

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Please note that this report could contain images and/or the names of people who have passed away.





OUR VISION

An Australia free from poverty and inequity...

... where First Nations families realise their aspirations for the next generation of children: to be free from trauma and suffering, enjoy equity and safety, be able to grow into adulthood happy and healthy and to have agency over their social, cultural, political and economic future.



LEARNING ON COUNTRY AT MPWERINGKE ANAPIPE (NORTHERN OUTSTATIONS), CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

VALUES

Our work is guided and informed by our commitment to:

Equity: We believe that power, knowledge and opportunity are shared by all people.

Agency: We support, reinforce and honour people's power over themselves and their lives.

Creativity: We celebrate and harness the spark of imagination to create change in all our work.

Love: We respect and care deeply about the wellbeing of all individuals, families and communities.

Openness: We value honesty, transparency and accountability in all our work.

Family: We prioritise family and consider everyone touching us as family.

Disruption: We will disrupt the status quo to achieve justice and radical, enduring change.

“We focus on strengths at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children’s Ground). We don’t see the deficits. People come to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe because they are family, because they are connected, not because they have been referred. We want all Arrernte people who come to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe to feel good about who they are, proud to be part of a community because we are First Nations people working together for our children.”

Veronica Turner,
Grandmother, Arrernte educator and member of the Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Governance Committee



CONTENTS

02	Chairperson’s Report
03	CEO Report
04	Highlights
06	How we create change
08	Kakadu West Arnhem
16	Top End
18	Central Australia
26	Governance
30	Financial Report
39	Our staff
40	Our volunteers
41	Our supporters

OUR COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

Children’s Ground acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia: the holders of the oldest continuous culture in the world with a more than 60,000 year history. We acknowledge that First Nations communities in Australia, like First Nations communities across the world, experience disadvantage, inequity and trauma at a disproportionately higher rate than non-Aboriginal communities. Children’s Ground is walking alongside these communities.

Children’s Ground will be guided by First Nations communities - their wisdom and their leadership – and by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples.

We uphold the rights of First Nations families and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education and wellbeing of their children, consistent with the rights of the child.

We are convinced that control by First Nations peoples over matters affecting them and their lands, territories and resources will enable them to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions, and to promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs. We believe that by achieving this, Australia and the world will benefit.

Children’s Ground acknowledges and honours First Nations peoples, and pays respect to Elders past and present, as the traditional custodians of this land. In Melbourne we live and work on the land of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, in Kakadu on the lands of the Mirarr People, in West Arnhem on the lands of the Bolmo People and in Central Australia on the lands of the Arrernte People.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Firstly, I want to thank our incredible supporters. This annual report is a testament to the power of the people. The families and the children, everyday Australians who support our work and visionary philanthropists who are prepared to hold the risk of disruptive change to the status quo. You are enabling the change that the Government is finding elusive. You are giving hope to local people who have control over their decisions and who are now exercising that control to build a new future for their grandchildren.

At the same time, after 10 years of concerted effort by Government to Close the Gap between Aboriginal people and mainstream Australia, the national reality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples remains disturbing. We invite all levels of government to look at Children's Ground. In a model that spans twenty-five years, we now have four years of practice and evidence that is beginning to paint a picture of what works and what the risks are to sustaining change. We have achieved outcomes that the communities have dreamt of – kids in early childhood, parents working, grandparents connected and young people at risk becoming inspiring leaders. We are creating change in the most difficult realities and learning all the time.

The Children's Ground cultural leaders and families are often not aware that they are 'the gap.' They are getting on with business for their next generation. I stand behind these leaders. The children, the mothers, the fathers, the young people and the grandmothers and grandfathers. They all give me hope. Even during the most difficult times, people don't give up. They find a new way. They are determined.

We know this is a long journey. It is an environment in which we face constant challenges and it requires us to be agile and responsive. Our time in Kakadu proved what is possible. I was so proud of what the people achieved over four years. They have given us all a gift. They showed us that change will come when you back local voice, local talent and create the space, resources and conditions for



WILLIAM TILMOUTH (CENTRE) WITH ANTHEA AND MR WEBB

change. The success was theirs. They rebuilt their social and cultural capital. They created a safe place and they governed. They created a place for their children and their families to learn, to be empowered, to be employed, to look after health, to create art, celebrate culture, establish enterprises. Against a tide of poverty and disempowerment, overcrowding and social stress, people backed themselves. We are building on their momentum and success.

I was sorry for the families that we had to leave Kakadu earlier than we expected. There are too many 'sorries'. But circumstances change in complex environments and this is where our ability to be innovative is so important. As always, the people have found a new way to continue the journey with Children's Ground in the Top End on their traditional lands and we are honoured to continue working with them.

In Central Australia, with the ability of philanthropy to also be responsive and innovative, we have been able to build upon our operations from 2016. We increased delivery to three Arrernte communities. As with the Top End, the leadership from the people is our greatest strength. Elders led the charge and have been joined by adults with extensive experience in education. The work they have done in articulating an Arrernte curriculum in early years and learning is ground-breaking. As with the Top End, the kids are following the families. The families are following their culture and language and making this a safe place for everyone. As an Arrernte man, who was

stolen, it is watching the unfolding of a dream. As I watch these kids and their families, I know we are on the right path. The people have the answer and the ability to mobilise the solution. It is those in our communities who have no power over the purse strings, who live the relentless reality of disadvantage who know what the solutions are.

With Children's Ground we are able to give people the right to determine their future. We are supporting the social and cultural capital that is imbedded in our societies.

While we appreciate and need support from Government, it was our philanthropic family who stood by us during the most difficult of times this year, who provided outstanding support and certainty and allowed us to continue to pursue our ambitious change agenda.

We are in great hands. Our Board is committed and talented, our Ambassadors are passionate and we have the sage and steady direction of our Research Advisory Group. Our staff and volunteers are professional and give so much. My thanks to all of you. You have fuelled hope and possibility. You are the enablers. This is our time, together, to disrupt the status quo. It is possible. This annual report celebrates a changing tide.

William Tilmouth, Chair

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

This year was full of all the challenges in trying to achieve seismic change in the space of complex disadvantage. It was also a time to reflect on the incredible first four years of our work. We know the Children's Ground approach works. We are clear about the enablers and the barriers to changing the status quo. We have learnt that the main challenge we face is sustaining the environment for change. We have reflected on our strengths and weaknesses as an organisation and we have intensified our resolve and our strategy to achieve this change. We can prevent 'the Gap' and it takes innovation and a responsive, community-led environment.

This year we recorded a \$2.3M loss. The loss is primarily attributable to operational funding received in previous reporting periods for expenditure in this period, the ceasing of operations in Kakadu West Arnhem and the loss of associated revenue. This year we revised and adjusted our operations in view of our changed financial circumstances. With operations in Central Australia and the Top End continuing we are now focused on growth and sustainability.

I am humbled to be led by the communities who are governed by superior strategists who never take their eye off the vision. The senior grandmothers and grandfathers are used to changing circumstances and they guided their communities to maintain momentum and build on the amazing work of the past four years. They lead and we follow.

In Kakadu while we said a reluctant goodbye to community, friends, families and staff and to something that we all knew was very special indeed, new horizons were created by the people who are determined to continue their journey.

We will always be grateful to KWAAT and GAC for making Children's Ground in Kakadu West Arnhem possible. In four years we were able to show what is possible when everyday community members are given the right to determine their future.

We were able to create the conditions for change. And we saw change – quicker and more substantial than we ever anticipated. We watched grandparents, mothers, fathers, young people and children walking together, holding their cultures, languages and knowledge, and leading with hope and possibility. People were working, governing, creating learning, health and wellbeing for their kids and families. First culture, language and society was the driving force.

There is a generation of four-year-olds whose only memory is an environment rich with family, culture, learning and wellbeing. The kids who came to Children's Ground transitioned to the local school as confident learners. Four years previously these were the kids who were being left behind.

There is a beautiful connection between Children's Ground families in the Top End and Central Australia. There is a shared vision and love. Building on quiet and steady work, Central Australian leaders were inspired by the Top End families. They not only created environments of safety for learning and wellbeing, they began to articulate the Arrernte 'curriculum' and foundations for life from early years through to adulthood. It is hard to keep up with the pace of the grandmothers who, despite being on dialysis three times a week, are defining a way forward that leaves little time for rest. It was a busy and exciting year; we extended our operations and shared our story at national and international conferences. The greatest joy was hearing the determined Arrernte voice demanding their right to lead the change for their children.

Children's Ground is not simply about quality early childhood, or education, or health, or community safety or employment. It is about creating the conditions where all of these things emerge. It is the social and cultural capital that underpins and determines successful life outcomes. Children's Ground is all of these.

It is hard to change the status quo. This is highlighted by the national Closing the Gap strategy which despite 10 years of



JANE VADIVELLOO WITH SARIAHA

concerted effort failed to meet its targets. However, by doing things differently at Children's Ground we are seeing all the key markers improving – long term unemployed people are working, kids are loving early childhood and their health is improving. Kids are not simply an enrolment statistic, they are creative thinkers and learners and the future cultural and community leaders. Our responsibility is to provide the environment, the ground upon which they can achieve their dreams and exercise their talents free from discrimination and full of opportunity.

