

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

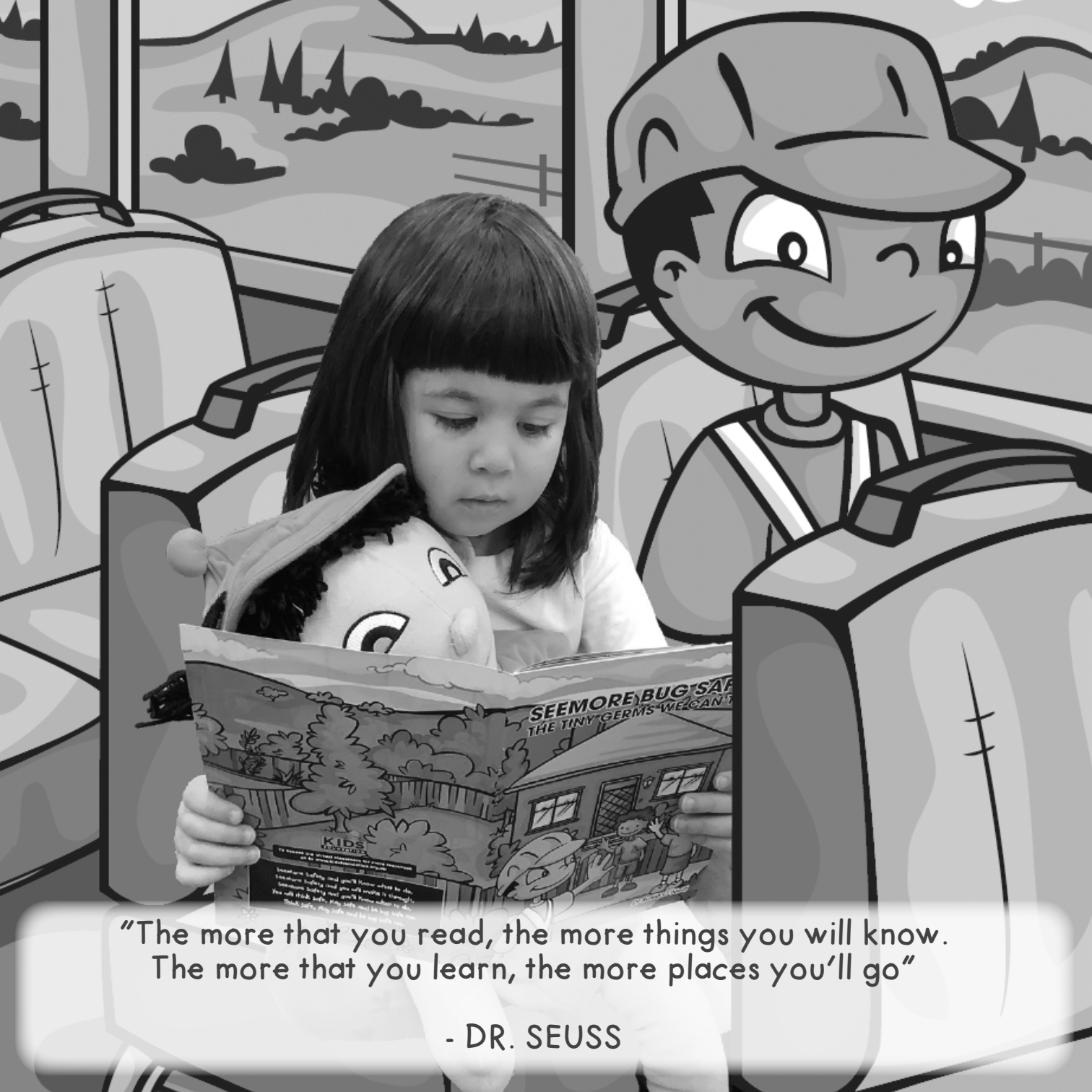


“Children are curious and amazing human beings, while reminding us that they have not experienced the world as long as us.”

