect and commitment. After many years of formal invitations from Felicity, the Chief Minister visited her. The visit of the Chief Minister with Minister Dale Wakefield was the first by a Chief Minister to the Traditional Owners on their land at Irrkerlantye. The Chief Minister stated his commitment to Irrkerlantye and the securing of tenure and infrastructure.



Towards the end of the year, there was great excitement at what we believed was to be an announcement of tenure following a cabinet meeting. Again, it appears that this was a statement of commitment with nothing formalised, despite a moment of fanfare. The family continues to wait.

We are closer than we have ever been. We have political will in a way that has not been present in the past. We are hopeful that 2020 will deliver long-awaited justice and the basic ability for Felicity to turn on a tap with a roof over her head at Irrkerlantye.

This work would not have been possible without the backing of Nic Brunner and Igniting Change or the pro bono support of lawyer Sean Bowden and the support of Lhere Artepe and their CEO, Robbie Campbell. We are grateful for Pat Cash's ongoing advocacy and the visit of Martin Luther King III in 2018 to highlight the human rights issues faced at Irrkerlantye. These efforts resulted in increased traction with the Government and have contributed to what seems to be a long awaited win for human rights for Felicity and her family.

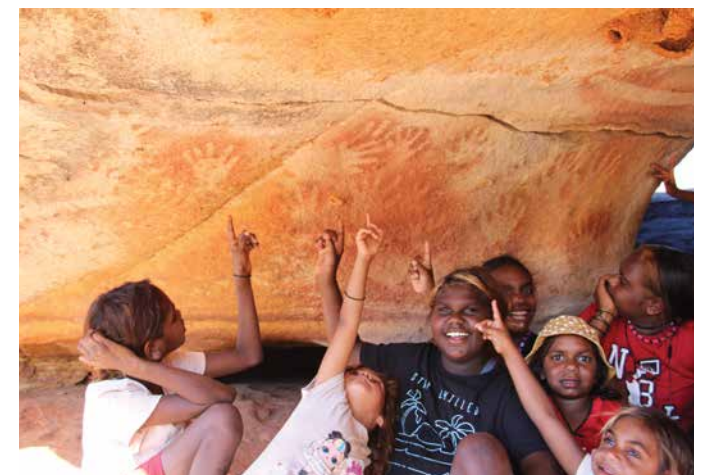
## Ampe Anwernekenhe Rlterre Ingkerre Atnyenetyeke - Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC)

2019 was Children's Ground's first full year delivering Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC) with Atitjere and Engawala communities in the Plenty Highway region. SCfC is a community development program that emphasises local control over child and family services in remote NT communities. Children's Ground, as the facilitating partner, is responsible for empowering local decision-making groups and ensuring service providers deliver projects according to the aspirations and expectations of the community.

In Engawala, the decision-making group continued to fund a playgroup for children aged 0-5 years and their family. The playgroup has been delivered by Central Desert Regional Council and was run entirely by two local First Nations early years workers for 2019. In Atitjere, the decision-making group funded and enacted their first on-country trips as part of SCfC. These have always been a high priority, with both communities aspiring to see more opportunities for strengthening First Language and Culture for their children. These were led and delivered by local community members with minimal logistical support from Children's Ground. It has been fantastic to see individuals and families leading the way with the skills and determination to ensure the cultural wellbeing of their children, families and communities.

Additional programs funded this year include the Youth Sports & Recreation program in Atitjere, a child safety education program, the interim provision of school lunches and two whole-of-community events aimed at bringing children and families together to celebrate.

Representatives from the decision-making groups attended two SCfC Knowledge Sharing Seminars through the year. These are conferences aimed at bringing all ten SCfC communities together from across the NT to share their



experiences, learn from each other and learn from the expertise of other agencies. In 2019, we had the biggest group of representatives attend these seminars and delivered our first presentation on our achievements so far.

Working to adequately support Atitjere & Engawala communities while being based in Alice Springs has been challenging. Best practice community development approaches must be place-based. These are small communities with limited local organisations and infrastructure which makes finding local providers and the space for new activities difficult. However, together with Government and the communities, we are working to overcome this as best we can to ensure we can support local people to lead the way in securing the learning, wellbeing and development of their children, families and communities.





# Wurdurd Garriygarrmerren

## Children's Ground West Arnhem Land

## Activity and progress in 2019

In the Top End of the Northern Territory, Children's Ground is a small operation which has focused on remote West Arnhem in recent years. In 2019, our regional scope grew with developments in both Maningrida and Town Camps in Darwin. In each part of this region, there are children and families lacking basic access to and engagement in services including early childhood, education and health.

In Marlkawo, families from Kakadu West Arnhem and Gunbalanya continued their dream to establish a permanent home on their traditional lands in remote West Arnhem. Families are leading and delivering the Children's Ground Approach (CG Approach) for their children and grandchildren. Living on Country full time has been difficult due to a history of trauma, loss of Elders, generations being dislocated, constant sorry business, ill-health, limited transport and complicated logistics. Marlkawo is so remote that not even the remote food trucks make their way to this community. During the dry season, there are no essential services except those supported by Children's Ground, these being early childhood, primary school, health promotion, support with transport, food security, connectivity and water security.

This small family outstation is cut off in the wet season. It is also a place that enables the most incredible education of children on Country, away from town stresses and surrounded by family. It is a place where cultural and emotional health is strengthened. This year, there were challenges and celebrations. It was a hard start to the dry season with many funerals across the region. However, for a core group of children and families, there was another season of rich and intense learning in both First Language and English. For the first time this year, a few family members stayed during the wet season after extensive planning.

Our work in Marlkawo is allowing us to evaluate the feasibility of a homelands delivery model that can provide equitable access to essential services of education, health, employment and social opportunities for people who choose to live on their traditional lands for cultural, health and wellbeing reasons. With over 500 homelands of less than 200 people across the Northern Territory, this work is critical.

After two dry season delivery periods in Marlkawo we have important learnings and evaluation findings about the barriers, enablers, strengths and challenges of designing and implementing such a model.

In Maningrida, we have been engaging with both homeland and local families and established key organisational relationships to work in partnership with homelands. Families want to be on their homelands but require more support to access essential services on their traditional lands.

In Darwin, where the team is based, an invitation from leaders and Traditional Owners led to the community

engagement phase with four Town Camps towards the end of 2019. Incredible leadership and the deep needs of families were the most striking outcomes of our early stage engagement. We look forward to continuing our work with these Town Camps in 2020.



### Community leading the way

2019 was another year of seeing the influence, power and necessity of community voice, leadership and Governance. Community Governance occurred with all leaders and families at Marlkawo. For some, they are on their homelands. Others live away from their country due to significant health issues and other circumstances.

