

# Annual Report 2020





## Our Vision

- For all children and families to live with dignity and justice, free from economic poverty
- For First Nations people in Australia to achieve their aspirations for their children to enjoy a life of opportunity, strong cultural identity, and personal wellbeing by having voice and agency over their social, cultural, political and economic future
- For Australia to know our history and celebrate First Nations culture and future

## Our Strategy

**The Children's Ground Approach (CGA) is a 25-year strategy designed to create lasting change.**

- **Goal 1:** Implement the CGA with communities in three to five regions and build the practice and evidence base
- **Goal 2:** Develop, articulate and share the Children's Ground Approach to achieve excellence in standards, leading practice and scalability
- **Goal 3:** Promote systems change
- **Goal 4:** Champion First Nations history, voice and culture
- **Goal 5:** Financial Sustainability at scale to achieve excellence
- **Goal 6:** A strong, effective, efficient organisation
- **Goal 7:** Contribute to national and international evidence: Implement a 25-Year longitudinal evaluation in each operational region overseight by National Research Advisory Group

*"It's been really busy this year at Children's Ground. A lot of exciting things are happening and new families are joining in. I feel really happy. Sometimes I look at all the children and think 'Wow! This has just spread like wild fire!' All those years ago we started Children's Ground little bit by little bit. And now look at this! I'm very proud."*

**Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground Central Australia) Director**

Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer passed away in early 2021. She was one of our founding Elders and a leader of the Arrernte Nation. Her vision and leadership have been, and will forever be, at the heart of our organisation. She set down the strategy and priorities as part of our most senior Directorship in Central Australia. While her loss is devastating, we will continue her lifelong commitment and fight to ensure all First Nations children can access quality education in their First Language, on their Country, and taught by the right cultural educators in their family. Thank you for your grace, your wisdom and your unwavering determination.

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## Our Commitment to First Nations People

Children’s Ground acknowledges and honours First Nations people. We pay our respect to Elders past and present as custodians of this land, that was never ceded. In Melbourne we live and work on the land of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, in Central Australia on the land of the Arrernte People and in the Top End the lands of the Bolmo and Larrakia people.



# 2020 Highlights

Highlights, challenges and successes come with a rich context – a story that numbers alone cannot tell. A year like no other brought out our strengths and highlighted the power of relational based delivery and empowerment as the foundation for making change. Through COVID, we kept to our core – focusing on children and their families, working with seven communities and engaged with many more. The Children's Ground 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 families and community. This year, COVID health threats required an increased focus on the protection of Elders and families who live with chronic health issues and in overcrowding. New ways of delivering learning and securing health in environments of stress pushed us to new horizons, creating new opportunities and highlighting the strength of the community. As well as building engagement numbers this year, we continued to build trust, relationships, strength in local decision making, operational quality, partnerships and evidence.

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

(Note: Top End data now includes Darwin community engagement)



381 children 0-8 years engaged in learning and health promotion, alongside their family.



Family (18+ years) continued walking alongside their children with 345 family members engaging in learning, and 590 engaging in health promotion and support focused on their individual and family's health and wellbeing.



131 First Nations Elders, leaders and families engaged in community governance.

Walk, Talk & Act community engagement and planning, starting with two Darwin town camps.

Community-led health promotion responses to COVID-19.

## Highlight 1: Security and Sustainability



In June, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground Central Australia) moved into our very own home! Through much negotiation, planning and philanthropic support, Arrernte Traditional Owners have security to lead their vision

worked in groundbreaking developments in linguistics, teaching and the first written language dictionaries over the past 50 years. We celebrate and continue this important cultural knowledge work. We look forward to establishing a centre of excellence, a community gathering place and leadership in systems reform.

**"It feels like I'm coming home."** – MK Turner OAM, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director, Law Woman, Professor

Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is a vibrant intergenerational place of safety, learning, love and wellbeing. Our new home gives us confidence, stability and the opportunity to develop and grow to fulfill our vision.

on their own country in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). Our new home was previously occupied by the Institute of Aboriginal Development (IAD), where many of our Elders and families

## Highlight 2: In My Blood It Runs

In 2020, Children's Ground continued working in partnership with the ground-breaking documentary *In My Blood It Runs* to implement its impact strategy. The film is a powerful vehicle of advocacy for systems change, using the voice of a child, Dajuan Hoosan, to showcase the need for reform in areas of education, criminal justice and welfare for First Nations people. Our Chairperson William Tilmouth, CEO Jane Vadiveloo and Director MK Turner OAM are key advisors to the film, alongside Executive Producer Felicity Hayes (a key governance member for Children's Ground). In 2020 Children's Ground:

- co-hosted the national launch of *In My Blood It Runs* in the community where Dajuan grew up and where Children's Ground works
- collaborated with other national organisations to progress the impact goals of the film: First Nations education reform and raising the age of criminal responsibility
- supported Dajuan to meet with Australian Parliamentarians alongside Utyerre Apanpe (First Nations Educators' Network) to seek education reform

## Highlight 3: Young Leaders

We are watching engagement of children grow and with this, their confidence. They are learning, laughing and engaged – in environments that honour their culture and learning that is rich and diverse with cultural and Western-trained practitioners working together in wonderful partnership.

This year our young people, who live with serious life risks, are emerging as leaders, finding their voice and talent, and becoming critical role models.

# Message from the Chair



William at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe with MK Turner OAM and his grandchildren

As I reflect on another year at Children's Ground, I do so with both pride for all we've achieved and a heavy heart with what we've lost. At the beginning of 2021, we were devastated by the passing of one of the founding directors and cultural leaders of Children's Ground, Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer. The passing of our old people is a tragedy. So much knowledge, language and story passes with them. It's so important that this knowledge is grasped, enhanced and practiced. We need to preserve it. We need to hold onto it and follow in their steps.

You speak to any old person and they all want their grandchildren to succeed in a Western, modern world. But they also want them to retain their identity, their culture, their language and their Country – to be solid in who they are. It's that foundation that needs to be strengthened and maintained, not fragmented and shattered. We want our children to be successful in modern society – but they can only be so with a strong foundation. Holding on to that strong foundation gives you the strength to do anything.

We have a systems failure in Western education: it doesn't understand our children or strengthen their families. It doesn't maintain the foundation that Aboriginal children come from – and sometimes it dismantles it. Children's Ground is about strengthening and celebrating that foundation and giving children a platform to bounce off into a global world with their identity, language, culture and Country intact.

While the mainstream education system talks about 'school attendance', our emphasis is on outcomes. We focus on how kids engage and the involvement of communities and families in and around that child's education and upbringing. This requires looking beyond education. This is about health, employment, culture and community in the long term.

At Children's Ground, our First Nations educators are developing their own curriculum to assert their learning priorities for First Nations children – both in First Language and in English. Health promotion is happening on a daily basis in community and with families. Young people are emerging from despair to become leaders. People who I have known for years who have never had the opportunity before are working and turning their lives around. Further afield, we are supporting a national network of First Nations educators to push for education reform and recognise our systems of education and their cultural expertise as professors, leaders and teachers.

We are hearing stories of children who have been engaging with Children's Ground developing stronger language skills than their parents – in two or more languages. They are vibrant and healthy and they love learning. Through Children's Ground, children are receiving a better education than their parents received. Parents are proud.

There have been many challenges on the ground in our communities in 2020 – COVID-19 was just one of them. My two biggest concerns are losing our old people and struggling for our funding. Demand for Children's Ground is growing, but the bandwidth to be able to put our full Approach in place is still not there.

**“We want our children to be successful in modern society – but they can only be so with that strong foundation. Holding on to that strong foundation gives you the strength to do anything.”**

Our children and communities should not be seen simply as the beneficiaries of Government or philanthropy; they are partners. They bring expertise, knowledge and leadership to these partnerships. They bring the solutions for enduring change. The rest of us are enablers.

I can't thank our funders enough. You believe in us, in our solutions and in our empowerment. You are giving us the agency we have always sought; this means we can put the solutions that we know can work in place.

I want to thank our Board, who bring great expertise and dedication to make our journey possible. To our CEO and our staff, you do the hard yards every day to empower people and give our children a door to a different future.

I am continually inspired by the strength and resilience of my people. I honour our Elders and I love watching our grannies full of life and spirit. I can see the tide turning. This report is a celebration of their hope and what this has created in our communities.

**William Tilmouth**

# Message from the CEO

2020 brought pain and unity. The events of this year amplified the importance of community and family as we supported each other through times of uncertainty, fear and risk. The Black Lives Matter movement put a global spotlight on racism and injustice. In Australia, the situation facing First Nations people is as serious as ever.

*“Statistically it is more likely that an Aboriginal child will go to jail than achieve a degree in higher education. Can we look our children in the eyes and explain that this is their future?”* **Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar**

In the lived experience of the First Nations people leading Children's Ground, children and families are navigating daily intergenerational poverty, overcrowding, trauma, ill-health, racism, cultural and emotional stress, family death, and threats of incarceration and child protection. It is unacceptable. It is preventable. We are building the practice leadership and evidence to dismantle the status quo through systemic reform each day.

We came through 2020 breathing a collective sigh of relief that COVID-19 did not find its way into the Northern Territory and remote communities of Australia. As Elders around the world died, we feared for the lives of our Elders and adults with chronic health issues, who live with serious illness and in conditions which would allow this disease to spread with ease. First Nations people and leadership created the protective wall which was supported by Government. In the Northern Territory, the places of safety were remote homelands. This highlighted the poor investment by Government, the poor state of housing, food insecurity and the lack of basic services in remote Homeland communities. At Children's Ground, we faced stark injustice as we supported staff to make existing home environments work ready, knowing that working from home for our First Nations staff in the Northern Territory was impossible due to overcrowding, homelessness, remoteness, and lack of connectivity.

At Children's Ground, we went into overdrive and were inspired by phenomenal grassroots leadership from Elders, adults and young people. The incredible responsiveness of our philanthropic family allowed us to implement a comprehensive response that included Elder protection, family plans, health information dissemination and environmental health work. We continued to support education both in town and on homelands in new ways. A focus on food security went beyond Children's Ground's immediate families to support a broader regional response. Our strategic and operational approach allowed us to respond to an immediate crisis, improving and informing our work.

This year, we purchased our own home in Alice Springs on a site that is significant to our Elders. For Arrernte leaders, this is a return to their place, on their Country. This stability

and permanency provide an important foundation for the future of the organisation. This was made possible through the generous support of our philanthropic partners. We cannot thank you enough.

Financially, we ended the year in a stable position. Our accounts show a \$2.2M profit at the end of 2020, the majority of which is attributable to the purchase of a property. This, along with smaller capital purchases, contributed \$1.55M to the end of year surplus. The remaining surplus includes grants received in advance or targeted project funding for expenditure in 2021 (\$471,000). The remaining surplus is attributed to a successful end of year campaign and operational underspend related to COVID restrictions. Government stimulus (which ceased in October 2020) was instrumental in supporting our wages costs for the year.

This year, the need for profound systems change has been highlighted around the world. We have begun to evidence practice leadership towards long term systems change through the Children's Ground Approach. While our financial position is stable, stability is not enough for us to achieve our vision. Children's Ground needs to grow to reach our full operational strategy. We aim to increase annual revenue by \$9M over the next three years to develop against our strategy. We have all felt the uncertainty of life over the past year. We will plan, knowing that the world can turn upside down, but that we can and must adapt when needed. Injustice will exploit any corner it can find. We will continue to shine a light on it and replace it with equity and dignity.

I thank all of our staff who are magnificent - in talent and in commitment. Some commute for 12 hours and work in tents. Others live without a stable home. Everyone is working with (and many are living with) layers of complex trauma. I recognise Felicity Hayes, Traditional Owner of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and a senior leader for Children's Ground who continues her 40-year fight for tenure on her own land.

I thank all of our game changing partners, our growing family of donors and our incredible Ambassadors. Our success is only made possible by the vision, commitment and generosity of others. Your collective investment and its impact are felt every day, from each child, in each family and each community. In our celebrations and our hope.

I thank our incredible Board and staff and, as always, the children who inspire us every day.

We dedicate this Annual Report to our Elders and to Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer whose legacy and visionary leadership will continue through the life of Children's Ground.

**Jane Vadivelloo**



# Changing the System

In a year where COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter sharpened our focus on the threats and risks that arise from injustice, the importance of our work at Children's Ground was amplified. Our vision is to change a system that is broken and failing. To change the existing system that results in injustice being experienced by First Nations people every day. To change the system that results in First Nations children across Australia being 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, injustice is a daily threat; it is relentless and devastating. Through this, people have maintained strength, clarity and fierce determination to make change - real, long lasting change. The enduring leadership of our Elders ultimately brought Children's Ground to life.



to five communities in each regional operation. Children's Ground aims to build evidence-based practice leading to policy and systems reform. We now have the foundational operations in three regions (two in the Top End and one in Central Australia).