We are inspired. At the same time, we are cautious. We do not have the level of financial capital yet to realise our full Children's Ground approach in Central Australia. It is critical that we do not get complacent and accept the long trodden road of 'nearly enough'. It is the road that leads to mediocrity and fails to deliver real change. We will build upon Government and philanthropic investment in 2018 as we continue our strategy for long-term change.

This year the communities, our Board, our family of supporters, our staff and volunteers, our Ambassadors, and our Governance and Advisory Committees have been the change makers. You are the collective architects of change. You are catalysts and inspirers. You are teachers and mentors; you are creators and leaders. I thank you for walking with us this year. I look forward to 2018, and the future.

Jane Vadivelloo, CEO

Children are learning, engaged and supported by family...

138 children aged 0-5 years engaged in Children's Ground early years learning across Central Australia and the Top End.

218 children aged 0-8 years engaged in Children's Ground learning, cultural, and family activities across Central Australia and the Top End.

First Nations early years learning and life 'curriculum' articulated and implemented as a **base for systemic reform** in early childhood.

Arrernte-led early years learning established in Central Australia.

Families are walking alongside their children with a hope for the future...

298 adult family members (18+) engaged with Children's Ground's learning, cultural and family activities and employment, alongside their children.

76 First Nations staff in flexible employment.

81% of local First Nations staff managing income through Children's Ground's voluntary financial management services.

Community is empowered, using their voice and leading the way...

675 community members (all ages) engaged with Children's Ground's activities in Central Australia and the Top End.

Three communities in Central Australia establish shared Community Centre in Alice Springs as **place of safety and inclusion** for all children and families.

Traditional Owners of **Marlkawo mobilise** and request Children's Ground continue working with them on their traditional country after the closure in Kakadu.



A generation of children in Kakadu enter into primary schooling with the foundations of early childhood education.

Primary-aged children in Kakadu supported in transition to school as confident and engaged learners.

"The kids are getting sharper. They're teaching one another. They're holding it in their hands and it's real."

Leonie Palmer



Young people at risk are leading the way in early years, environmental health and creative enterprise.

First Nations staff are speaking up and sharing their story at conferences including the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) in Canada.

"I feel really proud working at Children's Ground because this is the kind of thing I used to hope for."

Lorraine Gorey



Community leaders are recognised. MK Turner OAM and Roxanne Naborlhborlh both selected as finalists in the NT Australian of the Year Awards.

Cultural governance committees established in both regions. Committees meet weekly to govern and evaluate operations ensuring local leadership, operational standards and cultural integrity.

"It's our turn now, we're turning the page over."

MK Turner



HOW WE CREATE CHANGE

CHANGING THE SYSTEM

The status quo for First Nations communities in Australia is unacceptable. Children who are most vulnerable are at profound risk of becoming statistics in child protection, prison, school failure, welfare dependency, avoidable disease, and mental health systems, culminating in premature death. The living reality is daily trauma and emotional toxicity that endures through life. This is despite more than three decades of royal commissions, inquiries, 10 years of the Closing the Gap initiative and a great deal of money expended by governments, philanthropists, organisations and communities themselves.

Children's Ground was devised as an alternative to the current failed 'services delivery' system. It is a 25-year, intergenerational model that tackles the social, cultural, structural and economic determinants and inequities that combine to shape the devastating life experiences of children living in communities of extreme poverty. We work with each child, their family, and the whole community, with a priority on valuing their culture, to achieve academic, social, family, cultural, economic and emotional wellbeing.

“It is about governments stepping back, relinquishing agency and decision-making back to the community in order for them to have the chance to decide what they want to do with their lives, and what is best for them.”

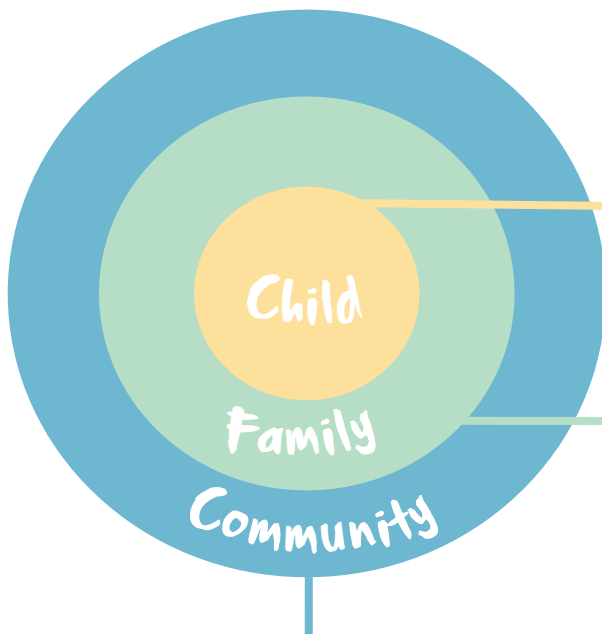
William Tilmouth, Chair

At Children's Ground, we believe one of the key problems is the inadequate structure of the existing system through which community services are designed, funded and delivered.

Mainstream services often do not consider the different language and cultural needs of the community – and fail to ask for input – and thus frequently fail. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia is made up of many Nations and many languages. A public policy approach that is executed from a foreign (western) cultural paradigm is set up to fail. This is especially true when the current system has a history of executing atrocities and the current service system emerges from this history.

Policies are focussed as if First Nations families are a problem to be solved. Funding is typically inadequate, project spans are short, benefits are often limited at best and often serve to weaken the cultural capital and life of communities. Approaches often contravene international human rights protocols.

It is clear that it is not Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are the problem. It is the system. It is the system that needs to be changed. We know that if we create the right conditions, lives change. Children being born today must enjoy dignity, equity and opportunity into adulthood. Enough children need to experience this for whole of community and societal change to be embedded.



Aspirations: In 25 years we will see...

Children are healthy, happy, confident in their cultures and have the knowledge and skills for life and learning.



Families are involved in their children's learning and development and are socially and economically strong.



The community values its place and heritage, enjoys economic prosperity and is safe and inclusive.



THE CHILDREN'S GROUND SYSTEM

The Children's Ground System (CGS) is about restoring agency – the ability to make decisions and have control over your life. The CGS creates the space for local leadership, the strategic platform for action, and the resources for excellence. It is designed to eradicate intergenerational inequity and allow all children, families and communities to enjoy social, cultural, political and economic wellbeing.

Through decades of experience we know what works and what doesn't. We started by identifying key failings in the existing system and redress these through our five systemic reforms:

1. **Governance:** Blending robust corporate governance with strong community ownership
2. **Workforce:** Local and sustainable, with cultural, community and sector experts.
3. **Investment:** Collective, outcomes-based investment
4. **Evidence:** Ongoing monitoring, supported by a 25-year longitudinal evaluation
5. **Service Delivery:** Integrated services based on excellence and leading practice. Five service areas are integrated to form our Learning, Wellbeing & Development Platform:
 - Learning & Wellbeing
 - Family Health & Wellbeing
 - Economic Development & Wellbeing
 - Community Development & Wellbeing
 - Cultural Development & Wellbeing

It's not just *what* we do to achieve change, it's *how* we do it. The design, delivery, governance and evaluation of our service delivery is underpinned by **eight strategic principles**, all of which are key to creating change with First Nations communities, and sustaining it.

1. **Start early**
2. **Stay for the long-term**
3. **Work with a critical mass**
4. **Celebrate people's strengths and abilities**
5. **Deliver the whole, not the bits**
6. **Innovate, combining old ways with new ways**
7. **Expect and deliver excellence**
8. **Be child, family and community-led**

Community leadership and agency is the single most important principle and practice in our model. It is only by securing the consent, support, active involvement and leadership of the community, in the governance, design, delivery, and evaluation of responses, that enduring change will be achieved. This protects and supports the key driver for change: respect for people's first culture.

This is the full Children's Ground System. It will take long-term investment at scale to deliver the response required to shift the status quo for First Nations communities in Australia. Children's Ground builds towards implementation of the full CGS where we work, building the resources to back communities to deliver excellence for the next generation.

Our theory of change

INPUT:

The Children's Ground System...

OUTPUTS:

is delivered with and governed by communities experiencing extreme disadvantage, integrating key service areas of learning, health, economy, community and culture, over 25 years...

OUTCOMES:

to bring about Community, Systemic and Societal change over a generation...

IMPACT:

so that children, families and communities enjoy social, cultural, political and economic wellbeing.

KAKADU WEST ARNHAM



JURELL, MARTEL AND BOB STRIPPING BARK DURING LEARNING ON COUNTRY



SISTERS, KEZIAH AND MENA, IN THE CREATIVE ARTS SPACE WITH BININJ EDUCATOR RHONDA HENRY

Children's Ground's first partnership was with the Mirarr people of Kakadu West Arnhem. In October 2013, with the support of Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, Kakadu West Arnhem Social Trust, the Federal Government and a group of angel philanthropic investors, we began our journey with Bininj people across the region, supporting them to realise their vision for the future of their children. The core funding was provided by the Kakadu West Arnhem Social Trust, established by the Mirarr and funded by disbursements from the Ranger Uranium Mine. Due to changed circumstances and priorities, the Mirarr informed Children's Ground in January 2017 that they were no longer in a position to fund and support the Children's Ground program. With sadness, on 30 June 2017, Children's Ground ceased operations in Kakadu West Arnhem.