In Marlkawo, Governance meetings focused on:

- strategic and operational planning
- learning, health, cultural knowledge
- environmental health
- community development
- enterprise
- family stress and wellbeing

Throughout our early Walk & Talk (community engagement) with families East of the Blyth and in Maningrida township, key Traditional Owners have actively engaged and led the process by determining who within their family group we need to engage with, including when and how to engage. From our early engagement, leaders have emerged by expressing their solutions for how they want to address their worries and achieve their aspirations for their children: leading early learning and health and wellbeing in their language, on their traditional lands and from their cultural knowledge systems.

Our very early engagement in Darwin Town Camps began with key community leaders and Traditional Owners; our first priority is hearing the voice of all families in these communities.

Our senior co-Director in Marlkawo was forced to relocate to Darwin during the year to begin dialysis. She continues to provide leadership and direction and now lives in one of the Town Camps we work with in Darwin.

Governance remains the foundation of and key informant for how Children's Ground operates.



Learning & Wellbeing at Marlkawo continues to be 100% on Country. Learning occurs during the day, evening and on most weekends. Being on Country allows First Cultural systems of knowledge and practice to lead delivery. The seamless delivery of Western and cultural learning has been the foundation for child, family and community health promotion and prevention, agency, and economic development – all of which are critical to active engagement in learning.

The children who have been at Marlkawo for solid blocks of time are demonstrating positive progress in their Western and cultural learning outcomes.

- **30 children** aged 0-15 engaged in Learning and Wellbeing supported by **41 family members** (18+ years)
- **73 people** of all ages engaged in formal learning
- When planning for 2019 learning and wellbeing, the community decided to continue the strong focus on Western learning each morning and cultural learning in the afternoons
- Families continue to set goals for their children's learning and wellbeing, from infancy to teenage years
- Cultural learning also occurs on weekends and evenings
- Emotional literacy is a key component of our learning and wellbeing approach. Daily learning integrates



Families at Marlkawo continued to provide an emotionally and culturally safe place for children and the whole community. There is growing recognition that living in Marlkawo has reduced the daily stressors that impact life when in town. Children and families have greater wellbeing with increased opportunity for strengthened cultural

and family connection in their homeland. Marlkawo is a place where young people who have been living with mental health issues are finding peace.

*"We don't need this trouble at Marlkawo - we need to help them at Marlkawo, help them to calm down. They're not safe in town." - Bininj leader*

One key area of concern continued to be the physical infrastructure with two broken down houses being the key accommodation for families. Official departmental reports have noted the residents "...cannot wash, cook or clean adequately under the current conditions... The floor is



*"It gave me goose bumps all over seeing her reading to her grandson, spending time with him, helping him to learn, showing him the right way." - Roxanne Naborlhborlh, community leader*

sessions to address trauma, support mental health and improve learning focus. A short yoga/breathing/relaxation session occurs each morning at the school balabala (traditional shelter), with children and their families participating. This has resulted in a calm and engaged start to the day for the wurdurd (children)

- Health promotion is integrated into learning every day. The morning sessions typically include teeth brushing and basic hygiene practices; afternoon sessions include learning about, collecting and preparing bush foods and medicine
- Our MoU with the Jabiru Area School continues with ongoing information sharing about children's learning and wellbeing



structurally unsafe in several areas... The water supply could be considered high risk." Children's Ground exhausted all avenues to get government support for these repairs before the wet season but was unsuccessful. Philanthropy and a Go Fund Me campaign helped fund the urgent repairs and after months of planning, the amazing Fair Tradies landed and worked with Children's Ground staff to complete upgrades on floors, kitchens, bathrooms, electrical work, water security and a new balabala housing shelter. This meant families could stay through the wet season and concerns for child and family health and safety were addressed.



Family Health and Wellbeing has focused on health promotion, social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) and environmental health, working with children, families and the community.

- **39 children aged 0-15 years** have engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- **89 family members** (aged 18 years+) have engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- Environmental health has included water security, housing repairs, regular community clean ups, managing overcrowding and food security

By living and learning on Country, children and their families have engaged in collecting, preparing and discussing the benefits of bush medicine and traditional health practices.



Preventative health strategies were embraced by children and adults and included cultural practices and Western health in the management of emotional and physical health (see box).

- **60 people** engaged in Social and Emotional Wellbeing, including **21 children aged 0-11 years** addressing a range of personal and mental health needs
- In Maningrida, health promotion and conversations were central to community engagement with families. With the prevalence of serious health issues in the region, homelands East of the Blyth River have serious concerns due to limited access to clinical health services



### Improvements in skin health through education

In the past, health issues relating to overcrowding have been rife, with families reporting poor skin health and a prevalence of scabies in the community. One 'germ health literacy' session was run on the veranda of one of the houses to engage the whole family.

Using a microscope, everyone took turns looking at germs magnified as the Public Health specialist talked about different types of germs, how they multiply and spread, what they do to your blood and body and how this impacts your health.

Children drew pictures of the germs and older children were able to relay in detail what they had learned. These conversations were shared with the adults.

Identifying and cleaning sores with children has always been a core health promotion activity, however, after this session adults regularly asked for support cleaning their own sores. Now each time a visiting child arrives in the community, adults ensure that their sores are promptly treated.

This, combined with regular conversations around clean bedding and home environments, tents and balabalas to manage overcrowding, resulted in the eradication of infected scabies from Marlkawo. We have seen a significant improvement in overall skin health and families empowered with knowledge around germs and Western health literacy.

### Black Rock Band (music enterprise)

**Jan:** Performance at Woodford Folk Festival

**March:** Crowd funding supported the purchase of updated audio gear and a trailer

**April:** Performance at Parrtjima festival Alice Springs and community workshops at the Gap Youth Centre in Alice Springs and the remote community of Atitjere

**May:** Cultural and music workshops with students at King David School, Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School, Templestowe College, Ashwood Primary School and Little Yarra Steiner School in the lead up to Reconciliation Week. The band also performed with Archie Roach and Shane Howard at a Children's Ground fundraiser in Melbourne

**Aug:** Performance at BigSound and Garma Festivals

**Nov:** Secured funding from Australia Council for the Arts to record their second album, which included collaborations with a number of artists (Emma Donovan, Sam Teskey and more). The new album will be launched in 2020



Culture and language are central to everything at Children's Ground. It is easy to integrate these when children and families are living on their traditional lands, surrounded by their history, sacred places and materials to learn their cultural knowledge systems and practices. These become the foundation of learning, health and wellbeing within the CG Approach.