- PROF. MARILYN FLEER







"The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go"

- DR. SEUSS

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"A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles"

- CHRISTOPHER REEVE

CEO AND CHAIR MESSAGE

In 2023, KIDS Foundation stands 30 years strong. The KIDS Team continues to be motivated by the courage and strength of the survivors that come into our world. We have been privileged to meet some seriously inspiring people in our programs and partnerships. Together we achieve what some would consider impossible, but when you have a can-do mindset and the right team beside you, you can make magic happen.

There are 30 years of countless memories we hold onto dearly, where we have shared some incredible moments. Our all-time favourites include:

- The creation of SeeMore Safety
- Printing and distributing 465,000 children's books, including SeeMore Bug Safety - The tiny germs we can't see where 4,000 copies were printed in languages other than English.
- Reaching 400,000 preschool children through 10,000 early learning education centres
- Seeing beautiful friendships form in our intergenerational program, 'Adopt a GrandBuddy'
- Accomplishing incredible achievements with our partners
- Creating magical moments and opportunities for our trauma and injury survivors.

Now we celebrate 30 years of greatness as we reach this remarkable milestone.

KIDS Foundation's work is only possible because of the many people that believe in our mission for 'every child to be safe, free from harm and injury'. For over 30 years we have impacted millions and made an extraordinary difference in the lives of many.

It is an absolute honour to go into the KIDS office and work alongside a unique group of people that are self-motivated, driven, committed, and loyal. Our heartfelt thanks goes to the children and their families, the devoted KIDS team, Board, Ambassadors, and volunteers who share our vision. Thank you!





"One moment can change a day, one day can change a life, one life can change the world"

- BUDDHA

30 YEARS OF KIDS

Over the last 30 years we have made an extraordinary difference in the lives of millions. Our team of 10 (4.5 full-time equivalent) are a unique group of self-motivated, driven, and committed people who devote their time to all facets of the Foundation. We are privileged to meet some exceptionally courageous and inspiring young people and get to wake up every day and create magical moments to make their lives the best they can be.

These young people, who in a second had their lives changed forever, are not ordinary. They are extraordinary. KIDS is a family that exists to provide unconditional love and support to the children and families that need us. There are 2 kinds of people in this world 'victims' and 'survivors'. You get to choose. Our people choose 'survivor'. The KIDS Team is passionately, truly, and deeply invested in their wellbeing, connecting with the children and their families to bring out their best despite their tragedies.

We are equally proud of our education program, fulfilling our dream of reaching 10,000 kindergartens and preschools in Australia. In 2020 the KIDS Foundation's SeeMore Safety program delivered 465,000 books to children aged 4 to 6 years. Some books were printed in four languages to support families with non-English speaking backgrounds.

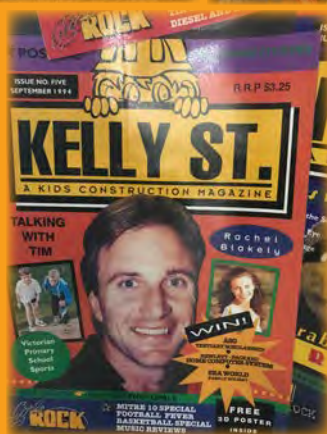
We have made countless memories and shared incredible moments over the last 30 years that we hold onto dearly and believe **the best is yet to come.**





30 YEARS OF





THE KIDS FOUNDATION



"You never know how strong you are, until being strong
is your only choice"

- BOB MARLEY



OUR DRIVE

Vision

Every child is safe, free from harm and injury

Mission

To educate and empower children to live safely and create a better life for those affected by serious trauma, injury and burns.

Purpose

To be a guiding influence in the lives of curious, amazing little people who have not experienced the whole world as we have to manage risks safely, and help survivors discover their purpose.

Values



WHAT WE DO

Child Safety

Since 2021, we have produced...

1/2 a million children's books

10,000 safety education packs

Physical and Emotional Wellbeing

Since 2021, we have supported...

65 Connecting Gen Intergenerational programs

2800 aged care and child participants

Trauma and Injury Care (TIC)

Since 2021, we have provided...

