

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024



**K.I.D.S.**  
**FOUNDATION**

BUILDING STRONG LIVES



*“Children are the world’s most valuable resource and its best hope for the future”  
- John F. Kennedy*

*“Children are curious and amazing human beings, while reminding us that they have not experienced the world as long as us.”  
- Prof. Marilyn Fleer*

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In 2023 KIDS Foundation celebrated 30 years, we rewound time to reflect on significant events and the beautiful friendships we created. We came to the realisation that over the 30 years we had come into the lives of more than a million families through our recovery and education programs, making difference.

We played old videos, some in DVD format, went through photo albums before phones captured and saved images. The images and videos shared stories of the most inspiring, courageous and extraordinary young people who through tragedy had their lives changed forever.

Our education programs initiated in 1993 from the original 'Adopt a Grandbuddy', an intergenerational reverse mentoring program. Unlike other early learning programs at the time, it empowered children to have agency in their learning. That program has continued to evolve and regularly features in media stories today. SeeMore Safety was created in the early 2000's, with the SeeMore Safety doll co-designed in 2006 by the great Tony Barber. Fourteen storybook titles have followed, with the release of a new book expected in 2024. We had our biggest printing and distribution run of 465,000 children's books in 2020, Another title 'SeeMore Bug Safety - The tiny germs we can't see' written in 2019 to help children understand the pandemic, saw 4,000 copies printed in 4 languages other than English.

We are proud to be working together with education and health sectors, like-minded organisations, and partners across Australia to give children the greatest possible outcomes to thrive. We do this through empowerment, education, innovation, research, and advocacy programs.

We will continue to evolve, inspire innovation, and to be a strong leader so we can achieve our vision that 'every child is free of harm and injury' and given the best chance of a happy, healthy and safe life.





# A Message...

2023 was a truly rewarding year for the KIDS Foundation and our people. We celebrated 30 years of greatness, cherished memories, remarkable moments, and reached outstanding milestones. It was a record-breaking year for fundraising, with a 20% increase in revenue. This allowed us to expand our recovery programs, camps, career enhancing experiences, and equine therapy plans. We were also able to invest more in our most in-demand education programs and services.

One of our notable accomplishments was the creation of Tour d’Horse, a race at a walking pace. In its first year, this event raised \$520,000. These funds will enable us to reach 200,000 children across Australia this year and make a significant impact on the lives of retired racehorses.

We are excited to introduce a new initiative called YABI (Young Advisory Board Influencers). This idea brings together future leaders through a young advisory group. The concept is based on a reverse mentoring model, where young influencers work with KIDS board members to create mutually benefiting, unique opportunities that will be instrumental in influencing outcomes that make real transformation.

Our commitment to improving the lives of children and young people affected by injury and trauma

remains steadfast. We continue to provide opportunities that build bright prospects, resilience, and optimism.

Through our program ‘SeeMore Safety,’ we give children agency in their learning to empower healthy physical and mental wellbeing outcomes in a way that ‘let kids be kids’.

We gratefully acknowledge the devoted, driven, committed, and loyal KIDS team, Board of Directors, Ambassadors, and volunteers who share our vision of creating a safe environment for every child, to be free from harm and injury.

We hope you enjoy reading the extraordinary and magical stories shared in this report.

A heartfelt thank you to all in the KIDS world.



Dr Susie O'Neill OAM  
CEO



Jo Stuckey  
Chair





## Vision

Every child is safe,  
free from harm  
and injury.

## Mission

To educate and  
empower children to  
be happy, healthy and  
safe, whilst giving young  
people differently abled  
through serious trauma,  
injury and burns, the  
best possible chance to  
recover and thrive.

## Values

Acceptance  
Trust  
Loyalty  
Respect  
Kindness

## Purpose

To support children and young people left differently abled, their families, and carers to recover and improve their quality of life beyond survival, laying a foundation for autonomy, happiness, and social connections. We do this through camps, workshops, community-based activities, and equine associated experiences and therapy programs.

To educate and provide a means of giving children the skills and knowledge they need to build a strong sense of identity and wellbeing. Through the SeeMore Safety program children are empowered to take agency in their learning to gain understanding of their physical and emotional capabilities, so that they can be happy, healthy and keep themselves safe.

## People

In our recovery programs we work with the most courageous and inspiring young people, who have been differently abled from trauma and injury caused from burns, accidents, violent crimes, abuse, illness and disease.

In our education programs, through kindergartens and preschools, we share experiences with amazing inquisitive little people who have not experienced the world as we have, but are eager to learn.



KIDS Foundation is a not-for-profit charity established in 1993 to support traumatised and injured children and grown-ups.

## What We Do

### TIC – Trauma and Injury Care

Our TIC programs support children and grown-ups who have been differently abled following horrific trauma and injuries caused from burns, accidents, dog attacks, crime, neglect, abuse, illness, disease and environmental events.

We recognise the positive impact of peer support that is promoted through our camps, leadership workshops and the National Burn Survivors' Network for families.

### Physical and Emotional Wellbeing

Through our recovery and education programs we are committed to promoting physical and emotional wellbeing.

We continue to provide healthy lifestyle opportunities and sessions. Individualised support is afforded to those when needed through counselling, providing equipment, mobility devices, education and financial resources.

### Child Safety

In 2020, our SeeMore Safety program reached 400,000 children through 10,000 kindergartens and preschools with an integrated approach to safety, physical and emotional wellbeing.

KIDS Foundation is committed to early intervention, creating, and instilling a health and safety culture that gives young people agency in their learning, critical for lifelong wellbeing, autonomy and happiness.