- **36 Bininj people** were employed across Children's Ground operations. Limited work and financial capacity resulted in employment being shared across the family group
- **Six people** in Marlkawo were involved in individual and family enterprise development. This included early discussions and planning through to design, development and testing of new potential products



### We want to thank our key organisational partners who make this work possible:

- Jabiru Area School (JAS)
- West Arnhem Regional Council
- Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)
- Red Lily Health Board
- Mala'la Health Service
- Gagudju Association
- Northern Land Council
- Warnbi Aboriginal Corporation
- Jabiru Clinic
- Gunbalanya Clinic
- Maningrida Clinic
- Warddeken Land Management
- Demed
- Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation
- Northern Territory Government Departments of Education, Health, Territory Families, Housing and Community Development
- Maningrida Progress Association
- N.T. Community Police, Community Liaison Officer
- Gwalwa Daraniki Association (GDA)
- Amity Community Services
- Maningrida Community College



# Children's stories of growing & learning

# with Children's Ground



## Anosh Age 1

When he was only 8 weeks old, Children's Ground supported Anosh and his mum to relocate to Marlkawo to live on their family's country. Here, he could be taught by important Elders, develop Kunwinjku as his First Language and develop strong relationships. Anosh's family knows that the first years of life are an important time for learning and development. They were determined to see him grow and develop in a safe and happy community.

At Marlkawo, Anosh and his mum benefited from engaging in daily health conversations focusing on both Bininj and Western parenting, maternal and child health practices. Cultural learning and health support focused on strong kinship relationships and exploring how a child's identity is derived from the land and cultural health practices.

Anosh has demonstrated strong early childhood development, including attachment with his mum and a calm spirit when he is with her. He was physically healthy and engaged with his environment, progressing in all key development areas. As he explored his home and country and focused on familiar voices and noises, his family was excited and involved in his wellbeing. Strong family relationships prior to pregnancy, during pregnancy, and after birth enabled the best possible environment for Anosh to thrive, grow, and develop.

## Marthalias Age 3

Marthalias has been attending Early Years learning at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe since we began operations in 2016, when she was just a baby. She was supported by her Nannas, who work as Senior Arrernte Educators.

At Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, Marthalias is given the opportunity to learn in Arrernte, Anmatyerre and English.

Marthalias has improved her comprehension of standard Australian English, listening and responding to others when greeting, asking questions or listening to instructions. She has begun imitating counting behaviour using number names when pointing to objects – an important milestone in her understanding of numbers and numeracy.

Marthalias has been getting stronger and more confident in her cultural knowledge. During Learning on Country activities, she is practicing Arrernte dance and learning about kinship and family relationships.



## Rodney Age 4

Rodney has been coming to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe since he was just one year old. At his young age, Rodney already speaks three languages – Luritja, Arrernte and English. At Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, Rodney is encouraged to learn in all three languages, taught by both experienced cultural and Western-trained educators.

On a recent Learning on Country trip, educators witnessed Rodney translating between Luritja and Arrernte with one of the Arrernte Educators, Angie. When Angie would identify a plant or animal in Arrernte, Rodney would name the Luritja word for it. Rodney is often seen translating Arrernte conversations into Luritja for the other multilingual children in his learning group.



## Rayah Age 5

Rayah's grandparents are key community leaders for Marlkawo and wanted Rayah to grow up there on her great grandmother's country. Through having opportunity to be engaged in learning and having health support, Rayah was able to live with her grandparents at Marlkawo during 2019.

Rayah's grandmother wanted Rayah to learn about her Country and its stories, and shared this knowledge with her in First Language daily. On one car trip back from visiting family at a neighbouring outstation, Rayah spent hours talking to her grandmother about the country they were driving through: where clan estate boundaries were and what animals and plants they could see.

Rayah has demonstrated the skills to link her learning from bush trips with the formal learning sessions led by First Nations Educators and Western-trained Educators. During a creative experience, Rayah chose to draw Ngalyod from the djang (sacred story) told to her during a recent visit to a sacred site. She used her drawing to retell her understanding of the story in Kunwinjku to the Cultural educator. Rayah's family shared how happy they felt hearing Rayah retell important stories and show she is talking strong Kunwinjku.





## Karen Age 5

Karen has grown to be a confident, energetic learner over the two years she has been attending Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe - a place where her identity and spirit as a First Nations child are recognised and celebrated.

At only five years old, she already speaks four languages: Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Western Arrernte and English and is getting stronger in her cultural knowledge from learning trips out on her Country. Karen is developing her skills across all her languages. She is surrounded by educators with language specialisation to deliberately acquire multi-lingual competence. Our approach to learning recognises that teaching through First Language and Culture will promote acquisition of English.

Karen is growing into a healthy, confident child, strong in her language and culture.



## Ashley Age 6

Ashley started coming to Early Years sessions with Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe when learning activities began this year in his community at Ewyenper Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp). Ashley is supported in his learning by his mother, Early Years Support Worker Cassandra, alongside Western-trained and Cultural specialist educators. His three siblings, all under six years old, also engage in learning activities at Children's Ground both at the community centre and on Country. Sometimes Ashley's Nanna comes along too.

Since Ashley has started coming to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, he has grown so much - developmentally, socially and emotionally. Cassandra has noticed changes in Ashley's behaviour. Early on, he was running around and found it hard to concentrate. He is calm now, engaging in learning and interacting in a very positive way with other children. Senior Arrernte Educator Marita McMillan says of Ashley: "He is a quiet one now. Before he was a wild one. He has settled down now."

In Arrernte learning, it is important that kids become independent. The educators are seeing this in Ashley. They are watching him learn about and make bush medicine and work with ochres. His fine motor skills are developing. He is learning about colours in both languages. His language is developing and strengthening in Arrernte and in English.

Ashley loves learning about healthy foods and how to safely cut up fruit and vegetables. He loves to help and learn new skills. Now he is insisting on helping with the washing up at home, encouraging his sister to do the same!



## Susan Age 7

In 2019, Susan returned to Marlkawo after spending an extended period of time on her father's family's outstation. Susan's parents and grandmother at Marlkawo expressed their worries for Susan's progress in Western learning and her challenges in focusing during learning. Children's Ground developed strategies with the family to work towards their aspirations for Susan. A key focus was to acknowledge and celebrate Susan's strengths including her ability to communicate in Kunwinjku and her awareness of Cultural knowledge and skills. The family and Children's Ground staff then built on these strengths with Susan.

Planning learning experiences that were taught in First Language and embedded Bininj teaching practices supported Susan to feel pride in her abilities. These experiences then informed her literacy and numeracy learning. It was effective because it was led by family, and we ensured the content was culturally relevant. This assisted Susan to be confident and focused and has enabled her to build her Western learning skills, supported by her family.

The Family Health team also worked closely with Susan, her family and the broader community in supporting her social and emotional wellbeing. This included spending time on Country to heal and daily yoga sessions that focused on breathing and awareness of mind and body.

Family shared their happiness with Susan's increased focus during her learning and her work towards being strong in both Cultural and Western knowledge and skills.



## Mahalia Age 11

Mahalia loves learning. She is bright and positive. She has now been engaged with Children's Ground for five years. This has been a shared learning journey with Jabiru Area School as Mahalia lives between Jabiru and Marlkawo. When her learning is consistent her skills develop rapidly. However, her learning is affected by the fact that she is sometimes absent. During 2019, Mahalia continued to develop ownership over her health and learning - being on Country nurtures her focus and learning outcomes.

