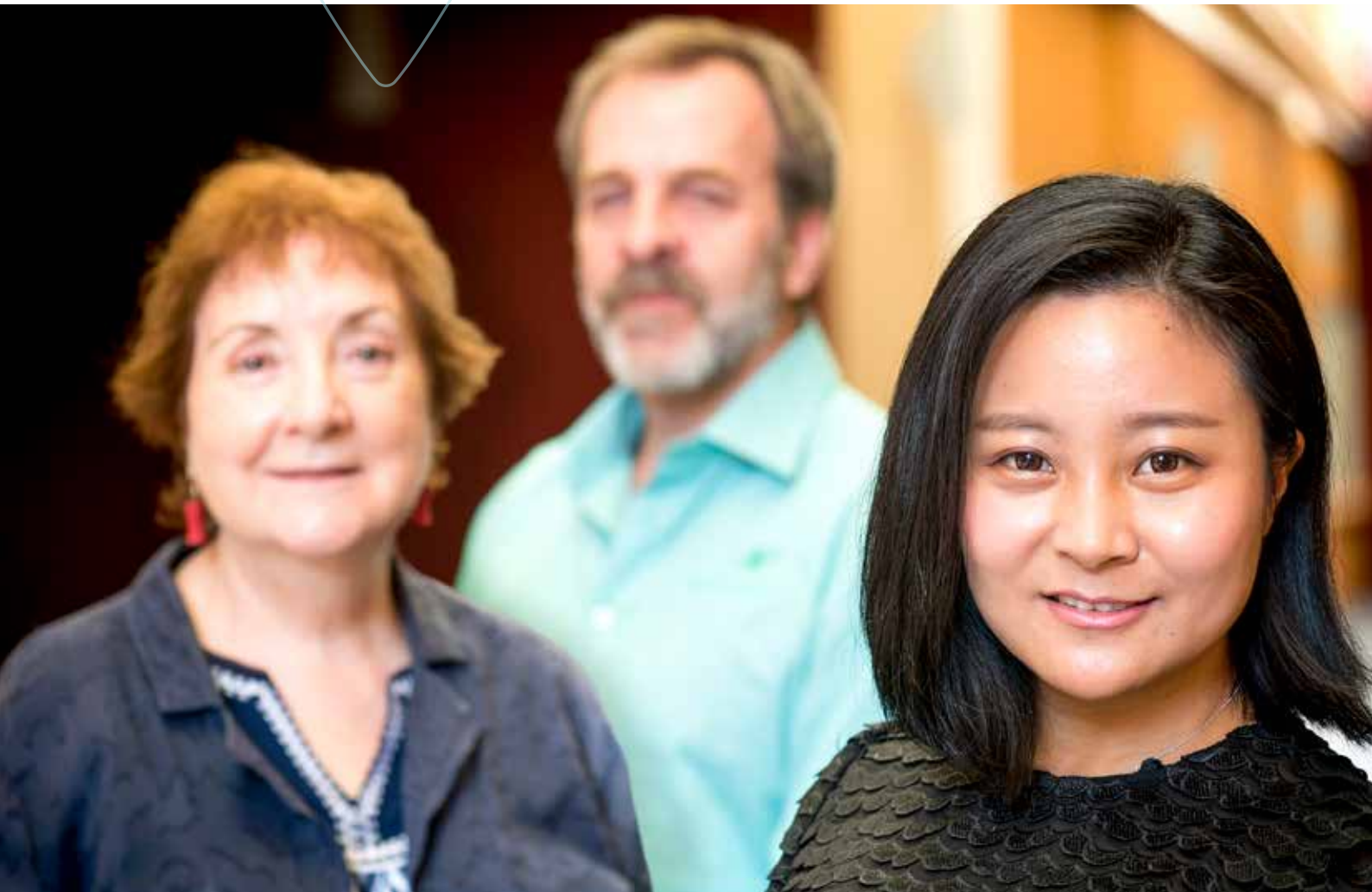




# Annual Report

Our town, your town

# 2016



yourtown  
let's create brighter futures

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**yourtown** is a charity with services

young people can access to find jobs, learn skills,  
become great parents and live safe happy lives.

# Our town your town

Giving young people choices

# 01

“We respect every young person is an individual and we give them a chance to find their place.”

– **Frankie Motilal**

**yourtown** Transition to Work Manager

## About **yourtown**

Since 1961, we've been tackling the issues affecting young people in Australia. Today, these include mental health, unemployment, and taking on family and domestic violence.

We take the time to listen, understand and encourage young people to find their place.

We aim to be part of the solution by delivering services that get results and give young people across Australia the chance of a brighter future.

With our work predominately funded by the community, it's together and by association that we give young people choices.



OUR VISION

young lives transformed,  
communities strengthened.



## **OUR MISSION**

To enable young people, especially those who are marginalised and without voice, to improve their quality of life.

# Chair and CEO's Message

This year was a landmark year for the organisation, from launching our new name and creative identity, to introducing new models of service delivery and expanding our presence into new communities. It's been a year that reflects much of what our organisation aims to represent – courage, belief and commitment to creating brighter futures for young people across Australia.

## Our new name

After wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders, we decided the time was right to move to a new name that fully reflects our work and strong connection with the community. Celebrating both the new and old is ultimately how we viewed the transition to **yourtown** on 28 February 2016. Being proud of what we have achieved, but having the courage to see that it was time for change, a time to represent the commitment to anyone who needs our services – after all, we don't just work with boys – and the understanding that making a real difference to the lives of others is something we aim to achieve in any town across Australia.

## Expansion of our services

**yourtown** has had a long-term commitment to supporting and advocating for young people needing a job, especially those who are long-term unemployed. This year saw a significant expansion to our services in this area.

Our partnership with Max Employment commenced on 1 July 2015 along with the official launch of the Australian Government's jobactive service. This partnership enables us to focus on supporting young people into employment in greater numbers in more sites across Australia.



“It’s been a year that reflects much of what our organisation aims to represent – courage, belief and commitment to creating brighter futures for young people across Australia.”

**Tracy Adams**  
CEO

Our engagement with the Transition to Work initiative also launched by the Australian Government sees us equipping young people to be 'work ready' and linked to opportunities within their communities to gain work. In addition, we launched ParentsNext, a program that helps parents prepare to join or re-enter the workforce.

Altogether, we have added 29 new sites to our organisation, expanding our presence in South East Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales, as well as setting up inaugural sites in Tasmania.

To support this expansion and other work, we implemented new business and operating models that are consolidated, contemporary and as effective as possible.

### Celebrations and awards

We celebrated two significant milestones for our telephone and online counselling/support services in 2016. Kids Helpline celebrated 25 years of providing support to children and young people nationally and Parentline celebrated 20 years of support to parents and carers in Queensland. Over the 25 years of Kids Helpline, more than 7.5 million responses have been made, and there is no doubt that many of those responses resulted in young lives changed and saved.

We very much pride ourselves on our dedication to the protection of children and are very proud of both our Kids Helpline @ School and Young Parents Program at Port Pirie for each winning National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) awards in 2015.

### Thank you

To our supporters, stakeholders and all of those who have engaged with our organisation over the past 12 months, thank you for sharing our vision of creating brighter futures.

In addition, we pay tribute to our long serving Board Chair, Br Ambrose Payne who retired after 14 tireless years of dedicated work in this position. We also acknowledge the outgoing members of our Executive Team whose service to our Mission over many years is one we are most appreciative of.

### New name, same purpose, same passion

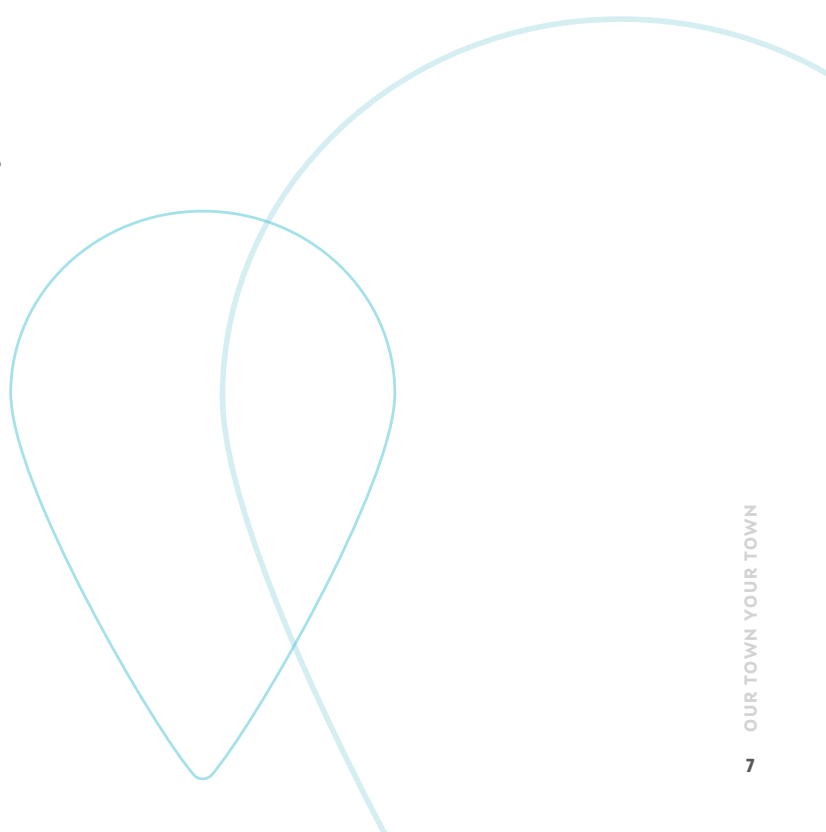
**yourtown's** courage, belief and commitment are unwavering. We may have a new name, but be assured we retain the same passion for helping young people to find their place.




**Gerry Lambert**  
Board Chair



**Tracy Adams**  
CEO





“The time was right to move to a name and identity which better reflects the inclusive nature of our work.”

**Tracy Adams**  
CEO

## BoysTown to yourtown

We first opened our doors as a Queensland based residential school for young men. So much of our organisation has changed since that time; the services we deliver, the help we offer and the way we interact with our community have all evolved.

Today, with programs and services at both a national and local level, we are in your community and your town, tackling the issues impacting the lives of young people – all young people, not just boys.

The time was right to move to a name and image that better reflects the inclusive nature of our work. As an inclusive organisation we need to make sure there are no impediments to young people accessing our services.

Our new identity represents our energy, positivity and aspirations, and showcases the sense of community we have as an organisation and the relationship we have with the community. ‘We are in this together’ with a strong belief in a future of promises and hope, of opportunity and potential.

‘Let’s create brighter futures’ encapsulates our spirit of optimism. It’s a roll up your sleeves statement suggesting a sense of belonging and making a positive change together.

Our new logo is inspired by map markers traditionally used to pin point one’s place in the world. They symbolise the opportunity for individuals to reach new heights, discover new directions, realise aspirations and find their place. The markers rise upwards to represent hope and growth and overlap to imply an ability to work together to achieve potential.

We have changed our name and our identity but we haven’t changed the essence of who we are, our values or our commitment to our Mission.

**Let’s create brighter futures** together.







## Our town

**yourtown** is committed to being recognised as a practical example of the Lasallian ethos and as such, to the following objectives:

- Behaviours that give witness to an organisational commitment to Lasallian Values, used as the foundation for all activities.
- Initiatives to promote engagement with the organisational commitment expressed as being 'together and by association'.
- Priorities in decision making that ensure the organisation is proactively involved with service to the disadvantaged.

## Our focus for the future

**yourtown** is accountable to those who rely on us and those who invest in us.

We're committed to best practice, working hard to achieve goals and measuring how we stack up.

Our Strategic Framework sets out our goals and objectives for delivering our Mission:

- Deliver high quality, evidence based, innovative services that break cycles of disadvantage and create independence in areas, and communities of high need.
- Position **yourtown** as a relevant, vibrant organisation well respected by the community.
- Foster a culture of individual and organisational accountability through shared mission and mutual responsibility.
- Ensure the sustainability of operations through diversity of funding and maintenance of appropriate financial reserves.

“What we do requires absolute commitment and a belief that we make a difference.”

Tracy Adams  
CEO

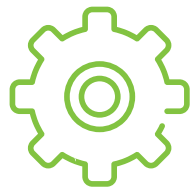
# Our values

The way we go about achieving our goals is just as important as reaching them. Our values are derived from the Lasallian Charism and, along with our Mission and Vision, are the foundation of **yourtown**.