We were privileged to have the significant financial backing for over three and half years which enabled us to implement the full Children's Ground System. Our integrated platform of services was delivered *with* and *by* Bininj people with a focus on early childhood and primary education and including nutrition, child and maternal health, environmental health support, social and emotional wellbeing counselling, employment, training and enterprise development, creative arts, culture and community development. The outcomes were outstanding.

Despite receiving notice in January 2017 of our impending closure, children, families and our staff remained focused and dedicated to achieving the best outcomes they could during our remaining time in Kakadu. Engagement remained high despite staff and families having to plan and prepare for our closure.

This is testament to the incredible spirit and passion of each and every one of the children, adults and families we worked with to create the best for their future. This passion and dedication shone across all areas of operations in 2017.

LEARNING & WELLBEING

Our learning and wellbeing focus in the first four years of operations in Kakadu was on providing quality early years learning for children aged 0-5 years and primary education for a small cohort of children aged 6-8 years who had been struggling in mainstream education.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- 60 children aged 0-8 years engaged in formal early years or primary learning at Children's Ground.
- 108 children aged 0-11 years engaged in formal early years, primary and extended hours learning.
- 284 community members (all ages) participating in Children's Ground learning, family and cultural activities – families are surrounding the little ones, supporting their learning and wellbeing.

Early years learning continued at the Community Centre for the first half of 2017, with Learning on Country days and mobile outreach to outstations in Kakadu. At the beginning of 2017, in preparation for our closure, Children's Ground transitioned the primary learners to the local primary school. The partnership with the local school has always been strong. This partnership allowed us to support transition to the new learning environment, providing transport, lunch, after hours and in-class support as well as advocating for cultural learning opportunities and the presence of family in the school. Staff at the school reported that Children's Ground learners were confident and engaged.



BLACK ROCK BAND PERFORM AT BARUNGA FESTIVAL, KATHERINE.

FAMILY HEALTH & WELLBEING

In 2017 our team provided the wrap around support for each child in our early years and primary learning program and their family. The daily health check-ins continued as a core part of our early intervention and health promotion work for children and families. Health staff worked closely with the learning team to integrate health knowledge and practice into the learning environment. We continued family health promotion and supported the chronic health management for young people and adults as part of the whole of family health approach. Social and emotional wellbeing demands were high following a number of critical incidents in the community.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- Improved health literacy
- Early intervention and prevention of child health issues including dental, skin and nutrition
- Early intervention and support for chronic adult health related issues
- Increased family involvement and informed decision making in the health of their children and their own health
- Completion of a major environmental health project improving housing health (see community development)
- Sustaining environments for child safety
- Social and emotional wellbeing support including support for at risk young people and serious mental health issues including suicide prevention, anxiety and depression for young people and adults.
- Yawkyawk (young women) present at National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference in Cairns.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & WELLBEING

Employment and workforce development has always been a strength of Children's Ground as it directly influences engagement of children in education and creates an empowered environment for families. The staff of Children's Ground and the community are the direct agents of change. They are not receiving a service which positions them 'in need' and 'lacking'. Instead local ability is recognised and the responsibility for change is held by the community. Local knowledge of need is embraced as an expertise. Experience in the workforce builds confidence and hope. Local people have the agency, respect and the opportunity to use their skills towards achieving their aspirations.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- 50 Bininj people – young people, adults and elders – employed across all areas of service design, delivery and governance in KWA
- Young people at risk, people living with a disability and adults living with chronic mental health and health issues engaged in employment
- Wide engagement with financial literacy and financial management.*
- Support for further employment after Children's Ground closure: writing CVs, seeking employment opportunities, liaising with new employers and providing references.
- Development of two creative enterprises: Bininj Kunwaral (arts enterprise) and Black Rock Band (music enterprise).
- Bininj Kunwaral:
 - 17 artists involved with arts enterprise.
- Black Rock Band:
 - 8 young men and women receiving professional development and exposure in music industry, sound recording and performance with shows in Melbourne and across the NT.
 - First album recorded
 - Signed with Melbourne-based not for profit music label Wantok Musik
 - Invited to play MONA FOMA festival in Tasmania in 2018

*In communities of extreme economic poverty, people in employment often have high stresses and demands placed upon them. Providing tools to support people to manage their finances and meet their daily needs has supported families to strengthen and work towards sustained economic independence while employed with Children's Ground.

“The fundamentals of Children’s Ground sit firmly within global strategies to address accepted social determinants of health... The consistent advocacy of Children’s Ground of working with families to enhance their existing strengths also promotes reflection by services to improve their own mode & standards of delivery.”

Dr. Paul Rivalland, GP, Jabiru Clinic Oct. 2016



EARLY LEARNER KEZIAH



BININJ AND BALANDA TEACHERS IN THE EARLY YEARS SPACE

“It is a ground breaking journey with the potential for transformational and generational change for families and communities experiencing the greatest disadvantage.”

Research Advisory Group, Children’s Ground

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & WELLBEING

Our community development focus remained strong through the first half of 2017, spearheaded by the Morle Boys (young men’s work team) and the Yawkyawk (young women) Community Development team. These young people live with a range of risks and were some of our most inspiring leaders.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- Painting project at Madjinbardi following on from the housing project in 2016. All homes were cleaned, rubbish removed, walls and floors cleaned as well as environmental clean up around homes. Led by Yawkyawk with support from siblings, elders, households and a volunteer team of young First Nations women from WA.
- Coordination of community meetings and BBQs, providing opportunities for community to come together particularly during times of stress and unrest.
- Leading of and logistical support for Learning on Country, mobile learning sessions, Bininj Kunborrk (traditional song and dance), collecting bush foods for cultural learning and nutrition.
- Upkeep of Community Centre and support with events and important celebrations that build social capital, pride and connection in community.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT & WELLBEING

Culture underpins all areas of Children’s Ground, privileging First Nations knowledge systems alongside Western knowledge. It sits at the core of our governance approach and is embedded across learning, health, economic development and community development.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- Ongoing delivery of Bininj-led early years learning.
- Creative arts and culture sessions delivered to the local school for primary learners.
- Black Rock Band recording a number of songs with cultural importance: Learning on Country, Bininj Kunborrk and Family. The latter was recorded with over 40 children and adults. These songs can be heard playing across the community and are a great source of collective cultural pride.
- Young artist we have supported, Ray Mudjandi, received recognition as semi-finalist in NT young achiever awards.
- Artists continued working with passion, dedication, purpose and belonging, teaching children, mentoring young people and supporting each other right up until the final days.

“There is no single organisation, service provider, program, funded initiative like Children’s Ground, no coordinated model like Children’s Ground – even close to those with the best intentions and resources... made up of the evidence based theory of action, principles, model and practices”

Learn Dunne, Principal, Jabiru Area School



MAHALIA, KAYLESS AND KEITH IN THEIR FIRST WEEK AT JABIRU SCHOOL



MAHALIA, SUSAN AND CURTIS DURING LEARNING ON COUNTRY

While our time in Kakadu was cut short, there is so much to celebrate.

We witnessed the transformation of a community who had mobilised around the future of their children. We witnessed Biniŋ people stand up and demand more for their children’s learning, health and wellbeing and then make that happen. We witnessed what happens when you back the vision and talents of a community, listen to their voices, follow their lead and support them with the resources to deliver excellence. They brought Children’s Ground to life, proved that change is possible and that it is First Nations children, families and communities who must lead this change.

The most powerful show of self determination and empowerment has been the decision of key families to continue their journey with Children’s Ground into the future through a new strategy involving their traditional lands in Arnhem Land.

Children’s Ground recognises the incredible staff and community of KWA who were the trailblazers of Children’s Ground. We also extend our deepest gratitude to the local community organisations and partners in the region who made our work possible. Our local partners, staff, volunteers, our philanthropic family, the NT and Federal Government, and most of all the community, all contributed to creating magic over the nearly four years of our KWA journey.

Our local community partners include:

- Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation
- West Arnhem Regional Council
- Jabiru Area School
- Jabiru clinic
- Red Lily Health
- Jabiru police station
- Jabiru childcare centre
- Djidbidjidbi Residential College
- Northern Land Council
- Parks Australia
- Girls Academy, Jabiru
- Centrelink, Jabiru
- Jabiru Pool
- Westpac Jabiru
- Two Rivers Newsagency
- Jabiru Foodland
- Mercure Kakadu Hotel
- Coinda Lodge
- AAA Charter
- Anbinik Kakakadu Resort
- Aurora Kakadu
- Warnbi Aboriginal Corporation

‘Wurdurd Garriygarrmerren’ - we are walking together with the children.

KEY EVENTS & ACHIEVEMENTS: Kakadu West Arnhem



TERM ONE BEGINS

- Decision to cease operations in KWA.
- Early years learning resumes in 2017 – at the Centre, on Country and with mobile delivery to children and families living at outstations in Kakadu.
- Families and staff are focused on creating the best outcomes for children in our final semester of operations. Children are confident learners and continue to be taught by Bininj and Balanda educators, in Kunwinjku and English, surrounded by family and with wrap around support to secure their wellbeing.
- Primary learners transition to Jabiru Area School with in-classs, transport and health support from Children's Ground. Teachers report they are engaged and confident learners.