10,035 support hours

One-on-one, in group settings and at camps



Spencer's Story

Spencer and his brother Fletcher came to KIDS Foundation after surviving a horrific and unspeakable revenge attack at the hands of their own father. At only 5 years of age Spencer suffered burns to 37 per cent of his body, including full thickness burns to his shoulders and neck. Spencer, now 15, doesn't let his burns hold him back.

KIDS Camps are a place where young people in the KIDS program can come together and share common understandings. Life skill sessions form a part of each camp itinerary, and participants complete vision boards or set goals to achieve in the coming year. Spencer is ambitious and has the desire and determination to achieve great things, and at KIDS we have a way of making dreams come true. Spencer's dream to become an actor was a little more complicated, however...

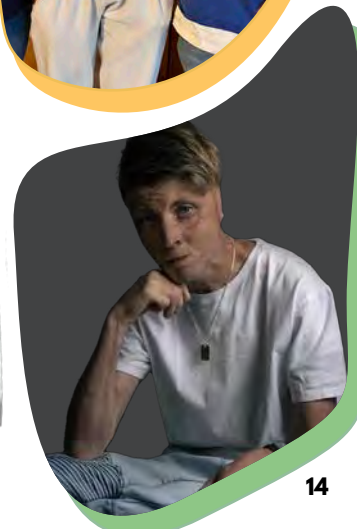
One of the volunteers at camp had told Spencer that a casting company had been advertising for burn survivors to play extras roles for an upcoming "blockbuster" movie. Spencer said he wanted to apply saying "I want to make my scars worthwhile". On his behalf, we contacted the casting company but sadly the positions had been filled. A few months later, our CEO Susie was on a health retreat sharing a house with a lovely lady named Leonie, who asked to read the book she had recently written. That night she stayed up reading. In the morning, she asked Susie about Spencer and Fletcher who featured.

Susie mentioned Spencer's desire to be in this particular movie. The following morning a gentleman named Rob approached her and said he would like to talk. He had been speaking to Leonie where she mentioned this young boy's dream to be in a movie. As it turned out, part of the

movie was being filmed on Rob's property and he was cast as an extra. Rob said he would give this role up for Spencer. KIDS didn't want him to do that, but we would be grateful to be introduced to someone from the casting company. They asked for three photos and his story. The casting company showed the information to the Director and after reading it, he asked Spencer to audition for a part. In the end, he ended up with a talking role in this blockbuster movie getting highly paid, with his own driver, dressing trailer and makeup artist. Spencer's dream of becoming an actor is well underway...



A note for Spencer written by Robert 'Macka' MacKenzie.



You don't meet people accidentally. They're meant to cross your path for a reason.



OUR PROGRAMS

The KIDS Foundation has been operating since 1993, occupying a unique position as a national leader in childhood safety, and injury and trauma recovery. Our mission is to ensure that all Australian children are safe - free from harm and injury.

This year, in 2023, KIDS Foundation celebrates being 30 years strong.

We work with children who have horrific injuries and trauma from burns, accidents, violent crimes, and abuse, to support them and their families to recover.

In 2020, our education programs 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.

EDUCATION

Our education programs empower children to build a strong sense of identity and wellbeing so that they can keep themselves and others safe while still allowing them to be kids. Educating children through the SeeMore Safety Program in Australian early childhood education centres is our focus.

RECOVERY (TRAUMA AND INJURY CARE [TIC])

Our TIC programs support children with horrific injuries and trauma caused by burns, accidents, dog attacks, crime, neglect, abuse, and environmental events. We recognise the positive impact of peer support that was promoted through the delivery of Trauma and Injury Care camps, leadership workshops and the National Burn Survivors' Network for families.

ADVOCACY WORK

Our advocacy work gives children a voice and agency in their own learning. We empower them to build self-worth, wellbeing, respectful relationships, values, and behaviours that allow them to become responsible risk takers and contributors to society.

Every day, the team at KIDS Foundation devotes time and resources to educating and empowering children and their families on ways to prevent trauma and injury associated with dangerous situations.