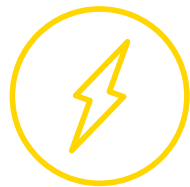
## Brother and Sister to all

We value each other and everyone we meet.



## Perseverance in Service

We never give up!



## Faith and Zeal

We do everything with energy and commitment.



## Innovation and Resourcefulness

We're not afraid to try new things.



## Professionalism

We stand for quality and lead by example.

# Ways we work

At the heart of who we are is how we respond to the needs of the disadvantaged.



## Respect

We respect others by listening and being honest.



## Excellence

We strive for excellence in what we do.



## Creativity

We're creative, working in ways that get amazing results.

# Our funding

**yourtown** has diverse funding sources, with Art Unions providing the majority of our revenue.



## Total revenue

- 64% ● Art Unions
- 22% ● Rendering of services
- 9% ● Government & other grants
- 3% ● Philanthropic & corporate income
- 2% ● Interest & other income



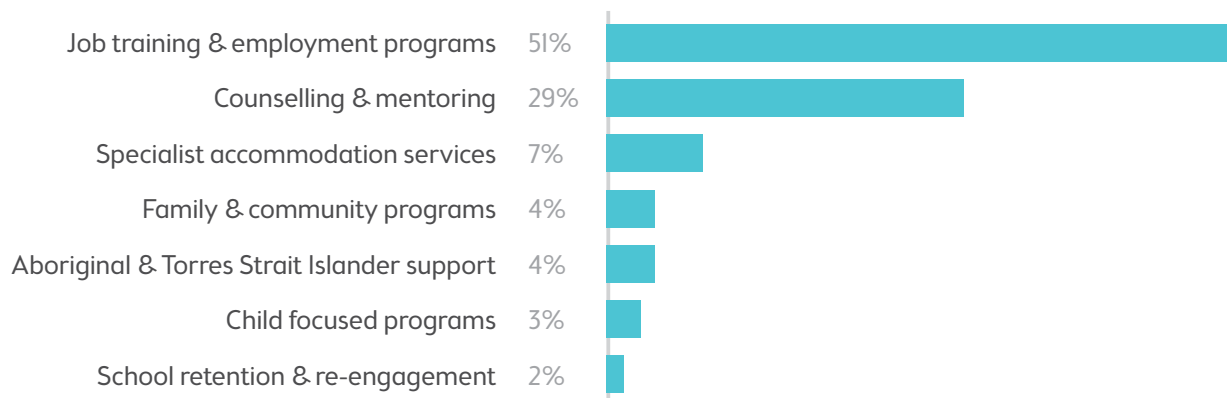
## How we spent our revenue

- 51% ● Client Services
- 1% ● Advocacy
- 23% ● Art Union prizes
- 15% ● Art Union Marketing & Administration
- 1% ● Fundraising other than Art Union
- 9% ● Corporate Administration



Josh was part of our Flexible Learning Options program in Adelaide. Initially he was very shy, quiet and felt he was unable to learn things. It was discovered he had a learning disability. Through tutoring and other support he is now enrolled in further education.

## Client Services expenditure



# Where are we?

Our service locations are prioritised to areas of high socio-economic disadvantage.<sup>1</sup> This includes places where high numbers of young people are unemployed, are without qualifications, or are in low skilled occupations, and/or are living in single parent households.

**yourtown** has 49 service centres in 36 locations across New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

Our business centre is in Milton, Queensland.

<sup>1</sup> **yourtown** disadvantage index informed by data that includes the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) and Education and Occupation (IEO) Indexes.



Kids Helpline is a national service.

Parentline operates across Northern Territory and Queensland.

The Domestic Violence Refuge is at an undisclosed location.

## New South Wales

Blacktown  
Campbelltown  
Cessnock  
Claymore  
Fairfield  
Ingleburn  
Maitland  
Mt Druitt  
Muswellbrook  
North Richmond  
St Marys

## Queensland

Beenleigh  
Browns Plains  
Caboolture  
Capalaba  
Deception Bay  
Ipswich  
Kingston  
Kippa-Ring  
Milton  
Victoria Point  
Woodridge

## South Australia

Elizabeth  
Enfield  
Kadina  
Kilkenny  
Port Pirie  
Salisbury  
Smithfield

## Tasmania

Bridgewater  
Burnie  
Devonport  
Glenorchy  
Launceston

## Western Australia

Balgo Hills



# Who we helped

Children, young people and families made more than **200,000** contacts with **yourtown's** helplines and more than **40,000** people accessed our face-to-face services in 2015-16<sup>1</sup>.

**191,818**

responses to children and young people by Kids Helpline<sup>1</sup>

**19,534**

people participated in our jobactive Employment Service (up from 9,758 in 2014-15)

**15,435**

children participated in Kids Helpline @ School

**8,713**

responses to parents and carers by Parentline<sup>1</sup>

**4,539**

people had contact with our Communities for Children program

**729**

young people participated in our Work Preparation and Training programs<sup>2</sup>

**640**

young people participated in our School Retention and Re-engagement programs

**540**

young people participated in our Transition to Work program<sup>2</sup>

In addition, **521,085** self-directed support and help seeking activities were made by children and young people via the Kids Helpline website.

<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on available data. Contact numbers for Kids Helpline and Parentline may include contacts by the same individual more than once. Participation numbers for our other services are as per individual only, although individuals may have contact with the service more than once.

<sup>2</sup> People accessing these services may have also accessed our other services.

**594**

people participated in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples support programs

**431**

parents and children were helped by our Specialist Accommodation Services

**316**

families participated in our Starfish mental health program

**162**

young people participated in our Work Enterprises<sup>2</sup>

**158**

parents and children participated in our Young Parents programs



# Insights

Young people matter

# 02

## Advocacy agenda

**yourtown's** advocacy work is focused on improving the lives of disadvantaged young people and their families. Our work with young people brings with it the responsibility of leveraging our knowledge of their experiences to bring about systemic change.

We continue to blend data, the voice of young people and a diverse range of expertise to create new, innovative and effective supports to empower children and young people to deal with relevant issues and concerns.

### Promoting respectful relationships

Pornography consumption makes up approximately 30% of all internet traffic, and whether intentional or accidental, children's exposure to pornography has dramatically increased as a result of the internet.

We shared our analysis of contacts to Kids Helpline from children and young people exposed to pornography with the Senate Inquiry into the harm to children caused by exposure to pornography on the internet.

Our research showed exposing children and young people to pornography had a damaging effect on the quality of their

peer relationships and in some cases encouraged sexual abuse by young people on other children and youth. We made a number of recommendations about how these concerns can be effectively managed within our community. This included community and educational awareness programs encouraging respectful relationships and providing children and young people with the skills they need to critically analyse sexualised media and empower them to challenge gender stereotypes.



## Preventing youth suicide

Suicide is the leading cause of death amongst 12-25 year old young people in Australia. Many organisations and individuals are working hard to develop strategies that will make a difference, but the voices of young people are often missing from the conversation.

This year, we surveyed 472 young people with lived experience of thinking about, planning and/or attempting suicide.

This is the first time in Australia such a comprehensive survey has been conducted with young people who have had a lived experience of suicide.

Young people gave us detailed responses as to how to listen more effectively to their concerns and how they wanted to be cared for. We presented this information at a National Policy Roundtable hosted by Orygen, The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health. Orygen used what we told them to help inform the redevelopment of the Commonwealth Government's youth suicide prevention policy.

## Tackling youth long-term unemployment

There are more than 50,000 young people in long-term unemployment across Australia and this figure is growing. We are trying to find the best ways to help.

**yourtown's** Strategy and Research Team released the **Tackling Long-term Youth Unemployment Discussion Paper** to share analysis and lead discussion around the issues associated with long-term youth unemployment. We are consulting with and inviting lead organisations to work together to find new strategies to address this critical issue.

We are also talking with young people experiencing long-term unemployment about what support they need to break the cycle of unemployment.

## Partnering to protect

Our research with Sydney University and the Black Dog Institute in relation to a new peer to peer support platform continues. This world first innovation will provide young people with support by peers and qualified counsellors on a purpose built social media platform. The aim of this platform is to reduce common mental and emotional health symptoms such as depression, anxiety and stress.

Research is also continuing with the Queensland University of Technology on the creative design of the Kids Helpline website to increase the reach and impact of existing text based self-help resources. This research is partly funded by the Australian Research Council.

Strategy and Research Team members include Brian Collyer, Dr Samantha Batchelor and Dr Claire Ryan



# What we do

Young lives transformed,  
communities strengthened

# 03

## Counselling and Mentoring

We take the time to listen, understand and encourage young people to find their place.

### Kids Helpline

“For 25 years, every 1.7 minutes of every day, Kids Helpline has answered a call for help.”

For 25 years, Kids Helpline (KHL) has been playing a critical role in protecting children and young people across Australia. No matter how big or small the problem, we help young people express themselves, build confidence and live safely.

We do this by:

Giving children and young people choices, support and someone to listen any time and for any reason

Children and young people can contact our professionally qualified counsellors directly on the phone and via email every

day of the week, every hour of the day. Live WebChat is also available from 8am to 12pm (AEST) seven days a week.

This includes:

- One-off counselling and crisis support
- Information and referral
- Ongoing counselling and case management.

Issues discussed can include anything from relationships with friends and family and school worries, through to homelessness, child abuse, body image, mental health, self-injury and suicide.

# KHL is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. This year, we proudly celebrate 25 years of the service.

Partnering with protection agencies, the corporate sector and educators to ensure the most vulnerable can access help.

We work closely with child protection authorities in every state and territory to inform social policy and ensure that our interventions will continue to keep children and young people safe. In 2015, this included 1,720 emergency care actions (Duty of Care) initiated by KHL to protect children and young people from immediate harm e.g. contacting the Police, Ambulance or other agency.

KHL is working with the National Children's eSafety Commissioner to help children and young people stay safe online. The Office refers cyberbullying-related contacts to KHL for the provision of counselling and support for young people experiencing issues arising from their online interactions. We also support young people making an official complaint to the Commissioner about cyberbullying.

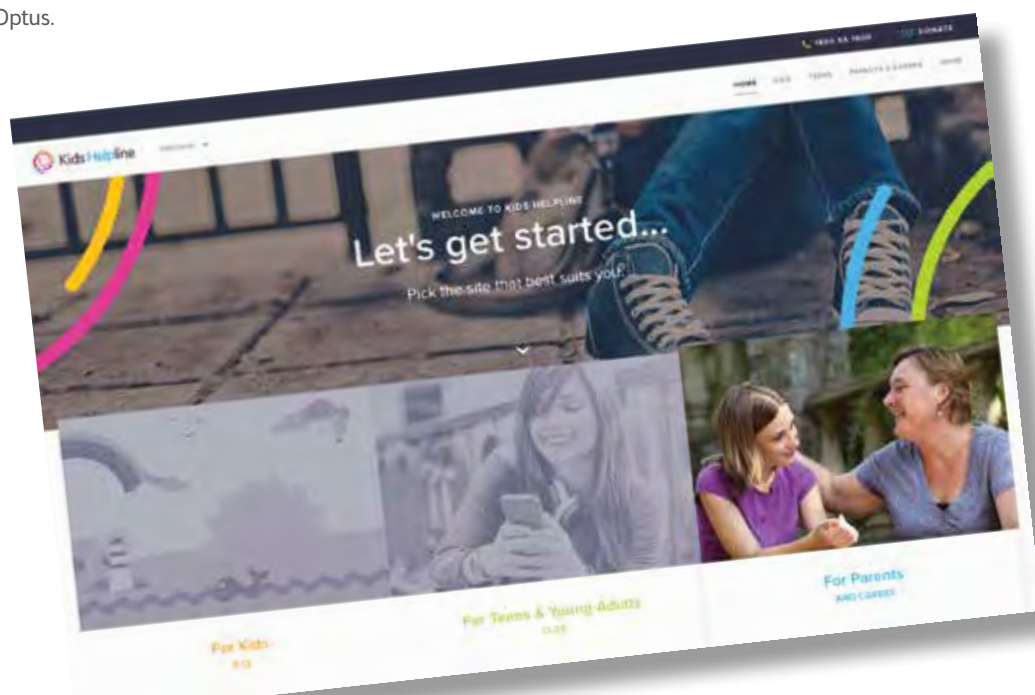
Our Kids Helpline @ School program brings education and information about key issues affecting young people into primary school classrooms via virtual technology and the funding support of Optus.

Responding to the changing needs of children and young people by finding new ways of being there 24/7.

KHL is working with a number of research partners to develop specialised online learning and counselling tools for children and young people.