# Who we Support



**9 Camps and Day Camps** were held in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland.



**2000 Early Childhood Education Centres** recieved SeeMore Safety program packs



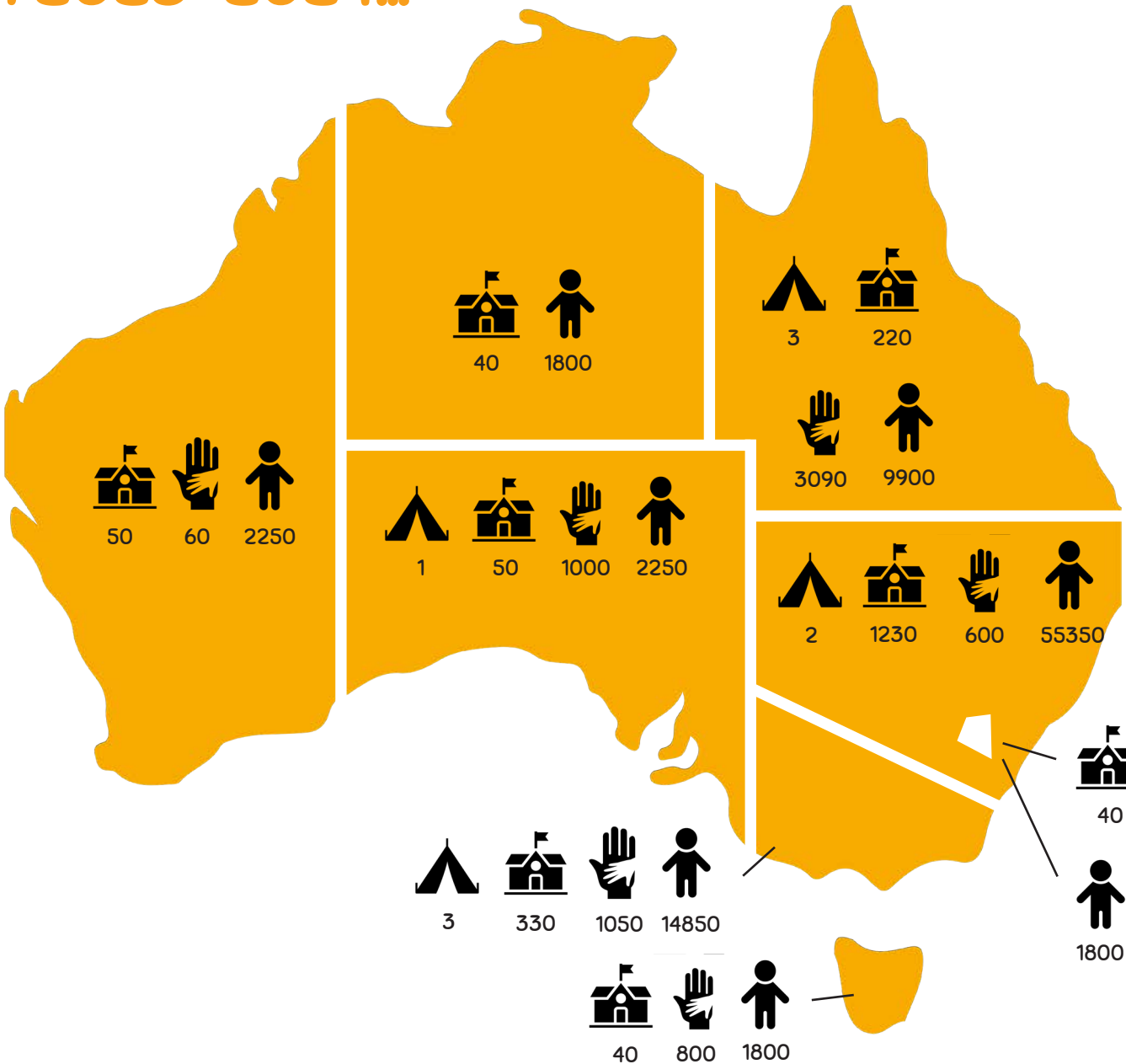
**74,000 Individualised Support Hours** were provided through one-on-one time, in group settings and at camps.



**90,000 SeeMore Safety, SeeMore Kindness and SeeMore and Carm Activy and Story Books** were printed and distributed to children throughout Australia.



# In 2023-2024...





# Trauma and Injury Care (TIC)

Over the past year, KIDS has held 7 camps and arranged 2 away experiences for the young people they support.

## TANGO Equine Camp Ballarat

Horse riding at Boomerang Ranch followed by an afternoon of stepping back in time at Sovereign Hill, along with other fun and engaging activities filled this camp TANGO in KIDS hometown of Ballarat.



## TANGO Equine Camp in the Hunter Valley

Participants were entertained by 'Faulty Towers - A Dining Experience', spent time grooming and riding horses with Hunter Valley Horses and spent the final day of this camp in Sydney working on their teamwork skills while trying to complete and Escape Room challenge.

## TANGO Equine Camp Gold Coast

We were able to fulfill Awheata's dream of going to Sea World. It was on her vision board she made at the last camp, and she was beyond excited when we arrived at the park. We were equally excited to see her so happy.



## TANGO Health Retreat at Gwinganna

For the very first time, KIDS ran a health and wellbeing camp for over 18 year olds. This was supported by the incredible wellbeing complex Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat, located Queensland's hinterland.





Equine Day Camp

Channel 7's Sunrise presenter and KIDS ambassador, Edwina Bartholomew joined a group of young injury and trauma survivors, including children who were involved in the Exford Primary School bus accident.



Sea Scout Day

Each year, KIDS is invited to attend a fun day out with the Sea Scouts. The 1st / 14th Brighton Sea Scouts took some of our young survivors to the water on stand-up paddle boards, sailing boats and others enjoyed racing down a slip 'n slide.



Camp Phoenix – 30 year celebration

An over whelming 159 participants attended our annual family Injury and Trauma Recovery camp made extra special as it included 'Dine in White' to celebrate KIDS Foundation's 30th Anniversary.



Bella Fund

In 2021, following the sad passing of Bella Tuddenham, the Bella Fund was established with 100% of the funds raised and donated by the Tuddenham family going to support families needing funds for mobility and support equipment, out of pocket medical expenses, and other needs for children with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA)





### Time Away

A small group were privileged to spend time away on two different occasions in the Hunter Valley during Tour d'Horse and the Woolooma Classic.



### One on One

Our Recovery team has also spent many hours offering 1:1 support and engagement opportunities to further support and assist survivors throughout the year.





# Education

## Ready To Go SeeMore Program

‘Ready to Go SeeMore’ is a safety education program proudly funded by The Flora and Frank Leith Charitable Trust. The program was delivered to 25 groups in 25 services across Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo, and reached approx 750 children. It was designed to prepare children in the year prior to school to be emotionally and physically school ready.

### Data showed that .....

- 88% of the services demonstrated an overall improved average in post assessment scores
- 100% of survey responses from educators reflected that they enjoyed the program
- 450 assessments were undertaken by staff
- 219 children engaged in both pre and post assessments
- 765 books were sent home with children



This program was supported by the Flora and Frank Leith charitable Trust



## eSafety Program

Our eSafety program and book, was proudly funded through the eSafety Commissioner’s Online Safety Grants Program as a result of a Pilot Program funded by Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation (NPCF) in 2022/2023. It was aimed at teaching online safety to preschool children. The Program shares the importance of teaching children to use devices in shared zones around the home, setting time limits for online use and making sure adults maintain a dialogue around online safety.