That's how KIDS gets it's acronym -

"Kids In Dangerous Situations"



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

In Recovery

2022 / 2023 saw KIDS embrace the power of the horse-human connection through the introduction and incorporation of equine assisted activities into our Injury and Trauma Recovery Camps.

Three Camp TANGO's took place during this financial year and were held across three states; Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland. Each TANGO, providing life-changing peer-to-peer connections and experiences for participants.

Our Victorian Camp TANGO's focus was on introducing attendees to the horse-human connection and how powerful it can be. Through equine assisted activities participants gained a new sense of trust and confidence within themselves and their capabilities.

Our South Australian Camp TANGO saw attendees step out of their comfort zones with some fun mental and physical challenges. Everyone worked hard on their team building, communication and problem solving skills whilst in an equine assisted environment.

Our Queensland Camp TANGO involved a number of enjoyable equine inspired activities; including a night out at the Australian Outback Spectacular; 'Heartland'; a meet and greet with world class horse trainer, Cody Rawson; equine assisted activities; and creating horse inspired artwork.



Who we supported - Tianna

Tianna is a burn survivor who was injured in a house fire at 14 months old after her night light ignited in the middle of the night. She first joined KIDS at an Injury Recovery Camp when she was 10 years old, then found KIDS again only a few years ago. In November, 2022 was presented with a specially modified car at Camp TANGO.

Tianna had wanted the independence her own car would bring her for so long and was beyond grateful when she found out that KIDS, alongside her family and other organisations had been working together to make her dream a reality.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

In Education

Connecting Generations

Hamilton Project - Statistics and Data

in 2022, the Connecting Generations program was implemented across 5 kindergartens and aged care centers in the Hamilton, Victoria area.

As part of this project, an assessment tool called 'CATE' (Children's Attitude Toward the Elderly) was used to consider children's perceptions of the elderly prior to the program delivery, compared to after. Children were shown pictures of an individual at different stages of ageing and responded to tasks and questions based on their understanding and opinions of the elderly

Data showed that;

Children's ability to correctly identify the oldest picture improved across all services by the end of the program

More children were able to correctly order the pictures from youngest to oldest at the end of the program

Children expressed less negative feelings, and increased neutral feelings when thinking about themselves at an elderly age

Children were more aware of the physical and social needs of the elderly at the end of the program



Visit to Coleraine Kindergarten

On the 2nd August, 2022, members of our Education Team, Nick, Hayley, Jo and SeeMore, traveled to Coleraine Kindergarten to see the successful Connecting Generations Program being implemented in partnership with Valley View Nursing Home. Even through the adversities of the Covid-19 Pandemic, these services were able to find a way to come together through the Connecting Generations Program. Each week, the kindergarten read one of the SeeMore Safety books and completed an activity from the KIDS Foundation Connecting Generations Program Guide, before taking a walk to hand deliver their creations and say hello to the residents at Valley View through the windows!

Noosa Perigan Beach incursion



Gumnut Preschool incursion



Kool Kidz Mill Park incursion

Trailer

Thanks to the generosity of the Jo White Bequest, we were able to design and develop a trailer for the Ballarat and broader regional Victorian community. This trailer will be used to deliver programs that support wellbeing and school readiness and promote the physical and emotional health and safety of children.

Works on the trailer were completed by local Ballarat company, Brimarco.

Our new KIDS Trailer



WHO WE SUPPORT

Since 2021...



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



10,000 Early Childhood Education Centres received SeeMore Safety Program packs and engaged with our virtual classroom and SeeMore Safety Show online.



10,035 Individualised Support Hours were provided through one-on-one time, in group settings and at camps.