Children's Ground is designed with a 25-year strategy to achieve systems change. Our core strategy is implementation of the Children's Ground Approach in three to five regions and to build the practice and evidence base for change. Operational economies and integration are achieved through a financial model that services three

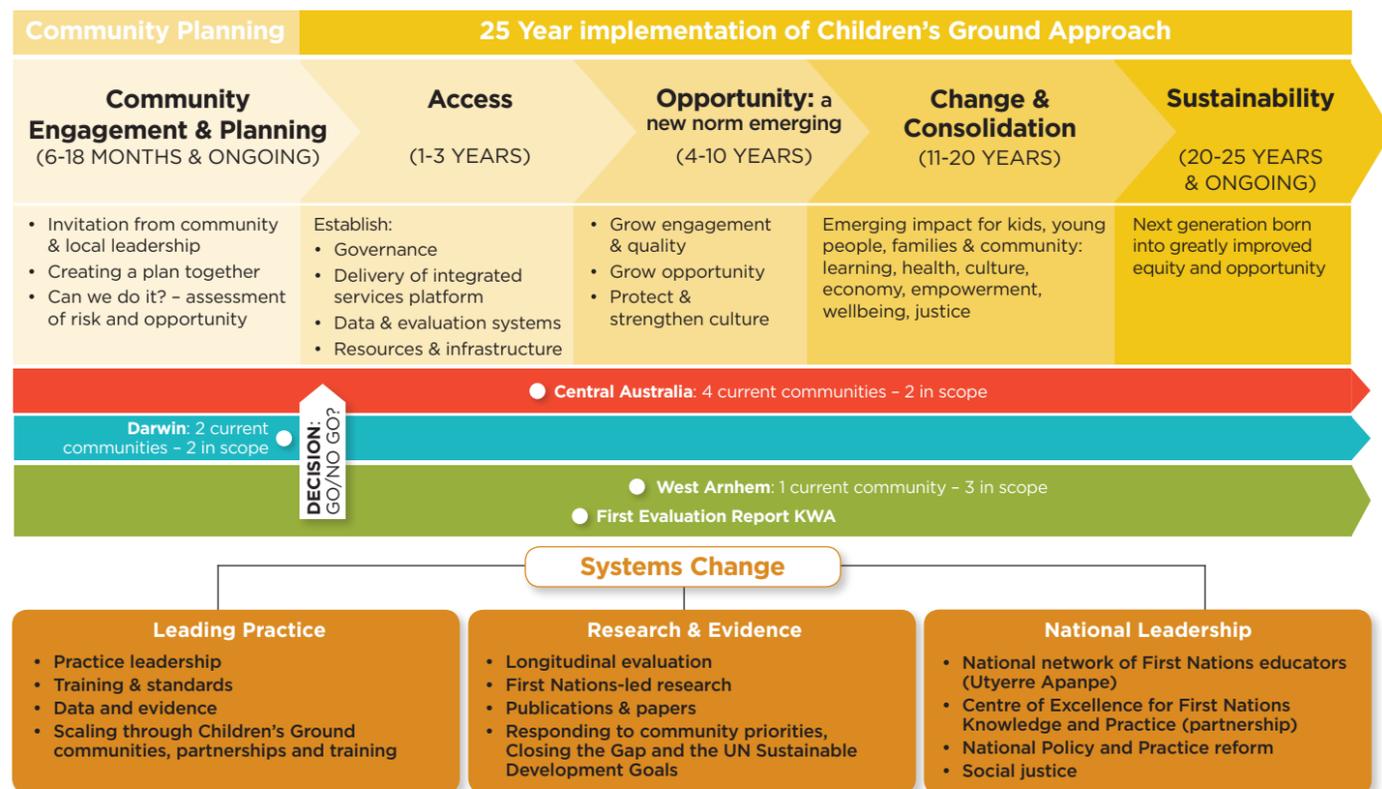
The Children's Ground Approach is a fully integrated system of services needed for whole of community change over a generation. Our Approach focuses on prevention, early intervention and empowerment rather than crisis and deficit. We recognise the strength and ability of people. We recognise the brilliance of all children and know that the environments in which they live and grow will allow them to exercise their brilliance. We are complementing leading First Nations practice with other global leading practice to bring the best to kids and families. We are determined to build our work so that the next generation can have the very best opportunities in life, while ensuring that their identity and culture are at the heart of life.

Children's Ground was created to change the status quo - to implement a system that recognises First Nations governance, solutions and systems of knowledge. First Nations community leaders know these solutions but hold little political power. First Nations lives are impacted daily by the history of Australia and the failure of successive

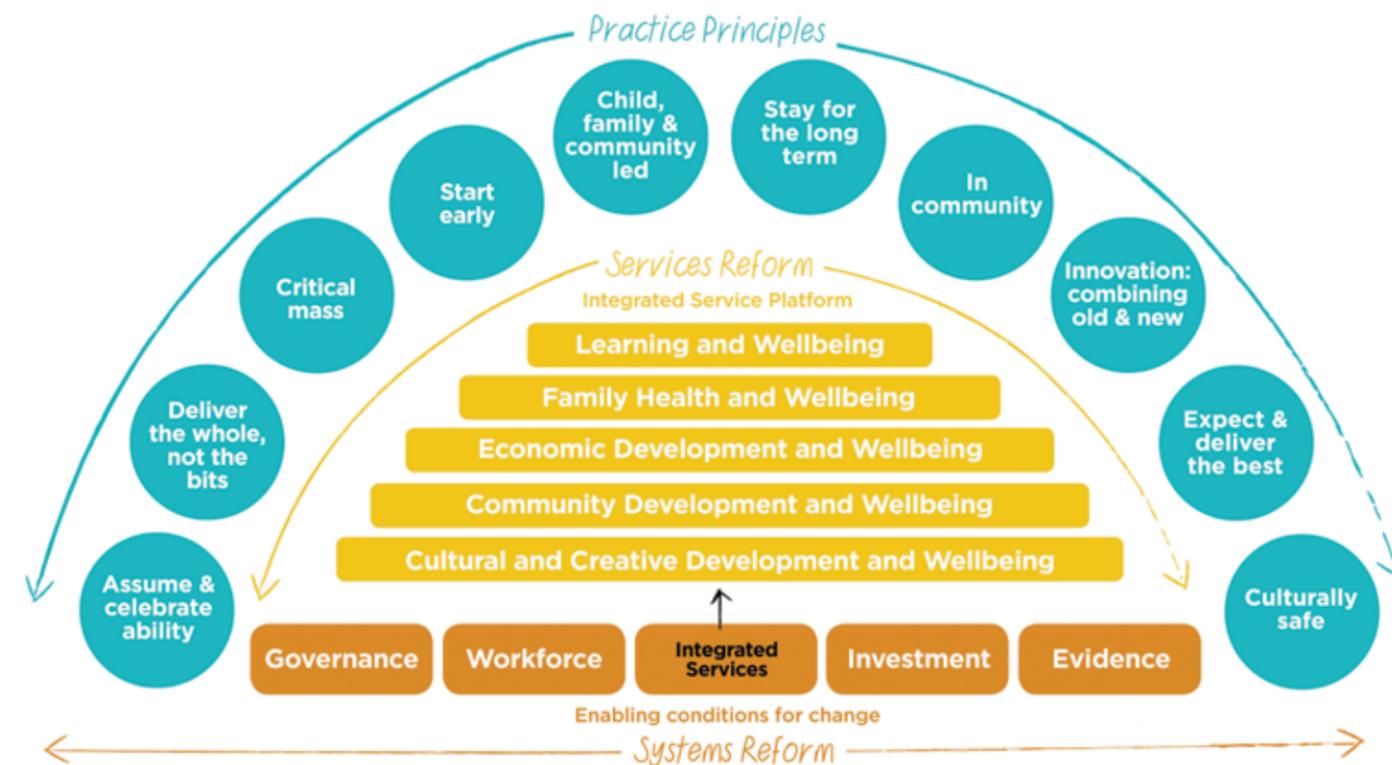
Governments to deliver justice and equity. First Nations people have lived through endless policy changes that have controlled their lives and delivered constant grief and trauma. Our systemic approach is First Nations led with a focus on delivering opportunity, dignity, safety and empowerment. We aim 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 Children's Ground Approach is reforming:

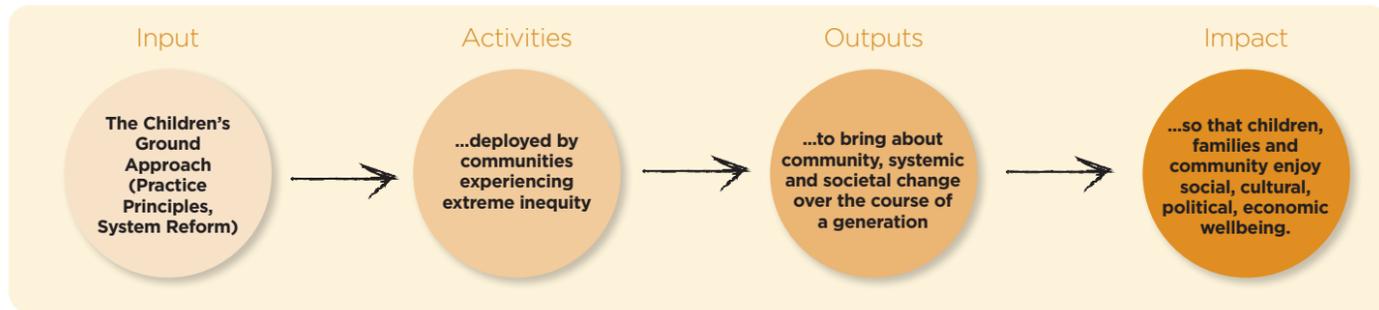
- 'How' services are delivered and governed (Practice Principles);
- 'What' services are delivered (Integrated and culturally responsive Service Platform); and
- System structures that are 'enabling conditions for change'.



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



# Theory of Change and Action



To achieve our theory of change Children's Ground works at three levels:

### Community change

First Nations people have agency over their lives, equity and opportunity. Local people have access to and drive quality integrated and culturally responsive services that are inclusive and place-based and that create safety and wellbeing. Every child enjoys wellbeing with their families. Whole communities shift from intergenerational inequity to intergenerational opportunity and wellbeing.

### Systems change

An integrated service delivery and policy system that meets the long-term needs of children, families and communities and builds on their identity, history, strengths and ambitions. A system that values First Nations knowledge systems.

### Society change

To celebrate, know and build respect for people, cultures, histories and aspirations as a nation so all people are valued. First Nations history and culture is celebrated as a central part of our nation's identity.

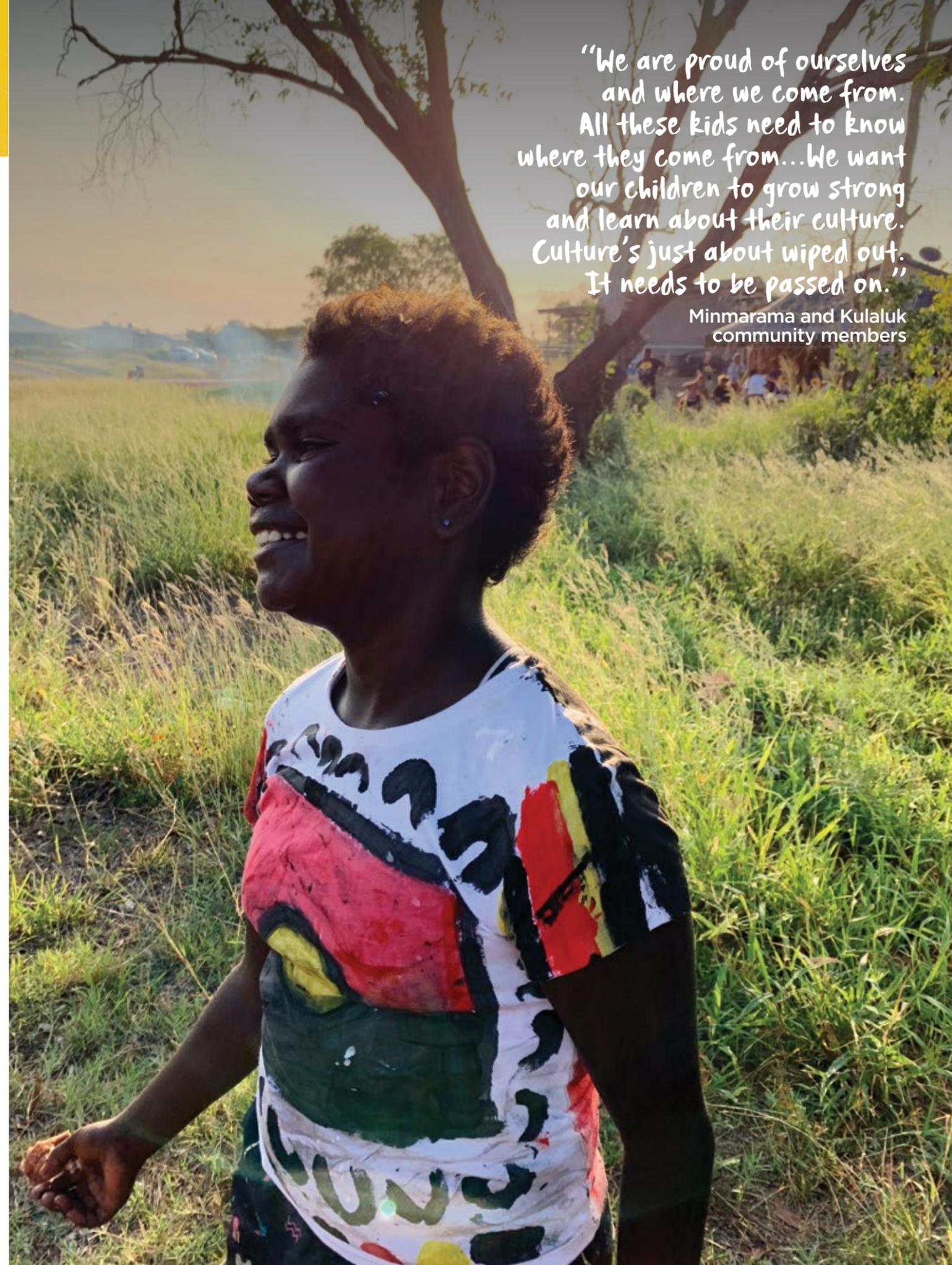


### Common Sense Solution

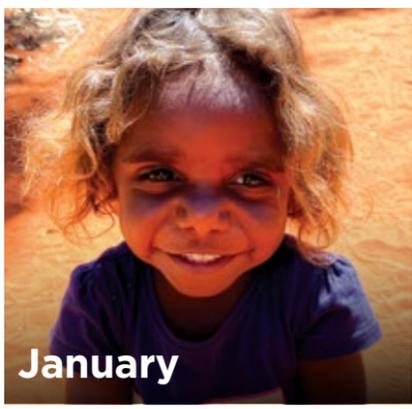
We believe First Nations people should have systems that reflect their cultures and respond to their histories as well as their futures. Intergenerational disadvantage and injustice will be a thing of the past. The outcome is communities that are rich in opportunity, where children are safe in their identity and enter adulthood with political, economic and cultural equity. This is achieved by working with children and their families within the whole community.