## New KHL website

Already a leading source of self-help information, the KHL website has been redeveloped to attract our young, tech savvy, social audience and provide more rapid access to our web and email counselling service. The new look site has increased functionality, including improvements to real-time WebChat counselling, with an improved look and optimisation for mobile devices. The site was launched in early 2016.





## They saved her life...

“There are times I know I would not have made it through to the next morning if I hadn’t been able to call Kids Helpline... There’s no way I’d still be here today.”

**Molly**  
KHL client

“Every day I have with my daughter is precious. I don’t know if we would still have Molly if it wasn’t for Kids Helpline ... They have saved her life on numerous occasions.”

**Sue**  
Molly’s mum

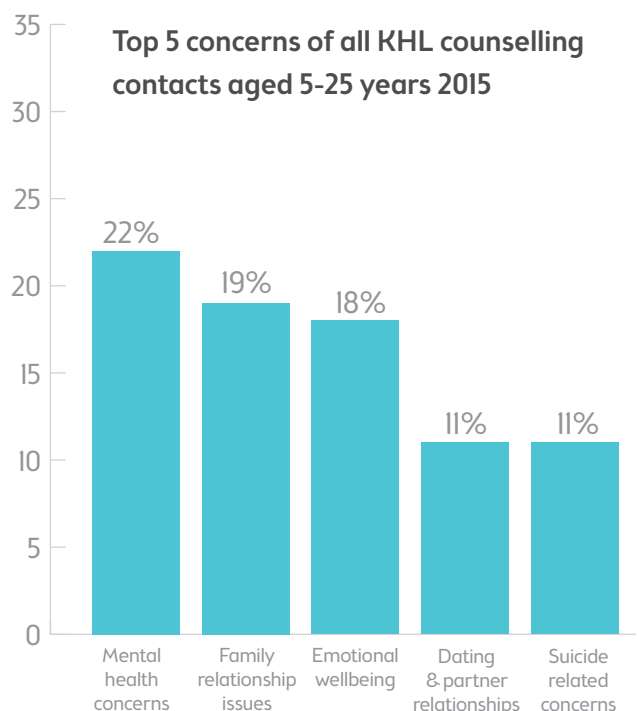
“KHL responded to more than 7.5 million (7,533,821) contacts from children and young people over 25 years.”

### Teens connect through Pandora

KHL teamed up with the Future Generation Investment Company (FGX) to create a branded radio station with Pandora Internet Radio that’s especially for teens, an Australia first initiative launched to let young people know help is available 24/7.

Pandora offers free personalised radio to listeners and has 500,000 registered 13-18 year olds in Australia. ‘KHL Good Vibes’ played feel-good pop songs loved by teens interspersed with KHL advertising from December 2015 to January 2016.

For more insights about KHL, check out our **2015 Kids Helpline Insights report** on our website.



Percentages total more than 100% because up to four issues may be recorded for each contact. (N=70,210)

# KHL turns 25!

KHL was created to give children and young people somewhere to turn when they needed help - particularly in relation to concerns such as abuse and neglect. Opening on 25 March 1991, more than 3,200 young people called us on our first day. Over the years we have made remarkable achievements and seen changes in why young people contact us, and also in how they do this.

In 1991, the internet did not exist the way we think of it today. In 2000, we were world leaders establishing the first real-time web counselling service. Today, we respond to thousands of contacts via chat and email and our website provides a wealth of information to children, young people and adults about key issues affecting young people. We also talk to classrooms across Australia via video conferencing.

In 2016, our services continue to evolve to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people, and maintain our promise to be there for them 24/7 for any reason.

Kids Helpline is 72% funded by **yourtown**. The Federal, Queensland and Western Australian Governments fund 28%.



Will and James join in the birthday celebrations!

## Changes in most common KHL concerns over 20 years

**+ 626%**

increase in contacts about mental health &/or emotional health, including self-injury<sup>1</sup>

**+ 246%**

increase in contacts about suicide<sup>1</sup>

**+ 58%**

increase in contacts about study and/or education issues

**- 89%**

decrease in contacts about contraception and safe sex

**- 81%**

decrease in contacts about pregnancy

**- 59%**

decrease in contacts about peer relationships

<sup>1</sup> Increase in mental health contacts likely due to increased community awareness of mental health issues, changes in counselling model and qualification, and increased age eligibility of KHL clients.



## Working at **yourtown** “This feels right...”

**MATT MIDDLETON**  
**COUNSELLING CENTRE SUPERVISOR**

If you'd like to know about Kids Helpline over the last 25 years then go no further than **yourtown** Counselling Centre Supervisor Matt. Starting with KHL in June 1991, Matt's been with KHL almost since day one.



A fresh faced 21 year old when he started, he left the third year of an advertising/graphic design degree to pursue a career in which he could help people. We asked Matt a few questions about his time at **yourtown**.

### **Why did you decide to work for KHL?**

"After a few work placements I realised that graphic design wasn't for me. My family had always had an interest in social justice. My mum had worked for the Department of Child Protection and we had foster kids live with us as I grew up. I saw an ad in the paper about a new service called Kids Helpline and thought, yes, this feels right."

### **What process did you follow?**

"I wrote a very honest application and was granted an interview, then went through a process that looked at whether a person had the values and attributes that made them right to be trained for KHL. Then and now, KHL worked around a unique therapeutic client-centred strength-based framework. I went through an eight week training program where employment was not confirmed until completed successfully."

Today, KHL still offers specialised training as part of the KHL recruitment process but also asks that staff have a tertiary counselling degree and one year of experience before coming on board. Many like Matt, who now has a Masters Degree in Counselling, have post-graduate degrees.

### **What have you seen change over your 25 years at KHL?**

"The internet and email did not exist in mainstream use in 1991 with the only form of non realtime communication via letter or written note. That's very different today.

Kids used to call us a lot when they'd been left home alone. This was very common in the 90s. Definitely a lot of adolescent and puberty related calls from those thinking about sexual relationships. General peer relationships, bullying and school related issues were also very common.

Today, we have similar themes but now technology has fed into that i.e. cyberbullying, sexting and alike issues. Technology can be helpful at times but can also amplify problems.

Over time, we have also put more robust procedures in place around risk and duty of care in line with other changes in the community. This has meant changes in the level of professionalism in terms of tightened procedures. These were really important given we extended our age range to 25 years. When we did that we started getting a lot more complex mental health calls from the older 18-25 age bracket. There was a lot higher risk of emergency care being needed. It's also meant longer wait times for people calling because our counselling sessions are longer."

### **What do you believe is the most challenging part of your job?**

"Two things come to mind. One is when it gets super busy, which it frequently does, where as a supervisor you can have multiple competing demands at any one time. Having to filter and prioritise in the heat of the moment where you could be juggling across one, two or three crisis contacts from clients at one time and at the same time responding to requests for debrief support and managing the other operational aspects of the shift. My job is to assist where needed which can include crisis contacts and help to decide if Duty of Care is necessary i.e. emergency support.

The other challenge is adequate self-care working with such traumatic presentations from clients, which can be anything and everything from suicide, abuse, break down or psychotic episodes."

### **What is the best thing about your job?**

"KHL has such an incredible reach. Almost every child and young person in Australia can have access to 24/7 support if they are feeling unsafe or would like to talk through any issue. This is part of what attracted me in 1991 as a 21 year old and this hasn't changed. If you stop and think, any child or young person who has access to a telephone or internet can access highly qualified and professional counselling as well as crisis support. We can be proud of this as a community and a country that we have an organisation that is mainly community funded that is able to support services like that.

I also work with amazing colleagues. We have a lot of amazing people from different backgrounds but they all have an interest in empowering and supporting young people and parents. They are also very interesting people in themselves. KHL attracts a certain kind of person - highly creative in all different kinds of ways."

# Parentline

Tailored to meet individual parent and carer needs, Parentline provides counselling, information and referrals to enhance the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and their carers.

Available to parents and carers across Queensland and the Northern Territory, the seven-day-a-week professional telephone and online counselling and information service helps parents work through issues like:

- Challenging behaviour and discipline of children
- Child mental health/emotional wellbeing
- Parent-child relationships
- Parenting strategies
- Parent mental health/emotional wellbeing.

All Parentline counsellors are trained Kids Helpline counsellors, giving them a unique understanding of issues facing parents and their children.

We know our service helps. Parent capabilities found to be common protective factors that prevent child abuse and neglect include:

- Parenting confidence
- Parenting strategies and skills
- Relationship with child/children
- Understanding of child/children
- Capacity to cope, and
- Ability to care for child/children.

Feedback from 660 parents and carers who used Parentline between 2011-15 showed that the service was very effective or effective in increasing these parent capabilities.

“The Counsellor I spoke to listened very well – didn’t interrupt. She was calm but she had personality. She reassured me that what I already knew was OK – I needed that reassurance. She gave that to me in a professional way with the human side of it.”

– Parentline caller

This year, Parentline responded to 8,713 contacts.

## Police referrals

Parentline works with the Queensland Police Service to support vulnerable parents and carers in the community to get the support they need 365 days a year.

Individuals and families benefit from a collective community response, with Police alerting Parentline to a need and our service being there to provide professional counselling and other support.

We do this by providing outbound non-crisis calls that support those experiencing issues such as:

- Domestic violence
- Mental health concerns
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Elder and carers support
- Legal assistance
- Accommodation assistance.



## Celebrating 20 years of Parentline

“Parentline has responded to more than 200,000 telephone and online contacts over 20 years.”

In 2016, Parentline celebrated its 20th birthday. Parentline came about because close to 10% of calls (15,000) to Kids Helpline in 1995 were from parents and carers asking for parenting help. Many of these people were over the age of 25 years.

In response, we trialled a parent-focused service across South East Queensland. The aim was to provide a professional counselling service that educated and encouraged parents and carers to build on their strengths to better understand and work with their family, and find solutions to challenges. The trial was an overwhelming success with Parentline officially launched

across Queensland in 1996, and extending to the Northern Territory in 2004.

Children’s challenging behaviour has stayed the number one concern over the last two decades. The most notable change to contacts was around the mental and emotional health of children, with contacts about this almost doubling (6% to 10%) in 20 years.

For more insights about Parentline over the last 20 years, check out our **2015 Parentine Insights 20 Years report** on our website.

Parentline is funded by the Queensland and Northern Territory Governments.

“90% of parents surveyed said Parentline increased parenting confidence, strategies and skills or improved their relationships with their children.”

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk joined in the helpline’s celebration and met with Parentline counsellors about issues affecting parents and carers who contact the service

Parentline  
1300 30 1300





# Youthful Offenders Program

**yourtown** works with young people in prisons to support positive behaviours while incarcerated and lays the foundation for re-engaging with family, education, employment and the community.

For many young people in prisons repeated incarceration is normal. For these young people childhood is often marked by trauma, family circumstances are chaotic, and substance abuse and mental health issues are common. Some have barely known freedom since the age of 10, moving directly from juvenile detention to adult prison. In 2013, Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) invited **yourtown** to develop and pilot the Youthful Offenders Program to address the needs of this group.

We work with young men aged 18 to 25 at Woodford Correctional Centre and aged 17 at the Brisbane Correctional Centre. We combine intensive individual support with workshops that help young men address their personal challenges, stay safe while incarcerated, and make achievable plans for a future outside the criminal justice system.

We do this by:

- Addressing the underlying causes of offending and re-offending
- Improving core skills
- Identifying strategies to achieve goals and meet challenges
- Supporting participants to re-engage with family, education, employment and community.

The program is funded by the Queensland Government.

This year, 159 young people took part in the program.

# Supporting Children

Every child has the right to a brighter future. **yourtown** provides the resources and tools they need to achieve that through early intervention programs and specialised creative therapies.

## Expressive Therapy

Expressive Therapy is a creative arts and play therapy developed for children with emotional and behavioural problems that may stem from exposure to trauma.

The therapy aims to improve emotional and social wellbeing, behavioural adjustment, quality of attachment relationships and self-concept. Operating within a trauma and attachment-informed therapeutic framework, it is integrated within family support programs at our domestic and family violence refuge and the young parents program in South East Queensland.

Therapists work with infants and young children to communicate and express their experiences through art, movement, music and play and to build safe and trusting relationships with their parents/carers.

Therapy sessions are in a dedicated therapy room or outdoor space, based on the needs of the child, and are offered individually, between the parent-child, with siblings or with other family or groups.

The provision of Expressive Therapy in **yourtown's** domestic and family violence refuge has become an important component of our refuge model. Like traditional refuge models, we ensure families are safe and housed, but we also address the traumatising effects of family violence on children.

