



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Children's Ground 2025 Annual Report: Communities creating the conditions for children to thrive

Children's Ground has released its [2025 Annual Report](#), highlighting the strength of community led solutions and the long term change being driven by First Nations communities across Central Australia, Darwin and West Arnhem.

The report demonstrates what is possible when communities lead long term investment in children, bringing together learning, health, employment, governance and culture in ways shaped by local priorities and aspirations.

In 2025:

- 1,502 community members engaged with Children's Ground
- 287 children participated in early learning in First Languages, culture and English
- 1,299 children and family members engaged in health and wellbeing programs
- 196 community based First Nations people were employed through Children's Ground
- 837 children, young people and families strengthened culture, language and identity
- 173 community members participated in governance and decision making

These numbers represent First Nations people holding authority over the decisions that affect their lives, designing solutions that reflect their priorities and creating the conditions for children to thrive.

The report captures the continued success of a community led system that supports children from before birth into adulthood. In Central Australia, nine years into implementation, communities are demonstrating what sustained investment can achieve through stronger local leadership, employment pathways and integrated support for children and families. Across Darwin and West Arnhem, communities continue to expand initiatives in response to community identified needs and ambitions.

The report reflects a significant milestone for Children's Ground, with an independent evaluation commissioned by the Australian Government confirming the Children's Ground Approach as an effective, evidence based model aligned with leading practice in prevention, early intervention and place based reform. The evaluation recommended a coordinated, multi departmental funding

approach over an initial seven year period. Children's Ground looks forward to working with governments to realise this recommendation and provide communities with the certainty needed to continue building opportunities for children and future generations.

The report also highlights the barriers that continue to affect children's lives, including inadequate housing, delays in progressing critical community infrastructure and limited access to essential health services. Children's Ground continues to advocate for coordinated, long term investment that addresses these barriers and supports communities to continue the progress outlined throughout this report.

Quote attributable to William Tilmouth and Evelyn Schaber, Co Chairs, Children's Ground

“At a time when too much of the national conversation is focused on crisis, punishment and deficit, this report tells a different story. It shows families leading change, children growing up strong in culture and identity, young people stepping into responsibility and communities creating opportunities for future generations.

“Across our regions, children are learning through First Languages and culture while building literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Families are accessing health and wellbeing support in community. Local people are employed in roles that strengthen both economic participation and cultural responsibility. For many communities, these opportunities have either been unavailable or delivered in ways that ignored culture, language and local priorities. It’s vitally important that we know who we are, that we are proud of who we are, and we understand our history, our identity, our culture and the struggles that we have to overcome.

“Today, communities are building something different and creating the foundations for long term change on their own terms.

“What gives us hope is that we can see the impact. Communities are investing in their children, strengthening their own authority and creating a future grounded in culture, opportunity and self determination. The challenge now is ensuring these community led solutions are backed with the long term commitment and investment needed to continue this progress for the next generation.”

END

Children’s Ground’s 2025 Annual Report: [View the report here](#)