Through 1,000 centres across Australia, 50,000 families have had tangible and free access to ‘Netys the Trusted eSafety Friend’ and SeeMore’s programs that address the need to enhance online “safety risk intelligence”.

These resources were spread throughout Australia in distribution of approximately;

- 400 NSW
- 200 VIC
- 200 QLD
- 200 spread across WA, SA, TAS, ACT and the NT.

*This distribution was based on population and number of centres.*



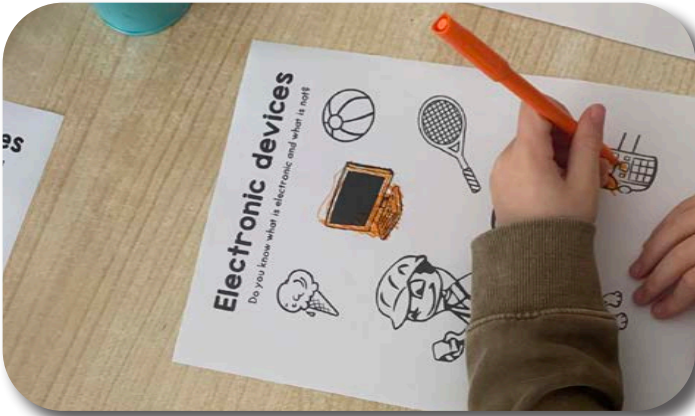
This program was supported by the eSafety Commissioner



26,000 children at 650 pre-schools across the Hunter, Central Coast, Mid-North Coast, Central West, New England and the Northern Rivers.

### Data showed that...

- 90% of parents said they would continue to use or consider using the SeeMore Safety app in the future
- 100% of parents felt their child was safer online since engaging in the program
- 94.7% of services said they would continue to use the KIDS Foundation eSafety resources as part of their curriculum





CARHM Start and SeeMore Kindness Program

The CARHM Start Program has been delivered in: Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh and is proudly funded by Flora and Frank Leith Charitable Trust reaching 500 children.  
Geelong is proudly funded by The City of Geelong's Healthy and Connected Communities Grant reaching 250 children.

The SeeMore Kindness Program, incorporating the CARHM Start program, has been delivered in: North and West Dandenong, funded by The Andrews Foundation and reaching 180 children  
Ballarat is funded by Ballarat Connected Communities reaching 250 children.

The programs are a wellbeing and school readiness early intervention program that supports the physical and emotional health and safety of children and prepares them for their transition into school life. CARHM Start is an extension of our Ready To Go SeeMore program, focusing on the social, physical and emotional health and safety of children.

The project takes a holistic approach, stimulating positive action towards laying a solid foundation for the health, happiness, physical and emotional



This program was supported by Flora and Frank Leith Charitable Trust and the City of Greater Geelong

wellbeing of children. The program aims to reduce emotional and physical health problems in young children by introducing appropriate interventions at an age when foundations for learning, health and behaviour throughout life are laid.

The first round of testing for this program was completed in early 2024. Results and the final testing round will be completed in September through to November in 2024.



Visiting Kinders with our miniature ponies

Our new program, off the back of Tour d'Horse, started in early 2024 and is proudly sponsored by PetStock and RB Sellars. The program involves educators from KIDS Foundation, along with an equine specialist, taking our ponies Carm and Eleven Eleven into kindergartens. This allows children to learn a little about horses and how they (the children) can interact and remain safe in their presence.

- So far.....
- We've visited 13 centres in Ballarat, Bacchus Marsh as well as Geelong.
  - 23 class groups have been a part of our program
  - Approximately 1200 children have pet, brushed, and learnt all about Carm and Eleven Eleven and have hopefully started to develop an awareness of emotional connection.

The feedback from educators and families who have been involved with the program has been overwhelmingly positive, with many requesting additional visits next year. There has also been great interest in this program stemming from our story on Sunrise and other media stories, and also from word of mouth within the community and also amongst educators.





# Events

## 2023 Noosa Triathlon

The 2023 Noosa tri saw the KIDS foundation field a team of 40 athletes which included 3 teams. Athletes gathered Saturday afternoon at the RACV Noosa resort for a briefing and welcome from Susie, Nick and Beau, with a special guest KIDS ambassador, Craig Alexander (Crowie) who let every athlete know that they should finish the bike leg in under an hour. Athletes heard first-hand how the KIDS Foundation supported survivors and the personal growth in wellbeing and health thanks to the support of the foundation. Matt Thiele and Kel Keir shared their current achievements and their positive outlook which they credit to the community and years of attending KIDS Foundation camps and events.

Matt Thiele and Kel Keir were a great help in the event expo. Speaking with athletes and the public about the KIDS Foundation, selling waterbottles, frisbees and drumming up sales of our 2024 Lucky Spot. Kel won the lucky spot and gifted it forward to an athlete who missed out on the 2023 event.

This year with 40 active athletes, we raised over \$117,000 thanks to the team effort of Harris Trade plumbing \$45,000 and the individual athletes raising a combined \$72,000. A Special mention needs to go to the ten athletes that raised over \$2000 with an extra special mention to individuals that raised \$9500 - Leah Covell, \$5500 Matt Howarth and \$3700 Simone Joyner. \$3707 for their fundraising efforts. Sponsorship from Harris Trade Plumbing Supplies,

Metrics and Rethink investing also assisted in reaching this target, which put KIDS Foundation to the top of the minor Charities for fundraising in 2023.

The athletic results from the competitors in the KIDS team were outstanding. The first charity superstar female was Jamie Orr, with Rose skipper coming in 3rd. Brent McKinnon represented the males achieving a 3rd for the charity superstar males.

Athletes were presented with their charity superstar medal by Crowie at Charity Park at the conclusion of the race.

2024 will see the team 50 strong with more athletes representing Harris Trade Plumbing Supplies, Metrics, the All Sorts and a couple of new faces we are excited to meet.



## Put Your Hand Up Campaign

This year's Put Your Hand Up Campaign transitioned into a fully online, social media driven awareness initiative, achieving remarkable engagement and impact.

### Key Highlights:

- Engaged our ambassador network and built new connections through our YABI Network, enhancing the campaign's reach.
- Secured participation from prominent ambassadors and platforms, contributing to a combined potential reach of over 187,000 followers.