"We are proud of ourselves and where we come from. All these kids need to know where they come from... We want our children to grow strong and learn about their culture. Culture's just about wiped out. It needs to be passed on."

Minmarama and Kulaluk community members



# Key achievements and events

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
 <p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Engagement and Planning</b> (Walk, Talk and Act) with Knuckey Lagoon, Minmarama, Kulaluk and 15 Mile continues in the Top End</li> <li>• Learning starts back with huge excitement and plans for the year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the threat of a <b>COVID-19</b> outbreak in the Northern Territory, Children's Ground turns into overdrive - everyone's priority becomes first language health information, individual family health and wellbeing plans, food security, Elder protection and housing health</li> </ul>  <p><b>March</b></p>	 <p><b>May</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COVID safe learning:</b> play-based learning in the front yards of community homes; remote learning support; outstation delivery - creating continuity in education throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period</li> <li>• <b>Reconciliation Week:</b> Children's Ground brings together inspiring First Nations leaders, educators and activists including Dr Gary Foley and Uncle Jack Charles in a series of four webinars attended by over 500 participants</li> </ul>	 <p><b>July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In My Blood it Runs</i> screens on ABC and is reaching online audiences nationally and internationally</li> <li>• <b>Language preservation of Arernte</b> is introduced in professional development for Arernte staff who are learning from cultural and linguistic Elders and Professors in weekly sessions</li> </ul>	 <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations educators in Central Australia <b>publish four new children's books</b> that celebrate eight of the Indigenous languages spoken throughout their communities. These books are the next offering from our social enterprise project <i>Anwerne Ingkerrekele Mpwareke: By Us, For Us*</i></li> <li>• Learning, health promotion, local employment and cultural life is in full swing - the Children's Ground Approach is being led and delivered by local First Nations people in <b>seven communities</b> with surrounding communities engaging actively</li> <li>• <b>Community led planning days</b> are held in the Top End to discuss mental health and wellbeing and chronic disease prevention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Arernte language app launched</b>, promoting language learning through interactive games and audiobook versions of four Children's Ground multilingual children's books</li> <li>• <b>Minmarama celebrates NAIDOC Week</b> with surrounding communities, Elders and a march by the kids</li> <li>• First Nations staff in Central Australia complete their <b>Certificate 2 in Family Wellbeing</b></li> </ul>  <p><b>November</b></p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We purchase our home in Central Australia</b> - a place for Arernte people on Arernte land, for excellence and leadership in systems change and First Nations knowledge</li> <li>• <b>Premiere of <i>In My Blood It Runs</i></b> is held at Uyenpere Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp) in partnership with Akeyulerre, the Hidden Valley Community Centre and families. Uyenpere Atwatye is the home of Djujan (the film's star) and his families. Around 500 people attended the event where families led Arernte children in a significant cultural dance performance and celebrated the film on its home soil</li> </ul>  <p><b>February</b></p>	 <p><b>April</b></p> <p><b>COVID-19 response:</b> health promotion, planning and prevention continue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting families to relocate back to remote Homelands</li> <li>• Partnership and food distribution hub established, young people lead in messaging and community safety, creation of learning plans and packs for remote learning continuity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe moved to its <b>new permanent home</b> in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) at an important site for Arernte community</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resurgence of attention on <b>Black Lives Matter</b> highlights the systemic injustice faced by First Nations people in Australia and the critical need for systems change</li> <li>• A permanent <b>community hub for health, learning and wellbeing</b> for Mpweringke families is established at the remote community of Burt Creek</li> </ul>  <p><b>June</b></p>	 <p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people from community who have been at risk find their confidence and <b>become emerging leaders</b> as staff in key position including health, research &amp; evaluation, administration and learning</li> <li>• Following COVID-related travel restrictions and numerous funerals, <b>Children's Ground recommences in Marlakwo</b> (remote West Arnhem Land) for the dry season</li> <li>• Working with Marlakwo families to address environmental health concerns including housing overcrowding and water infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Third meeting of Utyerre Apanpe</b> (First Nations Educators' Network) is held both virtually and in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). First Nations educators, leaders and young people joined virtually from Darwin, Marlakwo (West Arnhem Land), Brisbane, Cairns, Perth, Melbourne and Canberra</li> <li>• <b>Marlakwo Healing Camp</b> takes families to important cultural sites and focuses on cultural, emotional and physical safety and wellbeing</li> <li>• In Central Australia, a 'tooth fairy' from the NT Department of Health continues to regularly visit Early Years activities to promote <b>dental health</b> in a fun and accessible way</li> </ul>  <p><b>October</b></p>	 <p><b>December</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human Rights Day virtual fundraiser</b> held, featuring live performances from artists including Yirrmal, Emma Donovan, Missy Higgins and The Cat Empire</li> <li>• Communities in the Top End and Central Australia hold <b>end-of-year celebrations</b> to acknowledge the achievements of children and families throughout 2020 including five in-location Christmas parties in Central Australia to comply with COVID safety</li> </ul>						

\*Assisted by the Indigenous Languages and Arts grant

# COVID-19 Response

When COVID-19 hit the Northern Territory, Children's Ground and other First Nations leaders across the Territory knew that a slow response could be disastrous for communities. COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on people who live with health inequalities, overcrowding and poverty. Elders and community leaders were clear about the risks and the Children's Ground's Approach enabled a quick response. Being community-based and integrated, we were able to focus immediately on health promotion and prevention within key activities:

- Health promotion and information in First Language
- Family and household planning – family by family through a comprehensive plan covering all key areas of need for lockdown and remote isolation
- Protection strategies for Elders and others at high risk
- Environmental and housing health – ensuring access to hygiene and cleaning products and materials, plans for overcrowding and industrial washing capability
- Food security

## Health Promotion

The accessibility of accurate, relatable health information was fundamental to preparing for a community-wide COVID-19 outbreak. As soon as the threat became apparent, we held daily meetings with families at Children's Ground to discuss the worries in community and identify the information people needed. Combining these requests with the emerging health advice about COVID-19, we created informative posters, signs and videos in First Languages and English.

First Nations families were proactive in getting accurate health advice about COVID-19 to their communities. Through videos, our Elders spoke in their First Language to give health advice regarding hand-washing and hygiene practices, as well as how to maintain social and emotional wellbeing during this challenging time. From the outset of COVID-19, young men and women were committed to protecting Elders and supporting their communities. These young people, who themselves are at risk, have grown in confidence.



The health videos we filmed with Elders and young people were published through Children's Ground's social media channels and were then shared by many other national Aboriginal organisations and broadcast on ICTV (Indigenous Community TV).

First Nations staff, young people and families were responsible for creating, distributing and displaying these posters outside their homes to keep their communities safe and informed. These educational materials have since been adopted and distributed by at least 15 national First Nations community and health organisations across the country and translated into other First Languages per local needs.

Prioritising health promotion about COVID-19 empowered the communities we work with to protect themselves and feel more in control, reducing anxiety and worry.

***“We’re making short films about Coronavirus - we want to let young people know and old people as well. It’s serious, especially for Aboriginal people who might not know about this!”*** – Tizzy Turner, Young Arrernte Leader

During the COVID-19 response, young people took their role in media and communications seriously. They have been working hard on communication assets regarding COVID-19 to inform and engage First Nations youth in the NT. This group of young people is showing incredible maturity and leadership by sharing health messages through age-appropriate platforms, both in First Language and English.

## Community and Family Planning

Families created household and family plans as a fundamental safeguard to ensure the wellbeing of the community, particularly Elders and others at high risk. Each family carefully considered, documented and tracked what their needs would be before, during and after a COVID-19 outbreak, covering areas of health, safety, food security, income, personal safety, learning and wellbeing.

As part of this community planning, Children's Ground supported a number of families to relocate back to homelands outstations. Provision of learning kits, food and environmental health resources, health information and transport enabled families to create safe environments for themselves away from town and to reconnect with their Country. Ongoing support was provided remotely or through weekly visits.

## Elders Support

The significant risk to Elders was a key focus for Children's Ground. We identified the Elders and other high-risk individuals in our communities, created individualized plans and provided ongoing support for food security, health security, social and emotional wellbeing and environmental health. Due to serious risks associated with overcrowding, Children's Ground collaborated with six other Aboriginal controlled organisations to call upon the Australian Government to support the establishment of designated “Elders Protected Areas” for vulnerable First Nations Elders to self-isolate should a COVID-19 outbreak occur in First Nations communities.



## Environmental Health

Many of the challenges First Nations communities experienced in attempting to prevent a COVID-19 outbreak related to environmental health: living in overcrowded, unsafe housing without access to resources for basic hygiene and illness prevention. Children's Ground supported families to access both home health and hygiene items through financial and in-kind donations. Children's Ground collaborated with other local organizations including Tangentyere Council and Ingkerreke Outstation Resource Services in Alice Springs.

## Food Security

The restriction of movement combined with heightened health risks, shortages in supplies due to COVID and the high cost of obtaining food in remote areas created significant food security risk. Children's Ground established a short-term food security and housing health supply program. Distribution included remote areas and town locations facing barriers. We were grateful for the partnership with Ingkerreke Aboriginal Corporation, who provided critical transport logistics for bush locations in Central Australia. Through donations for food security, we supported three other Aboriginal organisations to broaden reach across remote areas. A donated shipping-container was relocated to remote West Arnhem for food storage and now provides year-round food security supporting families over the wet season when they are rained in.

## Learning and Wellbeing

Through the support of our Learning and Wellbeing team, families stepped up to continue learning activities for their children despite the challenging circumstances. In Alice Springs, educators adapted Early Years learning sessions to follow social distancing rules, with lessons taking place in the front yards of family homes in small groups. This shift in learning allowed for more focused attention on each child and the engagement of young mothers and their infants who had previously not been leaving their homes to come to a Children's Ground hub. For some families, bringing the learning activity to the front yard of a home removed a barrier to accessing Children's Ground.

For families who decided to isolate on homelands, Children's Ground provided support for local adults and young people to facilitate learning activities remotely. First Nations and Western-trained educators collaborated to develop at-home learning packs for families, based on the Arrernte-kenhe Angkentye (Arrernte curriculum) to ensure the continuity of rich cultural and Western learning during this time. Data, learning plans and delivery were developed and executed throughout the period.

Natassia from Mpweringke Anapipe is a young person and speaks to the empowering nature of directing learning in her community:

***“We got this chance to step up and teach because of COVID. We taught the story of the Atyunpe (perentie) and the Alewatyerre (goanna) and the dot painting on their backs. We found it easy because we know the kids. We are their family. Family knows them best. It is important to us to keep telling our Arrernte stories to keep our culture strong and alive. Even though things are changing and communities are open again, this gave us the chance to use our teaching skills and we can continue doing it by ourselves. We know how to teach; we have always been teaching from when we were kids. I learnt to teach from watching my mum, my grandmother and sisters.”***

Many of the challenges First Nations communities experienced in attempting to prevent a COVID outbreak related to living in overcrowded housing, the lack of transport and financial resources to travel out to their homelands and live sustainably for a short or long period of time and significant food security concerns. While Children's Ground and other services were able to support families to overcome some of these barriers, others were insurmountable. One family group, consisting of 25 members across four generations relocated to their outstation and lived in two houses. Families enjoyed being back there and away from the stresses of town. They were actively supported by Children's Ground. During the period, they delivered learning to children and began to make plans for permanent living. Despite valiant attempts by Ingkerreke, the issue of water security was not able to be resolved and ultimately families returned to the overcrowding of Alice Springs.

Many First Nations families we work with will continue to live in homes and communities that lack the essential services and resources for basic hygiene, food security and illness prevention. This is the case for families who live in town camps in regional centres such as Alice Springs and Darwin, and those who live on their traditional lands where investment in infrastructure and essential services has been lacking for many years. The impact of COVID-19 has highlighted these serious inequities.

# Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe

## Children's Ground Central Australia



vision on their own country. Our new home was previously occupied by the Institute of Aboriginal Development (IAD), where many of our Elders and families worked in groundbreaking developments in linguistics, teaching and the first written language dictionaries. We celebrate and continue this important cultural knowledge work. Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe can now establish a centre of excellence. In this new home, First Nations knowledge, leadership and practice will be uplifted. Solutions and leading practice to redress complex injustice and achieve transformative systems change will be evidenced. Here, the Arrernte people have a vibrant intergenerational hub on their own lands, where safety, learning, love, dignity and wellbeing are honoured. Our new home will allow us to fulfil our vision.