A **yourtown** two year evaluation of the program found the therapy resulted in significant improvements to children's social, emotional and behavioural functioning, self-confidence and self-esteem, and in the quality of the parent-child attachment relationship.

The program was funded by the Margaret Pemberton Foundation.

This year, 138 children and 88 families participated in 713 individual and 316 group sessions.

“Our work with infants is ground-breaking, with few therapists and organisations in Australia working with this age group in this way.”

# Finding his voice

Mum of five, Jess, was struggling. She and her husband had tried to get their nine year old son Daemon the support he needed but nothing seemed to work. **yourtown's** Expressive Therapy program was about to change all that and give Daemon a brighter future.

Daemon had been diagnosed with autism and selective mutism, and experienced high levels of anxiety. His parents had tried many Doctors and treatments but not much seemed to work. The Doctor they had was no longer available and the waiting list for a new Doctor or therapist was months long. Jess and her husband did not know what to do next and worried about the future for Daemon and their family.

While taking medication to help, Daemon was still too frightened to do most things others take for granted. He hated leaving the house and even brushing his teeth made him feel anxious. Daemon did not speak to anyone outside his immediate family, which made things extra hard for him. He did not talk to his school teacher or other children in his class.

At her wits' end, Jess spoke with the school counsellor who knew of **yourtown's** Expressive Therapy program offered at Deception Bay. Jess had tried everything else and thought "why not?".

Daemon and his family were soon working with therapists at **yourtown**. We worked with Daemon, then together with his siblings and mum, to work through his anxiety and other issues. Selective mutism is rare in Australia. His therapist, Tanya, found there were no indicators of trauma in his past to explain the anxiety disorder he was experiencing. The world and everything in it just seemed to frighten Daemon.

Daemon found sensory interaction with sand (sand play) very calming. Other treatment included painting and drawing what was going on in his life as well as role-play using dolls or puppets.

After several months with the program he began to talk to his therapist and then to others, including his school teacher as well as some new people he had just met. He was also significantly less anxious.

We asked Jess what this meant to Daemon and their family.

"The future for Daemon is bright now. He has a future. He'd had a lot of time off school, behavioral issues and was in constant meltdown. Now he's happy, he's calm. He's off his anxiety medication. He can speak to people. It's brought calm to the house and new perspectives on dealing with behavioural issues. It's meant we can do things as a family and not worry so much."

And would Jess recommend **yourtown** to others?

"Yes! Absolutely! The work **yourtown** do is fantastic and it works. The range of therapies is very good. The therapists are lovely. It's just a fantastic environment for kids and adults to be in."

"The future for Daemon is bright now. He has a future."

- Jess



Jess with Daemon and his younger brother and sister Brandan and Lucy

# ‘Starfish’ Mental Health Program

Starfish is a service that works with families to support children and young people aged up to 18 years who may be experiencing challenges relating to their emotional and mental health.

We aim to assist families where there are early signs of mental health challenges or children are at risk of poor mental health outcomes. The service also works to raise awareness of issues that may lead to poor mental health outcomes and reduce stigma associated with mental illness.

Support includes intensive long-term case management as an early intervention; short term support; practical assistance and home-based support; links and referrals to other local services and resources; targeted therapeutic groups and counselling. Mental health education, information workshops and community development outreach for parents and groups are also provided.

Starfish is offered in South East Queensland and is funded by the Federal Government.

This year:

- More than 300 people received support
- More than 3,200 people attended mental health information and education sessions

# Kids Helpline @ School

This innovative early intervention and prevention program uses technology to connect primary school aged children with knowledge that can positively impact their emotional and mental health.

Kids Helpline counsellors interact with children in their own classrooms, via video link or phone. Teachers work with the counsellor to develop a session based on the needs of the students, and play an important role in co-facilitating the session. Discussions help children develop their skills, resilience and ability to reach out for help when needed.

Our counsellors talk with classes in real time about issues that commonly cause problems for children. These include bullying, staying safe online, cyberbullying, transitioning to high school, friendships and feeling sad.

Since the program commenced in 2013, KHL has seen an increase in contacts from primary school aged children (from 8% in the 2013 calendar year to 12% in 2015) suggesting that more children have knowledge of KHL and have the confidence and trust to contact the service when they need help.

Optus provides funding support for the program.

This year, 15,435 children accessed the program.

BELOW: Kids Helpline @ School session



Supported by:



“Kids Helpline @ School (KAS) is part of KHL’s commitment to protect children by providing intervention and education about key issues affecting them.”

### What teachers and students said about Kids Helpline @ School

- 89% of students said they had more ideas about how to deal with the issue discussed
- 87% of students said they would consider contacting KHL if they had a problem
- 91% of teachers said the sessions appeared to improve their students’ understanding of the topic discussed
- 96% of teachers said they would recommend the program to other teachers and schools

“It was helpful because I can be really shy at times and you guys (helped me) sort of come out of my shell and to be more confident.”

– Student



### Winner in national child protection awards

Kids Helpline @ School was recognised by the National Association for Prevention of Child Protection Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) ‘Play Your Part’ awards 2015.

The awards recognise organisations that have played their part to prevent child abuse and neglect through promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Australia.

KAS received the award as an inspiring example of collaboration between the private (Optus), NGO (Kids Helpline) and public sector (schools) to not only promote the safety and wellbeing of children through prevention and early intervention, but also provide support to children that was inclusive and engaging.

Social Services Minister Scott Morrison presented the award at the Mother Teresa Primary School, Canberra



# Strengthening Families and Communities

Healthy families are the heart of strong, dynamic communities.

Unfortunately, some people in disadvantaged areas often face challenges that tear families apart rather than build them up. We aim to be part of the solution by delivering services that tackle grass-root issues affecting our community.

## Communities for Children (CfC)

**yourtown** as the CfC facilitating partner for Deception Bay, Queensland, works in collaboration with partner organisations and key stakeholders on a whole of community approach to enhancing early childhood development and wellbeing for children up to 12 years.

Using prevention and early intervention based individual and targeted community activities, we focus on those who are socially disengaged, isolated, and/or may be lacking in confidence due to challenges with language, transport and limited personal networks.

We aim to give children the best start in life by working towards:

- improved health and wellbeing of families and the development of young children from before birth through to 12 years of age
- creating strong, child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this to maximising the health, wellbeing and early development of young children.

We offer free physical and other activities for children and families encouraging families to do more physical activity, eat healthier, connect with their children's education and build connections with community services.



This year, achievements included:

- 4,251 contacts from vulnerable children and families with outreach learning and literacy activities and events
- 25 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents/carers, along with their children, were supported to build connections with community activities and services
- 240 free physical activities were offered to children and families
- 1,600 connections were made with children and families through parent-focused activities
- 25 local community practitioners were trained and delivered three evidence-based parenting programs
- 41 parents and carers completed evidence-based parenting programs.

CfC is funded by the Federal Government.

# Specialist Accommodation Services

Families have become the fastest growing group facing homelessness in Australia, and families with children now comprise one third of the nation's homeless.

## Family and Domestic Violence Refuge

**yourtown's** Family and Domestic Violence Refuge accommodates up to seven mothers and 28 children (including sons aged up to 18 years).

Many women and children at the refuge live with unresolved and complex trauma, compounded and reinforced over time by domestic and family violence.

Families in our refuge participate in an individually tailored program within a strengths-based and trauma informed framework. We work one-on-one with women to deal with the issues that prevent families moving forward. Issues can include:

- Complex legal matters
- Mental ill health
- Substance abuse
- Financial stresses
- Parenting concerns
- Need for post-refuge housing
- Fear of physical attack by the perpetrator of violence.

The refuge is funded by **yourtown**.

This year in total, 308 individuals received support. Seventy-three (73) families were accommodated at the refuge with a further 42 families helped via outreach support.

## San Miguel Family Centre

San Miguel offers short-term and transitional accommodation to help families experiencing homelessness.

Social housing is under intense pressure. Even families with the most complex, numerous and persistent barriers can wait two years or more for a permanent roof over their heads.

Vulnerable families can become chronically homeless – living in cars, staying with friends or family for temporary periods, or sleeping rough. Children in these families may miss out on school, dental appointments and vaccinations. Older children often become default carers.

The San Miguel Family Centre in North Richmond, New South Wales is one of a handful of specialist accommodation services available to assist families experiencing homelessness. Our team utilises individual case management, child and youth development work and outreach support to assist families to achieve sustainable, independent accommodation. San Miguel can accommodate 15 families in separate residences (including larger families with six or more family members).

The New South Wales Government through Mission Australia funds approximately 15% of the service. **yourtown** funds the remaining 85%.

This year, 27 homeless families received shelter and support on site at San Miguel, and seven families were assisted via outreach. Sixty-six (66) children participated in our Child and Youth Development Program while on site. More than 90% of the families that exited San Miguel transitioned to independent tenancy.

# ParentsNext

ParentsNext helps parents prepare to join or re-enter the workforce by the time their youngest child starts school.

In 2015, **yourtown** won the opportunity to deliver ParentsNext in the city of Playford, South Australia.

We assist parents to set short and long-term goals to build their confidence to re-engage in education activities that lead to employment. Our trainers offer a range of programs to build work readiness and help young people explore accredited educational pathways.

Our new ParentsNext site will offer young people a training and study space with a fully equipped play room for children.

We are keen to give young people a voice in their community. Our ParentsNext Advisory Committee gives parents this opportunity and helps involve them in local community projects.

The program is funded by the Federal Government.

This year, 284 parents were part of the program.

# Young Parents Program

Being a young parent brings unique challenges. **yourtown** helps young parents learn good parenting skills and form supportive relationships.

The Young Parents Program offers practical parenting support for parents and carers aged 14-25 years and their children. Set in a friendly home like environment, our child and family development specialists help young families with life skills, health and wellbeing support, as well as encourage positive relationships by creating child development activities that respond to the needs of each child and parent.

This program operates in Deception Bay, Queensland and Port Pirie, South Australia.

In Port Pirie we also offer the Care Plus Program for parents with children up to the age of 18. We provide families with strategies to:

- strengthen connections between home and the school community, including school participation
- improve social and emotional wellbeing
- strengthen family relationships.

We do this through case management, individual and group and family activities.

The Young Parents Program is funded by **yourtown**. Care Plus is funded by the Federal Government.

This year, 158 parents and children took part in the program.



ABOVE: Education and Child Development Minister, Susan Close presented **yourtown's** Elisabeth Kobierski and Jo Vanstone with the award

## National recognition for child protection

In 2015, the Young Parents Program in Port Pirie was honoured to receive the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) 'Play Your Part' South Australia State award for its focus on early intervention and the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.



Working at **yourtown**  
“It’s not about ‘me’  
– it’s about us.”

**JO ANN VANSTONE**  
**YOUNG PARENTS PROGRAM TEAM LEADER**

Jo’s keen interest in behavioural science and contact with **yourtown** via a school program saw her undergo a sea change and get a job at **yourtown**.

After six years as a nurse and with a keen interest in 'how and why people tick', Jo decided to study behavioural science. Her work at John Pirie Secondary School, Port Pirie supporting the Flexible Learning Program also meant she had frequent contact with **yourtown** and the work the organisation did with young people at the school. Really liking what she saw, in 2011, she became the Team Leader for **yourtown's** Young Parents program. We asked her about her work with **yourtown**.

### **What does a Team Leader do?**

"I coordinate services for young people and children as well as expectant parents through to families with kids as old as 18 years. I lead a team that includes two Child Development Workers and a Family Worker with our Care Plus program. Together, we case manage families on an individual or family basis."

### **Why do you work for yourtown?**

"Because I'm a people person and I want to help anyone who needs support to get it. I like helping people, like to see them succeed and love interacting with young families."

I believe our program works because it's not about 'me' - it's about us. We work with like-minded people who share the same passion for doing what we do. It's doing the best we can do for those who need us."

### **How many clients do you believe you've helped over the years?**

"Forty to 50 families over the last five years. These range from single parent families to parents with four kids."

### **What do you believe is the most challenging part of your job?**

"Child protection is never easy - having to report issues related to signs of abuse and neglect and when kids are at risk. Thankfully, this is not often."

It's also hard sometimes to build relationships with families when they have been experiencing hardships and feel they've nowhere to go. We say we can help but they've heard this story a million times and feel 'nothing is going to happen for me - why bother?' We need to build that level of trust and that doesn't happen overnight."

### **What is the best thing about your job?**

"Seeing families succeed. It's fantastic to see their growth - their interactions with their children develop."

I love having the freedom to support them [families and children] the best way that will work for them.