As Djungayi (Mother's Country) of Marlkawo, Mahalia demonstrates an understanding of her cultural role and responsibilities. This has deepened through spending extended time on Country, in a safe environment, where learning is led by her family in her First Language.

Mahalia demonstrates an enthusiasm for and dedication to learning. Strong cultural learning has given Mahalia a sturdy foundation from which to progress her literacy and numeracy skills. Children's Ground has supported Mahalia's love of learning through holistic, community-based approaches to education that respond to her individual strengths.

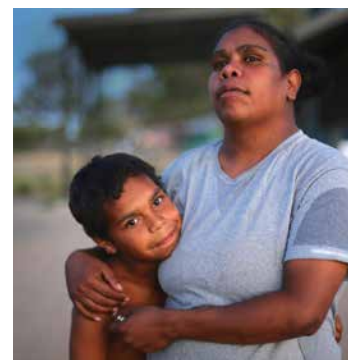
Mahalia has had experiences in her short life that impact her social and emotional wellbeing. With her family focused on her wellbeing, Mahalia is developing confidence in her own identity and is learning to be a leader within her community at Marlkawo. She often supports other children in their learning in a compassionate way, communicating in her First Language and in English. Her kindness and sense of humour are loved by everyone.





# Research and Leadership in Systems Change

## An impact and change agenda: *In My Blood It Runs*



Children's Ground is a proud partner of *In My Blood It Runs*, a film by Director Maya Newell, Dujuan Hoosan and his family Carol Turner, Megan Hoosan, James Mawson and Margaret Anderson.

Involved from its inception, Children's Ground has walked beside this film through Felicity Hayes who is the Executive Producer, William Tilmouth, MK Turner OAM, Mrs. Abbott (Dec.) and Jane Vadiveloo who join Amelia Turner as advisors. Rachel Edwardson, a Children's Ground Ambassador, was a film producer alongside Sophie Hyde and Larissa Behrendt.

First and foremost, this is Dujuan's story. As a 10-year-old boy expelled from school and on the cusp of being taken into welfare or jail and surrounded by loving family, his brilliance shines as he fulfils his responsibilities as a traditional healer and questions the world around him. Two of his most powerful statements are, "Stop killing Aboriginal people" and "I just want to be an Aborigine."

Dujuan knows the blood line that runs through him – of the first people who walked these lands. He faces the struggle of so many First Nations children who want to be seen and understood and who want to live as Aboriginal children.

Dujuan lives two truths. One truth is the power of identity, culture and family as his positive life force. The other is the impact of the post-colonial history of brutality, fear and exclusion that sets his life trajectory towards profound risk and onto a well-worn treadmill heading for incarceration, welfare and early death that devastates so many children and families.

Chair of Children's Ground and film advisor William Tilmouth says of the film:

**"In My Blood It Runs presents an ecosystem of problems as seen from the perspective of a 10 year old child. It asks what can we do about it? Dujuan asks us to hear him, to see him, to honour his truth.**

**My experiences were similar to Dujuan's. 50 years on and we see the same issues. But Dujuan had family. The story of *In My Blood It Runs*, shows the power of family solutions to a very complex problem.**

**In the film welfare comes knocking for the children. Dujuan sits with his great grandmother Mrs Abbott on the town camp who tells him about how close she was to being stolen as a child – like the kids removed and taken to Croker Island. That was me. The stolen generation.**

**The policies today are not so explicit, but the practices of yesteryear follow us today. Our families still experience welfare as a primary strategy of control by the system. Our families are all touched by the criminal justice system. Families fear the cutting edge of the sword. This one stays and this one goes. Dujuan was close to that edge. History runs straight into him and he is forced to carry that history. This film is about how Dujuan and his family are able to break this cycle."**

Dujuan and his family want this film to have an impact on improving the lives and wellbeing of all First Nations children. Their key messages are:

1. We want Australians to know that we love our children
2. Aboriginal people have solutions and want the agency to control their own lives

The 'impact strategy' designed by the Arrernte and Garrwa family and advisors has three main themes: tackling racism, reforming juvenile justice and reformed education. These goals are areas of work that many people across Australia have been working towards for many years. Our impact will work to complement and support this work with a range of partners to amplify and further stimulate change.

Children's Ground is leading the impact strategy to champion and build significant support for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led education system with the support of the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC).

**"Everyone is always saying that we need to make our kids ready for school, but why can't we make schools ready for our children." – MK Turner OAM**

Children's Ground knows that if we get education right, fewer kids will end up in jail and welfare. At the same time we are also supporting reform in juvenile justice to ensure that it is therapeutic and restorative and to ensure that incarceration is the last resort.

This film was created to give voice and share truth. We will use this film to compel changes in the system. We are grateful to the vision and support of Good Pitch Australia who made this impact possible.

The film had its international release in 2019, playing at festival screenings and receiving awards and accolades including: Melbourne Film Festival, New Zealand Film Festival, Darwin Film Festival (Winner Audience Choice Award), Byron Bay Film Festival (Winner Best Film and Best Documentary), AFI DOCS (Washington, USA premiere), DOC NYC (USA), ATOM Award – Winner Best Documentary for Social and Political Issues, Walkley Award Nomination Best Documentary, AACTA Award Nomination – Best Documentary and Best Cinematography.

It will be released in cinemas in 2020.



# A national First Nations education system



In 2019, Children's Ground organised two First Nations Educators' Network meetings. These forums brought together over 50 educators from 15 different nations across Australia. Utyerre Apanpe was established as a new national network of First Cultural educators to lead education reform and to campaign for formal government recognition of a First Nations education system.

**"We are here because we hold knowledge and practices that have been passed on through generations and since before time. We hold the ways of teaching from our ancestors. We are here because we hold the future for our next generations."**

Utyerre Apanpe, 2019

Australia is nearly forty years behind countries in which First Nations education systems are integrated and recognised including Hawaii, New Zealand and Canada. International leadership recognises the critical importance of a child's language and culture to their educational success:

**"When taught first in their own languages, children learn better, are more self-confident and transfer their literacy and numeracy skills to additional languages. Children who start formal education in a second or foreign language are much more likely to experience frustration and failure, resulting in higher dropout rates for these children."**

UNESCO 2012

Utyerre Apanpe is led by cultural Professors who are recognised through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law and practice with a fraternity of educators from 15 different nations; this number is growing. Utyerre Apanpe has a clear strategy to redesign education for First Nations children.

Utyerre Apanpe recognises that any education system must recognise local control, where each nation holds the right to determine its own method of delivery, in line with the laws and learning from country.