**“There is so much history in this place and now this is our opportunity to add to it.”**

William Tilmouth, Founding Chair

This year we have again been inspired by children's growth in their learning, identity, languages and cultural knowledge. Cross-generational leadership between Elders and next generation adults is inspiring; this year, a huge change has been the number of young people emerging as leaders. They are breaking generational unemployment, finding their talent and bringing it to work at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe. Too often, our young people are drifting without opportunity. At Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, they have begun to walk alongside families, supporting early learning activities, health promotion, community development and enterprise opportunities. The Youth Team played a critical role in environmental health in our community-led COVID-19 response.

COVID-19 showed the importance and power of placed-based delivery. We focused on strengthening delivery where people live, strengthening community in turn. Early Years learning, Learning on Country, health promotion, employment and enterprise activities occurred across four locations.

With distress, we watched Elders around the world suffer from COVID-19. At Children's Ground, Elders never retire; they get more and more important. They continue to push for and lead the creation of improved standards in culture and language.

Children remain at the heart of everything we do. They continue to be born and we focus on giving them the best start to life. We are seeing changes after humble beginnings four years ago. We are seeing children who are confident bilingually in both English and Arrernte. Children are surrounded by generations in a rich learning context. They are engaged and inquisitive. This is cultural safety. They are learning in a context that nurtures their identity, celebrates the strengths of family and recognises the importance of old and new knowledge. Younger children and babies are following their brothers and sisters into learning activities as our Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe family continues to grow and we create a new norm - a love for learning, and places of wellbeing.

Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is directed by the community, the families and the people.

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.

### Community leading the way

Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is directed by the land, the community, the families and the people. This is First Nations Governance. 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 the face of a challenging year worldwide, we have continued to follow the leadership and guidance of our Elders and cultural leaders, while supporting the younger generation to find their voices. Strengthening youth leadership was a key feature of 2020, with the employment of several new young people across our communities contributing their talents and vision to our emerging youth team and governance committee.

In 2020, we began Walk and Talk with a fifth community, Amengkwerne, who has formally requested Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe in this location. This large community of Arrernte people is related to many families already involved who want us to extend Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe.



### Irrkerlantye: a forty-year fight for water and housing

Alice Springs is the second biggest town in the Northern Territory. It is the home and meeting place of many peoples from many nations. Yet the legally recognised Traditional Owners still live in tin sheds with no water security.

Children's Ground has continued to support Felicity Hayes and her family as 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. As Traditional Owners of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) they have a vision for their community - one of safety, secure housing and access to education. Felicity and her family's aspiration and determination for homes and an intergenerational hub for learning, wellbeing and enterprise has been unwavering, but slow to realise. Another year has passed with no change.

Last summer, families at Irrkerlantye endured scorching temperatures with temporary water security from new water tanks installed by Children's Ground. We also installed a demountable building in the community to assist with accommodation. These are only temporary measures. This exemplifies the seriousness of human rights abuses in the Northern Territory that persist with little regard from the Government.

This year, negotiations with Government continued. In June, Chief Minister Michael Gunner wrote to Felicity saying: "My Government recognises that land tenure is crucial to the lives of Aboriginal people, spiritually, physically, socially and culturally and is committed to ensuring land and sea ownership delivers on the economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal people."

The Northern Territory Government acknowledges the need to explore tenure and servicing solutions at the Irrkerlantye community and has agreed, in-principle, to provide the Irrkerlantye community with appropriate land tenure, so that Irrkerlantye residents can pursue residential and community development opportunities." (Chief Minister Michael Gunner in correspondence to Felicity Hayes 5th June 2020).

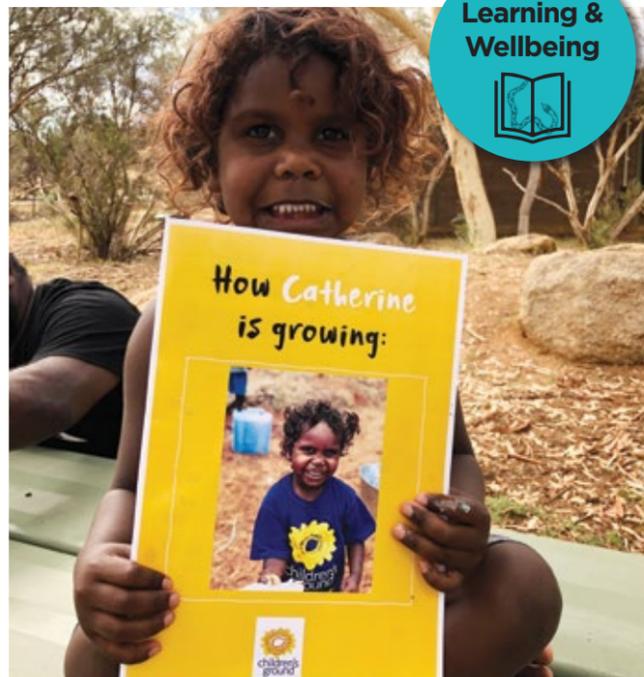
There is still no commitment to extending the water infrastructure from town, despite the existing connection for the pistol club, which is located next to Irrkerlantye.

The human rights issues faced by the Irrkerlantye community are shared by many across the Northern Territory. The lack of urgency by Government to address this speaks to the serious systemic failings that create injustice.

# Activity and Progress in 2020

## Central Australia

### Learning & Wellbeing



- **161 children aged 0-5** engaged in Learning and Wellbeing supported by 250 family members (18+ years)
- **599 people of all ages** engaged in formal and informal learning – including Early Years sessions on Country, in community, at family nights and during community celebrations
- Overnight Learning on Country sessions were introduced to extend cultural learning activities
- Remote Learning Kits - for families on homelands during the threat of COVID-19 to continue independent learning
- COVID-responsive, socially-distanced learning sessions in the front yards of family homes
- **Four children's books** published featuring **8 languages**, building foundations for early literacy in First Language and English
- Arrernte language-learning app released to strengthen literacy and digital skills

**“At Children’s Ground, children learn about what they see. We are making books, so they can see the words in both Arrernte and English – learning both ways in one day. We want kids to learn out on Country. They learn better on their Homelands.”**

Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director

### Family Health & Wellbeing



- **170 children aged 0-5 years** engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- Trauma informed practice in learning and counselling addressed intergenerational enduring trauma
- Healing integrated into learning planning and activities: creating a therapeutic space for children and their families
- **571 family members** (aged 6+ years) have engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- Daily nutrition program for children: adults engaged in preparation, delivery and nutrition education - Western and bush foods knowledge and use
- Child and Maternal Health for mums and bubs and sexually active young people
- Comprehensive health promotion and prevention during the threat of COVID-19
- Food security program established to respond to COVID-19
- First Nations health knowledge and practice promoted including connection to Country, bush medicines, traditional healers, bush foods and ceremony
- Mpwerkingke Anapipe established their own in-community Learning, Health and Wellbeing hub
- Health literacy, early intervention and targeted health initiatives to address chronic health and health risks – partnering with local health organisations
- **13 First Nations staff members** complete their Certificate 2 in Family Wellbeing

### Economic Development & Wellbeing



- **57 First Nations people** were employed across Learning, Health, Men's and Youth, Admin, Finance, Research and Evaluation, Community Development and Governance
- Staff engaged in professional development and training in Light Rigid Vehicle operation, Certificate 2 in Family Wellbeing, Child Development through Australian Childhood Foundation, NAPCAN and Governance Foundations for Not-For-Profit Directors, food handling and compliance
- **Four new children's books** published, featuring **8 languages** and continuing the Anwerne Ingkerrekele Mpwareke: By Us, For Us learning resource enterprise. Our First Nations Educators and illustrators now have nine books available for sale online and in leading bookstores and arts institutions
- The Indigenous Literacy Foundation ordered **2420** of our new books for inclusion in their remote literacy packs. This enables our books to reach a further **400 First Nations communities**
- Arrernte-language learning app released and available for public download from the Apple and Google Play app stores – featuring audio versions of four books with accompanying literacy games
- A number of new retail products developed including puzzles, t-shirts, caps, flashcards and an Arrernte language learning poster. First Nations staff supported to learn retail skills: point of sale system, customer service and packing/posting products

**“For me, working at Children’s Ground is like going back to school again. There’s always something new to learn from these Elders. I love working here.”**

Purina Anderson, Community Researcher & Health Promotion Support

### Community Development & Wellbeing



- Four communities leading place-based delivery of Children's Ground, building learning, health, economy and cultural wellbeing for their families
- Ingkerrekele Arntarnte-areme Governance Committee meet weekly
- Men's and Youth Team grows to include more young people employed from within communities, strengthening local leadership and role models
- A youth media team emerges during the threat of COVID-19 to develop health messages and videos aimed at informing young people about the virus and how to stay safe
- Mpwerkingke Anapipe establishes its own learning, health and wellbeing hub on country at Burt Creek
- COVID-19 used as an opportunity for people to reconnect with and live on their country again

**“Children’s Ground is the best! We didn’t have anything like this before. We invited you to come work in our community because we knew you would stick around. Any ideas we have – you support us! I’m very proud of what we’ve achieved together this year.”**

Tim Macnamara, Uyenpere Atwatye Community Leader

# Activity and Progress in 2020

## Central Australia

### Cultural & Creative Development & Wellbeing



- First Nations cultural practice and expertise embedded across all areas of our work
- Support of Elders to maintain critical roles as Professors
- Knowledge camp held to share approaches to education from a First Nations worldview and develop the Arrernte-kenhe Angkentye (Arrernte Curriculum)
- Improved First Language literacy, supported by the development of language learning resources
- Connection to country underpinning health, learning, culture, safety for children and families
- Creative foundations of art, story, song and dance integrated in learning

**“Kids are learning about the old ways and the new ways. The cultural activities are really important. And no feeling shame. They need to feel proud of who they are.”**

Kwementyaye Kngwarraye Palmer, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director



**“Since I’ve started working at Children’s Ground, I’ve seen a lot of changes in all these children. They never used to wash their hands, struggled to listen to directions and sometimes wouldn’t participate in activities. Now, they are washing their hands, listening carefully and are excited and happy to participate in learning. During each learning session**

**they come and sit in a circle and get started on their healthy routine without even being asked! They wash their hands and clean their faces by themselves. I even heard one of them say, “We’ve cleaned our face and now we need to wash our hands again!” The children are really learning how to take care of themselves and live healthy lives.**

**During a recent Learning on Country activity, I was talking to one of the children about how she loves it here at Children’s Ground and wants to learn more on Country with her grandmothers. I felt very proud hearing that – proud that little children talk about what they want. They are telling us adults what they want to learn and where – on Country!**

**We have big plans for the Men’s and Youth Team next year. We want to teach children how to make traditional tools like boomerangs, shields and spears. We want to be on Country and get the children to learn more from us as young men. We want to ask them what they want to make and what they want to learn. We are going to lead and run the learning sessions. The Senior Arrernte Educators will work with us and stand by us, so we can learn to be the next generation of educators for the children. All the generations working together. We want to do this to keep culture strong.”**

- Edmond and Mitchell Doolan, Men’s and Youth Team

### We want to thank the organisational partners who help make our work possible:

- Akeyulerre
- Arrernte Language Centre
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation
- Tangentyere Council
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
- Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit (CAAFLU)
- Red Cross
- Child Friendly Alice
- ICTV
- Connected Beginnings
- Purple House
- Alice Springs Language Centre
- St. Joseph’s Flexible Learning Centre
- Larapinta Child and Family Centre
- Yipirinya School
- Yarrenyty Arltere Artists
- Ninti One
- NT School of Music
- Mental Health Association of Central Australia
- Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation
- Olive Pink Botanical Gardens
- Alice Springs Desert Park

## Ampe Anwernekenhe Rlterrke Ingkerre Atnyenetyeke - Stronger Communities for Children



Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC) is a program created by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA - Australian Government). Our role is that of a facilitator - to support local governance and decision-making as people decide what changes they want to see for children, families and their community. With a brokerage fund from the Government, we then work with community, government and other organisations to implement priorities. Children’s Ground has been working with SCfC in the Atitjere and Engawala communities in the Plenty Highway region since July 2018. Both communities lie approximately two hours north-east of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and are part of the Arrernte Nation with overlap with the Alyawarr and Anmatyere Nations. Family relationships connect to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe. While not implementing the Children’s Ground’s Approach, we use the principles of our organisation, our cultural connection and our expertise to deliver this Government initiative.



### Our governance model:

*“In the centre sits the Stronger Communities for Children Decision Making Group. Leading into the Decision Making Group are footprints from the Plenty Highway communities and outstations. We all come together to discuss what we want to see for our children and how we can use our funding to make it happen. Footprints walk together from the decision-making group into a Coolamon: this is where our ideas go and this is our vision for looking after children and young people. Inside are the bush foods that represent our culture, strength and good health. The circles up the top are all the happy and healthy children of the Plenty Highway region.”*

- Stronger Communities for Children Decision Making Group

Painting by Maria Ross

### 2020 update

The threat of a COVID-19 outbreak in the Northern Territory had a significant impact on the Atitjere and Engawala communities. In Central Australia, remote communities went into lockdown for 3 months; people were worried about the threat of the virus, movement was restricted and many of these communities were underserved due to travel restrictions. Despite this, and with the leadership of local Decision-Making Groups, community members continued to work towards creating better outcomes for children and families and we have seen some wonderful achievements across the year.