I really believe that half of the success of the program is due to being in a casual home like environment. They don't feel the pressure of being in a clinical setting and are more relaxed. We work hard to make it a place they want to be, to know we're on their side. Give them a second, third, fourth chance and go above and beyond to help them.

The other day I received the greatest compliment when someone who at first did not think we could help at all told me 'You're brilliant!' They had asked us for help and we'd done what we said we would."



# School Retention and Re-engagement

**yourtown's** qualified specialists and trained mentors work with young people struggling in school, and many who've already left, to address their challenges in learning.

## Flexible Learning and Youth Engagement Programs

When young people are identified as being at high risk of leaving school early, our team works hard to understand the issues at hand and offer practical solutions leading to positive outcomes.

### Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program

**FLO helps young people aged 14-17 years who are at risk of early school leaving to remain in formal education or plan for transition to work.**

We work in close partnership with schools, local community organisations and employers to provide flexible learning options and supports matched to each young person's needs, interests and aspirations. Young people are engaged in activities that build self-esteem, enhance life and interpersonal skills and encourage interest in pursuing further learning.

Support includes:

- Diagnostic testing to identify barriers to learning
- A plan matched to individual needs, interests and aspirations
- Referrals to specialists to address personal, health and social concerns

- Help resolving obstacles to finishing school
- Career counselling
- Life skills workshops aimed at improving self-confidence and interpersonal skills
- Support completing an education program in line with the Australian Core Skills Framework
- Assistance transitioning to the next phase of learning, either through formal education, further training or employment.

FLO is offered in Adelaide and Port Pirie, South Australia, and is funded by the South Australian Government.

This year, 116 young people were supported by the program.

### Youth Engagement Program

**yourtown's Youth Engagement Program (YEP) is a youth support service designed to assist young people aged 14-16 who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, from mainstream schooling to re-connect with the community, learning and work.**

The program has a dual focus: supporting young people struggling to stay at school, and supporting existing early school leavers to make a successful transition to other training or education.

**yourtown** delivers YEP in the Redlands, Logan and Ipswich areas in South East Queensland.

Early school leaving is associated with a range of negative outcomes across a lifetime. Young people who leave school early are more likely to become unemployed, have low earnings, receive welfare support, have poorer physical and mental health, higher crime rates, and lower levels of connectedness to community than those who complete their education. These young people go on to have families of their own and are less able to support their children's education, contributing to intergenerational disadvantage. YEP supports young people to disrupt this cycle.

The program is run by a team which includes qualified Youth Workers, a re-engagement teacher, volunteer coordinators and community mentors.

The program is funded by **yourtown**.

#### Key achievements in 2015/16:

- 493 young people supported
- 280 outcomes comprising 211 return to education, 17 got jobs and 52 went on to further training.

## Art Workshop Program

The Art Workshop Program provides young people and the community an opportunity to express themselves using art as their voice.

Many of the young people we work with have backgrounds that include violence, neglect, abuse, depression, isolation and fear of what they feel. Through the Art Workshop Program young people are given the opportunity to create personal art works to express thoughts and emotions they are struggling to articulate.

We offer one day to five week workshops that can include canvas inspirational word art, torso plaster sculptures, puzzle pieces and murals. Participants learn vital skills such as teamwork, compassion for others, inner strength development and confidence. Through art, they find their voice.

We work with women's and men's groups, schools, youth or community groups.

The program is funded by **yourtown**.

This year, we had a number of amazing projects completed by **yourtown** young people and community organisations that included work for the Brisbane Festival, beautifying the Woodridge railway station bus shelter and our totem poles proudly displayed on stage at the Creative Generation event at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre.

“We help young people create an external expression of their personal journey in a way that is emotional, honest, and often thought provoking.”



Aboriginal Elders and Totem Pole Artists worked with young people and yourtown's Evangeline Goodfellow on this community project displayed at a Creative Generation event

“At the heart of the program is the opportunity for young people to connect with their youth worker in a supportive environment to work towards making positive change in their lives.”

## Youth Skills

Youth Skills provides a solid foundation for participants to complete a nationally recognised qualification as a way of reconnecting with education, whilst improving their life and social skills.

Starting in January 2016, the program supports young people aged 15 to 19 who have had dealings with the Queensland justice system by engaging them in training that will lead to a nationally recognised Certificate I in Core Skills in Education and Certificate II in Skills for Vocational Pathways.

Participants often face major barriers to education or employment, including learning difficulties, drug and alcohol addiction, mental health issues and family relationships. Led by a qualified trainer and supported by a Youth Worker and volunteer tutors, the program is offered for a minimum of two days a week during school terms.

Adventure based learning and practical activities, including sport, are often used to promote engagement. We also work in partnership with Youth Justice and other agencies to ensure participants are provided with the support needed to succeed.

Youth Skills is funded and supported by the Queensland Government through its Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.





# Job Training and Employment

**yourtown** works with government agencies, businesses and organisations to offer personalised attention to young people who need skills, training and employment to create brighter futures.

## Job Recruitment and Employment

Young people are among the most disadvantaged in the labour market and make up the largest proportion in long-term unemployment compared to other age groups. **yourtown** is tackling this issue by being part of the solution, getting results.

## jobactive Employment Service

Starting in 2003 with a single site in Queensland, **yourtown** has grown to be one of Australia's largest providers of youth specialist job services.

From 1 July 2015, we commenced a partnership with MAX Employment, a highly successful provider of Employment Services and Australia's largest.

This has allowed us to expand our Employment Service to more sites in South East Queensland, Western Sydney and Northern Adelaide and introduce our services in the Hunter Valley and Tasmania. We now operate as a sub-contractor for the Federal Government's jobactive service in 26 sites across Australia.

We provide free recruitment services for young people aged up to 30 years, specialising in filling entry level and semi-skilled positions and help employers source, evaluate and place qualified candidates for positions.

“The partnership with MAX has allowed us to take our face to face services to more young people than ever before, and to more of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia.”

**Brendan Bourke**  
**yourtown** Head of Client Services

This year, over 19,000 young people were assisted by the program with close to 6,000 placed into employment.



## A job that fits

When Kerri was referred to the **yourtown** Employment Service, she had no job, was experiencing family conflict and was worried about having somewhere to live.

Kerri had been sharing a rented home but had just learnt this was up for sale. She worried she would soon have to find somewhere else to live, pay the cost of moving and pay higher rent, something she could not afford.

Our Employment Team made it a priority to find Kerri a job. She had thought hard about what she wanted to do in life and that was horticulture. She loved working outdoors and had tried to get work but “was getting nowhere”.

The Employment Team found her a place in a Certificate III in Horticulture, which she completed with flying colours. Soon after, an opportunity came up with MLK Cleaning that was right up Kerri’s alley. The job involved grounds maintenance, including mowing, turfing and trimming. The team knew Kerri was the right person for the job and she was. Kerri was soon at work and loving it!

“We go into Housing Commission houses and fix, repair and tidy up the yard and make it all good again for the next people who live there and deserve to have a welcoming environment.

This job fits perfectly with who I am and I fit in with the people working around me. That can sort of be hard to do in life. It means the world.” Kerri

Allen from MKL Cleaning said he’s more than glad to have Kerri on board.

“She’s keen and works hard, does a great job and has a happy outlook. She wishes everyone a good morning and just has a great attitude to work. I’m more than happy that she’s come to work for us.” Allen

# Transition to Work

**yourtown’s** new Transition to Work (TTW) program provides intensive support to improve the work readiness of unemployed early school leavers who are at high risk of long-term unemployment.

In March and April 2016, we opened 12 Transition to Work sites located in some of Australia’s most disadvantaged regions: Mid North South Australia, Brisbane South East, Ipswich, South West Sydney and Greater Western Sydney.

Young people aged 15-21, who have not finished year 12, gain the skills, motivation and attitude to succeed in the workplace. We build industry awareness and understanding, and help young people develop the qualities that employers want.

We do this by offering:

- training to develop core capabilities and understand workplace expectations
- workshops that improve interpersonal skills, teamwork and workplace communication
- personal development through individual and group mentoring.

TTW provides an alternative to Employment Services (jobactive) for young people and provides an individually tailored approach to gaining skills and experience for entering the workforce.

TTW is funded by the Federal Government.

In 2016, 540 young people have started with TTW and over 100 young people have got jobs or gone on to further education.



“TTW uses **yourtown’s** extensive experience and expertise in strength based youth focused services.”

“I really don’t know where I’d be if I hadn’t found **yourtown**. I think I’d be on the street.”

- Torey

## Torey’s story

When Torey was 16 years old she began taking drugs.

“I was in a domestic relationship for two years and went on drugs. He was on drugs and I sort of went along with it. It really was a stupid decision.” Torey

Then Centrelink referred Torey to **yourtown**.

“I was on drugs for three years and coming here helped me a lot. Tanya’s been there the whole way through it. She helped me a lot. Got me into counselling. She was sort of like a mother figure for me. I don’t really talk to my family. I’ve been drug free for a year now.

My anxiety is through the roof - I’m really nervous and stuff. I’ve gone into work and I’ve left so many good opportunities because I’d freak out. I felt I’m not good enough for anything. Why would they want me? Tanya has been helping me through all of this.

She’s helped me get some volunteer work to calm my nerves and get me used to people, be less anxious, feel more confident.

I know these are little steps but I’d really like to work and I think I’m ready to try and do this.

I really don’t know where I’d be if I hadn’t found **yourtown**. I think I’d be on the street.” Torey

The Tanya that Torey referred to is **yourtown** Transition to Work Employment Consultant, Tanya Quinn. She had this to say about Torey:

“She’s a good kid that’s been through a lot but is very determined to find herself again. It’s the determination and resilience that our kids show that makes me want to do what I do. One’s like Torey try even harder when they feel they are against the odds. I will do everything I can to be there for them.” Tanya

# yourtown Work Enterprises

**yourtown** provides motivated young people with paid work and on-the-job training in its own not-for-profit enterprises to help prepare them for open employment.

Over 2,500 young people have benefited from paid work experience through our enterprises over the last 16 years. Young people need to learn what is expected of them in the workplace. On-the-job training gives them a supportive environment to develop these skills.

Trainers provide young people with vocational skills and knowledge. They also take on the important role of mentor, encouraging young people to adopt positive work attitudes, habits and personal behaviours required for future employment.

Our Youth Workers provide additional assistance, offering individual support alongside life skills and personal development training. Young people also receive the help needed to transition to ongoing employment.

The enterprises operate in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

They are funded by **yourtown** and fee for service contracts.

This year, 162 young people received paid employment to complete projects that included residential house construction, landscaping, fencing, grounds maintenance and graffiti removal.

## It gave me confidence to keep going

Chris was having a hard time getting a job and finding things were tough. He came to **yourtown** and was employed to work on a number of Enterprise projects that included grounds maintenance in the suburbs of Western Sydney.

Our Enterprise Trainers and Youth Worker helped Chris work on his mental health, learn new skills and gain work experience.

Slowly, Chris' confidence grew as he learned how to use various work tools, build his communication skills and achieve goals he set out to do.

Within six months of working with **yourtown** Enterprises, Chris was able to obtain his learners and then provisional drivers license and budget to buy his first car. Knowing what he could achieve once he set his mind to it, Chris is now more confident, believing he can achieve and transition to ongoing employment.



"I was able to achieve so much within six months with the help of my trainer and youth worker. It gave me the confidence to keep going, set new goals and keep pushing myself." Chris

# Work Preparation Training Programs

**yourtown** works with government agencies, businesses and organisations to offer personalised attention to young people who need skills, training and employment to create brighter futures.

## Get Set for Work

Get Set for Work (GSFW) provides 15 to 19 year olds with nationally accredited training at a Certificate II level.

For many young people, GSFW provides them with an avenue to complete and obtain their very first qualification. It is the first time for many of them to achieve and succeed at something. With the right support and mentoring, young people remain engaged and are motivated to take the next step into the world of work.

Working with qualified professionals and volunteers, young people gain employability skills such as team building, as well as benefit from industry and employer visits.

This year, certificates were completed in the areas of retail, hospitality, engineering, landscaping, and vocational skills. The program is delivered in line with school terms.

GSFW is funded and supported by the Queensland Government through its Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.

This year, 121 young people were part of the program.

## Racing to learn

What do a space frame chassis, wishbone suspension and motorsport have to do with unemployed young people?

For 14 teens, it was the chance of a brighter future through a unique program where they learnt the skills and knowledge to help build a fully functioning race car.

Ranging in age from 15-19 years, the young 'race team' completed a Certificate II in Engineering while building a full-sized single seat open cockpit sports car, based on a Le Mans Prototype (LMP).