- A meeting of key senior custodians for Marlkwawo is held to discuss a request for Children's Ground to work with families who wish to relocate to their country.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

YAWKYAWK PAINTING PROJECT AT MADJINBARDI

- Yawkyawk community development team, together with a group of young First Nations women visiting from WA, coordinate a project that saw all homes at Madjinbardi cleaned, rubbish removed and environmental clean ups carried out around the houses.



'BOH BOH' (GOODBYE) TO KAKADU

- On the 30th of May we held our farewell celebration at the Community Centre. This included an awards ceremony for all children, young people, staff and community partners as well as a performance by Black Rock Band.
- In June all families were presented with 'Learning Journey' books which illustrate the development and achievements of their children while at Children's Ground.



- The loss is felt by everyone after leaving KWA as is hope and excitement for new opportunities in West Arnhem.
- Community engagement and planning for Top End operations is mobilised.



MARLKAWO

- Children's Ground begins 'Walk, Talk & Act', Community Engagement Phase, with families at Marlkawo.

OUR LOCAL HERO: ROXANNE NABORLHBORLH

- Roxanne announced as finalist in the NT Australian of the Year Awards in the Local Hero category. Roxanne was nominated for her achievements in mobilising families in Kakadu and creating access and opportunity for Bininj children in the region.
- Roxanne attended the awards ceremony in Darwin with her family.



- Support for families during grief after the loss of a young family member and Traditional Owner.

- Phase 1 of Community Engagement and Planning - 'Walk & Talk' - for Top End operations complete with plans for 2018 endorsed by the Board.

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER

BLACK ROCK BAND

A huge year for music enterprise and young leaders, Black Rock Band:

- May: play sold out show at the Melba Spiegeltent, Melbourne
- June: finish recording first album, play Barunga Festival in Katherine (winners of Best Community Band).
- September: Bush Bands Business and Bush Bands Bash, Alice Springs.
- December: sign with Melbourne-based record label Wantok Musik Foundation.



“The only way a Bininj kid is going to learn is to make them a strong Bininj person.”



- Dayna and Martina from the Yawkyawk Community Development Team present at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference in Cairns.



KEITH AND EARLY YEARS LEARNERS READING WITH ROXANNE

Keith's Learning Journey

Keith is nine years old. He is from the Burdoh clan in West Arnhem. Keith speaks Kunwinjku and English. Keith is confident and caring, and a talented, creative and quick learner.

Keith first came to Children's Ground when he was just 5 years old, when we first opened our doors in Kakadu. Keith hadn't been to school or to an early years program before so this was his first formal learning experience.

When Keith turned 6, he was enrolled at the local public primary school although both the school and his family reported Keith was not having a positive learning experience.

Families asked Children's Ground to start a primary class for children who were struggling at the primary school and so Keith returned to Children's Ground for his primary learning.

Keith's Aunt, Roxanne, was the first worker at Children's Ground in Kakadu. When Keith was 6, his mother, Kestianna, started working at Children's Ground too, becoming one of our core staff members and a young leader. Keith's father, Enosh, is a young man with serious health concerns. He would also come to Children's Ground regularly to be present with family. Keith's grandparents, Abel and Cecily, are both senior artists and became involved with Children's Ground as cultural educators, advisers and community leaders. They worked in the creative arts space, co-located with the early years, and both live with serious chronic health issues. As Keith's family became more involved with Children's Ground so did Keith, becoming one of the most frequent attenders in the primary class.

At Children's Ground, Keith was learning in his first language (Kunwinjku) and in English, being taught by both Bininj (Aboriginal) and Balanda (Western) educators and was surrounded and supported by his family.

Every day at Children's Ground, Keith and his family ate healthy manme (food) and had access to health support. Children's Ground's family health approach meant supporting Keith, Keith's father and his grandparents. It involved his whole family.



Keith had a history of skin infections that made it difficult for him to learn. The more Keith came to Children's Ground, his infections began to decrease, his nutrition improved and his attendance increased.

Keith is a sensitive child who has lived with his father's health concerns his whole life. Understanding and supporting him during periods of acute illness for his father was important in his learning journey.

By the time Keith was 8 he continued to be an active and engaged learner. He especially loved learning and performing Bininj Kunborrk (traditional song and dance) and learning about cultural practices and knowledge from family, especially from his grandfather Abel. His family could see Keith's confidence increasing as well as his sense of belonging and cultural identity. This is important for Keith and for his family.

Keith is confident, gentle, caring and an enthusiastic and engaged learner, and he would often help other children in the learning space. While at Children's Ground, Keith learnt to read and write in both Kunwinjku and English and was developing strong early numeracy skills.

Keith loved being involved in the range of community activities as part of Children's Ground including family events, discos, community barbeques and bush trips. He especially loved the specialist programs that were part of his learning journey such as art, music, circus and dance.



Over three and a half years that Children's Ground was in Kakadu, Keith's daily experience of life changed:

- He was actively engaged in learning both Biniñ and Balanda knowledge and skills.
- His health and the health of his family improved.
- He saw his parents and grandparents working and using their voice and engaged in programs, services and the community.

In early 2017 Keith and other children were supported to attend the local public school to prepare for when Children's Ground would close in Kakadu. Keith entered the primary school as a confident learner, proficient in the foundations of english literacy and numeracy.

At the same time, Keith's grandparents, whose traditional country is outside of Kakadu, requested Children's Ground support their families as they move back to their country. They asked for a new Children's Ground to start at an outstation in West Arnhem. The Children's Ground Board approved their request and we are now undertaking a 'Walk, Talk & Act' around Marlkawo with these families, including Keith's.



DANCING BINIÑ KUNBORRK (TRADITIONAL SONG AND DANCE) AT MAHBILIL FESTIVAL, JABIRU

“Our children are coming to Children's Ground every day. They are learning in both ways, growing strong and healthy.”

Roxanne Naborlhborlh (Keith's aunty) and **Cecily Djandjomerr** (Keith's grandmother)



KEITH LOVES CREATIVE ARTS AND CULTURE WITH HIS GRANDFATHER ABEL



CECILY DJANDJOMERR AND ROXANNE NABORLHBORLH



SELONE DJANDJOMERR AND HIS SON, STUART

A NEW BEGINNING

When it was announced that Children's Ground would be ceasing operations in Kakadu, a number of Traditional Owners requested that Children's Ground continue to work with their families. One invitation was from families to work with them on their traditional lands at Marlkawo and other homelands in West Arnhem Land in order to continue the journey they began over the past four years. The determination to 'take' Children's Ground to their homelands is an example of Children's Ground being owned and directed by the people.

A meeting of key senior custodians was held in April 2017 with the CEO of Children's Ground. It was agreed that the preliminary phase of Community Engagement and Planning take place after June 2017. This included assessing viability and creating a plan with community for sustainability and establishing Children's Ground operations on their traditional country. It was agreed that this would be a small operation and significantly different to operations in Kakadu.

In all communities engaged with Children's Ground, we begin with an unprecedented period of community engagement and planning, referred to as 'Walk and Talk'. The Walk and Talk phase works with community leaders and Traditional Owners to talk with families and community members about their aspirations for their children, to share what Children's Ground is about, how the Children's Ground System works and what it could look like in their community.

Planning was undertaken with Traditional Owners, families and key stakeholders in the region with visits to country during the period. Preliminary community development work and preparations were undertaken including power and water security, environmental planning and establishing key authorisations for operations in Arnhem Land. Sustained operations during 2018 dry season have been planned and there is great excitement by families about continuing their Children's Ground journey next year.



ROXANNE LEADING THE WALK & TALK WITH FAMILIES AT MARLKAWO

“They’re alive and walking around, my mum and dad and my brothers. They are waiting for us and saying to us, ‘When are the kids coming back?’”

Cecily Djandjomerr,
Traditional Owner of Marlkawo

“We were all sad when Children’s Ground stopped in Jabiru. But this does not mean that we are stopping. Children’s Ground is for 25 years. Our wurdurd are still young, they still have a lot to learn and we still have a long way to go.

We are always thinking about the future for our wurdurd. We have worked to make it safe for our wurdurd to go to school and to learn. We have supported our young people who were lost. We created jobs and we were making our kids and our families healthy again. We are proud of what we have done. Before there was nothing for our families. Our wurdurd were lost. Now, they have been learning as Bininj children. They have been learning Bininj and Balanda ways, just as we wanted. We have never had this before. We all walked together as one family working for our children. We have many families who want to keep being part of Children’s Ground. We know Children’s Ground works.

To keep our work with our families going on our country, we have asked Children’s Ground to get support from Government, Land Council and philanthropy.

We respectfully ask for your support so that we can keep our dream and our families alive.”

Mark Djandjomerr

Traditional Owner of Marlkawo
Grandfather and Father

Cecily Djandjomerr

Traditional Owner of Marlkawo
Grandmother and Mother

Roxanne Naborlhborlh

Djunkai (caretaker) of Marlkawo
Mother

May Nango

Mirarr Traditional Owner
Grandmother and Mother



CENTRAL AUSTRALIA



GIRLS PERFORMING ANTHEPE (ARRERENTE DANCE) AT MPWERINGKE ANAPIPE



FAMILY EXPLORE AN IMPORTANT DREAMING SITE WHILE LEARNING ON COUNTRY AT MPWERINGKE ANAPIPE

2017 was the first full calendar year of operations for Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, the Arrernte translation of Children's Ground.