Highlights from 2020 include:

- COVID-19 Environmental Health Project - in partnership with Central Desert Regional Council. This saw cleaning and personal hygiene kits distributed to all households in Atitjere, Engawala and surrounding outstations, accompanied by health and hygiene conversations
- **575 people** engaged in family and community planning, including weekly plan and risk rating reviews
- Community-led soap and bush medicine making workshops with children and young people
- Small-scale, on Country trips led by families to support cultural wellbeing through the community lockdown period
- Bush first aid training, increasing skills and knowledge in communities to respond in an emergency, particularly when on Country and away from the clinic
- Participation and presentation at the SCfC Knowledge Sharing Seminar held with all SCfC communities in Mparntwe in September
- All-of-community cultural camp to the Dulcie Range National Park supported by Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation

Thank you to our partners and other organisations in the region for their support of SCfC so far: Arltarpilta Inelnye Rangers and the Central Land Council, Central Desert Regional Council, Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation, Central Australian Remote Health Development Services, Rainbow Gateway, NT Department of Education, Ninti One and National Indigenous Australians Agency.

We are looking forward to the future and supporting more activities and opportunities for children, young people and families in the Plenty Highway region.

# Children's Ground Top End

Children's Ground operations in the Top End have grown to include two distinct regions, West Arnhem and Darwin.

We continue to work with the very remote homeland of Marlkawo and surrounding homelands in West Arnhem. In 2020, we began community engagement and planning in Darwin with two key aims: (1) improved economies of scale in operational delivery and (2) scaling towards a third operational region, as per our strategic plan.

Our work has been made possible by philanthropic and Australian Government health funding.

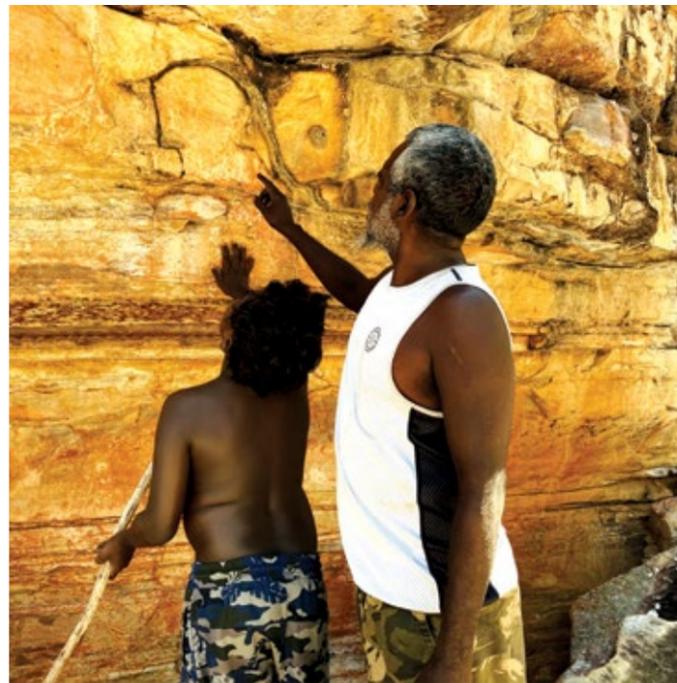
## Wurdurd Garriygarmmerren (Children's Ground in West Arnhem)

Within this region we are delivering a homeland version of the Children's Ground Approach in Marlkawo. Health promotion is delivered more broadly in the West Arnhem region.

West Arnhem operations are designed to respond to the weather and remoteness of the region. Distinct operational plans are in place for the wet season (when roads to the communities are cut off) and the dry season. Access to remote areas were restricted for an extended period of time due to bio-security laws put in place as a result of COVID-19 and subsequent delays in processing permits.

COVID-19 highlighted the enormous inequities facing First Nations people living on homelands, many whom live with poor infrastructure, poor transport and lack health support and food security.

Funding for our work in West Arnhem has been spearheaded by philanthropy with important funding for health promotion from the Australian Government Department of Health.



Since July 2018, Children's Ground has received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health to implement our Family Health and Wellbeing Framework, titled 'Health in the Hands of the People'. The Framework is designed as a comprehensive community-based health promotion approach. The goal is to apply each of the core elements of the Framework with a community to achieve health access, literacy, health behavioural change and improved health outcomes over a generation. This has funded our health promotion capacity in both Alice Springs and West Arnhem.

The Children's Ground's Family Health and Wellbeing Framework is designed to holistically respond to health burdens in any given community and include:

- Maternal and Child Health (including sexually active young people)
- Nutrition – for children as well as adults
- Health Promotion – universal and targeted
- Health planning and management – individual and family
- Social and emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Prevention and response to family violence
- Cultural health promotion and practice
- Environmental health
- Consumer agency
- Health system access – health care coordination.

### Engagement in West Arnhem

- **126 people** engaged in learning, health, employment or community governance
- **119 people** (40 of whom were children aged 0-15 years) engaged in health promotion and wellbeing support
- **82 people** engaged in social and emotional wellbeing (13 of whom were children aged 0-8 years) to address trauma, mental illness, mental health, generational trauma, suicide prevention, and depression
- People who previously had little to no access to or engagement in health services were actively engaged in health promotion, improving health behaviours and health literacy
- People with chronic health issues are now actively engaging in health promotion and disease management.



### Marlkawo and surrounds

Children's Ground was designed to address the most severe inequities facing First Nations children and families. Part of our strategy has been to trial the Children's Ground Approach for small remote communities that have minimal or no service access. There are over 500 homelands where small populations (ranging from 5 people to 200 people) live on their traditional lands in the Northern Territory. Cost, remoteness and economies of scale have resulted in poor government services. Basic services such as education and health often do not exist, housing and employment opportunities are seriously limited and food security is a major risk. Together, this limits people's ability to permanently return to their homelands, despite the desire. This particularly impacts those who live in overcrowded and highly stressful contexts in larger communities that are not their traditional lands.

In what is some of our most innovative and challenging work, Children's Ground has been trialling and assessing a 'cluster' approach, in an effort to connect delivery between culturally-connected homelands to achieve economies of scale and service access.

Key Elders and Cultural Directors for Children's Ground in the Top End sought to return to their homelands in remote West Arnhem land, to Marlkawo and surrounding homelands in 2018. To give a sense of the remoteness of Marlkawo, the Tucker Truck from Maningrida, which provides food to Homelands, does not reach it. The closest town, clinic and shop are three hours drive away and the commute for staff, who work on a roster system, is a 12-hour drive from Darwin; there is no regional accommodation available.

Despite these challenges, families were determined to return to their traditional lands at Marlkawo and Children's Ground staff were equally determined to support this. We began with a defunct airstrip, staff staying in tents and families living in two broken down houses with no running water and missing floorboards. The past three years has been a significant journey.

This wet season marked the second year of families living on their lands year-round. The population ranges from 8 people to 50 people, depending on the time of the year and the service population has been over 100 people. The two houses have been renovated and now have running water. The airstrip has been upgraded and is accessible in the case of emergencies. In addition, outdoor living structures called Balabalas and new toilets have been constructed to help address overcrowding and related health issues. Lastly, an area bush school with a classroom and the living quarters for staff have been established.

Leaders from Marlkawo are in the process of documenting their return to Country with Children's Ground, and celebrating the re-establishment of their community over the past three years, in both Kunwinjku and English.

Dry season delivery was very limited due to COVID-19 and the death of a key family member and long-term member of Children's Ground. Her funeral highlighted the serious challenges remote areas face. The coffin was delivered by plane but in a damaged state which impacted the cultural ceremony due to health considerations. So often our work involves preserving human dignity and respect in extremely difficult and unacceptable scenarios.



# Activity and Progress in 2020

## West Arnhem

### Learning & Wellbeing



- **26 children** (aged 0-15 years) engaged in Learning and Wellbeing and were supported by **13 family members** (18+ years)
- Extended hours of learning across the dry season with 100% of learning being on Country
- Morning learning sessions targeted Western learning priorities, including numeracy and literacy
- Ongoing partnership with the Jabiru Area School for children who spend time living in both Marlkawo and Kakadu
- Health promotion integrated into early years learning, focusing on nutrition, health behaviours, health literacy, and social and emotional wellbeing
- Trauma-informed practices utilised to support learning

### Family Health & Wellbeing



- **27 family members** supported for chronic health
- **82 people** supported for mental health
- Environmental health addressed to mitigate overcrowding and maintain health infrastructure, including water and ablution
- **One** healing camp took place at a special site which had not been visited for a long time. During the camp, adults shared stories and history with young people. A dedicated discussion which focussed on cultural health and health of the spirit, mental health, physical health and chronic disease took place
- **83% of the 103 people** who possess a health profile have a chronic health condition, serious mental health condition and/or live with harmful substance use issues

### Community Development & Wellbeing



- **33 people** engaged in community governance – making decisions about Children’s Ground for their children, families and whole community
- After two years families now have two safe and functional houses, an upgraded airstrip for emergency service access, water security, a bush hub for learning and health and purpose built outdoor dwellings to minimise overcrowding. As a result the vision of Elders is being lived – families are now able to live permanently on their traditional homelands year-round

### Cultural & Creative Development & Wellbeing



- **78 people** engaged in cultural learning, on Country learning, and cultural health
- Cultural identity and wellbeing were strengthened for children and families. Activities included: collecting and weaving pandanus, collecting bush tucker and bush medicine, visiting sacred places of healing, and sharing stories, cultural knowledge and artwork
- Creative and cultural arts experiences were integrated into all learning activities

### Economic Development & Wellbeing



- **36 First Nations staff** employed, many of whom have not had employment experience prior to Children’s Ground.
- **8 First Nations educators** from Marlkawo virtually participated in the First Nations Educators’ Forum, showcasing their strength as cultural educators at a national level
- The Black Rock Band released their second album

#### Black Rock Band

Children’s Ground continued to support the creative and professional development of Top End First Nations musicians, the Black Rock Band, in 2020. The year began with an energetic performance at the internationally renowned Two Worlds Festival in Melbourne, before the onset of COVID-19, when all tours and concerts were cancelled. However, the Black Rock Band used this time as an opportunity to reconnect with family, Country and culture. They also recorded their second album ‘Identity’ and released their new single ‘Red, Black and Yellow’. The band’s new album continues their practice of storytelling and is an ongoing celebration of their culture, while exploring social issues and current events.

**“This album is a reflection for us to think about and to maintain our culture and language. We created the album to encourage First Nations people around Australia and the world to stick together. This is building a bridge between the two different worlds that we live in.”**

Richie Guymala, lead singer of Black Rock Band



# Activity and Progress in 2020

## Darwin



### Children's Ground Darwin

At the request of community leaders our primary focus in 2020 was implementing our Walk, Talk & Act Community Engagement and Planning process. This involved engagement to:

- Hear and discuss community concerns, aspirations and priorities
- Present the Children's Ground Approach
- Establish local support and in time, potentially an invitation to deliver the Children's Ground Approach
- Determine financial capability for a full or growth Children's Ground Approach model
- Build a plan for delivery (subject to invitation and viability).

Darwin is the closest full-service centre for West Arnhem. With the support of families from West Arnhem who live in Darwin for periods of time, we established relationships in four Darwin Town Camps: Kululak, Minmarama, Knuckey Lagoon and 15 Mile. Comprehensive Walk Talk and Act occurred with Minmarama and Knuckey Lagoon.

Walk, Talk & Act involves a focus on speaking with all families and leaders to ensure whole communities are involved in decision-making and planning processes. Small-scale early childhood delivery is the 'Act' part of our Walk, Talk & Act engagement and planning process as it assists in informed discussions and decision-making processes by community leaders and families.

Community plans were created by Traditional Owners, families and community leaders which included responding to aspirations, hopes, dreams, and worries for families and children. The ultimate vision expressed by communities' leaders is for safe, strong and, thriving communities with education, employment and community safety at the heart

At the invitation of community leaders, we will continue small scale engagement and planning into 2021 as we work to secure the financial resources to implement a full or growth Children's Ground Approach and model. Efforts to secure Government funding will continue.

During the Walk Talk & Act phase, children and their families have engaged in conversations about their family and community and in early learning sessions, learning on Country, school holiday programs, health promotion and support, community governance and early-stage employment.

**"We want our children to have an education, and better health and employment in their future. We all want to feel safe in our homes and have better community living. We need a place to come together regularly to learn, have celebrations and entertainment for youth. This will make kids safer."**

Minmarama and Kulaluk Community Members

### COVID-19

In response to COVID-19, Children's Ground undertook the same approach in the Top End as in Central Australia. Community leaders worked with Children's Ground to develop and implement plans to address the threat of COVID-19 and ensure community safety. Plans focused on health promotion, environmental health, hygiene, food security and community support.

Throughout 2020 we saw the incredible passion, resilience and drive from our leaders and Elders. They are unwavering in their commitment to ensuring the younger generation has the best opportunities to grow, learn and be strong in culture and language, surrounded by family.



Children's Ground places an important focus on community events and celebrations given how often families face stress and grief. Therefore, Walk, Talk & Act in Darwin included a vibrant NAIDOC week celebration and march with Minmarama and Kulaluk communities which was attended by members of the neighbouring Bagot community. Elders talked about history and children marched with pride. An End of Year celebration at Knuckey's Lagoon was just as special. These celebrations promote inclusion and provide an opportunity for the entire community to come together in a positive way – to connect, share stories and enjoy their community as a safe and happy environment.