Taking place at Mount Gravatt TAFE, Queensland, the Get Set for Work training used a simulated workshop environment to develop work-ready skills with motorsport used as a driver for students to get involved.

Many of the young people enrolled came from diverse backgrounds and had disengaged from education for 12 months or more.

# Work for the Dole

Work for the Dole provides not-for-profit organisations and government agencies with an extra pair of hands whilst giving job seekers on-the-job experience.

The development and delivery of a quality Work for the Dole group project greatly enhances the employability and life skills of participants.

This year, we continued to create and deliver projects that not only improved community facilities and contributed to social outcomes, but also provided valuable work experience for young people looking for work. Projects completed included:

- landscaping and horticultural improvements to community facilities in Western Sydney, South Australia and South East Queensland
- community catering in South East Queensland and South Australia
- computer and white goods recycling in South East Queensland
- refurbishment of three Scout Halls in Northern Adelaide.

Work for the Dole is funded by the Federal Government.

This year, 519 people were part of the group projects.

# Community Work Skills

**yourtown's** Community Work Skills programs provide job seekers with accredited training and paid traineeships.

## Community Based Training

The Community Based Training program provides young people with nationally accredited training and support to find work, particularly in vocations experiencing labour market skill shortages.

Certificate III level qualifications are offered in Aged Care, Customer Service, Early Childhood Development, Community Services and Process Manufacturing. Participants are provided with mentoring and support to complete the training and find work after completing the qualification.

As part of the program, participants complete work experience with an employer, with a number offered employment on completing the training. Other graduates often choose to continue their education at a tertiary level.

The program has engaged a large number of people from culturally diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, particularly in the Aged Care and Community Services areas.

**yourtown's** Aged Care program has been identified by the Queensland Government as a best practice project due to the high number of completions and employment outcomes achieved.

The program is offered in South East Queensland and funded and supported by the Queensland Government through its Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.

This year, 113 young people received training and support to find work.



## Work Skills Traineeships

Work Skills Traineeships provide young people with up to 26 weeks of paid employment.

The program not only provides paid work and accredited training, but gives young people the skills and experience needed to find a job. The program offers real work and, for many, their first paid job.

**yourtown** employs trade qualified supervisors to support and manage the young people and achieve quality work on the projects. At the same time, young people are supported by counselling and learning activities to prepare them for a successful transition to work at the conclusion of the traineeship.

Working with the Logan City Council, Ipswich City Council and other community based organisations, projects this year

included the refurbishment of Council owned facilities such as sporting clubs and other community facilities, community re-vegetation and landcare activities, and the rejuvenation of local gardens and parks. Young people had the opportunity to complete a Certificate I in Construction or Certificate I in Conservation and Landcare Management.

Work Skills is funded and supported by the Queensland Government through its Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.

This year, nine community based work projects were completed with 74 young people employed in the program.



Calvin Duncan (left) and three other graduates were offered permanent jobs with Queensland Rail on completing the Work Skills program. This Work Skills team worked on an Ipswich City Council construction and vegetation rejuvenation project for the city.

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples support

**yourtown** provides Indigenous employment and wellbeing programs that create community engagement and job opportunities.

## Balgo

**yourtown** is committed to engaging, strengthening and building equal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, their extended families and communities.

Balgo is a remote Aboriginal desert community in the East Kimberly region of Western Australia. Art works from Balgo are prized and the community boasts a world renowned Art Centre. However, the 600 or so residents of Balgo must deal with issues related to remoteness and isolation.

In partnership with the local Wirrimanu Aboriginal Corporation, **yourtown** delivers a range of activities designed to improve the lives of the children, young people and families of Balgo.

The local playgroup (Early Learning Program) provides a structured early learning environment for the pre-schoolers of Balgo, while at the same time developing parenting skills within the families of the community.

The Youth Development Program featured organised sports and adventure activities, BBQ's and movie nights, designed to encourage participation and teamwork, and build the resilience and self-esteem of the young people of Balgo.

**yourtown** also facilitates the youth offenders program in the community, focusing on reducing reoffending and promoting rehabilitation. This involved supervising the improvement of community facilities, that enabled young people to complete youth justice orders.


We also work with and support the Women's Art and Crafts micro business that gives the women of the community an opportunity to create their silk pieces and have an avenue for sales.

Balgo programs are funded by **yourtown** and the Federal Government through the Wirrimanu Aboriginal Corporation.

This year, 230 people participated in the Balgo activities.







“Our staff at Balgo live and work in unique conditions and are incredibly proud of the relationships forged and lives impacted by our involvement in this community.”

## Indigenous Youth Engagement and Transitions Program (IYET)

IYET works with Indigenous students aged 15-18 years who are identified as at high risk of early school leaving to re-engage in learning and complete their formal education.

IYET provides structured mentoring by a qualified Indigenous mentor who works with the young person to access the necessary support to remain engaged in school and successfully transition into further education or employment, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

We do this by:

- uncovering reasons for disengagement, including diagnostic testing to identify barriers to learning
- career counselling
- a personalised plan matched to individual needs, interests and aspirations

- specialist referrals to address personal, health and social issues
- personal and life skills to improve self-confidence and interpersonal skills
- building cultural education and connection into learning activities to help build pride in cultural heritage
- literacy/numeracy programs and individual tutoring
- help transitioning to the next phase of learning, either through formal education, further training or employment.

The program is run in South East Queensland and is funded by the Federal Government.

This year, 87 students took part in the program.



## In Maddy's words...

"I was handed a survey to fill out which asked for my interests and hobbies. Five months after completing it and not having thought any more about it, I got a call from Cassie, an IYET mentor, asking if I would be interested in a Business Administration Traineeship at **yourtown**. Of course, I said yes!

I'd never had a job before so I didn't know what to expect when I started here. Without a doubt, my experience with **yourtown** has been a positive and memorable one.

The things I've learnt whilst at **yourtown** seem endless. Not only have my skills and knowledge grown but I have grown as a person too. I was very shy when I first started but the support and encouragement from my supervisor and teammates has been amazing. I feel more confident now, particularly when communicating with my teammates and other colleagues. I've improved my computer knowledge and excelled in my ability to use a variety of different software programs.

The support offered by team members at **yourtown** has been beyond terrific." Maddy, **yourtown** Trainee

Today, Maddison is 18 years old and is working full-time in customer service and sales for a manufacturer and supplier of PVC piping. She has been taking driving lessons and is working towards going for her licence in the next month or so.

# Indigenous School Based Traineeship Program (SBT)

SBT works with Indigenous senior school students to secure and complete school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and make a successful transition from school to work.

The program aims to reduce early school leaving and improve attendance, attainment and completion rates among Indigenous students and increase the number of young Indigenous people who successfully transition from school to work.

Our Indigenous mentors work with young people to understand issues confronting Indigenous students and help them draw on existing individual, familial and the community strengths to further strengthen cultural identity, kinship and relationships.

We maintain partnerships with employers and industry to:

- identify skills-in-demand
- create structured entry level training opportunities for young Indigenous people in industries that offer career advancement prospects
- ensure successful completion of training
- provide placement and post placement support to ensure retention in employment.

The program is run in South East Queensland and is funded by the Federal Government.

This year, 96 students took part in the program.

# Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC)

In partnership with the Federal Government and GenerationOne, **yourtown's** Vocational Training and Employment Centre provides tailored pre-employment training, personal mentoring and job placement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Many employers want to expand their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want to work. However, employers sometimes have difficulty connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jobseekers who are work and job ready.

The VTEC mentoring program is designed to prepare and support Indigenous Australians into sustainable employment, whilst supporting the employer with cultural understanding.

We work with employers to identify their labour needs and to secure placement opportunities and provide practical work preparation programs to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people meet employer requirements. We do this by offering ongoing personal support, mentoring and coaching to help them achieve great outcomes.

The program is run in South East Queensland and is funded by the Federal Government and is based on the GenerationOne model.

This year, 213 people took part in the program.



“Nothing is more rewarding than to see someone’s life turn around by gaining full-time employment. Generational unemployment is real. Closing the gap through employment and training is a realistic obtainable target.”

**Dean Brunker**

Indigenous Client Services Manager

# yourtown board

We are committed  
to best practice

# 04

**yourtown** is a registered public company with an independent Board and governance and organisational structure headed by a CEO.

Our Board members are experts in various fields. Together they are responsible for the overall business, management and direction of **yourtown**.

The Board's most important role is safeguarding the trust that clients, donors, corporate partners and government place in **yourtown**. The Board is committed to best practices in governance, accountability and transparency. All members are volunteers and receive no remuneration for their service.



Gerry Lambert - Chair



LEFT TO RIGHT: (back) Br Kenneth Ormerod, Peter Ffrench, Maria Corpuz, Ben Naparstek, Gerry Lambert, Margaret Brechman-Toussaint and Jack Firman, (front) Lachlan Ball and Kristan Conlon.

“As the leader of **yourtown**, I’m focused on building on our established platform of tackling the issues affecting children and young people across the country.”

**Gerry Lambert**  
Chair

### Gerry Lambert

Chair

Chair of Strategy Advisory Committee

BCOMM (HONS), ACA, GAICD

APPOINTED FEBRUARY 2011,

ELECTED CHAIR 2016

Gerry is an experienced company director with both listed and unlisted entities. He has over 25 years experience as a senior corporate executive with expertise in the financial, strategic, systems/compliance, management and human resources areas of companies in the mining, building and property development industries. Gerry is a past non executive director of two ASX listed companies, Villa World Limited and CuDeco Limited, and was the General Manager/Chief Financial Officer, Executive Director of Villa World Limited from 2000 to 2005. Gerry is also an advisory board chair of two private companies and is the proprietor of a mentoring consulting business.

### Peter Ffrench

BSOCWK, GRADDIPBUS, FAICD, FAMI

APPOINTED FEBRUARY 2011

Peter is a business advisor to leading Queensland businesses, specialising in marketing and business strategy, executive coaching and organisational development. He has over 25 years senior executive experience in general management, marketing and sales with leading national companies across a diverse range of industries. He has held general management positions in FMCG, utilities and energy industries in both the public and private sector.

### **John Williamson**

Chair of Audit and Risk Management Committee  
BA/LLB (ANU), FCSA, FAUSIMM, MAICD  
APPOINTED IN NOVEMBER 2011

John has had broad executive senior management and consulting experience spanning over 30 years in the corporate governance, strategy and commercial arenas. His experience has been gained across several sectors in a wide variety of companies. He is currently an executive director of WEPL management consultancy. He is a former director of the Governance Institute of Australia.

### **John (Jack) Firman**

BE(CIVIL)  
APPOINTED FEBRUARY 2013

Jack has a long association with **yourtown** having been the General Manager of BoysTown Lotteries from 1997-1999 and its Chief Executive Officer from 2004-2008. Other business appointments have included CEO of the Metropolitan Ambulance Services, CEO of the Port of Melbourne Authority, and various executive appointments with Melbourne Water. He has extensive experience in corporate governance, executive management and financial reporting.

### **Margaret Brechman-Toussaint**

BA HONS (PSYCHOLOGY), PHD (CLIN), MAPS, MCCP  
APPOINTED MARCH 2013

Margaret has held senior positions in the university, government and non-government sectors and played a critical role in developing and implementing innovative, early intervention and prevention initiatives that promote the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children. She has extensive expertise in strategic policy and research, inclusive governance frameworks, the development of collaborative partnership agreements, contract negotiation, the management of multi-site placed-based initiatives for successful implementation of evidence based programs and innovative models of service delivery.

### **Kristan Conlon**

Chair of Board Advisory Committee  
BA/LLB, MAICD  
APPOINTED JUNE 2013

Kristan is a partner of a leading independent Australian law firm with a background in property and corporate advisory. She advises property developers, government and government owned corporations, major landlords and tenants, listed corporations and private clients in a vast array of transactions. She has presented at a variety of legal conferences in the property and commercial sectors, including the Property Council of Australia. Kristan's memberships include Queensland Law Society, Australian Institute of Company Directors, Property Council of Australia and Urban Development Institute of Australia.

### **Br Kenneth Ormerod**

BA, DIPTEACH, MA (THEOLOGY)  
APPOINTED APRIL 2014

An educator since 1972, Br Ken has been the Principal of the De La Salle College Cronulla (NSW), St Bede's College Mentone (VIC) and Oakhill College Castle Hill (NSW). He was a Foundation member of the **yourtown** Board and the Board of St Michael's College Henley Beach (SA).