Children's Ground was originally designed with, by and for Arrernte people living in extreme economic poverty and experiencing relentless trauma in Central Australia. At the request of a number of grandparents and parents, concerned for the future of the next generation, Children's Ground returned to our birthplace in 2016, supporting Arrernte families to take action and safeguard the future wellbeing of their children.

Our work builds on decades of work and wonderful organisations and initiatives that informed Children's Ground and who with who we currently now partner, including the families at Yarrenyty Arltere and Akeyulerre.

2017 was an incredible year of excitement, growth and challenge for Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe. We have been led by a truly extraordinary Arrernte leadership team. They are superior strategists, cultural professors and long term educationalists. We are seeing the aspirations of Arrernte families being realised as their abilities and talents are mobilised to create safety and opportunity for their children. We have watched more and more children coming along with their families, eager to learn, loving the routine, nourished and engaged as they learn with family on their country, learning in their first language and culture and in English.

We have been working with families from or connected to three communities in Central Australia:

- Irrkerlantye (Whitegate Town Camp)
- Yarrenyty-Arltere (Larapinta Valley Town Camp)
- Mpweringke Anapipe - northern outstations

Families living at Ewyenper-Atwatye (Hidden Valley Town Camp) and Alice Springs public housing have also been actively engaged with Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe.

Our work in Central Australia has been challenging as here we do not have the level of funding to implement the full Children's Ground System. Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe is a grassroots operation with an initial focus on Learning & Wellbeing (early years learning). This has included limited integration of the other platform areas; Economic Development & Wellbeing (employment and training for families), Family Health and Wellbeing (nutrition and some cultural health practices and referral), Community Development (Governance) and Cultural and Creative Development and Wellbeing. We will grow to implementation of the full model only as our investment grows, ensuring we have the resources required to deliver excellence. All of our service areas continue to be underpinned by our principles and driven by our systemic reform agenda across workforce, investment, evidence, governance and service delivery.

“Children's Ground is leading the way in Aboriginal self-determination and early years education. The model is exemplary and the best that I have ever experienced in my 30 years of working in the early years.”

Louise Dorrat, Early Childhood Specialist, Lecturer, Deakin University

“We want our kids to learn with us, in our culture – culture in the classroom. At the moment our children are being left at the back of the classroom doing whatever they want to do instead of learning. We are doing this program so we can teach our children to learn better”

Felicity Hayes, Traditional Owner, Grandmother and senior Arrernte educator, Central Australia



ANNA MARIA PALMER READS IN ARRERNTE TO WARREN



ALISON FERBER READS IN ARRERNTE WITH HER FAMILY AT BURT CREEK

LEARNING & WELLBEING

Our learning and wellbeing focus in Central Australia has been on providing quality early years learning for Arrernte children who historically have had little or no access to existing services. Elders and families want an education system that is culturally fit for their children and we are walking alongside them to realise this aspiration.

This year we doubled the delivery of early years sessions from one day to two days per week for each family/community group. One day of learning has been spent on Country and the other at our new Community Centre located in Alice Springs.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- Establishment of our Community Centre in Alice Springs: a community hub of safety and inclusion for all families.
- Articulation and implementation of Arrernte learning and life 'curriculum'.
- Arrernte early literacy resource production.
- 45 children aged 0-5 years engaged in formal early years learning in Term One, increasing to 65 children in Term 4. Engagement increased as our capacity to deliver increased.
- 44% of children attending in the first semester increased their attendance in the second semester.
- 144 family members aged 18 years and older participating in early learning, surrounding the little ones and supporting their learning and wellbeing.
- The building of hope, engagement, pride and possibility as Arrernte elders and senior people take control over the future learning of their children and grandchildren.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & WELLBEING

As with our workforce in the Top End, our local Arrernte workforce are nothing short of phenomenal. All live with considerable economic, health and housing stresses in their lives. And yet all of them have an incredible dedication to their work, their families and their communities. All of our staff members are skilled and knowledgeable: they are educators, professors, strategists, lawyers, health workers, communicators. And yet most of them have experienced long-term unemployment and thus live with the economic poverty this creates. At Children's Ground, we recognise ability. We acknowledge and celebrate First Nations knowledge systems and practice. We privilege cultural expertise and the vision and innovation of First Nations peoples to create a new future for themselves and their children.

Key achievements in 2017 include:

- 26 adults in flexible employment as educators, cultural advisers, leaders, directors and support workers across nutrition, education, transport and administration.
- Improved financial literacy and financial management.
- Presentations made by our educators at three conferences: SNAICC (Canberra), NT Children's Learning & Development conference (Darwin), World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (Canada).
- Arrernte children seeing their family members recognised for their knowledge and expertise, and growing up to see families working as the norm.
- Extensive volunteer Arrernte workforce attending early years sessions.

“The way we think about health at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children’s Ground) is through our holistic First Nations perspective. For our kids to walk in both worlds, we know that it’s important to look at the Western health system too. We are taking health back to the people and making sure our families know and control their health story.”

Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Governance Committee, Central Australia



DULCIE SHARPE TEACHING CHILDREN FROM YARRENYTY ARLTERE



EARLY YEARS LEARNER RICHARD EATING HEALTHY FOOD

FAMILY HEALTH & WELLBEING

Our Family Health & Wellbeing approach in Central Australia is in its infancy as we continue to grow towards full implementation of the Children’s Ground System. However, the Children’s Ground integrated approach aligns with Arrernte whole of family practice and our Governance Committee and educators have ensured that health has still been central to our early learning activities. First Nations health knowledge and practices are balanced with Western health practices in the learning environment to strengthen children’s knowledge, awareness and agency over their own health and wellbeing. Nutrition is also a core element of our early years activities, with healthy meals provided to children, staff and families on each day of learning. As our resources grow we will work towards integrating social and emotional wellbeing and health support not only for children but for their families as well.

We have partnered with local health organisations to respond to issues of ear health and hearing loss for children attending early years learning. Our early years learning approach is trauma informed, providing safe and nurturing environments for children and their families.

We continue to have a strong partnership with Akeyulerre (the Arrernte Healing Centre) which is keeping Arrernte health practices alive and providing a space for the work of Arrernte health practitioners including the harvesting and production of bush medicines.

Key achievements for 2017 include:

- Healthy meals as part of every learning session, incorporating bush foods where available.
- Recruitment of a First Nations nutrition worker
- Improved child health practices.
- Support for elders and governance committee who live with chronic health concerns
- Arrernte health practices embedded in learning including ‘smoking ceremonies’ to keep children’s Utnenge (spirit) strong. These occur at the Centre and on country.
- Partnership with audiologist from Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. Child hearing assessments conducted where children live and involved all families.

Children’s Ground in Central Australia has a long story. Arrernte people, including our directors and some of our core staff members, have been working for decades for recognition, rights and systems reform. They do not wish to see generation after generation caught in the criminal justice, child protection and health systems. They have worked tirelessly for an education system for their children that privileges Arrernte language and culture. We are building on those foundations. We try to honour the talent and vision of these community leaders and many who have passed away.

We have had the support and partnership of some wonderful individuals and organisations throughout the year, both locally and interstate, including:

- Akeyulerre (healing centre)
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
- Project 1 Million
- Youthworx
- KOGO (Knit One Give One)
- Yarrenyty Arltere Artists
- KIDS the film
- Rod Moss.

We extend our deepest gratitude to you.

Children, families and staff at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe have achieved a great deal already and we are only at the very beginning of our 25-year journey. Amazingly, we have achieved this without any dedicated Government funding. It has been the compassion, leadership and generosity of our philanthropic, community and corporate partners that has enabled families to take their aspirations for their children and turn them into a reality. Their backing has demonstrated what is possible when First Nations people have hope, agency, opportunity and voice in decision-making about their own lives, backed with the resources to deliver excellence.

“Today we want a place where our children are safe – where they can grow up to be healthy, educated and have a better future. Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children’s Ground) is the place for them. We are seeing our kids learning and loving to learn. Their families are walking beside them.

We have hope for the future”
Lorrayne Gorey, Senior Arrernte Educator



LORRAYNE GOREY LEADS A LEARNING ON COUNTRY SESSION



LEONIE PALMER WITH CHILDREN AT OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY



ANNA MARIA PALMER LEADS A LEARNING ON COUNTRY SESSION WITH THE IRRKERLANTYE EARLY YEARS GROUP

KEY EVENTS & ACHIEVEMENTS: *Central Australia*



TERM ONE BEGINS

- Walk & Talk (Community Engagement and Planning) continues with families at Irrkerlantye (Whitegate), Yarrenyty-Arltere (Larapinta) and Mpweringke Anapipe (Northern Outstations).
- One day of early years learning happens each week with each community. Early learning is delivered on country and by Arrernte and Western trained educators.
- Governance Committee meets every week to articulate the Arrernte early years learning and life 'curriculum' and set operational priorities and standards for each community.



- Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground) is visited by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Gillian Bird, and Ambassador to Denmark, Iceland and Norway, Damien Miller.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

- Australian tennis champion, Pat Cash, visits Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe. Pat spends time with Traditional Owner, Felicity Hayes, along with other elders and educators, learning of their decades-long fight for social justice and educational reform for their children.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- After developing Arrernte learning resources in 2016, our first early years book is professionally printed and bound: *Mpwaltye (Frog)* by MK Turner and families from Mpweringke Anapipe. This resource uses images from an Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Learning on Country session to teach children numeracy and literacy 'Arrernte way'; on country and with family.
- Resource development continues throughout 2017 with a second book *Awengkere (duck)* printed in September.



TERM THREE BEGINS

- Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe establish Community Centre in Alice Springs as a place of safety and inclusion for all children and families in the region. The Centre provides a space for additional early years, governance, professional development, nutrition and food preparation as well as community celebrations.
- Delivery of early years learning doubles for each community now having two sessions every week. One still held on Country and the other at our new Centre.



OUR SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR: MK TURNER OAM

- MK is announced as a finalist for Senior Australian of the Year in the NT Australian of the Year Awards.
- MK was nominated for her lifelong contribution to Aboriginal people and the broader community in Central Australia, and for her recent work as a director within Children's Ground.



“You’ve got to have your identity to learn. That’s why Children’s Ground is really important: we need kids to grow up with their identity strong.”

MK Turner OAM, Director, Central Australia

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER

SHARING OUR STORY

Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Arrernte educators and staff presented at three conferences throughout the second half of 2017, including:

- *Akalyirreme Nthenhele Apeke: Renewing the push for Arrernte education in Central Australia*, World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE), Canada.
- *You’ve got to listen to us; our voice: Privileging Arrernte language and culture in Early Childhood*, SNAICC Conference, Canberra.
- *Anwernenhe anteme iwerre anthaye ampe akweke anwerne-kenhe areyeko: Backing Aboriginal People to lead the way in the Early Years*, Little People Big Dreams, Northern Territory Children’s Learning & Development Conference, Darwin.



- First Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Community Report is published. Staff worked on all facets of the report with contributions from all families/communities. The report tells the story of Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe back to families and is a wonderful celebration of the unique knowledge, hard work and ongoing drive of all First Nations staff and families at Children's Ground.





RODNEY AND LILIANA LEARNING ON COUNTRY AT IRRKERLANTYE

Rodney's Learning Journey

Rodney is three years old. He is Luritja (on his father's side) and his mother is Arrernte. At three years old, Rodney speaks both Luritja and Arrernte, and is learning to speak English.

Rodney has been coming to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe since he was just one year old. His aunty, Felicity Hayes, is the Traditional Owner of Mparntwe (Alice Springs). She is an educator and was Children's Ground's first Arrernte employee. Rodney first came to our early years sessions with Felicity to join the Irrkerlantye early years learning group.

Before starting at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe, Rodney spent his time at home. In July 2017, his mum, Noreen, started working as a staff member and early years educator. Rodney came two days a week in 2017, one day Learning on Country and one learning session at our Community Centre in Alice Springs. Other family members that come to Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe include his grandmother, aunts, cousins, brothers, and sisters, and even his nephew, Richard.

Rodney is surrounded by his family at Children's Ground which means he is comfortable and confident in his learning environment. Rodney has developed a strong sense of identity and shows this through leading in play with the other children and always asking his educators lots of questions, mainly in Luritja.

Rodney enjoys visiting his mum's country, Mt Undoolya and Irrkerlantye, during Learning on Country. While visiting these places he learns how to find witchetty grubs, hunt goanna, find bush fruits, name different plants and trees, and to cook damper and kangaroo tail.



RODNEY LEARNING ABOUT BUSH MEDICINE WITH HIS AUNTY FELICITY HAYES

Rodney has developed a strong sense of identity and shows this through leading in play with the other children and always asking his educators lots of questions, mainly in Luritja.



RODNEY AND HIS MUM NOREEN



RODNEY LOVES GETTING ON THE BUS TO AMPE-KENHE AHELHE



READING WITH HIS SISTER ANNA MARIA PALMER

He loves to collect things he finds with his Aunty Felicity, she tells him the Arrernte names for them and how to use them.

His father's country is Ukaka nears Kings Canyon, Tempe Downs homestead (not far from Ukaka). Rodney loves swimming in big water holes near there.

Rodney travels on the Children's Ground bus driven by his mum or sister Anna Maria. He knows it is important to sit in his car seat with the belt done up. When arriving at Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe learning sessions Rodney remembers to wash his hands and face and blow his nose. He is happy to try the nutritious foods, and brush his teeth before home time. Rodney is especially great at helping to clean up and pack away, something his mum says he enjoys at home.

Rodney has become strong in many areas of his learning. He is exposed to early english literacy and numeracy as well as in Arrernte. His spirit is strong when he is learning on country. He shares joy with those around him. He is often seen exploring the land around him and loves to attempt challenging tasks independently. Rodney loves music and singing. He often creates his own songs and repeats other familiar songs.

His mum Noreen is proud of all the things he is learning while at Children's Ground including listening to stories in Arrernte and English, learning old ways of doing things on country, practicing swimming, solving problems all on his own, and being creative.

Rodney's family's goals for him are to learn to read and write in both his languages and in English, to respect and help others and be kind. They want him to continue his early years learning with Children's Ground.



AMPE-KENHE AHELHE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE, CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

“The land, the people, the story – that’s our governance.”

MK Turner OAM, Director, Central Australia

“We are speaking up at meetings, we are telling our story at conferences, we are pushing ourselves to lead. We’re in the driver’s seat now.”

Lorrayne Gorey, Grandmother and Senior Arrernte Educator

Children’s Ground’s governance model blends strong central stewardship with local community ownership and engagement. It is a dual governance structure, designed to recognise the traditional Western board as well as the traditional cultural authorities of local governance, that are particular to each location in which we work.

OPERATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The operational governance model for Children’s Ground prioritises not only Aboriginal leadership, but Aboriginal leadership from those who are the users - the families and the community for whom Children’s Ground is designed.

Aboriginal Governance systems are more complex than Western legal governance structures can provide for. They are collective, land-based and underpinned by people’s connection and relationship to culture, country and to each other through kinship. Our local Governance Committees work closely with operational staff and Directors, as well as providing guidance to both the CEO and the Board.

Governance Committees are open for all family members to be part of and to have their say in determining the future they want to create for the next generation.

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

In Central Australia, our operations are directed and governed by our Arrernte Governance Committee. This group is comprised of Traditional Owners and leading representatives for each community/family group. There is no singular authority for the region, rather everyone has a voice in the design, delivery and evaluation of Children’s Ground for their own community and family group, as well as collective oversight for the region alongside our Arrernte Chairperson, William Tilmouth.

Key Governance Committee members in 2017 include:

Irrkerlantye:

- Felicity Hayes
- Anna Maria Palmer
- Therese Ryder

Yarrenyty-Arliere:

- Blanche Ebatarinja
- Dulcie Sharpe
- Marlene Rubuntja

Mpweringke Anapipe:

- MK Turner
- Leonie Palmer
- Alison Ferber
- Veronica Turner
- Lorrayne Gorey
- Cathy Turner
- Marita McMillan



A MEETING OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF MARLKAWO TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THEIR CHILDREN

“We are all one big family. We have asked the Children’s Ground Board to keep working with us. We are taking Children’s Ground back to our country in Marlkawo. Wurdurd Garriyigarrmerren (Children’s Ground) is still alive. It is ours.”

Mark Djandjomerr, Cecily Djandjomerr, Roxanne Naborlhborlh & May Nango

TOP END

In Kakadu West Arnhem, our operations were governed locally by our Co-Directors May Nango (Traditional Owner of Jabiru) and Mark Djandjomerr (senior cultural leader and Traditional Owner of Marlkawo), alongside other elders, cultural advisers and community leaders. Community meetings were held weekly to set the direction, discuss operational matters and ensure Children’s Ground stayed on the right path for wurdurd and families in Kakadu.

Our operations in Marlkawo in West Arnhem are a continuation of the journey of some of these same families and cultural leaders. Mark Djandjomerr who was our co-director in Kakadu is a Traditional Owner of Marlkawo. He is now part of the operational governance team for the Top End, together with other Traditional Owners and caretakers for that country, and cultural leaders in the region, including Roxanne, Cecily, May and Kaylene, who were all instrumental in KWA. Shirley Djandjomerr joins this group as a key governance member.



MARK DJANDJOMERR AND MAY NANGO

Key Governance Committee Members in 2017 include:

- Mark Djandjomerr
- Cecily Djandjomerr
- Shirley Djandjomerr
- Kaylene Djandjomerr
- Roxanne Naborlhborlh
- May Nango

OUR BOARD

Our Board of Directors is a skilled group of people, highly qualified in their respective fields and with the commitment and passion required to lead Children's Ground alongside our Aboriginal Governance Committees. They bring with them a wealth of experience across the health, education and social sectors, Government, financial management, human rights, investment and fundraising, enterprise and business development. Led by William Tilmouth, the Board is moving toward at least half First Nations representation.

Adrian Appo took a leave of absence from January - October and Robert Griew took a leave of absence from October - December.