**"We haven't had a NAIDOC celebration in Minmarama for so long. This means a lot to the families and it means a lot to the old people who fought for us. We can remember them on this day, I will tear up remembering them. This will be the beginning. Next year will be even bigger. Let's invite the press!"**

Anna Secretary, Larrakia Community Leader



**"Stories need to come out about culture. We are proud of ourselves and where we come from. All these kids need to know where they come from. And then the kids share stories with each other. Cultural learning comes from the Elders for our children and families. We want our children to grow strong and learn about their culture. Culture's just about wiped out. It needs to be passed on."**

Minmarama and Kulaluk community members

**"In the future, I want to work. I hope to be a doctor like my Grandma. She did the nightshift. Maybe I'll go do the nightshift with the babies."**

An 11 year old child, Minmarama

We want to thank our partners and organisations in both West Arnhem and Darwin:

- Gwalwa Daraniki Association (GDA)
- Jabiru Area School (JAS)
- Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)
- Northern Land Council
- Maningrida Community College
- Amity Community Services
- Maningrida Clinic
- Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation
- Warddeken Land Management
- Demed
- West Arnhem regional council
- Mala'la Health Service
- Jabiru Clinic
- Gunbalanya clinic
- Maningrida Progress Association
- Northern Territory Government Departments of Education, Health, Territory Families, Housing and Community Development
- Danila Dilba
- Larrakia Nation



## Biji Age 4

Joan or Biji, as she prefers to be known, lives in Knuckey Lagoon community, surrounded by a supportive family of parents, grandparents and siblings and extended family members who visit regularly from out bush.

We have seen remarkable changes in Biji since she began engaging with Children's Ground Early Years learning, supported by her family, 18 months ago. Prior to Early Years learning with Children's Ground, Biji was incredibly shy, non-verbal and preferred to play alone. She was untrusting and would hide behind her brother. She struggled to socialise with other children and found it difficult to regulate her emotions. Sometimes she would physically and verbally express herself in extreme ways when she felt overwhelmed.

Since then, Biji has engaged in Early Years learning with Children's Ground three days per week, responding positively to a calm environment with a consistent routine. She actively participates in yoga and mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises which have had a positive impact on her behaviour in the learning environment. She is calm and is able to focus on her learning. During a typical Early Years session, educators and family will witness her playing happily with her friends, caring for younger children, calmly sharing her toys, expressing her needs through words and confidently celebrating her achievements.

Biji's grandmother Laurel often attends Early Years sessions with her, which makes Biji feel safe and supported in her learning and enables her to strengthen her First Language and cultural knowledge. Biji is growing up to be a happy and confident learner in two languages who feels safe in her community and learning environment, surrounded by a loving family.



## Azeriah Age 10

Azeriah Djandjomerr loves learning on Country alongside his little brother Flint Junior and cousin Tylar, guided by his father, Flint Djandjomerr who is a Traditional Owner for Marlkawo.

Recently, the Djandjomerr family led a Learning on Country trip to Barnalorr: a special healing place they have not visited for many years. Azeriah, Flint Junior and Tylar were keen to engage in physical activity through swimming across the river to the sandy bank, which evolved into important cultural learning as they followed the rocky escarpment in search of ancient bim (rock art). The boys pointed out all of the animals and symbols they recognised and listened attentively to Traditional Owner Flint Djandjomerr recall stories. It is clear they know these stories are sacred.

Flint showed the boys where to find ochre and how to mix it with water to make a burnt orange paint. Azeriah, the oldest of the three boys, showed a keen focus on his father's every move, eager to learn this traditional painting technique. He watched closely as Flint sucked the paint into his mouth and with a strong blow towards his outstretched hand, splattered the ochre from his mouth, removing his hand to reveal his artwork: a single handprint alongside that of his ancestors.

Azeriah demonstrated his learning by immediately stepping forward to have a turn at creating his own handprint, guided and reassured by his father. He explained to Azeriah that it takes time to learn this technique and tells him to keep practising.

Azeriah spent the rest of the day following the footsteps of his father. Here on Country, we see a family at peace, far removed from their everyday worries. Even at this young age, Azeriah demonstrates a deep connection to his land, his ancestors and his family, which is nurtured and celebrated at Children's Ground.



## Gertrude Age 7

Gertrude has been attending learning activities with Children's Ground in the community where she lives, Yarrenyty Arltene Town Camp, for the last 4 years - since the very beginning of our operations in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). Engaging with Early Years sessions both in her community and on Country has helped Gertrude become the curious and confident learner she is today. She is brave with her learning and always trying new things.

Gertrude is consistently excited to see the bus arrive to pick her up for a Learning on Country trip with her family. During a trip to Simpson's Gap, West of Mparntwe, Gertrude showed a keen interest in exploring her environment and learning from the cultural educators in her family about the edible bush foods available. When Gertrude found a native fig tree, educators showed her how to locate a fig ripe enough for eating. Gertrude listened carefully and persisted in looking for a soft fig that had changed colour from yellow to reddish-brown, but none were ready yet. When she returned to the same location for another Learning on Country trip a few months later, Gertrude demonstrated her learning without any prompting. Gertrude loves to learn on country. During a recent Learning on Country trip, after listening to how to find and dig for tyape (witchetty grub), she insisted on carrying and learning to use the shovel, and was so excited when a tyape was found and she got to taste it!

Gertrude shows the same enthusiasm when engaging in Western learning. She is steadily developing her skills in literacy and numeracy and writing. Gertrude can now write her letters, her full name and numbers up to 30, displaying great pride when she shows her family what she has written. What a pleasure to see her grow and learn - surrounded by family, in the community where she lives.



## Winston Age 7

Winston has been attending Early Years activities at Ampekenhe Alhelhe since operations began in 2016, when he was just a little one. He has been consistently supported in his learning by his grandparents, who work at Ampekenhe Alhelhe as Senior Arrernte Educators. Here, Winston is given the opportunity to learn in his First Language (Arrernte) as well as English, learning on and from his apmere (homeland).

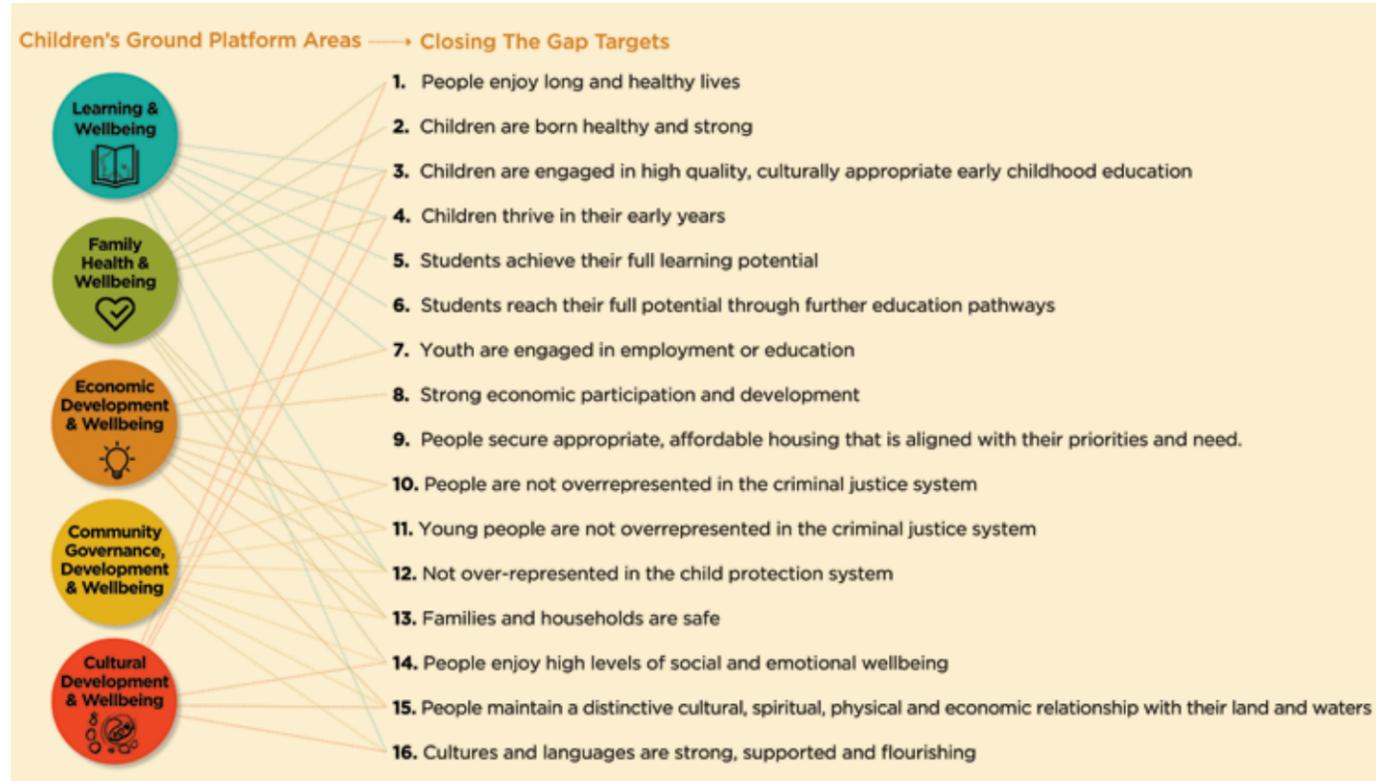
Winston is progressing in his knowledge of Arrernte. He can follow simple instructions in Arrernte and is able to say short sentences with a mix of Arrernte and English. Winston is learning about greetings and body parts in Arrernte, as well as writing his own name and counting.

While out on Country, Winston introduces himself to the land and shows respect to it, know that this will keep him culturally safe. He is learning to listen to Elders, family and adults about the stories and the histories of the land and people. He enjoys looking for and hunting alewatyerre (goanna) and alangkwe (bush banana) with his family.

Winston is a curious and confident learner. He enjoys using his senses to touch, feel, smell and taste when on Country. He is a careful observer, learning quickly from others and confidently sharing his ideas. Ampekenhe Alhelhe provides the space for Winston to grow and mature in a culturally-safe environment, surrounded by his First Language and family.

# Leadership in Systems Change

Children's Ground's long term systems change approach responds to each of the new Closing the Gap targets as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



## Evaluation and Research

Monitoring and Evaluation is at the heart of our reform. Building the evidence base for leading practice in First Nations service delivery has been highlighted as a huge gap by the productivity commission. If we are to Close the Gap, evidence-based practice that is culturally safe must be a national priority.

This year, we have progressed our first baseline evaluation for Central Australia which will be released in 2021. This provides us with a critical foundation to track change over time. Accessing data from Government data sets for small communities continues to be a challenge. The first stage of our new, purpose-built data and monitoring system is now up and running and will be critical to our evaluation. We continue to be guided by an incredibly talented group of National research and evaluation advisors (see pg 37) who we thank for their time.

We have now built data across two regions and this will form the basis of our first papers for publication which we will progress in 2021. Children's Ground continues to deliver

conference papers and contribute to national practice and evidence. As we grow, we look towards increasing our capacity to undertake a range of research priorities identified over the past five years.



As we build the evidence base for change in community, we are also progressing our work at a national level, working with Government and the sector to achieve meaningful systems reform.



## Using Film as a Systems Change Tool

Children's Ground has been instrumental in the conception and creation of the ground-breaking new documentary *In My Blood It Runs*. Directed by Maya Newell, and featuring Dujuan Hoosan and his family Carol Turner, Megan Hoosan, James Mawson and Margaret Anderson, the film was made possible through a powerful narrative and impact strategy (funded through Good Pitch) and is bringing the risks facing First Nations children to light. The film followed Dujuan for three years from the age of 10, as he navigated the mainstream Australian education system and the welfare and criminal justice systems - while showcasing the strength of his family and culture.

*In My Blood It Runs* shows the impact of systemic failures and pressures on the lives of children and families. Dujuan's life is the life of our kids and our families. The film brings the voice of a child to life and is a powerful vehicle of advocacy for systems change. Dujuan has the power a child has in truth telling. He watches the injustices and abuses that happen in Don Dale, he listens to the pain of his grandmother's story who was hidden away to prevent being stolen, he faces the fear of being removed by welfare and his mother faces the economic challenges of living on Centrelink and a system that threatens to suspend her pay. He faces failure at school and his incredible spirit is at times broken but not destroyed. As he struggles, his family surrounds him, tirelessly, building his strength as a traditional healer, guiding him and finding a solution to prevent him from being lost into the system. The film showcases the strength of First Nations culture and knowledge systems. It highlights the love and solutions of First Nations people and the need for reform in education, criminal justice and welfare.

Dujuan's grandmothers are the leaders of Children's Ground. They want a solution to this broken system. They are leading reform. Felicity Hayes is the film's Executive Producer, a Traditional Owner for Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and a key governance member for Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe. Key advisors to the film include Children's Ground Founding Chair William Tilmouth, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe and Children's Ground Director MK Turner OAM and Children's Ground CEO Jane Vadiveloo.

In February 2020, Children's Ground co-hosted the national launch of *In My Blood It Runs* with Uyenpere Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp) in Alice Springs - where Dujuan grew up and where Children's Ground works. It was an incredible community event, driven by families and celebrating their voice. Hundreds of people from Alice Springs attended the open-air event. Elders led Arrernte children to open the event in a significant cultural dance performance. The evening was a true celebration of Dujuan, of family and of community.