### Ambassador Engagements:

The following ambassadors actively promoted the campaign across their platforms:

- Darcy Vescio (34.5K followers)
- Brooke Walker (10K followers)
- Emily Gough (1.7K followers)
- Richard Harris (7.6K followers)
- Jakara Anthony (18.8K followers)
- Ben Seymour (31.4K followers)
- Racing.com/Sam Doran (83K followers)



## Hot Temple Tri4KIDS

An incredible day at TRI 4 KIDS!

Thanks to Ballarat Hot Temple, the annual Olympic distance triathlon was a smashing success. We had 5 outstanding individuals and 17 phenomenal teams giving it their all. None of this would've been possible without our amazing volunteers! A special shoutout to the KIDS ambassadors for giving this event such a meaningful purpose.

Together, we raised an incredible \$7,500 to support children who have faced trauma and injury. Every dollar will make a difference in their lives, and it's all thanks to generosity and support of Ballarat Hot Temple Fitness studio members.





# 2024 Tour d'Horse

In January 2024, KIDS Foundation created an extraordinary fundraising initiative, 'Tour d'Horse', that surpassed all expectations by raising an astounding \$519,600, in its first year. The money raised supports children and grown-ups who have suffered severe trauma and will enable the delivery of educational resources to less fortunate children, while also highlighting the remarkable talents of off-track racehorses in a new role.

The tour took place over 10 days from Pokolbin to Tamworth, ending at the Toyota Tamworth Music Festival Parade. Riders took on an endurance challenge, riding 200 kms at walking pace. The 17 teams were made up of; The Victorian Racing Club, Godolphin Lifetime Care, Petstock, Magic Millions, The MRC Foundation, Emirates Park, Sam & Anthony Freedman, Michael Freedman, Banter Toys, RB Sellars, Team Thiele, Paradise Investment Property Group, Harris Plumbing, Greg Eurell Racing, Mackas Australian Black Angus Beef, Harwood Grains, Hunter Valley Operations and MJ Payne Racing. Celebrities included the likes of World Champion Ironman

Craig Alexander, ex Rugby Player John Minto, Award winning film director Simon Wincer and Actress Rachel Griffiths AM.

We are deeply grateful to the Hunter Valley community for their unwavering support in bringing Tour d'Horse to life. Special thanks to local legends Brian Atfield, Anto White, Ross Greenwood, and John Wade for their invaluable contributions and knowledge that influenced the success of the event. Their dedication has been instrumental in helping us achieve our fundraising goals and shining a spotlight on the incredible bond between humans and horses.

At the heart of our mission and what drove the event is the belief that every child deserves a chance to be safe free from harm and injury, and sadly if injured, usually under the most traumatic circumstances, heal and thrive.

The success of Tour d'Horse reinforces our commitment to creating a brighter future for children and harnessing the unique abilities of off-track racehorses. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants, sponsors, volunteers, and supporters who made this journey possible.







## Tour d'Horse 2025

If you are interested in being part of Tour d'Horse 2025, here is a little teaser:

# Riding Together for Purpose

KIDS overcoming trauma and injuries

## Eleven Eleven

To many, Eleven Eleven or 11:11 has a special meaning. Some believe it influences our path and embraces a meaningful moment in time for an event to occur. To others, it's a sign of spiritual influence, an "angel number", that signals guidance, a sign to manifest your dreams or make a wish. For KIDS, Eleven Eleven has significant meaning and connection. Especially for our CEO, Susie.

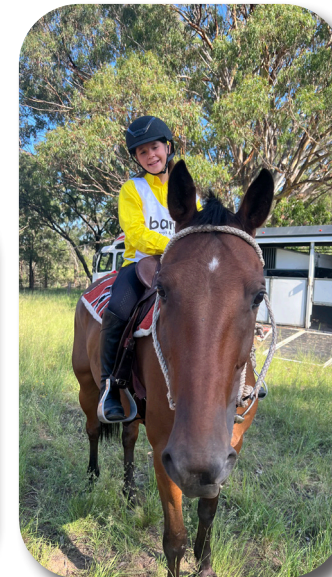
After the success of Tour d'Horse 2024, we decide to search for a retired racehorse to be a KIDS Equine Ambassador who could lead future Tour d'Horse races. We heard about a horse that was coming off the track, famous for winning the Magic Millions Cup 3 times. The trainer was happy to gift him to the KIDS Foundation to be rehomed at Belltrees in the Hunter Valley. His name was Eleven Eleven. We knew he was the one. It happened to be the time that Bella, Susie's granddaughter, passed away. Susie connected with horses at the time to help with the loss, later introducing horses into the KIDS recovery and education programs. Eleven Eleven is now playing a major role in our education and equine recovery programs for trauma and injury survivors.



## Nellie and Ellie

Eleven, Eleven appears in KIDS life in many ways like the two 11 year olds, Nellie and Ellie. They were the youngest riders on Tour d'Horse. They not only took on the challenge of riding 200km but also the fundraising. Fundraising at any age is daunting, however these two pocket rockets took it in their stride, raising an amazing \$58,000 between them.

Nellie and Ellie, were sponsored by Banter Toys, their horses named Pokémon Bella and Pokémon Belle reflecting characters from the Pokémon series. Riding Pokémon Bella was significant to Nellie as she rode in honour of her baby sister Bella who passed away on May 18, 2021, at 11.11. Ellie was inspired by the survivor's she had met at the KIDS Foundation camps. They formed a special bond with their horses and a friendship filled with memories they will hold dearly in their hearts forever.

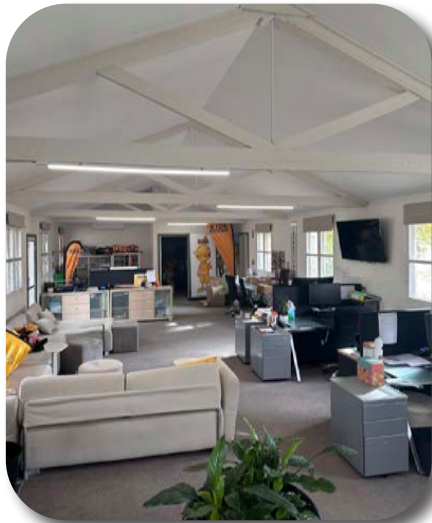




# Out and About

## The place we call Home

Each day not only are we privileged to work alongside a unique group of talented and driven people, but we get to work in an environment that inspires our creativity. Thanks to the support from the Ballarat City Council we have a place to call home, set amongst the open grassy and treed spaces within the Community Hub situated in the Ballarat Airport precinct.