**"It has been inspiring to share our knowledge with each other. Although we are from many nations with many languages we share a common vision and history. We recognise the laws of our lands. We belong to the land and the land belongs to us."**

Utyerre Apanpe, 2019

An objective for 2020 is to obtain formal government commitment to advance the development of First Nations-led education in Australia.

Dujuan's grandmother, Carol, speaks clearly about education in *In My Blood It Runs*:

**"I want my grandchildren to be educated. So they know the system when they grow up. We should be teaching our kids Arrernte. Fluent Arrernte. Not a poor version of Arrernte but to speak the language of our old people. And the best time is when we are in our homeland. White people educate our kids in the way they want them to be educated. But I need them to speak their language so that they can carry on their language. We want our kids growing up learning in both ways."**

As we move into 2020, we will focus on education reform as a key driver in promoting identity and culture while also preventing racism, incarceration, unemployment and ill-health.

**"Utyerre connects you, ties you back... The strings in the land... You have to follow that back to where you really belong ... where your bloodline lays in the country... from children to grandchildren. It carries a message and keeps you alive. It looks after and guides the family. Utyerre has a message in it. The land next to you is a relationship through Utyerre. The spirit of each country goes into the ground and joins."**

MK Turner OAM

<sup>1</sup> Turner, M. 2010. *Iwenhe Tyerrtye What it Means to be an Aboriginal Person*. Compiler Barry McDonald. IAD Press

# The CG Approach: Proof of Concept

In 2013, Children's Ground's first community partnership was established with the Bininj (First Nations) people of Kakadu West Arnhem. The CG Approach was delivered from late 2013 to early 2017<sup>2</sup>.

In 2019, an evaluation of the CG Approach in Kakadu was released and can be accessed on our website: [childrensground.org.au/who-we-are/reports](http://childrensground.org.au/who-we-are/reports).

The report is a rigorous evaluation, oversighted by our National Research Advisory Group. Their letter of commendation includes the following statements:

**"Your short experience in Kakadu West Arnhem shows that the Children's Ground Approach has been effective in creating change across a whole community in a short period. The integrated nature of this change for children and families is of particular importance and includes early childhood, schooling engagement, local governance, employment, wellbeing, safety and cultural identity. This approach has potential for significant long-term impact."**

**Our next step is to use this report to inform relevant policy and practice changes beyond Children's Ground. The report makes a compelling case for the continuation and broader implementation of this important work."**

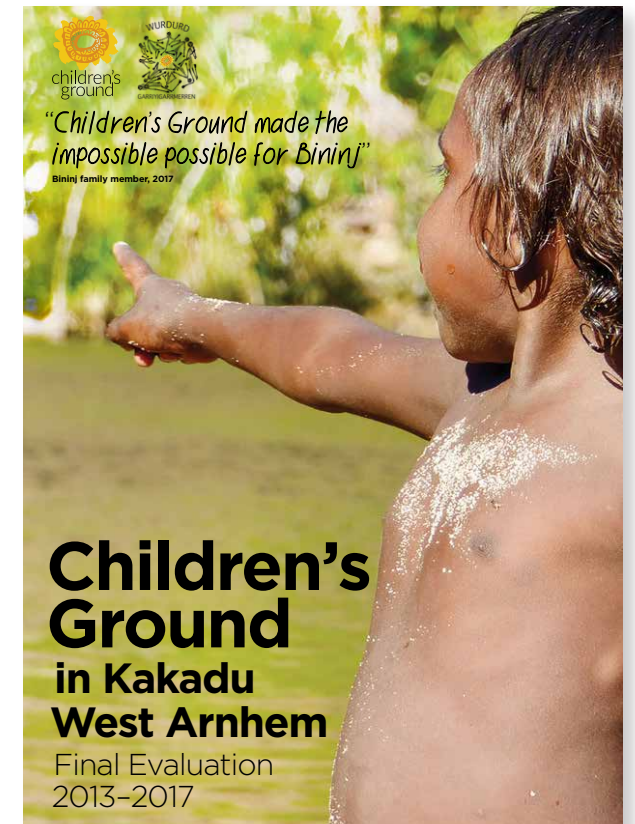
Children's Ground Research Advisory Group, 2019

The final evaluation report from our time in Kakadu provides findings of the first stage of our operational journey. It is the proof of concept for the CG Approach. It shows the power and impact of a comprehensive platform of prevention that is a whole of community, fully integrated, culturally driven approach to addressing complex generational needs.

The first years of Children's Ground established a foundation for long-term change with Bininj people in the region, with a particular focus on outstations outside the remote centre of Jabiru - where communities faced the greatest exclusion and hardship. These foundations included access to and engagement in:

- a place of safety for children, families and the whole community (cultural, physical, social and emotional safety)
- intergenerational learning for children, alongside their family, in their language, on their traditional lands - learning about their culture and English literacy and numeracy
- whole of family health promotion, support and wellbeing
- flexible employment and economic opportunities
- services and supports that privilege Bininj language, culture and knowledge systems

<sup>2</sup> Children's Ground is no longer based in Jabiru and continues work with families who took the CG Approach to Marlakwo in West Arnhem.



From 2014-16, 431 people engaged in the CG Approach, including 131 children aged 0-11 years in formal and extended hours learning. Some key impact findings include:

- A new population of children aged 0-5 years engaged in formal early years learning at Children's Ground (children who had never previously participated in formal early years) - with 75% of children engaged across the region
- 100% of children had family directly engaged in their learning, health and wellbeing
- 87 Bininj people employed - most of whom were previously long-term unemployed - which was in contrast to down trends in First Nations employment in the Northern Territory
- 162 Bininj people were involved in local leadership and community governance and were instrumental in guiding all aspects of Children's Ground

This evidence demonstrates that the CG Approach has the capacity to achieve profound change with children and families in a short period of time. As a proof of concept, the evaluation analyses the process effectiveness of the CG Approach, the outcomes for children, families and communities and the drivers of change enabled by Children's Ground's systemic and service reform.



“We’ve been following government nearly all our lives - this is a new beginning. We are following a new path, our own path as First Nations people for the future of our children. At Children’s Ground, the community are taking the lead. We are very proud of that. We are the government of ourselves.”

MK Turner OAM, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director

# Governance

Children’s Ground’s governance structure balances cultural and corporate governance. Together, they ensure we possess organisational quality and standards, cultural integrity and the community leadership necessary to achieve lasting change.

With First Nations people leading the way, we have a unique, two-tiered governance structure that replaces a top-down form of governance to one where First Nations people control matters affecting their lives. The Board complements this by providing direction and oversight in matters relating to strategy, finance, legal compliance and risk management.

**Cultural Governance**  
in each region  
(First Nations responsibilities)

**Executive Director**  
(CEO)

**Children’s Ground Board**  
(Western legal / board responsibilities)



## Our Community and Cultural Governance

### Central Australia

*Ingkerrekele Arntarnte-areme*, our Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Governance Committee, directs our operations in Central Australia. This group is comprised of Elders, Traditional Owners, community and family leaders from each community. This enables Cultural Governance systems to be recognised and ensures accountability and community control at the grass roots. The following people have led Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Governance Committee this year.