Children's Ground and other national organisations are partners in calling for systems change. *In My Blood It Runs*, Children's Ground, Human Rights Law Centre and the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition have all been working together to progress the key impact goals of the film - First Nations Education and Curriculum Reform and Raising the age of criminal responsibility in Australia from 12 to 16 years of age.

Following the positive reception at the UN in September 2019, when Dujuan became the youngest person to ever address the United Nations Human Rights Council, Children's Ground leaders (including Dujuan's family) accompanied Dujuan on a three-day trip to Canberra where the film screened to over 100 Australian Parliamentarians in February 2020. Members of Utyerre Apanpe (First Nations Educators' Network) joined the trip, seeking reform in First Nations education. The film highlights the work of Children's Ground in First Nations-led education reform.



# Leadership in Systems Change

## First Nations Education Reform

Australia is 40 years behind other countries in establishing First Nations-led educational systems. Children's Ground convenes and supports Utyerre Apanpe (National First Nations Educators' Network). This network is led by experienced First Nations educators and cultural Professors from over 15 different nations across Australia. They are calling for the establishment of a First Nations-led Education system, in line with Article 14 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Utyerre Apanpe has met with prominent leaders on all sides of politics to promote reform.

The third forum of Utyerre Apanpe was held 6-8 October 2020 both virtually and physically in Mparntwe (Alice Springs). First Nations educators, leaders and young people joined virtually from Darwin, Marlkawo (West Arnhem Land), Brisbane, Cairns, Perth, Melbourne and Canberra.

Over three days, participants discussed First Nations educational frameworks, curriculum, pedagogy, standards and reform. We saw a strong representation from young people and a commitment to create a dedicated day for youth voices at the 2021 gathering.

Forum participants commented that the most enjoyable aspect of the forum was listening to and connecting with others - their sharing of stories, knowledge, culture, language, Country, their experiences and the work they are doing with passion, commitment and care.

Participants agreed that they wanted Utyerre Apanpe to be the vehicle for change - a way to speak with politicians about reforming the education system; to set standards and support the network of First Nations educators nationally and to acknowledge First Nations education structure and standards. This will in turn achieve great educational outcomes for our children and allow them to hold their heads up high.

This year Utyerre Apanpe established a permanent youth forum as part of the network to support the voices and leadership of young people and to continue the intergenerational strength of First Nations systems.

**"Being at this forum makes me think - us Arrernte mob, we can do this. We want people to come together like in the old times when old people used to come together. These forums create the space for us to do that."**

Acacia Lewis, First Nations Community Researcher and emerging young leader

**"We need to embrace and celebrate spaces like this because it's come from a long line of people who didn't have opportunities like this. We are still walking in their footprints. And we are leaving footprints too."**

Jo Wilmott, First Nations Senior Cultural Advisor



## Reconciliation and Truth Telling

During Reconciliation Week, Children's Ground brought together inspiring First Nations leaders, educators and activists including Dr Gary Foley, Uncle Jack Charles, Joanne Willmot, Yalmay Yunupingu and Children's Ground Arrernte educators and young leaders for a series of virtual conversations reflecting on truth, history, resilience, education and the way forward. The four webinars were enthusiastically attended by over 500 participants and were met with positive, appreciative feedback. This is an example of our commitment to raising voices, truth telling and creating places where people across Australia can learn and access these voices.

**"This is the best history lesson I've had and I'm 50 years old. We need to get true Australian history into the political tertiary education as well as primary & secondary education system."** Attendee

**"We have been in the trenches, we have been in struggling and fighting with the deficit armoury and arsenal that was available to us and we are still existing. You're not going to stop us from being tall, proud, strong, resilient and wanting to bring our younger generations to stand with us."**

Jo Wilmott, First Nations Senior Cultural Advisor

**"I tell my students, 'When you've found your racist, now your task is to try and educate that person. Try and bring them around to your way of thinking and understanding. Try and raise their level of knowledge and awareness so that they become aware enough, to not harvest such racist notion.' They say, 'Oh, but that's really difficult'. I said, 'Of course, that's difficult. When you go and do that, you'll find out just how difficult it's been for generations of people like me. The problem exists with you. It's back at your place, go home and fix it.'" Dr Gary Foley**

## Black Lives Matter.

After George Floyd's death in the USA, the Black Lives Matter movement gained worldwide momentum. In Australia, as people galvanised to give voice to our own injustices, there is a new possibility to confront our truth and to compel change.

Children's Ground was established to revolutionise our systems to make them equitable and just and to celebrate our First Nations history and knowledge. We believe every child should enter our systems of education, health, justice, economy and society and enjoy dignity and opportunity and have their culture and identity respected and uplifted.

The racial injustice that underpins Australia's current systems is demonstrated in evidence from the 12 years of Closing the Gap; this evidence shows First Nations people suffer the greatest inequities in this country across health, education, income, employment, physical health and mental health - with minimal change after 12 years of dedicated policy development and investment.

In Australia, as of May 2021, there have been at least 476 First Nations deaths in custody since the Royal Commission in 1991 - more than one a month. None of these deaths has resulted in a conviction.

Every week, at least 97% of youth held in NT detention centres are First Nations. The 2017 Royal Commission into the Detention and Protection of Children in the Northern Territory found systemic abuse of children in detention and produced 200 recommendations. Almost three years later most of these recommendations have not been implemented. Across Australia, 27% of the prison population is First Nations despite the fact that First Nations Australians are only 3% of our general population.

First Nations children are 10 times more likely to be in child protection. Meanwhile, a recent investigation by the Office of the Children's Commissioner Northern Territory found 16 years of systemic failures in relation to 12 Aboriginal children and their placement with two foster carers. The investigation found that children were subject to abuse, with

allegations of sexual, physical and psychological abuse.

Part of the daily reality for First Nations leaders is burying loved ones, experiencing racism, living with economic poverty and managing chronic illnesses. They are watching their young people at risk and their families in prison and hospitals. Everyone is worried about the future of the next generation. It is First culture, language and knowledge that keeps people alive under phenomenal stress.

This is the reality for all of the families at Children's Ground. It is an enduring and oppressive injustice that takes generational power and resilience to withstand. How can we allow people to live in tin sheds with no running water for 40 years and not do anything about it?

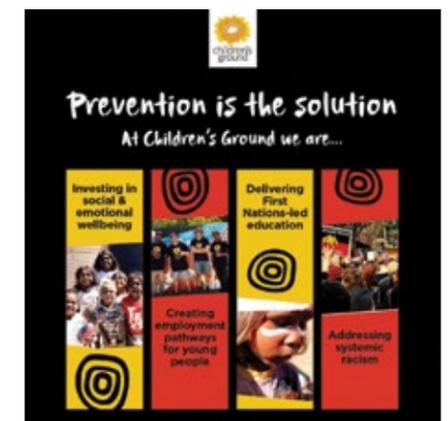
This system is broken.

Children's Ground was designed to end systemic failures. It arose from the lived experience of families who want to stop the treadmill of children on the path of lifetime stress and disadvantage. It is possible to prevent this and to cease the never-ending crisis, deficit and racially unjust responses that are the hallmark of the status quo.

Prevention is cheap compared to the cost of incarceration and the burden of disease and welfare on the economy and, more importantly, on humanity. However, effectively funding and implementing prevention has eluded Governments.

Children's Ground recognises it will take a long and deep investment to implement leading practice, to collect and show the evidence and to scale this work. A 25-year approach seems long, but it is not so in the context of the generational injustice that has endured for 230 years and continues to threaten many generations into the future.

Across the globe, people are coming together, understanding that it will require deep structural reform to achieve the necessary changes being demanded by the Black Lives Matter movement. We are inspired by people across the world and all walks of life standing together. We will continue to confront injustice, we will not be silent, we will continue to fight, until we succeed. Together we can achieve this.



“We’re here to teach our grandchildren. When they have children, they can look back and see what we tried to do and then pass it on to their children. They’ll think – these people have been strong. They will look at these photos of us old people and will understand, even if we pass away, that we opened up Children’s Ground.”

Marlene Rubuntja, Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director



# Governance

The governance model for Children’s Ground blends strong central stewardship with local community ownership. We have a unique, two-tiered governance structure balancing cultural and corporate governance, ensuring we have the organisational quality and standards, cultural integrity and community leadership to achieve real change.

Both arms of governance are highly skilled and experienced. This governance structure recognises cultural and corporate governance and authority as equally important. Only First Nations people sit in our Cultural

Governance structures. Both First Nations and non-First Nations people sit on our corporate Board which has majority First Nations directorship.

The governance model was designed to ensure the strategic vision can be successfully delivered at a grass-roots level. The corporate Board is National and guides the strategic and compliance agenda for the organisation. The local cultural governance structures guide the strategic and compliance agenda for local operations as well as cultural authority and responsibilities.



## Our Community and Cultural Governance

### Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children’s Ground 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 and community and family leaders from each community. This enables the recognition of Cultural Governance systems that arise from both land and kinship and ensures accountability and community control at the grass roots. The following people have led Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Governance Committee this year. They have liaised with and sought direction from other community leaders and committees as part of their obligations and responsibilities.

#### Mpwerkingke Anapipe:

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

#### Yarrenyty-Arltere:

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

#### Uyenpere Atwatye:

- Rosario Young
- Marita McMillan
- Cassandra Neal
- Blair Young

#### Irrkerlantye:

- Felicity Hayes
- Anna Maria Palmer
- Therese Ryder
- Eva Hayes



### Top End

In the Top End of the Northern Territory, our operations are directed and governed by Elders, Traditional Owners and community and family leaders from each community. The following people have led governance this year, alongside other community members:

- Cecily Djandjomerr (Marlkawo and Darwin)
- Roxanne Naborlhborlh (Marlkawo)
- Helen Secretary (Darwin)
- Jackie Treves (Darwin)
- Esther Kenyon (Darwin)
- Ronnie Agnew (Darwin)
- Janine Cincaid (Darwin)
- Pauline Grant (Darwin)
- Raymond Guymala (Marlkawo)
- Shirley Djandjomerr (Marlkawo)
- Mark Djandjomerr (Marlkawo)
- May Nango (Marlkawo)
- Kaylene Djandjomerr (Marlkawo)
- Antonia Djandjomerr (Marlkawo)

## Our Board

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

Board members are highly qualified and experienced 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



**MK Turner, OAM**  
Arrernte Elder, founding Elder of Children's Ground, cultural, educational and linguistic specialist



**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 Subcommittee



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



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



**Amy Poynton OAM**  
BA, MBA, Board member, Chair of the People and Culture Subcommittee, member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Subcommittee



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



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



**Annalee Stearne**  
Nyungar woman, Post Grad Dip Public Health, Health Sciences; Grad Dip Secondary Education, Education; BA Aboriginal & Intercultural Studies



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

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

**Cindy Wei**  
External member of the Partnerships, Investment and Communications Subcommittee

## Our Elders and Patrons

### MK Turner, OAM

MK Turner OAM is a respected North Eastern Arrernte (ayerrere ikngerre) Elder, cultural adviser, translator, teacher, social justice champion, artist and author. In 1997, she received the Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of her service to the Aboriginal community of Central Australia, through preserving language and culture and interpreting. MK has fought for the rights of Aboriginal people for over four decades. She is dedicated to keeping Arrernte culture, life and language rich and strong.

### 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.

Aunty Joy is a Patron of Children's Ground.

### 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. Jo was recognised with the honour of Elder of the Year for South Australia in 2016 and in South Australia's 2020 Queen's Birthday honours for her service to the Indigenous community of South Australia. She is a proud mother and Grandmother. She provides critical leadership and support to Children's Ground.

## 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

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

**Mr Matthew James** CEO, 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

**Dr Jordan Cory** BSc, MBBS, GDip Surgical Anatomy, MPH '21 Candidate, Harvard University, 2020 Fulbright Future Scholar

## Our Inspiring Ambassadors



### 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.



### Corinne Grant

Corinne Grant is a practicing 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.



### 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.



### Pat Cash

Pat Cash is an Australian tennis champion, winning the men's singles at Wimbledon in 1987. 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.



### 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.



### The Teskey Brothers

The reputation of Melbourne blues band The Teskey Brothers continues to grow as they win hearts and ears globally. Scooping up awards, touring and even playing alongside Orchestra Victoria, The Teskey Brothers capture something real, raw and relatable. It is no wonder they are a go-to band for many fans across this big land, and for other musicians to share the stage or studio - from Jimmy Barnes to the Black Rock Band.

**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 2020

The directors present their report on Children's Ground Limited for the financial year ended 31 December 2020.

#### (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	
Josie Rizza	Non-Executive Director	
Amy Poynton	Non-Executive Director	
Amunda Gorey	Non-Executive Director	
Jordan Cory	Non-Executive Director	
John Lochowiak	Non-Executive Director	
Margaret K Turner	Non-Executive Director	Commenced 2nd June 2020
Annalee Stearne	Non-Executive Director	Commenced 22nd December 2020
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.