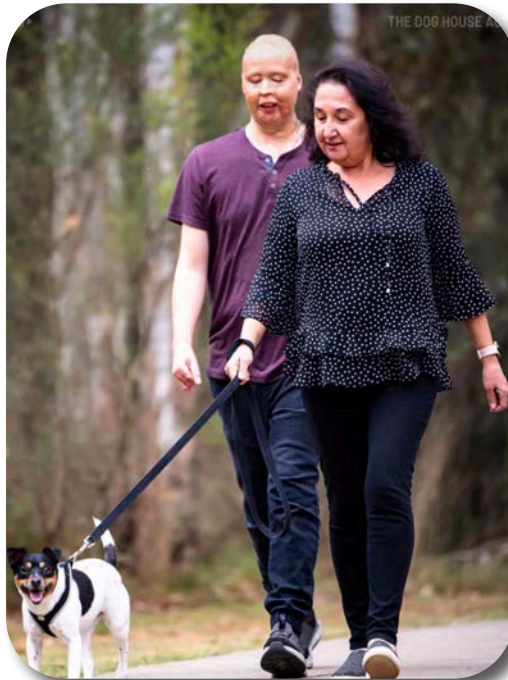
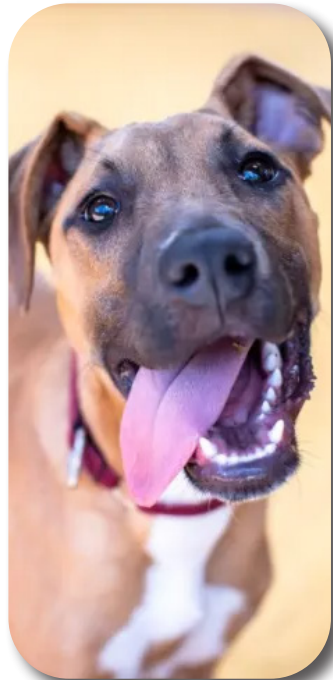
## Woolooma Classic

In 2024, KIDS Foundation was honored to be the chosen charity for the inaugural Woolooma Classic Adventure Run. This 31km challenge, which featured grueling, steep and undulating terrain with 1,458m of elevation, united participants and raised awareness for children and families affected by injury and trauma. The event was deeply moving, with participants inspired by the stories of KIDS ambassadors Matt, Kel and Tom, alongside the wisdom of running legend Steve Moneghetti. A heartfelt thanks to Phoebe and Jono White from the Woolooma Glasshouse for including KIDS in this unforgettable experience. This remarkable event was more than a run—it was a powerful statement of resilience, community, and support for those who cannot take the journey themselves.



## The Dog House

In 2024, two of our KIDS Foundation families featured on Channel 10's "The Dog House Australia". The Dog House is a match-making show, where dogs are given a second change and rehomed by being matched to families searching for their perfect pup. The Pikari and Thiele families travelled to Kemps Creek in NSW to see if they could find their match! Lisa, Matt's mum, ended up adopting Millie, a beautiful little 8-year-old Fox Terrier mix, who Lisa showers with love and care. Awheata and her family adopted Boof, a 4-month-old Bull Arab pup, who is absolutely adored and a ball of fun.



## Red carpet

In last year's Annual Report we told the story of Spencer and his wish to become an actor. Through a chance meeting with Robert MacKenzie, long story short, he landed a speaking role in the blockbuster movie, Furiosa: a Mad Max Sequel. He was highly paid, with his own driver, dressing trailer and makeup artist. In June, Susie was honoured to walk Spencer down the Red Carpet at the premiere of the movie in Sydney. A treasured memory that she will hold close to her heart.





Hunter Valley NEWS



Australia actress Rachel Griffiths rides out from Hunter Valley Horses on day one of Tour d'Horse. Picture by Simone De Peak

ever we can to help these guys succeed - which I am sure they will," he said.

Mr Googe said every day on the farm in Pokolbin, they get to see the positive impact interactions with horses have on people.

"We know the impact of equine therapy on trauma victims is not recognised enough in Australia as it is in other countries. I think anything that shines a light on the huge benefit and what these guys who have been through can gain, is a great cause," he said.

The race will ride into Tamworth and join the Toyota Country Music Festival Parade on January 27. Of the \$390,000 already raised MJ Payne Racing team has raised \$53,000. The 1/2 million dollar target will enable KIDS Foundation to reach 200,000 kids in 2024.

Available slots have been taken up by many leading names in the horse industry including Godolphin, Emirates Park, Michael and Anthony Freedman, MRC, VRC and Magic Millions.

The Courier

Pet treats to bolster grassroots charities

**MILANIE WHELAN**

A LITTLE care for your pets could help boost funds for grassroots charities that are feeling the squeeze in what people can give amid rising living costs.

Bulletin-based not-for-profit KIDS Foundation, promoting child injury prevention and helping children with trauma, and Cher Guy Small Animal Rescue are a special focus in Petstock's annual Home Town Heroes fundraising campaign.

For the first time, The Petstock Foundation has guided donors to choose a local charity to benefit from the drive rather than a statewide push.

For KIDS Foundation founder and chief executive officer Susie O'Neill every bit counts even more. KIDS Foundation will be using funds from the campaign to help fund its new equine therapy program.

Dr O'Neill said KIDS Foundation was trying to look at how loose change could add up such as \$20 to put one child through a prevention program for the year.

"There are certainly challenges at the moment," Dr O'Neill said. "As much as people want to give, day-to-day they don't have the extra funds to give away but they will want to find ways to help."

(Giving programs) means we can gain strength and opportunities by putting programs in place and sets up the foundation for life."

Cher Guy Small Animal Rescue's Brenda Guy said increasing living costs in the community was particularly telling in a "quiet" adoption period.

Ms Guy said they were finding it was often the initial outlay costs, rather than weekly food and care costs that were putting people off adopting a furry friend. She said this was a trend other rescue groups across the state had also been finding.

Funds from the Petstock Home Town Heroes campaign will add to Cher Guy's de-sexing program in Litterra.

"It's a good time before spring and kitten season, while it's a quieter time of year, to get de-sexing," Ms Guy said. "Often people might pick up a kitten for free but don't have the funds to de-sex and so, we can get a huge influx of kittens."

The Petstock Foundation operations head, Sherralee Cassidy said the financial crisis was hitting everyone hard and, with many amazing grassroots charities out there, all efforts were helping people and animals in each local community.

"A lot [of charities] are doing stuff silently that some times you don't always notice," she said. "...If they don't have funds, there is a danger this work will cease."