In 2017 we welcomed two new additions to our Board, Amy Poynton and Tony Lawler. Amy joined the Board of Directors in October and comes with over 30 years of combined experience in both business management and providing expert consulting and professional services. Tony joined us in February 2017 as an adviser and nonvoting Board member. He is a retired politician and has a 30-year history owning and operating pharmacy businesses in NSW.



Adrian Appo, OAM

BTeach – Board Member and Member of the Investment sub-Committee



Robert Griew

BAppSc, MPH, GCEcP - Board Member and Member of the Investment sub-Committee.



Kon Karapanagiotidis, OAM

LLB, BSW, BBSC, MED, MDevStuds – Board Member, Member of the Investment sub-Committee.



Amy Poynton

BA, MBA
Board Member



Clive Ringler

BEc, MCom, ASX Accredited Adviser, Level 1 & 2 – Board Deputy Chair, Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk sub-Committee and Member of the Investment sub-Committee



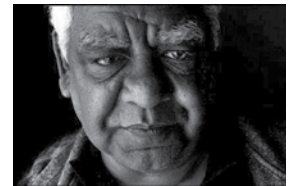
Josie Rizza

CA, BEc, GradDipAppFinInv, GAICD - Board Member, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk sub-Committee and Member of the Investment sub-Committee.



Jane Vadiveloo

BSc, MPsych(Forensic) - CEO, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk sub-Committee, Member of the Investment sub-Committee and Co-Chair of the Research Advisory Group



William Tilmouth

Founding Chair of Children's Ground.
Board Chair and Co-Chair of Research Advisory Group.



Tony Lawler

BPharm, JP
Member of Pharmacy Guild of Australia
Nonvoting Board member.



Rosemary Addis

LLB (Hons 1st Class), New York Bar, Company Directors' Diploma, AICD - Strategic Adviser.
Investment sub-Committee Member, Former Board Member.

OUR RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP

Our Research Advisory Group is made up of respected researchers and academics with extensive experience. They provide valuable guidance to our monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by our Director of Research and Evaluation together with our 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 Fiona Arney

Director, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia

Associate Professor Sally Brinkman

Co-Director, Fraser Mustard Centre. Senior Research Fellow, Telethon Kids Institute

Mr Matthew James

Senior Executive, Housing and Specialised Services Group and Deputy Director, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Dr Tim Moore

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

Professor Sven Silburn

Director, Centre for Child Development and Education, Menzies School of Health Research

Associate Professor David Thomas

Head, Wellbeing and Preventable Chronic Disease, Menzies School of Health Research

Professor Komla Tsey

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

OUR INSPIRING AMBASSADORS

It is our privilege to have the inspiration and backing of our ambassadors: Jan Owen AM, Margaret Kemarre Turner OAM, Pat Cash and Rachel Naninaaq Edwardson. We continue to recognise the late honourable Malcolm Fraser as a past Ambassador and Elder of Children's Ground.

**Dr Jan Owen AM**

Jan Owen AM is the 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.

**MK Turner**

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

**Pat Cash**

Pat Cash is an Australian tennis champion, having won the men's singles at Wimbledon and achieved a world ranking of No.4. Pat is the co-founder of social impact and environmental organisations Planet Ark and Do Something. He lives in the UK and has been travelling the world coaching, competing and commentating for the past 30 years. Pat has emerged as a passionate advocate for social justice for First Nations peoples, particularly 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.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Director's Report

For the year ended 31 December 2017

The Directors present their report on Children's Ground Limited for the financial year ended 31 December 2017. The following financial information is a summary of the audited general purpose financial report.

The names and details of the Company's Directors and Board members in office during the financial year and until the date of this report are as follows.

Directors and Board members were in office for this entire period unless otherwise stated:

	Meetings eligible to attend	Meetings attended
William Roy Tilmouth	8	7
Kon Karapanagiotidis	8	5
Josie Rizza	8	8
Adrian John Appo	8	1*
Clive William Ringler	8	7
Robert Griew	8	6**
Amy Poynton	2***	2
Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo	8	8

* Adrian John Appo was on a leave of absence from January 2017 to October 2017.

** Robert Griew was on a leave of absence from October 2017 to December 2017.

*** Amy Poynton joined the Board in October 2017.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of Children's Ground Limited during the financial year were to relieve poverty and disadvantage to First Nations children and young people living in communities of extreme poverty in Australia through the provision of child and family support services to children and young people (from 0 to 24 years) and their families. Such activities include early years learning and care, family health, community development, cultural development and economic development services and activities. The Financial Statements record a \$2.39M loss. This loss is predominantly attributable to the ceasing of operations in Kakadu West Arnhem (KWA) and the loss of associated income dedicated to KWA operations. For further details refer to Significant Developments Note 1(n).

During the reporting period Children's Ground extended operations in Central Australia in the areas of early years and family related services and evaluation.

Community Engagement and Planning was undertaken and enterprise development continued in West Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory.

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

(n) Significant Developments

During the reporting period, Children's Ground Limited (Children's Ground) ceased its operations in Kakadu West Arnhem.

In January 2017, Children's Ground received correspondence from Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) advising Children's Ground that it no longer had support to continue operations in Jabiru beyond 30 June 2017. This was an earlier exit date than the 30 September 2018, advised by GAC in the prior reporting period. As requested, Children's Ground completed a transition plan and exit from its centre in Jabiru by 30 June 2017. All costs association with the KWA transition and exit are noted in the accounts. (See Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income). No further costs are expected to be borne in relation to KWA.

Operations in KWA during the reporting period were predominantly funded from grants received from Kakadu West Arnhem Social Trust (KWA ST) and philanthropic funding from the prior reporting periods which had been specifically committed to our operations in KWA. This accounts for a significant proportion of the recorded loss of \$2.39m (and cash outflow of \$2.1m).

In addition, Government funding was unexpectedly halved during the year as a result of agreements coming to an end and extended delays in negotiating and finalising a new contract. Consequently, no Federal Government income was received or due to be received with respect to the second half of the year. Government funding has now been confirmed to renew in the first quarter of 2018.

Children's Ground's operations are continuing in Central Australia and West Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory.

During this reporting period, Children's Ground restructured its operations to work towards aligning annual costs to annual income, without disrupting services to the vulnerable communities the company currently works with. The directors are satisfied that Children's Ground has sufficient reserves and other sources of funding from Commonwealth and NT Government together with philanthropic and corporate investment to enable it to continue its work supporting First Nations children and families.

(p) Going concern

For the year ended 31 December 2017, the company incurred a net loss of \$2.39m and reported a negative cash flow from operating activities of \$2,059,792. During 2017, Children's Ground ceased operations in Kakadu West Arnhem. See Significant Developments Note 1(n) for further information.

Children's Ground's operations are continuing in Central Australia and West Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. The entity is highly dependent on grants and donations to support its operations. Due to the nature of grants and donations, the ongoing level of income from this source is inherently uncertain.

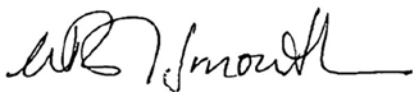
In the board's opinion, the entity remains a going concern on the following considerations:

- As at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds for believing that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due;
- No formal demands for payment have been received from any of the company's creditors;
- There are no outstanding loans to be paid;
- The company is in the process of negotiating with government departments, philanthropists and corporate investors to secure ongoing funding.
- The company has restructured operations and is moving towards aligning annual costs to annual income.

Auditor's independence declaration

The auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 31 December 2017 has been received and can be found on page 5 of the financial report.

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



Director: _____
William Roy Tilmouth
Dated: 16 March 2018

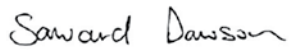


Director: _____
Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo
Dated: 16 March 2018

Auditor's Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 31 December 2017, 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: 16 March 2018

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2017

		31 December 2017 (12 months)	31 December 2016 (6 months)
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	2	1,893,598	2,046,846
Employee benefits expense		(2,828,426)	(1,564,040)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(197,328)	(76,768)
Travel and accommodation		(151,111)	(73,480)
Motor Vehicle Expenses		(113,790)	(68,115)
Client Support Consumables		(88,564)	(58,747)
Rent		(81,329)	(26,147)
Professional fees		(72,782)	(83,160)
Utilities and cleaning		(56,469)	(48,318)
Computer expenses		(34,206)	(20,492)
Children's Service Support		(32,772)	(37,943)
Printing and stationery		(29,725)	(29,499)
Repairs and maintenance		(29,029)	(7,320)
Asset Purchases < \$1,000		(18,973)	(36,976)
Insurance		(8,648)	(4,213)
Training and development		(12,678)	(3,456)
Advertising and Promotion		(9,364)	-
Program asset purchases		(2,402)	(5,925)
Other expenses		(104,277)	(72,328)
KWA site closure expense	1(n)	(406,993)	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period/year		(2,385,268)	(170,081)
Other comprehensive income			
Total comprehensive income for the period/year		(2,385,268)	(170,081)