\*Margaret K Turner commenced 2nd June 2020

\*Annalee Stearne commenced 22nd December 2020

##### Principal activities

The principal activities 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 2020

#### 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	8
Clive William Ringler	9	8
Josie Rizza	9	9
Jordan Cory	9	6
Amy Poynton	9	9
John Lochowiak	9	5
Margaret K Turner	3	2
Annalee Stearne	-	-
Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo	9	9

\*Margaret K Turner commenced 2nd June 2020

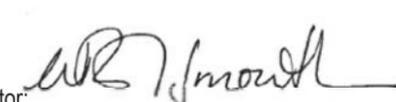
\*Annalee Stearne commenced 22nd December 2020

#### Auditor's independence declaration

The auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 31 December 2020 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 31st ..... day of March ..... 2021

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Directors' Report

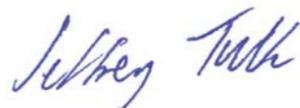
For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 31 December 2020, 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



Jeffrey Tulk  
Partner

Blackburn

Dated: 31 March 2021



## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue	2	8,759,008	5,447,975
Employee benefits expense		(5,154,442)	(3,669,474)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(186,689)	(160,616)
Travel and accommodation		(79,711)	(164,486)
Motor Vehicle Expenses		(135,573)	(140,724)
Telephone and fax		(31,321)	(24,958)
Client Support Consumables		(177,306)	(98,817)
Rent		(72,087)	(61,609)
Professional fees		(99,428)	(64,163)
Utilities and cleaning		(66,556)	(37,881)
Computer expenses		(52,599)	(58,809)
Children's Service Support		(51,571)	(184,583)
Printing and stationery		(35,872)	(41,122)
Repairs and maintenance		(40,221)	(36,706)
Asset Purchases < \$1,000		(62,293)	(75,728)
Insurance		(27,458)	(9,958)
Training and development		(17,857)	(15,412)
Advertising and Promotion		(2,350)	(4,026)
Interest expense on lease liability		(406)	(1,914)
Other Expenses		(260,532)	(149,765)
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>2,204,736</b>	<b>447,224</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>2,204,736</b>	<b>447,224</b>

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	4,367,473	3,398,928
Trade and other receivables	6	140,346	59,872
Inventories		9,676	6,866
Other assets	7	64,740	90,404
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>4,582,235</b>	<b>3,556,070</b>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Right of use asset - Hoddle St	8	-	20,792
Property, plant and equipment	9	1,664,422	310,853
Intangible assets	10	37,538	-
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,701,960</b>	<b>331,645</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>6,284,195</b>	<b>3,887,715</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	11	483,230	456,463
Other liabilities	12	1,246,261	1,199,883
Employee benefits	13	421,262	288,621
Lease liability - Hoddle St	8	-	21,570
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,150,753</b>	<b>1,966,537</b>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	13	98,384	90,856
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>98,384</b>	<b>90,856</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>2,249,137</b>	<b>2,057,393</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>4,035,058</b>	<b>1,830,322</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained surplus		3,976,234	1,771,498
Reserves	22	58,824	58,824
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>4,035,058</b>	<b>1,830,322</b>

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	2020	Retained Earnings \$	General Reserve \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 January 2020</b>		1,771,498	58,824	1,830,322
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		2,204,736	-	2,204,736
<b>Balance at 31 December 2020</b>		<b>3,976,234</b>	<b>58,824</b>	<b>4,035,058</b>
<b>2019</b>				
<b>Balance at 1 January 2019</b>		1,575,250	58,824	1,634,074
Change in accounting policy to reflect the retrospective adjustments - adoption of AASB 15		(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>		<b>1,771,498</b>	<b>58,824</b>	<b>1,830,322</b>

## Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

### Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	2020	2019
Note	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Donations, grants and other income received	8,065,898	6,490,913
Government COVID-19 Stimulus Grant	962,500	-
Interest received	16,012	34,439
Payments to suppliers and employees	(6,497,291)	(4,979,888)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	16 2,547,119	1,545,464
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Payment for intangible asset	(45,946)	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(1,511,058)	(163,439)
Redemption (Placement) of term deposits	-	433,987
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(1,557,004)	270,548
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Proceeds from leases (leases repaid)	(21,570)	(30,406)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(21,570)	(30,406)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	968,545	1,785,606
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	3,398,928	1,613,322
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	5 4,367,473	3,398,928

## 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 7 - 30:

- 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;
- the financial statements and notes are true and fair 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



Director



Dated 31 March 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 2020, 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 2020.

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 31 March 2021.

**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: 30 April 2021

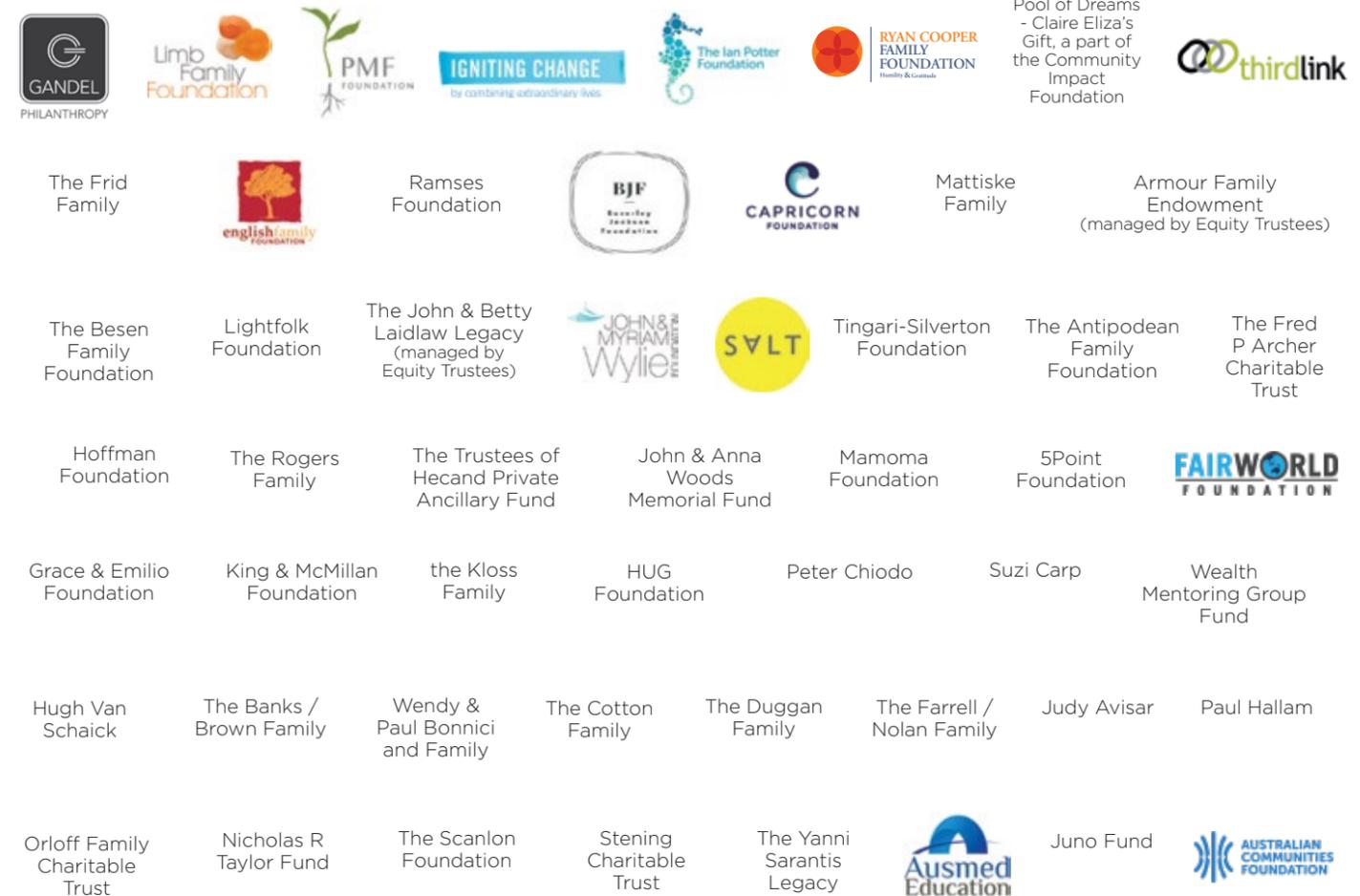
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 T +61 3 9894 2500 F +61 3 9894 1622  
 contact@sawarddawson.com.au  
 sawarddawson.com.au



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We also wish to acknowledge all of our silent partners, regular givers, peer-to-peer fundraisers and general supporters.

# Our Staff and Volunteers

## Staff

Acacia Lewis  
Alex Young  
Alison Ferber  
Amanda Turner  
Amber Thompson  
Andrena Webb  
Andrew Alford  
Angela Ross  
Angelina Hayes  
Anna Satharasinghe  
Annamae Woods  
Annamaria Palmer  
Annette Robinson  
Annie Cameron  
Antoinette Furber Gorey  
Antonia Djandjomerr  
Ashleigh Steel  
Ava Watkins  
Belinda Kinitavaki  
Belinda Morton  
Bernadette Wheeler  
Bessina Cameron  
Beth Palmer  
Bill Pheasant  
Blair Young  
Blanche Ebatarinja  
Brenda Tilmouth  
Caitlin Taunton  
Caitlyn Bakes  
Calandra Foster  
Caleb Maru  
Camille Dobson  
Carol Marie Turner  
Cassandra Neil  
Cathy Turner  
Cecilia Schaber  
Cecily Djandjomerr  
Chantelle Bloomfield  
Cherie Cameron  
Chloe Abbott  
Christine Alangale  
Christine Reiff  
Clifford Pope  
Clinton Mackie  
Corianne Djandjomerr  
Cristina Nobleza  
David Holmes  
David Rankine  
Delvena Splinter  
Dianne Williams  
Dianne Neil  
Dillon Brennan  
Dominique Mercuri  
Doris Bundy  
Duane Djandjomerr  
Dulcie Sharpe  
Edmond Doolan  
Emily Hill  
Emma Franklin

Emma Fulgenzi  
Esther Kenyon  
Ethan Nabulwad  
Eva Schouten  
Felicity Douglas  
Felicity Hayes  
Flint Djandjomerr  
Frances Williamson  
Genise Williams  
Grace Anthony  
Greg Hammond  
Gregory Lippo  
Grifford Reiff  
Hayley Causer  
Hayley Otter  
Ian Craig  
Irene Reiff  
Jacinta Bush  
Jacqueline Treves  
Jacquita Kita Palmer  
James Doolan  
Jamie Mapleson  
Jamie Toyne  
Jane Vadiveloo  
Janella Ebatarinja  
Jasmine Crea  
Jasper Brown  
Jayden Reiff  
Jennifer Lorains  
Joanne Ferguson  
John Anderson  
Josabella Cameron  
Julie Davenport  
Kamahll Djandjomerr  
Kaylene Splinter  
Keenan Bird  
Kimberley Namarnyilk  
Kwementyaye  
Kngwarraye Palmer  
Kylie Gordon  
Larissa Meneri  
Laurel Milera  
Layla Smith  
Lee Nabarlambarl  
L Sheedy  
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Lindsay Whitehurst  
Lorrayne Gorey  
Lorrelle Shadforth  
MK Turner  
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Marie Bloomfield  
Marita McMillan  
Mark Djandjomerr  
Marlene Rubuntja  
May Nango  
Melanie Townsend  
Melissa Kean  
Melissa Ross

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Michelle McGuirk  
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Nakita Ferber  
Natalie Hunter  
Natassia Gorey-Furber  
Neville Namarnyilk  
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Purina Anderson  
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Raymond Junior Reiff  
Raymond Reiff  
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Rhonda Inkamala  
Richie Nabarlambarl  
Riley Gorey  
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Sonya Nango  
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Susanne Haines  
Tamara Burlando  
Theresa Ryder  
Tiziana Turner  
Tony Schabwer  
Trina Reeve  
Trudi Collins  
Trudy Inkamala  
Veronica Turner  
Veronica Dobson  
Vienna Buramura  
William Lowah

## Volunteers

Angus Boot  
Aanart Bhachech  
Abi Selvanathan  
Amanda Sutherland  
Ana Ferreira  
Angela Jessup  
Belinda Postill  
Ben Tardrew  
Bert O'Loughlin  
Beth Dangerfield  
Bridgette Hogan  
Carmelia Cheong  
Carole Fox  
Clarissa Langi  
Deidre Lim  
Ellie Aliabadi  
Eva Schouten  
Georgia Short  
Greg Hammond  
Hafsa Tmar  
Ian Craig  
Ivy Hoang  
Jak Webb  
Jenny Warmington  
Jessica Laihad  
Julia Mitchell  
Julia Wulf-Rhodes  
Kate Enright  
Kate Khazour  
Kate Tregoning  
Lee Davy  
Liz Reece  
Lorena Miguelez  
Lucy Brown  
Luka Douglas  
Maggie Church-Kopp  
Natalie Buckley  
Nick Tapper  
Nicole Pereira  
Rajesh Pillai  
Sam Horman  
Sam Langdon  
Sarah McLean  
Sarah Saunders  
Shirley Ruan  
Stephanie Edkins  
Stephen Iles  
Tasmia Tahseen  
Taylor Fitzgerald  
Tony Mendes  
Wendy Hawkins

## Pro bono support

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Makinson d'Apice  
Luke Tonkin  
Ben McIntyre

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Eco Store

**We thank all of our staff, volunteers and pro bono supporters.**

**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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***“We want Children’s Ground to come for our children. We need Children’s Ground. Children’s Ground listens to all of us. They spend time with each family. They know that we all want similar things for our children and families. This is how it should be. This is what we need.”***

Knuckey Lagoon Community Members