#### Mpweringke Anapipe:

- MK Turner OAM
- Leonie Palmer
- Alison Ferber
- Michael Gorey
- Veronica Turner
- Lorraine Gorey
- William Lowah
- Cathy Turner
- Amanda Turner

#### Yarrenyty-Arltere:

- Blanche Ebatarinja
- Dulcie Sharpe
- Marlene Rubuntja
- Trudy Inkamala

#### Ewyenper Atwatye:

- Rosario Young
- Marita McMillan
- Cassandra Neal

#### Irrkerlantye:

- Felicity Hayes
- Anna Maria Palmer
- Therese Ryder

### West Arnhem Land

In West Arnhem, our operations are directed and governed by Traditional Owners and caretakers for the outstations where we work.

- Cecily Djandjomerr
- Shirley Djandjomerr
- Raymond Guymala
- Antonia Djandjomerr
- Greg Lippo
- Christina Djandjomerr
- Kamalh Hunter
- Christine Alangale
- Josh Cameron
- Kaylene Djandjomerr
- Roxanne Naborlhborlh

- Annie Cameron
- Mark Djandjomerr
- May Nango
- Jessabelle Cameron
- Corrianne Cameron
- Sonya Nango
- Lee Nabarlambarl
- Angela Bangarr
- Ethan Nabalwad
- Esau Djandjomerr



Our Board

Our Board of Directors is made up of highly skilled people. Expertise on the board includes cultural knowledge and governance, health, education, financial management, human rights, NFP leadership, research, the arts, investment and business development.

Board members are highly qualified in their respective fields and have the commitment and passion required to lead Children's Ground alongside our First Nations Governance structures.



**William Tilmouth**  
Arrernte man, founding Chair of Children's Ground, Board Chair and Co-Chair of Research Advisory Group



**Dr Jordan Cory**  
Kamilaroi woman, BSc, MBBS, GDip Surg Anat, AAICD, Board member



**Amunda Gorey**  
Arrernte woman, Board member and member of the People and Culture Sub-committee



**Kon Karapanagiotidis, OAM**  
LLB, BSW, BBSC, MED, MDevStuds - Board member, member of the Partnerships, Investment and Communications Sub-committee, and member of the People and Culture Sub-committee



**John Lochowiak**  
Pitjantjatjara man, BA of Education, Board member



**Amy Poynton**  
BA, MBA Board member, Chair of the People and Culture Sub-committee, member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-committee



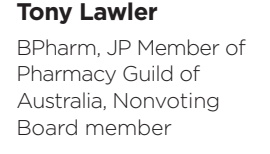
**Clive Ringler**  
BEC, MCom, ASX Accredited Adviser, Level 1 & 2 - Board Deputy Chair, Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-committee



**Josie Rizza**  
CA, BEc, GradDipAppFinInv, GAICD - Board member, member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-committee and member of the Partnerships, Investment and Communications Sub-committee



**Jane Vadiveloo**  
BSc, MPsy(Forensic) - CEO, member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-committee, member of the Partnerships, Investment and Communications Sub-committee and Co-Chair of the Research Advisory Group



**Tony Lawler**  
BPharm, JP Member of Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Nonvoting Board member

**Cindy Wei**  
Partnerships, Investment and Communications Sub-committee member

Our Elders and Patrons



**MK Turner, OAM**  
MK Turner is an Eastern Arrernte Elder, cultural adviser, translator, teacher, social justice champion, artist and author. Born in the Harts Range region, north east of Alice Springs, she is also Anangkere (traditional healer) and 'professor' - a holder of customary law, practice and knowledge. In 1997, she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to the Aboriginal community of Central Australia. In 2017, MK was a finalist in the NT Australian of the Year Awards.



**Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO**  
Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin is a Senior Wurundjeri Elder of the Kulin Nation. Born in Healesville, Aunty Joy's family never left Wurundjeri land. She is the senior custodian of these lands and is the great-great niece of William Barak, Ngurungaeta of the Wurundjeri-Willam clan.

Aunty Joy has had numerous government appointments including as a member of the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria and of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. In 2006, she was made an officer of the Order of Australia for her service to the community through significant contributions in the fields of social justice, land rights, equal opportunity, the arts and reconciliation.

Research Advisory Group

Our Research Advisory Group is made up of respected researchers and academics with extensive experience. They provide valuable guidance to monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by our Director of Research and Evaluation and community researchers in each site. Our 25-year longitudinal evaluation enables us to build the evidence base to influence policy aimed at ending intergenerational disadvantage in the long term.

Our Research Advisors are:

**Professor Komla Tsey** Research Professor, Centre for Research and Innovation in Sustainability Education, The Cairns Institute, James Cook University

**Professor David Thomas** Head, Wellbeing and Preventable. Chronic Disease, Menzies School of Health Research

Our Inspiring Ambassadors



**Pat Cash**  
Pat Cash is an Australian tennis champion, winning the men's singles at Wimbledon. Pat is the co-founder of Planet Ark and Do Something. He lives in the UK and travels the world coaching, competing and commentating. Pat has emerged as a passionate advocate for social justice for First Nations people, particularly the Arrernte Elders he has spent time with in Alice Springs.



**Dr Jan Owen AM**  
Jan Owen AM is the Co-Chair of Learning Creates Australia and the former CEO of the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA). In 2014, Jan received a Doctor of Letters from the University of Sydney in recognition of her contribution to young people and policy. In 2012 she was named the inaugural Australian Financial Review & Westpac Group 'Woman of Influence 2012'. In 2000 she was awarded membership of the Order of Australia for services to children and young people.



**Corinne Grant**  
Corinne Grant is a practising lawyer, author, accomplished emcee and performer. Corinne is a passionate defender of human rights, including the rights of the traditional custodians of Australia, and those seeking asylum. She was a recipient of the John Gibson Memorial Award for Refugee Law while studying at the University of Melbourne. Corinne has garnered well deserved attention for her quick wit, demonstrated in her roles on Channel Ten's *Rove Live* and ABC's *The Glasshouse*.



**The Cat Empire**  
The Cat Empire became a global ambassador for Children's Ground in 2019. This amazing Melbourne-based band has ignited energy and passion around the world for over a decade, having toured extensively across Australia, North America and Europe.