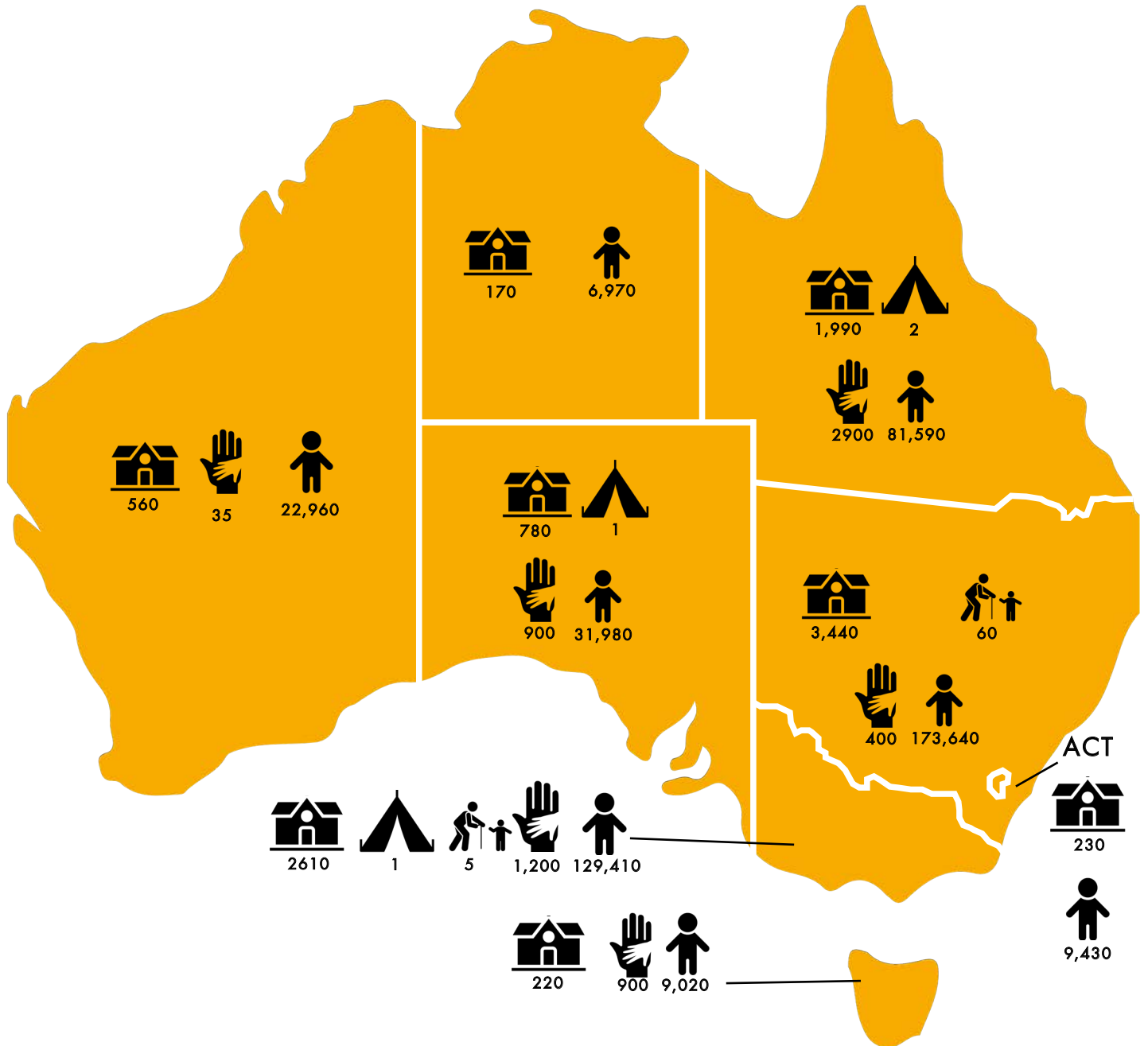


1/2 a million Safety Activity and Story Books were printed and distributed to children throughout Australia.



65 Early Childhood Education and Aged Care Centres received the Connecting Generations - Adopt a Grandbuddy Program.

In 2023...



OUR PEOPLE

The Board



Sincere thanks to the KIDS Foundation Board and Board Advisors (left to right), Athol Hodgetts, Charles Kovess, Susie O'Neill, Kate Emerson, Jo Stuckey, Hamish McLachlan, Margie Amarfio, Matthew Ricker, Ian Coutts and Rimas Liubinas for generously volunteering their time and expertise. Your commitment, passion and support allow us to continue to fulfill our mission and grow stronger.