### **Lachlan Ball**

LLB (UTS), MAICD  
APPOINTED NOVEMBER 2015

Loki is an experienced Manager in KPMG Australia's market-leading human and social services consulting practice, where he is engaged as a key adviser to governments, not-for-profits and private providers. Loki has a strong background in policy and law reform to support vulnerable children, youth and families, and prior to joining KPMG he worked as an adviser for three years to Australia's National Children's Commissioner. Loki has practical experience in organisational governance, risk management and strategic planning, and is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

“His strong vision, values and commitment resulted in the significant growth of services for young people and families of Australia.”

**Tracy Adams**  
CEO

## Maria Corpuz

BSC (ENG), MASTERSC (COMP SCI), PHD (CANDIDATE)  
APPOINTED NOVEMBER 2015

Maria is the Manager, Information Security of a leading Australian university. She has over twenty years of IT experience performing strategic roles and delivering programs in the fields of information security, IT strategic planning and enterprise architecture in government, telecommunications and higher education. Maria is a recognised industry expert, frequently being asked to speak globally about IT policies and frameworks, ICT risk management and business continuity management. She has published academic papers and her extensive knowledge is used to deliver IT projects and educate university students about the safe use of online media.

## Ben Naparstek

BA (ENGLISH, FIRST CLASS), LLB (HONS), GAICD  
APPOINTED NOVEMBER 2015

Ben is SBS's Head of Editorial for Online and Emerging Platforms, leading the overall strategy for the SBS online network and social platforms. He was previously Editor of Good Weekend magazine for the **Sydney Morning Herald** and **The Age**; and Editor of national current affairs magazine, **The Monthly**. He's been a contributor to the **Financial Times**, and the collection of his journalism, **In Conversation**, was published in three languages. He's served academic fellowships at the Johns Hopkins University and Columbia University, co-edited a book of cultural theory for Duke University Press, and won a Churchill Fellowship to research investigative journalism in 2014.

## Br Ambrose Payne

### Vision and Commitment

Br Ambrose became the Chair of the organisation when it was incorporated as a Public Company in 2002 and retired in April 2016.

As Chair of **yourtown**, Br Ambrose sought to maintain a strong focus on professionalism whilst nurturing the vitality of those who are involved in the delivery of our Mission. He provided exemplary leadership of the organisation and an unwavering commitment to service. Importantly, he has ensured that **yourtown** is well placed to meet the needs of disadvantaged children, young people and families both now and into the future.

## Br Ambrose Payne

Chair  
OCTOBER 2002 - APRIL 2016

Br Ambrose is retained in a consultative capacity on professional standards, international governance, financial planning and management for the Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Pakistan District of the De La Salle Brothers. He is a Fellow of the Australian College of Education, a Life Member of the New South Wales Schools Rugby Union and a Diplomat of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Manly.

## Br Christopher Gorringe

JANUARY 2007 - OCTOBER 2015

Br Chris is Chair of the Lasallian Mission Council Ltd and a Director on the Boards of St Michael's College Adelaide (SA), St Bede's College Mentone (VIC) and Oakhill College Castle Hill (NSW). He is Auxiliary Provincial and Chair of the Economic (Finance) Council of the De La Salle Brothers in the District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea.



Br Ambrose Payne

His leadership helped guide the significant growth of services that connect with hundreds of thousands of young people each year. This included the expansion of employment and training programs, development and expansion of accommodation responses for families escaping domestic violence and of those experiencing homelessness, the development of research and advocacy platforms to give voice and inform social policy and most recently, the change of organisational name.

We will continue to be inspired by Br Ambrose's unwavering commitment to our Mission.

# Executive Team

We are dedicated to embodying our values

# 05

The CEO and yourHeads are responsible for the day-to-day management of all **yourtown** operations. They develop, implement and monitor activities to ensure our work practices embody our organisational values, and are transforming young lives and strengthening communities.

## Tracy Adams

CEO

Tracy has more than 26 years' experience with **yourtown** and was appointed CEO in 2008. In this role, she is responsible for implementing the organisation's strategic direction and ensuring its operations are conducted with the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

Since being appointed to her current position, she has directed significant company growth, including an operating budget increase of more than \$20 million, a client increase of more than 100% and a greatly enhanced advocacy platform for those experiencing social exclusion. Tracy has frequently addressed Government enquiries into the welfare of young people in Australia.

Tracy is a graduate of the Harvard Business School General Management Program and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management (AIM). She is also Vice-President of Peakcare Queensland, Queensland's peak body for child protection, a member of the Cannon Hill Anglican College School Board, and a member of the Lasallian Mission Council.

## Geoff Walshaw

CFO & COMPANY SECRETARY

Geoff joined **yourtown** in 2007 and leads the finance, property, IT and business systems teams. In 2009, Geoff also assumed the role of **yourtown** Company Secretary. He has over 20 years experience in financial and management accounting, spanning commercial, government and not-for-profit organisations in Australia and the United Kingdom.





LEFT TO RIGHT: John Dalgleish, Tracey Gillinder, Tracy Adams, Geoff Walshaw, Cara Benoit and Brendan Bourke

### Cara Benoit

HEAD OF PEOPLE & CULTURE

Cara joined **yourtown** in 2008 and leads **yourtown's** People and Culture team, encompassing human resources, work health and safety, and remuneration and benefits. She has more than 20 years' experience in both human resources and operational management positions across a variety of industries, within Australia and Asia Pacific.

### John Dalgleish

HEAD OF STRATEGY & RESEARCH

John has been with **yourtown** since 2000 and leads the advocacy, research and evaluation for the organisation that generates new knowledge about issues impacting young people, and how to effectively respond. He has 11 years' experience as a practitioner in the areas of child protection and juvenile justice, and 26 years' experience in executive management within Government and the not-for-profit sector. John has led teams providing child protection, juvenile justice, disability, out of home care, community funding, and social and economic development programs within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. A member of several Boards, he is President of the Foundation for Independence Recreation and Social Training (FIRST) and a member of the Social Impact Measurement Network Australia (SIMNA). John is a Partner Investigator in several research projects funded by the Australian Research Council.

### Tracey Gillinder

HEAD OF MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

Tracey started at **yourtown** in 2013. She leads the development and implementation of all brand management and fundraising growth strategies for the organisation including corporate partnerships, donor and **yourtown** luxury Art Unions. Her more than 20 years in marketing and communications includes roles at Fairfax Media, Mercedes-Benz (Daimler Chrysler), BMW, MINI, Lamborghini and Cartier. Her memberships have included the Gold Coast Motors Events Co Marketing Communications Committee and Brisbane Lions AFL Marketing Communications Committee. She has also worked with the Uniting HealthCare/ The Wesley Hospital and Research Institute and McDonalds Australia (Ronald McDonald House Charities).

### Brendan Bourke

HEAD OF CLIENT SERVICES

Brendan commenced at **yourtown** in 2003 to help establish our employment, education and training programs and their associated regional delivery network. In 2016, Brendan was appointed as our Head of Client Services, leading the implementation and delivery of integrated client services in line with our organisational strategic framework. Prior to working with **yourtown**, Brendan spent five years as a senior manager with a major national recruitment agency following 16 years with the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) in a variety of operational and senior management positions. Brendan has a Graduate Certificate in Business and extensive experience in the training and employment services industry in the private, public and community sectors.

# Our people

We take the time  
to listen and understand

# 06

## yourtown staff

“The year has seen significant expansion, change and achievement.”

**Cara Benoit**

Head of People & Culture



“We’re a diverse team with a shared passion for creating positive change in the lives of young people.”

**Daniel Batkin**  
Grants and Programs Officer



Our diverse team of more than 550 staff works in a variety of ways to create positive change.

They include:

- Counsellors
- Youth workers
- Indigenous mentors
- Tradespeople and vocational trainers
- Employment consultants
- Community development workers
- Child and family workers
- Human Resource advisors
- Marketers, fundraising and media advisors
- Researchers and policy writers
- Administration staff
- Accountants.

Sydney based Transition to Work Employment Consultant Danielle Lech and jobactive Placement Consultant Huss Dehaine

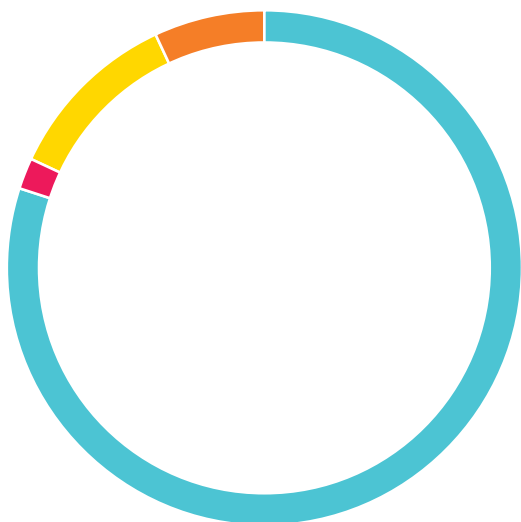
## Expansion

Our number of staff grew by 18% (113 people) this year.

**yourtown's** successful tender submissions for the jobactive, Transition to Work and ParentsNext contracts led to our need to engage more employees in these programs designed to help young people get a job.



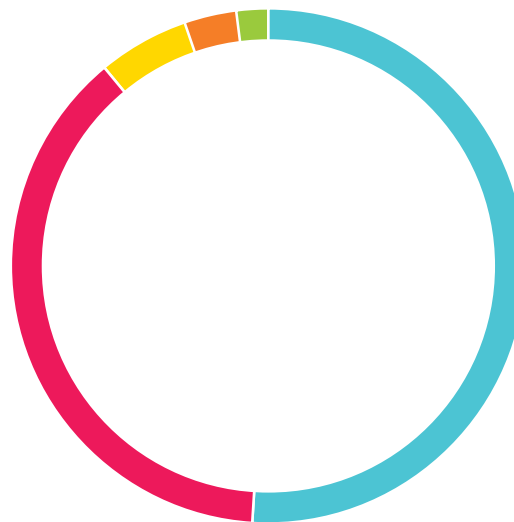
# Where we work



- 80% ● Client services
- 2% ● Advocacy
- 11% ● Marketing & Fundraising
- 7% ● Corporate support

# Achievements

Tenure of our staff remains an organisational strength with the average length of service increasing to be more than 5 years.



## Years of service

- 49% ● Less than 3 years
- 38% ● 3 to 10 years
- 7% ● 10 to 15 years
- 4% ● 15 to 20 years
- 2% ● Over 20 years

# Change

The organisation underwent a restructure designed to achieve our strategic objective of integrated individualised service responses.

This included changes to the Executive Team and most significantly, the amalgamation of our two client services divisions – counselling with employment, education and training – into a streamlined integrated structure.

In addition, a newly formed People and Culture team was appointed to focus on the performance, development and capability of our people. First priorities for this new team include a full review of Core Skills training and the design of a manager development program.



Kids Helpline counsellor Katrina Barben celebrates 22 years at yourtown with Superior General Br Bob Schieler

### Superior General says well done!

We were privileged to have the Superior General Br Robert (Bob) Schieler recognise some of our long-term staff during his visit from Rome in April 2016. He praised **yourtown's** Lasallian ethos, saying it is a powerful reflection of the rich diversity of the Lasallian Mission.

### Lasallian collaboration

A Lasallian Leadership Conference was held in September 2015 bringing Lasallian school and **yourtown** leaders together to explore leadership in Lasallian organisations. Twenty-two (22) participants worked with Senior Lasallian Leaders to discuss ideas and opportunities across our sectors.

### What our people say

In April 2016, we undertook our third biennial Employee Engagement Survey to better understand the sentiment of our people about the organisation, what's working well and identify opportunities for improvement. We were pleased to receive the following results:

- an identified organisational culture of success
- The **yourtown** values ranked the third highest factor in what makes our organisation a truly great place to work

**76%**  
survey response rate

**72%**  
of employees say **yourtown** is a 'truly great place to work'

**7.9%**  
level of disengagement halved in 2016

**+21%**  
Increased trust in the executive team

### What's next?

An organisation action plan is being developed in response to the areas that present an opportunity for improvement. This will include:

- Manager development
- Training, development and career opportunities
- Exploring perceptions of bullying and favouritism in the workplace
- Employee recognition
- Team problem solving.

### Education assistance

This year, 10 staff members received financial support towards their ongoing education. This included:

- Masters level study in:
  - Business (Philanthropy and Non-profit Sector)
  - Technology
  - Social work, and
  - Clinical Psychology
- Advanced Diploma of Management

Workshops were also undertaken in mediation, therapeutic groupwork and change management.

### Health and wellbeing

**yourtown** aims to be a lead agency in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff. Lost work days due to workplace injury were reduced by a further 20% this year, directly impacting on our WorkCover premium and confirming our approach to creating a safety culture is working.