**Adjunct Professor Sally Brinkman** Co-Director, Fraser Mustard Centre. Senior Research Fellow, Telethon Kids Institute

**Mr Matthew James** Senior Executive, Housing and Specialised Services Group and Deputy Director, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

**Dr Tim Moore** Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Community Child Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

**Professor Sven Silburn** (ret. previously) Director, Centre for Child Development and Education, Menzies School of Health Research

**Professor Fiona Arney** Director, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia



**Rachel Naninaaq Edwardson**  
Rachel Naninaaq Edwardson is an Iñupiaq filmmaker and educator whose work has been critically acclaimed in the US, Canada, Australia and Europe. Her *History of the Iñupiaq* documentary series is the first Native produced and directed documentary series in Alaska. Since 2007, Rachel has been an adviser and program designer of educational initiatives and reforms in Australia and Alaska.



**Joanne Willmot**  
Joanne Willmot is a Wakka Wakka woman born and raised in Cherbourg Aboriginal Mission. She is a cultural advisor and ambassador of Children's Ground. Joanne is recognised for her commitment and long history in promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights. Jo has worked for many years with State and Commonwealth Government, Aboriginal and non-Government agencies. Since 2006 she has been the Aboriginal Programs Manager for Relationships Australia in South Australia. She was Elder of the Year for South Australia in 2016. She is a proud mother and Grandmother. She provides critical leadership and support to Children's Ground.



**The Teskey Brothers**  
Melbourne blues band The Teskey Brothers completed tours of Australia and the world in 2019. The Teskey Brothers capture something real, raw and relatable. During the year, the band was nominated for seven ARIA awards, taking out three categories including Best Group. They also won four Music Victoria Awards, and even scored a Grammy nomination!

We continue to recognise the late Honourable Malcolm Fraser as a past Ambassador and Elder of Children's Ground.



# Financial Report

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Directors' Report

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

The directors present their report on Children's Ground Limited for the financial year ended 31 December 2019.

#### (a) General information

##### Directors

The names of the directors in office at any time during, or since the end of, the year are:

Names	Position	Appointed/Resigned
William Roy Tilmouth	Chair	
Kon Karapanagiotidis	Non-Executive Director	
Clive William Ringler	Non-Executive Director	
Adrian John Appo	Non-Executive Director	Resigned 15th March 2019
Josie Rizza	Non-Executive Director	
Amy Poynton	Non-Executive Director	
Amunda Gorey	Non-Executive Director	
Jordan Cory	Non-Executive Director	Commenced 12th June 2019
John Lochowiak	Non-Executive Director	Commenced 28th June 2019
Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo	Chief Executive Officer	

All Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

\*John Lochowiak commenced 28th June 2019

\*Jordan Cory commenced 12th June 2019

\*Adrian Appo resigned 15th March 2019

##### Principal activities

The principal activity of Children's Ground Limited during the financial year were to provide opportunities to help break the poverty cycle for disadvantaged indigenous families and supply significant aid to needy people in the community. Such activities included early years learning and care, family health, community development, cultural development and economic development services and activities.

No significant changes in the nature of the Company's activity occurred during the financial year.

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Directors' Report

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

#### Meetings of directors

During the financial year, 9 meetings of directors (including committees of directors) were held. Attendances by each director during the year were as follows:

	Directors' Meetings	
	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
William Roy Tilmouth	9	8
Kon Karapanagiotidis	9	6
Amunda Gorey	9	7
Clive William Ringler	9	8
Adrian John Appo	2	1
Josie Rizza	9	8
Jordan Cory	5	2
Amy Poynton	9	8
John Lochowiak	4	1
Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo	9	9

\*John Lochowiak commenced 28th June 2019

\*Jordan Cory Commenced 12th June 2019


\*Adrian Appo resigned 15th March 2019

#### Auditor's independence declaration

The auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 31 December 2019 has been received and can be found on page 6 of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Director: 

Director: 

Dated this 15 day of April 2020



# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

## Directors' Report

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 31 December 2019, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in Division 60.40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

*Saward Dawson*

Saward Dawson

*Jeffrey Tulk*

Jeffrey Tulk  
Partner

Blackburn

Dated: 15 April 2020



# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
Revenue	2	5,447,975	3,751,995
Employee benefits expense		(3,669,474)	(2,683,466)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(160,616)	(118,288)
Travel and accommodation		(164,486)	(103,154)
Motor Vehicle Expenses		(140,724)	(122,045)
Client Support Consumables		(98,817)	(63,290)
Rent		(61,609)	(91,877)
Professional fees		(67,817)	(40,401)
Utilities and cleaning		(37,881)	(24,918)
Computer expenses		(58,809)	(22,446)
Children's Service Support		(184,583)	(144,418)
Printing and stationery		(41,122)	(26,321)
Repairs and maintenance		(36,706)	(5,481)
Asset Purchases < \$1,000		(75,728)	(27,756)
Insurance		(9,958)	(10,372)
Training and development		(15,412)	(7,791)
Advertising and Promotion		(4,026)	(3,605)
Interest expense on lease liability		(1,914)	-
Other expenses		(174,873)	(131,726)
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>443,420</b>	<b>124,640</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>443,420</b>	<b>124,640</b>

### a) Adoption of AASB 15 and AASB 1058

Children's Ground has adopted AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customer and AASB 1058: Income for Not-for-Profit Entities for the financial year ended 31 December 2019.

Under AASB 15, Grant and Philanthropic revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects when the transfer of promised goods or services occurs. For Children's Ground, this has meant that for some grants where services are provided over the 31 December 2019 financial year, i.e., in 2019 and 2020, a portion of this grant is recorded as Income in Advance at 31 December 2019. This will be recognised as revenue in future periods when Children's Ground transfers the promised goods or services.

Children's Ground has chosen to use the modified retrospective application approach when applying these new standards for the financial year ending 31 December 2019. This has required an adjustment to the opening retained earnings of \$247,172 to accurately reflect revenue and unearned income for the 31 December 2019 financial year.

The 31 December 2018 comparative information is prepared under AASB 118 Revenue and AASB 1004 Contributions. Accordingly, the comparative information is still the same as reported in the year ended 31 December 2018 and no changes were made for the adoption of AASB 15 and AASB1058.



# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

## Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	3,398,928	1,613,322
Trade and other receivables	5	59,872	132,420
Inventories		6,866	-
Other financial assets	6	-	433,987
Other assets	7	90,404	35,118
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		3,556,070	2,214,847
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	8	310,853	270,183
Right of use asset - Hoddle St		20,792	-
Intangible assets	9	-	6,658
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		331,645	276,841
TOTAL ASSETS		3,887,715	2,491,688
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	10	456,463	306,042
Other liabilities	11	1,199,883	274,283
Employee benefits	12	288,621	235,978
Lease liability - Hoddle St		21,570	-
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,966,537	816,303
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	12	90,856	41,311
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		90,856	41,311
TOTAL LIABILITIES		2,057,393	857,614
NET ASSETS		1,830,322	1,634,074
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained surplus		1,771,498	1,575,250
Reserves	20	58,824	58,824
TOTAL EQUITY		1,830,322	1,634,074

# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

## Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

	2019		Retained Earnings \$	General Reserve \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 January 2019</b>					
Change in accounting policy to reflect the retrospective adjustments - adoption of AASB 15			1,575,250	58,824	1,634,074
		1(b)	(247,172)	-	(247,172)
<b>Balance at 1 January 2019 restated</b>			1,328,078	58,824	1,386,902
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year			443,420	-	443,420
<b>Balance at 31 December 2019</b>			1,771,498	58,824	1,830,322
<b>2018</b>					
<b>Balance at 1 January 2018</b>					
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year			1,450,610	58,824	1,509,434
			124,640	-	124,640
<b>Balance at 31 December 2018</b>			1,575,250	58,824	1,634,074



# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Donations, grants and other income received		6,490,913	4,108,001
Interest received		34,439	25,797
Payments to suppliers and employees		(4,979,888)	(3,571,750)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	14	1,545,464	562,048
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Purchase of plant and equipment		(163,439)	(152,968)
Redemption (Placement) of term deposits		433,987	(403,374)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		270,548	(556,342)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Proceeds from leases (leases repaid)		(30,406)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		(30,406)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held		1,785,606	5,706
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		1,613,322	1,607,616
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	4	3,398,928	1,613,322

# Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086


## Directors' Declaration

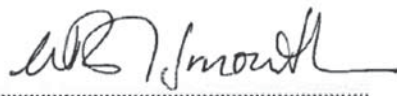
In the opinion of the Directors, the financial report as set out on pages 4 - 25:

- (i) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable, and;
- (ii) the financial statements and notes are in accordance with Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Director .....  
  
JANE VADIVELOO

Director .....  
  
William Tilmouth

Dated 15 April 2020





**Children's Ground Limited**  
**ABN 74 154 403 068**

### Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

#### Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2019, the summary Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income, summary Statement of Changes in Equity for the year then ended, summary Statement of Cash Flows and Directors' Declaration, are derived from the audited financial report of Children's Ground Limited for the year ended 31 December 2019.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report.

#### Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report and the auditor's report thereon. The summary financial statements and the audited financial report do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial report.

#### The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial report in our report dated 15 April 2020.

#### Board's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

The board is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the summary financial statements.

#### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

*Saward Dawson*

**Saward Dawson**

*Jeffrey Tulk*

Jeffrey Tulk  
Partner

Blackburn  
Dated: 15 April 2020

20 Albert St, PO Box 256, Blackburn VIC 3130  
T +61 3 9894 2500 F +61 3 9894 1622  
contact@sawarddawson.com.au  
sawarddawson.com.au



Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

## Our Partners and Supporters

We thank all the amazing individuals and families, in Australia and overseas, for their generosity and support that enables First Nations families to break the cycle of disadvantage and create hope and opportunity for the next generation.

### Philanthropy



### Government



### Corporate and NGO Supporters



Children's Ground would also like to thank Clare Ainsworth Herschell, the JRA Support Fund, Justice, Empowerment, Mission Inc, Karla Burnett, King David School, the Kloss Family, Lauriston Girls' School, Social Garden, St Ignatius' College Riverview, and the Yanni Sarantis Legacy. We also wish to acknowledge all of our silent partners, regular givers, peer-to-peer fundraisers and general supporters.



# Our Staff and Volunteers

## Staff

Alison Ferber  
Amanda Turner  
Amber Thompson  
Andrena Webb  
Andrew Corrigan  
Angela Bangarr  
Angelina Hayes  
Anna Satharasinghe  
Annamaria Palmer  
Annette Robinson  
Annie Cameron  
Antoinette Furber Gorey  
Antonia Djandjomerr  
Ash Steel  
Audrey Inkamala  
Ava Watkins  
Barbara Petrick  
B Djandjomerr  
Belinda Kinitavaki  
Bernadette Wheeler  
Bessina Cameron  
Bethan Rees  
Bill Pheasant  
Blanche Ebatarinja  
Brenda Tilmouth  
Caitlin Taunton  
Calandra Foster  
Camille Dobson  
Carol Marie Turner  
Cassandra Neil  
Cathy Turner  
Cecilia Schaber  
Cecily Djandjomerr  
Chantelle Bloomfield  
Chloe Abbott  
Christianna Djandjomerr  
Christine Alangale  
Claire Clayfield  
Clayton Webb  
Corianne Djandjomerr  
Cristina Nobleza  
Damien Kamholtz  
Darius Cameron  
David Holmes  
David Rankine  
Delvena Splinter  
Dianne Williams  
Dillon Brennan  
Dominic Ferguson  
Dominique Mercuri  
Doris Bundy  
Dulcie Raggett  
Dulcie Sharpe  
Emily Ades  
Emily Hill  
Emma Franklin  
Ethan Nabulwad  
Felicity Douglas  
Felicity Hayes

Fiona Lawrence  
Giulia Frattaroli  
Grace Anthony  
Graham Rostron  
Greg Hammond  
Gregory Kopp  
Gregory Lippo  
Gwendolyn Djandjomerr  
Helen Fitzgerald  
Ian Woods  
Irene Reiff  
Irene Tilmouth  
Ivan Namarnyilk  
Jacinta Bush  
Jack Namarnyilk  
Jacquita Palmer  
Jamie Mapleson  
Jamie Toyne  
Jane Vadelveloo  
Janella Ebatarinja  
Janice Turner  
Janine Morton  
Janine Turner  
Jasmine Crea  
Jason Butcher  
Jasper Brown  
Jennifer Inkamala  
Jennifer Lorains  
Joanne Ferguson  
John Anderson  
Johnnie Williams  
Josabella Cameron  
Josh Cameron  
Julieanne Reiff  
Kamah! Djandjomerr  
Kaylah Webb  
Kaylene Djandjomerr  
Kaylene Splinter  
Kerry Bird  
Kimberley Namarnyilk  
Kurt Petrick  
Kwementyaye  
Kngwarraye Palmer  
Layla Smith  
Lee Nabarlambarl  
Leonie Sheedy  
Lillian Alexander  
Lorrayne Gorey  
Michelle McGuirk  
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## Pro bono support

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The combined talent, generosity and quality of work is absolutely outstanding.

It is impossible to quantify the human and financial contribution of our volunteer and pro bono teams.

We cannot thank you enough.





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**“My people don’t desire to be second class citizens, ‘unwanted problems’ on the landscape drifting with the currents of prescribed solutions. My people don’t desire or deserve educational and economic failure. Education is designed to fail them from the outset. Recognise our strength, our culture. Give our people power, choice, options and the means. They will participate, they will lead and the whole community will flourish. This is our story.**

**Our people have both a cultural knowledge and a learning through a life of injustice. Through Children’s Ground, for the first time in our colonial history, we are creating places of education that come from our language and culture, that honour our identity and knowledge and history. We are including and want our children to be proficient in academia in white mans terms. Our next generation will be formidable. Their identity will not be denied.”**

**William Tilmouth, Chair Children’s Ground**