ThoroughbredNEWS

Your daily source of thoroughbred racing and industry news

More than \$500,000 raised during the inaugural Tour d'Horse in support of KIDS Foundation

13 February 2024 | by Victoria Racing Club

The inaugural Tour d'Horse charity ride reached a special milestone at the end of its journey, raising more than \$500,000 in support of the KIDS Foundation.

The Victoria Racing Club (VRC) alongside other representatives from the thoroughbred racing industry took part in the 200km endurance race with seven members of the VRC team partnered up with a retired racehorse on each leg.

Other racing industry organisations who supported the fundraising efforts included Godolphin, Michael Freedman, Anthony & Sam Freedman, Michelle Payne Racing, Magic Millions, Melbourne Racing Club Foundation, Emirates Park, Pelstock and Greg Eursli.

With the motto "riding with purpose and passion" the group of 17 teams made their way across the Hunter Valley to a grand arrival at the Tamworth Country Music Festival with some of Australia's most famous country artists paying a visit including Troy Cassar-Daley.

Australian actress and Ride Like A Girl director, Rachel Griffiths AM represented the Michelle Payne Racing team and was enthusiastic about the fundraising initiative.

"This fantastic community have all come in for this charity (and) it has a really gorgeous feeling."

The New England district was treated to the first public appearance of the 2024 Lexus Melbourne Cup as it was carried through the streets on horseback as part of the 2024 Tamworth Country Music Parade.

The funds raised during the 10-day journey will enable KIDS Foundation to reach 200,000 children in 2024 via the following activities:

- Run five recovery camps, providing individualised support and equine-assisted therapy programs for injury and trauma survivors.
- Deliver early intervention programs that protect and care for children's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Provide resources and books for under-resourced children, families, preschools and schools.
- Put \$20,000 of programs and resources into the local communities Tour d'Horse travels through.

VRC Chief Executive Steve Roach said the club was proud to be involved in supporting such an amazing cause.

"The inaugural Tour d'Horse was an incredible success and it was great to see so many organisations from across the racing industry come together to make a difference in the lives of some of the most vulnerable children in our society," Mr Roach said.

"It has been a very meaningful way for us to give back to the community this year and the Club is proud to have helped raise more than \$33,000 for the foundation and contribute to the overall result of over \$500,000."

KIDS Foundation Founder and CEO Dr Susie O'Neill OAM was delighted with the fundraising efforts and support from all over the country.

"We are so proud and excited to have reached the goal of raising more than \$500,000. It was a huge success and an amazing effort from the whole group of riders, the crew and the entire team behind the scenes," Dr O'Neill said.

"A big thank you to all of those that supported the foundation along the way, and we are so excited to put the funds to use and help kids."

Share / Save

Young girl who lost arm in school bus crash 'feels like a normal kid' again

By Allannah Sciberras | 7:42pm Aug 23, 2023



Seven children remain in hospital days after Eynesbury bus crash

A 10-year-old girl who lost her arm in a horrific school bus crash west of Melbourne earlier this year says she "feels like a normal kid" again.

Awheata was among 10 kids who were taken to hospital with serious injuries after their bus crashed while they were heading home from Exford Primary School on May 17.

There were 45 children on the bus when it rolled at the intersection of Exford Road and Murphys Road at Eynesbury about 3.40pm.

Awheata was sitting in the back of the bus with her siblings when it rolled.

Her injuries led to her left arm being amputated.

Together with her family, Awheata attended a trauma and recovery camp hosted by the Kids Foundation in Queensland.



Her dad Daniel Pikhari said the camp did wonders for his daughter's confidence.

"To sum up the camp into words is an understatement. It was something my family needed," he told Neil Mitchell on Nine radio station 3AW.

"Being in an environment with parents who have had similar trauma has been amazing.

"This is the first time, this has happened to my family, and going up there and knowing the feelings I have, they are totally normal and are part of the process of the whole journey was uplifting."

Awheata said she was hesitant to get involved in the camp before she went due to her injuries.

But said it was great to "feel like a normal kid" again.

"We did lots of activities I thought I didn't want to do but my mum and dad said I needed to push (myself) forward," she said.

Awheata was also awarded the Extra Bright Star award for her efforts over the weekend.



The 2023 Lexus Melbourne Cup will be making a special guest appearance at O'Brien Icehouse in Docklands this Sunday, 23rd July from 1pm as part of the 21st annual Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour.

Melbourne Ice is taking on Sydney Bears and the day has been given to the KIDS Foundation to raise money through their "Put your hand Up" campaign. Funds raised from this campaign will be going to injury recovery programs for the children involved in the recent Exford school bus crash.

Founder and CEO of the KIDS Foundation, Dr Susie O'Neill said, "I'm thrilled to be a part of such a historic day, the Lexus Melbourne Cup will be on display so fans can have their photo taken with it, and I'd like to thank the Victoria Racing Club for this opportunity".



Official proceedings commence at 1pm with the \$600,000 Lexus Melbourne Cup trophy on the ice for a Captains photo, and then on display for an hour affording fans and supporters the rare opportunity to have their photo taken with it.

The VRC, custodian of the Lexus Melbourne Cup has a special relationship with the KIDS Foundation, supporting its equine therapy emotional health and wellbeing programs through the CARM collaboration.

The KIDS Foundation, now in its 30th year is dedicated to injury prevention and injury recovery for children and have some fantastic Ambassadors supporting their cause. Youth Ambassador, Matt Thiele will join KIDS mascot, SeeMore on the ice as well.



# The Team (in alphabetical order)



**Abbie McKay**  
Events  
Management Intern



**Annie Edgar**  
Finance



**Beau Jones**  
Noosa Tri KIDS  
Team Manager



**Erynne Trotter**  
Recovery Manager



**Jackie Mulholland**  
Education - NSW



**Jennifer Barker**  
Education - VIC



**Jo Brodie**  
Education - QLD



**Karen Jaques**  
Burns Survivors'  
Network QLD



**Lauren Grace**  
Graphic and Web  
Designer



**Leanne McPherson**  
Education and  
Recovery support



**Melanie Mullen**  
Communications and  
Media Manager



**Melissa Tipping**  
Burns Survivors'  
Network SA



**Naomi Maynard**  
Equine Manager



**Dr Susie O'Neill OAM**  
KIDS Foundation CEO



**Nicholas Van Der Molen**  
Education Manager



**Shae Scott**  
Education - VIC



**SeeMore Safety**  
Mascot

# The Board



Standing (L-R): Athol Hodgetts, Rimas Liubinas, Kate Hocking, Matthew Ricker, Charles Kovess  
Seated (L-R): Melanie Mullen, Margie Amarfio, Susie O'Neill, Jo Stuckey  
*Absent: Hamish McLachlan, Ian Coutts*