Staff were supported by our Employee Assistance Program. Practice Supervision and Core Skills training was also made available to our client-facing staff.

“It’s been great having organisational support to keep up with the latest thinking in the not-for-profit sector through the Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies.”

**Margaret Harley**  
Research Officer



# Our supporters

Thank you

# 07

## Thank you to our supporters

**yourtown** is predominantly funded by the community. Our supporters give young people choices, support and someone to listen.

Without the support of our Art Union ticket buyers, generous organisations and individual donors, advocates and those who have left us bequests and memorial gifts, many of our services would not exist.

### **yourtown** luxury Art Unions

A true win-win for those in need

**yourtown** Art Unions create brighter futures for young people and 15 lucky winners each year. Our Art Unions are the main source of funding for **yourtown** services delivered at community and national levels. We are one of the largest and longest running charitable Art Unions in Australia.

This year's Prize Home Value \$18.973M

We continue to offer our supporters 10 chances per year to win a high-end luxury property in coveted locations across Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

This year's Prestige Car Prize Value \$1.225M

We run five prestige car Art Unions a year that include a mix of prestige cars, luxury travel and gold bullion.

The success of our charitable Art Unions continues to grow with last year's Christmas Prize home, styled by Channel Nine 'The Block' Judge Darren Palmer, achieving record sales.

“I didn’t think anything like this would happen in my life. It’s just amazing. I’ve never owned a home ever. What a beautiful Christmas present!”

Judy



Winner Judy with Tracy Adams

### What a Christmas!

Judy’s Christmas in 2015 was extra special when she won the Christmas Prize Home on Queensland’s Gold Coast. As Judy is a Gold Coast local, our very own CEO Tracy Adams knocked on her door just moments after the draw with the amazing news. The result was truly life changing.

Judy had lived in Housing Commission homes her whole life with most of her furniture from curb side collections. She had just sold her couch to pay her power bill.

She now resides in a stunning beachfront apartment stacked with state of the art features and styled by ‘The Block’ Judge Darren Palmer.

## Our supporters

We are enormously grateful for the generous and collaborative relationships we enjoy with our supporters who continued to engage with us throughout the year.

Every young person has the right to a brighter future. Thanks to you, last year alone, we responded to over 200,000 contacts to our helplines and more than 40,000 face-to-face clients.

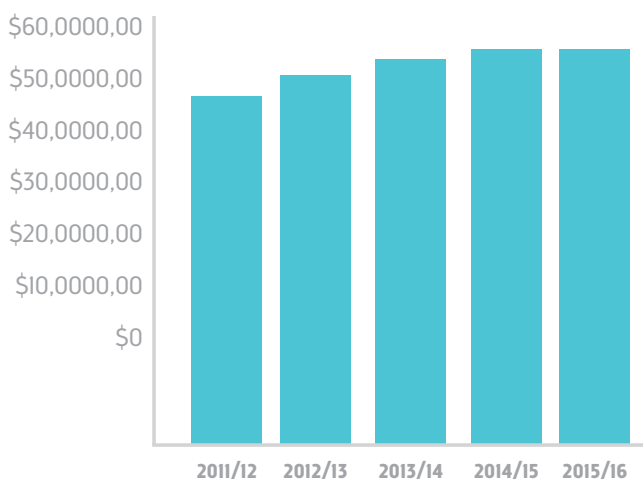
We can’t do any of this without your help.

Many of our supporters made regular donations with their Art Union ticket purchases; supported us through workplace giving; donated to our appeals; or invested in the future of our services through substantial gifts – including corporate partnerships, major gifts and bequests.

We are always looking for partnerships with organisations and individuals who share our values and want to support our work.

Our Organisational Strategic Framework has a renewed focus on **yourtown’s** vision to transform young lives and strengthen communities, as well as a fresh vision and portfolio strategy in

### Art Union income





the marketing and fundraising team. We look forward to driving new long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships and growing our supporter base.

Thank you for your support. By partnering with **yourtown**, you help create positive and immeasurable differences in the lives of young people throughout Australia.

### A special gift

We'd like to acknowledge a very special gift received this year that will create a brighter future for thousands of young people, thanks to the incredible generosity of a special **yourtown** supporter.

John gave thousands of young people a chance of a brighter future when he gifted property and funds to **yourtown** that has enabled us to plan building a spectacular prize home in a fantastic location. John was a very special person who had experienced many hardships in his younger life and wanted to empower young people doing it tough.

Many people don't realise that **yourtown** buys properties that become our luxury prize homes. We do not usually have property donated, but this time we have. John's gift will mean many thousands of young people who we help each year can be supported by funds generated from the Art Union.

**Building work for the Prize Home made possible by John**

“He was concerned for those who struggled in life, especially young people. His wish for them was that they be given the opportunity to find their place and live safe happy lives.”

**Tracy Adams**  
CEO



John is creating brighter futures for thousands



## Optus and Kids Helpline

Optus and Kids Helpline have one of the longest and strongest corporate and community partnerships in Australia. Our latest joint initiative is Kids Helpline @ School (KAS). Launched in 2013, it aims to help primary school students develop resilience and digital citizenship skills, like being safe online.

**yourtown** Senior Researcher Brian Collyer was also honoured to be named a finalist in the Optus Future Makers Award Grant program for his work on a new wellbeing App for young people. The program is open to non-profits, social enterprises and entrepreneurs with brilliant ideas using digital innovation to help vulnerable youth. Part of Brian's involvement has been his participation in an intensive accelerator program with access to industry experts, networking and mentoring.



Brian fourth from left with the other finalists

## Celebrate the West

We were proud to continue to receive the support of the annual Celebrate the West event raising funds for **yourtown's** San Miguel Family Centre in New South Wales. Our thanks go to event patrons Bryan Brown AM, John Brown AO, Bishop Kevin Manning DD and Phillip Gould AM, and the fundraising committee led by Sid Kelly. Funds from this year's event will go towards renovating 'Jack's Place', a community centre at San Miguel named after long term Centre supporter Jack Gibson OAM.

## NRL – State of Mind Campaign

Kids Helpline has been an official partner of the NRL State of Mind Campaign for the past three years.

The aim of the program, now and into the future, is to use the Game's reach, profile, clubs and players to reduce stigma around mental illness; stimulate help seeking behaviours by educating and informing our community with appropriate resources and literature; connect Rugby League communities with our expert partners; and develop elite players to be leaders in mental health advocacy within their clubs and communities.

The NRL works with our marketing and strategy and research teams, to provide resources, support and evaluation of the NRL State of Mind Campaign and its program.

## Margaret Pemberton Foundation

Our thanks go to the Margaret Pemberton Foundation for their generous support of our Expressive Therapy program over the last three years. Their funding support enabled us to set up this unique program adjunct to our Queensland Young Parents program and our Family and Domestic Violence Refuge. Hundreds of children and parents worked through trauma and other issues with help provided by the program.



Celebrate the West

## FGX – Investing in youth at risk

The Future Generations Investment Company Limited (FGX) was the first publicly listed investment company in Australia that was geared to create wealth for shareholders whilst also changing the lives of Australia's most vulnerable.

We would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to Geoff Wilson, Louise Walsh and those who have generously agreed to make this venture possible. Geoff and the supporters of the FGX believe they have a responsibility and a desire to utilise their resources to help children in Australia that are at risk and are less fortunate.

Kids Helpline received funds and support to develop cutting edge campaigns to ensure all children and young people across Australia are aware of the service and know they are not alone. We created a KHL branded radio station with Pandora Internet Radio that's especially for teens to create awareness about the service.



FGX's Geoff Wilson with Tracy Adams

## Acknowledging Simson Greeting Cards

Simson Greeting Cards is one of Australia's leading designers and distributors of greeting cards, stationery and paper products. John Simson and his family have supported Kids Helpline for over ten years with proceeds from cards sold at Christmas time. We acknowledge and thank John and his company for their long-term support of Kids Helpline, having raised over \$245,000 for the service.

## MAX 'Stars for Christmas' donation

MAX Employment presented a \$25,000 donation to Kids Helpline in celebration of their 2015 Christmas campaign: '15,000 Stars for Christmas', where they placed 15,939 people in jobs in three months.

MAX Employment Managing Director Deborah Homewood said MAX was honoured to support the charity, saying her visit to the Kids Helpline call centre was a moving experience.



MAX's Deborah Homewood with Tracy Adams

## Workplace Giving

Workplace Giving is a great way for organisations to engage their employees to give, allowing individuals to donate from their pre-tax salary.

AMP  
ANZ  
Bendigo Bank  
Brookfield Multiplex  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth  
Credit Suisse  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Goldman Sachs  
JB Were  
Bupa  
Minter Ellison  
Mirvac Projects  
NAB  
Optus  
Origin Energy  
Pricewaterhouse Coopers  
Quick Super  
Steven Hallis  
Sydney Opera House  
Sydney Water Corp  
Royal Bank of Scotland  
Unilever  
Veolia Transport

## Other supporters

We would also like to thank the following organisations for their donations or in-kind support:

Anglicare SA  
Broad Spectrum NSW  
Brookfield Multiplex  
Charity Greeting Cards  
C3 Church  
DBM Consulting  
Google  
Helen O'Grady Academy  
Kennards Self Storage  
Livewire  
Mission Australia and Family and Community Services  
Media Circus  
Riverfire Jody Barlow One Hub Optus Business  
Stockland  
The Wyatt Trust

We are grateful to those who gave to **yourtown** and Kids Helpline for your continued investment in the futures of disadvantaged children and young people in Australia.

# Government supporters

We thank the Federal, State and Local Governments for their financial and other support.

## Federal

Department of Employment

Department of Health

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner (Australian Communications and Media Authority)

Department of Social Services

## Northern Territory

Department of Health

Department of Children and Families

## Queensland

Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

Department of Education and Training

Department of Housing and Public Works

Department of Justice and Attorney-General

Logan City Council

Ipswich City Council

Moreton Bay Regional Council

Queensland Community Foundation

Redlands City Council

Smart Service. Queensland

## South Australia

City of Playford Council

Department for Education and Child Development

Port Pirie Regional Council

## Western Australia

Department of Local Government and Communities

Department of Employment



**Australian Government**



**Queensland  
Government**



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education and  
Child Development



**Government of Western Australia**  
Department of Local Government and Communities

# Governance & financials

Our commitment to continuous improvement & accountability

# 08

## Governance

Our governance is driven by a commitment to continuous improvement and accountability.



**yourtown** is a registered charity under Australian charities legislation and a public company limited by guarantee under corporations law.

We maintain quality certifications and our practices align with or exceed industry standards. Certifications include the ISO9001:2008 Quality Management Systems Standard for: Governance, Corporate Services and our services and policies align to the Quality Assurance Standard and the Business Excellence Framework GB 014.1- 2007, and Australian and New Zealand AS Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

Our Board of Directors meets eight times a year reviewing strategic recommendations, management accounts and detailed reports about our performance. The Board is also informed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee, Strategy Advisory Committee and a Board Advisory Committee each meeting three times a year.

# 5 year financial summary

Revenue increased for the fourth time in five years to a record \$91 million.

	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
<b>Revenue &amp; Expenditure</b>					
Total Revenue	90,555	83,219	81,579	80,364	85,615
Total Expenditure	90,944	81,510	79,565	78,871	85,482
Surplus (Deficit)	(389)	1,709	2,014	1,493	133
<b>Assets &amp; Liabilities</b>					
Total Assets	63,959	58,559	60,723	56,522	58,628
Total Liabilities	18,771	13,060	16,921	14,817	17,893
Net Assets	45,188	45,499	43,802	41,705	40,735
<b>Cash Flows</b>					
Net cash from operating activities	(3,100)	617	6,930	4,101	1,740
Net cash from investing activities	804	(10,439)	(3,780)	1,787	(3,780)
Net cash from financing activities	0	0	0	(2,147)	0
Net increase / (decrease) in cash	(2,296)	(9,822)	3,150	3,741	(2,040)
Cash & cash equivalents at 30 June	3,154	5,450	15,272	12,122	8,381

The organisation's balance sheet remains strong, with an asset base that allows us to continue to invest in our services and facilities. The strength of our balance sheet, especially our focus on working capital management, ensures the long-term sustainability of yourtown. Monies provided by the community either through our Art Unions or donations continued to show positive year-on-year growth.

Assets have intentionally increased as we planned further ahead and purchased a number of Art Union Prize Homes. We are proud that we are able to continue to provide exceptional Art Union prizes, while keeping our costs within strict controls.



**yourtown**  
Let's create brighter futures

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