Statement of Financial Position

For the Year Ended 31 December 2017

		31 December 2017 (12 months)	31 December 2016 (6 months)
	Note	\$	\$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	1,607,616	821,809
Trade and other receivables	4	71,789	67,370
Other financial assets	5	30,613	2,925,286
Other assets	6	31,305	74,772
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,741,323</u>	<u>3,889,237</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	7	208,868	330,488
Intangible assets	8	33,292	59,925
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>242,160</u>	<u>390,413</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>1,983,483</u>	<u>4,279,650</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	9	214,252	204,477
Other liabilities	10	50,000	-
Employee benefits	11	159,021	130,499
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>423,273</u>	<u>334,976</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	11	50,776	49,972
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>50,776</u>	<u>49,972</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>474,049</u>	<u>384,948</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>1,509,434</u>	<u>3,894,702</u>
EQUITY			
Retained surpluses		1,450,610	3,831,458
Reserves	20	58,824	63,244
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>1,509,434</u>	<u>3,894,702</u>

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 31 December 2017

31 December 2017

	Retained Surpluses	General Reserve	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 January 2017	3,831,458	63,244	3,894,702
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(2,385,268)	-	(2,385,268)
Transfers to reserve	4,420	(4,420)	-
Balance at 31 December 2017	1,450,610	58,824	1,509,434

31 December 2016

	Retained Surpluses	General Reserve	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2016	4,064,783	-	4,064,783
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	(170,081)	-	(170,081)
Transfers to reserve	(63,244)	63,244	-
Balance at 31 December 2016	3,831,458	63,244	3,894,702

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 December 2017

	31 December 2017 (12 months)	31 December 2016 (6 months)
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Donations, grants and other income received	1,937,506	2,079,549
Interest received	62,373	53,354
Payments to suppliers and employees	(4,059,671)	(2,458,764)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	14 (2,059,792)	(325,861)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of plant and equipment	(49,074)	(17,617)
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	-	24,223
Redemption (Placement) of term deposits	2,894,673	459,587
Net cash used by investing activities	2,845,599	466,193
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	785,807	140,332
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	821,809	681,477
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	3 1,607,616	821,809

Director's Declaration

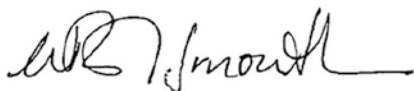
In the opinion of the directors, the financial report as set out on pages 5-26:

(i) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable, and;

(ii) the financial statements and notes are in accordance with Accounting Standards and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

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

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



Director: _____

William Roy Tilmouth

Dated: 16 March 2018



Director: _____

Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo

Dated: 16 March 2018

Children's Ground Limited

ABN 74 154 403 086

Independent Audit Report to the members of Children's Ground Limited

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

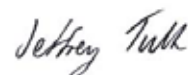
As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entity's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Saward Dawson



Jeffrey Tulk
Partner
Blackburn
Dated: 16 March 2018

20 Albert Street / PO Box 256
Blackburn Victoria 3130
T: +61 3 9894 2500
F: +61 3 9894 1622
contact@sawarddawson.com.au
www.sawarddawson.com.au

PRINCIPALS: Bruce Saward FCA Peter Shields FCA
Joshua Morse CA Jeff Tulk CA
Directors: Cathy Braun CA
Marie Ickeringill SSA Matthew Stokes CA
Murray Nicholls CA Vicki Adams CA CPA CFP®

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation



29

OUR STAFF



We thank all of our amazing staff and consultants who have worked with us over the years. You have laid the foundations for hope and success. We would also like to recognise the incredible contributions of the First Nations young people, families, adults and Elders that volunteer their time to create a better future for the next generation.

Our staff and consultants in 2017 include:

Abel Naborlhborlh	Dayna Namarnyilk	Josabella Cameron	Natasha Clarke (Hayes)
Alicia Smith	Dillon Brennan	Joshua Wurrkidj	Nerisha Nabalwad
Alison Ferber	Dionn Heitmann	Joy Nabegeyo	Nicole Alangale
Amanda Turner	Duane Djandjomerr	Judy Turner	Noreen Hayes
Angelina Hayes	Dulcie Sharpe	Julie Hayes	Perlin Simon
Annalee Stearne	Erin Maidment	Kamahl Djandjomerr	Raylene Djandjul
Anna Maria Palmer	Estefania Fernandez Diaz	Kaylene Djandjomerr	Rhonda Henry
Annie Cameron	Eva Hayes	Kestianna Djandjomerr	Rhonda Williams
Ashleigh Steel	Felicity Douglas	Kieran Bulliwana	Richie Nabarlambarl
Bernadette Wheeler	Felicity Hayes	Kimberley Namarnyilk	Romeo Jambulwanga
Beth Palmer	Fiona Ball	Larry Cunningham	Roxanne Naborlhborlh
Bethan Rees	Flint Djandjomerr	Lee Nabarlambarl	Russell Haines
Blanche Ebatarinja	Grace Gorey	Lena Tan	Samantha Eagle
Bram Morton	Grace Anthony	Lenny Wood	Selena Ebatarinja
Brett Butler	Graham Rostron	Leonie Palmer	Selone Djandjomerr
Cadell Goodman	Gwendolyn Djandjomerr	Leonie Sheedy	Sesha Whitehurst
Caitlin Anthony	Helen Fitzgerald	Libby Dummett	Shannon McLeod
Cara Goodman	Ian Djandjomerr	Lillian Alexander	Shirley Turner
Cathy Turner	Jane Ormonde	Lisa Walker	Sonya Nango
Cecily Djandjomerr	Jane Shanthini Vadiveloo	Loretta Djandjomerr	Stephanie Djandjul
Christianna Djandjomerr	Janella Ebatarinja	Lorrayne Gorey	Susan Indawanga
Christine Alangale	Janine Morton	Margaret Turner	Susanne Haines
Corianne Djandjomerr	Jarius Cameron	Mark Djandjomerr	Tamika Cooper
Cristina Nobleza	Jasmine Nabobbob	Marita McMillan	Therese Ryder
Damien Kamholtz	Jasper Brown	Martina Balmana	Ursula Nichaloff
Darius Cameron	Jennifer Lorains	Margaret Scobie	Veronica Turner
Darlene Thorn	Joanne Ferguson	Maureen Turner	William Pheasant
David Dodd	JoBeth Nayidji	May Nango	Wyonna Palmer
David James	John Lemibanda	Melissa Kean	Yvette Kirk

OUR VOLUNTEERS

The work of Children's Ground - in the Top End, in Central Australia and in our support office in Melbourne - would not be possible without the dedication and passion of our incredible team of volunteers. 2017 has been a wonderful year of growth of our volunteer program, with people of all ages and backgrounds lending us their time and expertise, whether for a couple of days or whether it's meant packing up their lives and travelling thousands of kilometres to support the work of community leaders in the Northern Territory. In 2017, our volunteers made our work possible by providing support across :

- Early years learning
- Resource development
- Media and communications
- Community events
- Housing and community development
- Nutrition and food preparation
- Fundraising
- Elder support
- Film and photography
- After hours activities
- Transport
- General operational support



Volunteers in 2017 include:

- Amanda Clatworthy
- Amber Coupe
- Caitlin Pheasant
- Calisha Gregg Rowan
- Daphne Gaulter
- Edie Bush
- Edith French
- Ester Koelle
- Ev Liong
- Grace Gorey
- Helen Miller
- Iona Julian-Walters
- Jasmin Gidgup
- Jess Lancaster
- Julie Ferry
- Katharine Spencer
- Kyra Lee-Hansen
- Liz Charls
- Louise Dorrat
- Marlena Flynn
- Nikki Crogan
- Patrick Pheasant
- Ruby Huzzey
- Shannon Mcleod
- Silkom Power
- Sophie Byrnes
- Estefania Fernandez Diaz
- Themba Wahlstrom
- Theresa Martin Lim
- Vicky Stevens



OUR SUPPORTERS

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT



PHILANTHROPY



The Brunner Family

Ramses Foundation



The Rogers Family



Beverly Jackson Foundation



Collier Charitable Fund

The Bonnici Family

David & Selina Baxby



Jessie Street Trust

Paul & Jane Hallam

The Duggan Foundation

Angel Fund

Australian Communities Foundation - Juno Fund

JB Davros Family Foundation

CORPORATE AND NGO SUPPORTERS



GOVERNMENT



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



LEARNING ON COUNTRY AT MPWERINGKE ANAPIPE, NORTHERN OUTSTATIONS, CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Address & Contact Details

Melbourne, VIC

2/10 Hoddle St | Abbotsford | VIC | 3067

Ph: +61 (0)447 903 084

Top End, NT

GPO Box 138 | Darwin | NT | 0801

Ph: (08) 8988 6987

Central Australia, NT

5 Bloomfield St | Alice Springs | NT | 0870

PO Box 140 | Alice Springs | NT | 0871

Ph: +61 (0)417 257 198

Email: cgadmin@childrensground.org.au

Web: childrensground.org.au

Facebook: facebook.com/childrensgroundaus

Instagram: Instagram.com/childrensground

Twitter: twitter.com/ChildrensGround

Donate to Children's Ground

childrensground.org.au/donations

“We want to teach kids their history as well as their culture; we want them to grow up with a strong identity. We want an education system for kids that is culturally appropriate. Now we are growing the fruit. We are the ones that need to make it happen. Kele (OK).”

**Arernte Governance Committee,
Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe (Children's Ground), Central Australia**