# The Youth Advisory Board Influencers (YABIs)



**Abbie McKay**  
Carlton AFLW Vice  
Captain + ...



**Amelia Velardo**  
Carlton AFLW Player  
+ Honours student



**Bella Houlahan**  
HR Administrator



**Brooke Walker**  
Essendon AFLW Player  
and Teacher



**Charlie Hocking**  
Talent Coordinator/  
Accredited Agent-More  
Than Management



**Claudia Higgins**  
Accounts Manager -  
Marketing



**Emily Gough**  
Essendon AFLW Player



**Emily Stuckey**  
Disability Support  
Worker



**Harvey Mitchell**  
Social Ventures Australia  
Consulting - Analyst



**James Johnstone**  
Snowboardcross Athlete  
- Australian Team



**Jaspa Fletcher**  
Brisbane AFL Player



**Keeley Skepper**  
Carlton AFLW player



**Mimi Hill**  
Carlton AFLW Player



**Shae Souter**  
Graphic Designer



**Xander McGuire**  
Journalist

## Who are our YABIs and what do they do?

KIDS Foundation has brought together an extraordinary group of young people we call the YABI's (Youth Advisory Board Influencers). The purpose of the YABI's is to create a unique learning opportunity, mutually benefiting the KIDS Foundation and future young executives.

We believe young people provide a valued resource that poses a different way of thinking. This Board is driven by young people, for young people offering purposeful engagement opportunities where they have real, valued roles that influence outcomes. Abbie MacKay, Carlton's AFLW Vice Captain leads the YABI's team enriched by the young talented future executives. They are taking on volunteer and mentoring roles as well as bringing new opportunities, fresh ideas and professional development prospects into the KIDS world.

## Why are we doing this?

- To source fresh ideas.
- To engage top young talented future executives.
- To provide professional development opportunities through reverse mentoring.
- To build a greater social media profile and reach.
- Because it makes business sense.



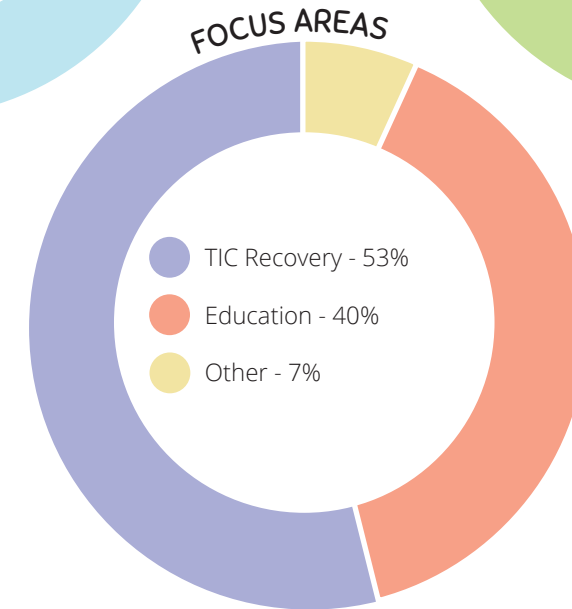
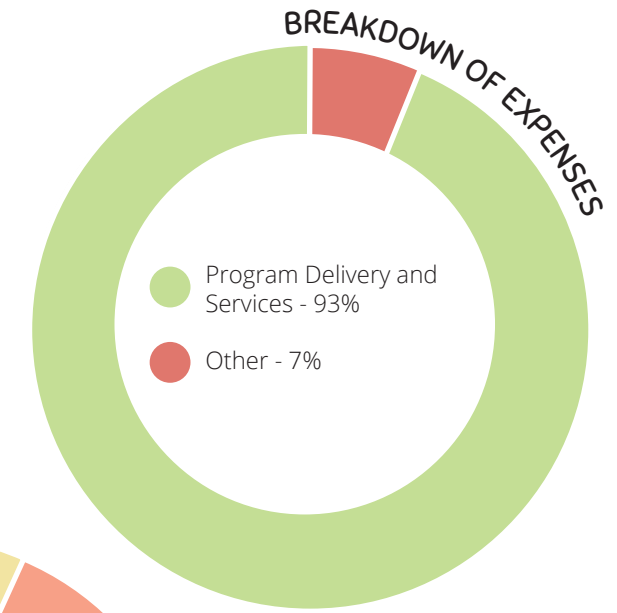
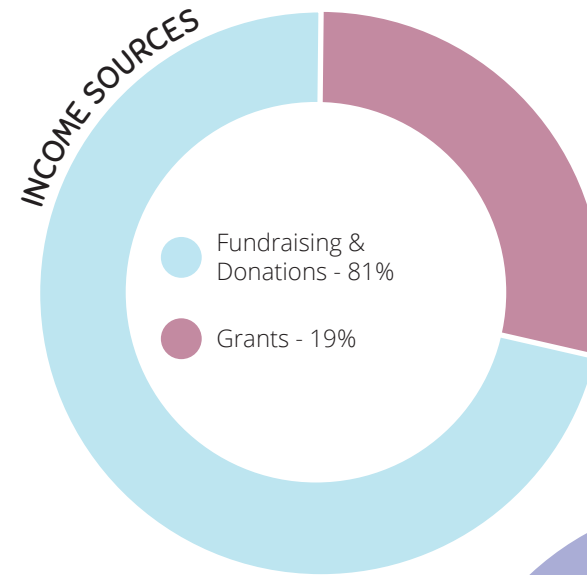


# Finances

Income	2023-24	2022-23
Revenue	\$1,059,953.00	\$844,317.00
Other Income	\$1,172.00	\$818.00
Total	\$1,061,125.00	\$845,132.00
Education Programs	\$567,207.00	\$463,789.00
Trauma and Injury Care (TIC) Programs	\$417,498.00	\$327,143.00
Administration	\$68,859.00	\$36,364.00
Annual Rent	\$708.00	\$635.00
Depreciation	\$1,773.00	\$2,332.00
Total	\$1,056,045	\$830,542.00
Surplus	\$5,080	\$14,590.00

*Albert Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle". At KIDS, we live every day as though everything is a miracle.*

# Your Money



*A full copy of our financials, notes and commentary as at 30 June 2024 can be viewed online at [www.kidsfoundation.org.au](http://www.kidsfoundation.org.au)*



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MACKA'S  
AUSTRALIAN BLACK ANGUS BEEF  
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OPERATIONS



INNOTECH  
SECURITY



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Westfield



WIDELAND  
GROUP



WOOLLOOMA GLASS HOUSE



# Spotlight: Banter Toys

In 2021 the challenges of COVID were difficult enough, and then on the day we were to return to work after many months of working from home, our workplace was broken into. We were truly devastated to find all our computers, screens, cameras, hard drives, TVs, cash box and much more stolen. But there are some really lovely people that came to our rescue off the back of an interview with Neil Mitchell on Radio 3AW.

One of the superheroes was Garry Issac from Banter Toys. Garry heard our story on the radio and donated \$20,000 to help us re-equip our workplace. Garry is one of the kindest and most special people I have ever come across. When things began to turn to the 'new normal' I visited Garry to give him a copy of my book "When Bad Things Happen Good Things Can Grow", thank him and share what we had been able to achieve with his donation.

The following year Garry donated 2,000 sensory toys for us to distribute to less fortunate children in our programs, and packs for the children who were involved in the Exford School bus crash as well as \$68,000 to go towards our programs. I was brought to tears, 'happy tears' when additional funds were donated to our Foundation, totalling \$263,000 in one year. One quarter of our annual income was donated by this most generous man. It is unimaginable to comprehend what this means to a smaller organisation and how many lives were touch through our education and recovery programs thanks to Garry's generosity.

It just goes to shows that – "When Bad Things Happen Good Things Can Grow".

Heartfelt thanks Garry, Kate and the Banter Foundation.



*"Young People, When Informed And Empowered, When They Realise That What They Do Truly Makes A Difference, Can Indeed Change The World."*  
- Jane Goodall





# Thank You!

**A massive thank you to everyone who generously donated to KIDS Foundation in the 2023-24 financial year. Donations of \$100+ are listed in alphabetical order below, however, we are so appreciative of every single donation we receive.**

A J Ferguson, Accru, Adam Owen, [Adam Davidson](#), Adam Coleman, Adam Stanley, Adam Lowndes, Adele Chiment, [Adrian Pazman](#), Aeron Holzhauser, Ainsley Anderson, Alan C, Alan Boyd, [Alec White](#), Alice Varley, Alison & Christian McGee, [Allan Cadzow](#), Allison Wiseman, [Amber Drum](#), Amy Shafik, Amy Byrnes, Andrew Nicholl, Andrew Guild, Andrew Howard, Andrew K, Andrew & Vivienne Cooper, Ann Walker, Anna Alexiadis, Anne Biggs, [Annette Ellis](#), Anthony Abbey, Anthony Newhouse, Anthony Osbourne, [Anthony Freedman](#), Anthony & Sam Freedman, Anto White, Anton Kape, [Arthur Holzhauser](#), Arthur Mitchell, Australian Turf Club, Banter Toys Pokémon, Barry Gerecke, Bec Renton, Belinda Kelly, Bella Tuddenham, [Ben Drummond](#), Ben McRae, Ben Smith, Ben Willis, Bjorn Baker, [Blake Ryan](#), Brad Merryweather, Brett Leo, Brett Burns, Brett Fulton, Brett O'Neill, [Brian McGrath](#), Bruce Gunter, Bryan Haskins, Cam Charlesworth, [Camilla Wylie](#), Carlie Trotter, Carmel Kelleher, Carmel Moore, Carmel West, Caroline Arthur, Caroline Crane, Cassie Faithfull, Catherine Fogarty, Charles Varga, Cherie Dear, Chloe Bennett, [Chris Jones](#), Chris Shedden, Chris Ashdowne, Chris Mai, [Chris & Julie Farquhar](#), Christine Renton, Chuck Van, Cindy Banks, Cindy Brundell, Claire Mossop, Clara Mena, Clayton Nicolas, Colin Alford, Con/James Christo/Caws, Craig Troy, Craig Tooley, [Craig Williams](#), Craig Pickford, Craig Alexander, Crump Martin, [Dale Trevor](#), Dan Floyd, Dan and Alison Charles, Daniel Parker, Daniel Clohesy, David Taylor, David Martin, David Edwards, David Turner, [David Matthews](#), David Head, David Cowen, David Garth, [David McIntosh](#), David Paradise, David and Selina Baxby, Deb & Les Tuddenham, Debbie Armstrong, Debra Kepitis, Diane Wynn-Jones, DJ Ferdinand, [Donna Chown](#), Donna Frankham, Ed Archibald, Edward White, Edwina Flynn, Eliot Ralph, Elise Ingram, Eliza Hoppe, Elliot Giakalis, Emma Freedman, [Emma Tuddenham](#), Emma Greeves, Emma Ridley, [Emma & Adam Tuddenham](#), Erin Finnegan, Fay Christou, Felicity Whibley, Fiona Butler, Fiona Hughes, Fiona Witheridge, Fiona Reynolds, Francesca Carter, Franco D, Frank Edwards, Frank Palazzo, Frank Herd, Gareth Beck, Garry McSkimming, Garry Isaacs, Gary Willetts, Gary I, [Gavin Nash](#), Gaye Haintz, [Geoffrey Porges](#), Gina Casalbuono, Glenn Donald, [Graeme Peddle](#), Graham Miles, Graham McTaggart, Grant Jennings, Grantley Dickinson, Greg Browne, Greg & Donna Kolivos, Gregory Bush, Harold Mitchell Foundation, Harris Tri Team, Harrison Murdoch, Harvey Phillips, Helen Oliver, Hillsrider Brighton, Hinano Kohring, Hunter Valley Operations, [Ian Batten](#), Inge Burke, Inmaculada Moreno, Irene Whight, Jaci Di Nardo, Jack Berner, Jackie Fish, Jaki Atwell, James Archibald, [James Bambridge](#), James Sinclair, [James Deacon](#), James Harron, James Mullen, Jamie Patrick, Jana Liston, Jane Berry, Jane Campbell, Jane E Grant, Janet Houghton, Janie Woods, Jason Brownley, Jason U, [Jaymie Doherty](#), Jayne Lawrence, Jeanette Jackson, Jeff Collinson, [Jeremy Bayard](#), Jess Bott, Jessica Aloe, Jillie Arnott, Jim and Kerrie Wilson, Jo Stuckey, [Jodi Ditterich](#), Jodie Hanssen, Jodie Mclatchie, Jody Sullivan, John Sutcliffe, [John Woodman](#), John Nicola, John Kallinikos, John Dawson, John Marotta, John Davies,

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