Rimas and Athol have taken on various roles supporting the KIDS Foundation for 30 years since 1993, the year we were founded. Matthew Ricker has provided sound financial advice for the past ten years after joining the Board in 2013.

OUR PEOPLE

The Team - In alphabetical order



Annie Edgar
Administration,
Educator &
Recovery Support



Beau Jones
Educator (NSW)



Erynne Trotter
Psychologist
Camp
Coordinator



Hayley Wilson
Educator



Jo Brodie
Educator (QLD)



Kylie Cirak
Grants



Lauren Grace
Graphic Designer
& Resource
Developer



Melanie Mullen
Communications
& Campaigns



**Leanne
McPherson**
Trauma & Injury
Care Coordinator



Melissa Tipping
Burns Survivors'
Network SA



**Nicholas Van Der
Molen**
Educator



SeeMore Safety
Educator

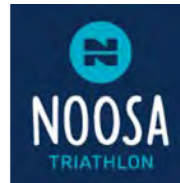
Dr Susie O'Neill OAM - CEO, Founder & Educator

In January our very own CEO and Founder, Dr. Susie O'Neill, was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the 2023 Australia Day honour list. Susie has devoted four decades to helping children as an educator and working with children at risk. It was extra special for her to be presented the award in the year KIDS Foundation turned 30!

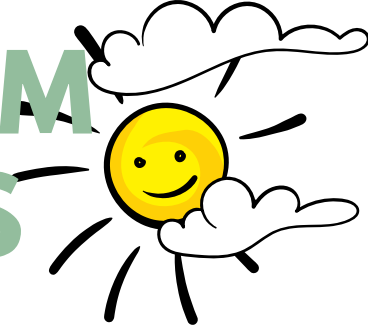


We are a small yet effective team, equivalent to 4.5 full time staff who have dedicated roles across all facets of the organisation. Our staff are our greatest volunteers, equally giving their time to support our education projects, trauma and injury care programs, camps, and events.

PARTNERSHIPS



OUR PROGRAM SUPPORTERS



CHILD SAFETY

eSafety Commissioner - SeeMore eSafety
Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation - SeeMore eSafety
Flora and Frank Leith Charitable Trust - Ready To Go SeeMore
Joe White Bequest - Ready To Go SeeMore

CHILD HEALTH & WELLBEING

Australian Charities Foundation - Bug Safety
Arcare - Connecting Generations
Pratt Foundation - CARHM Start

CAMPS & TRAUMA AND INJURY CARE (TIC)

Bank of Melbourne - Camp TANGO
Banter Toys & Collectables - TIC
Burnslife - Camp Phoenix
Clipsal - Burn Survivors Network SA
Consolidated Property Services - Camps and TIC
Harold Mitchell - Camps and TIC
Harris Trade Plumbing Supplies - Camps and TIC
Kookaburra - TIC
Petstock Foundation - Equine Camps
Smile for a Child - QLD Camps
Westfield - SA Camps

HELPING US DO BUSINESS

BossMan
Harris Trade Plumbing Supplies
Innotec
MDS Accounting Services
Noosa Tri
O'Brien Icehouse
Wattletree



FINANCES



INCOME

2023

Revenue	\$844,317.00
Other Income	\$818.00
TOTAL	\$845,132.00

EXPENSES

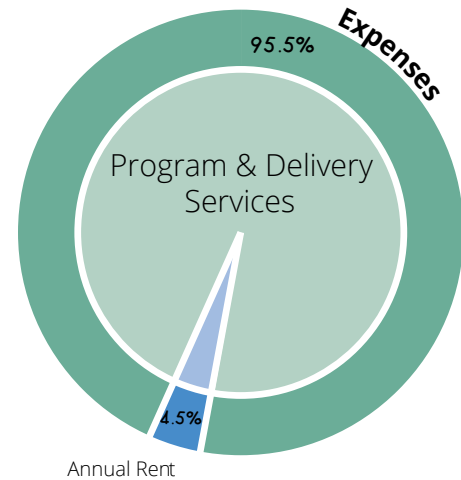
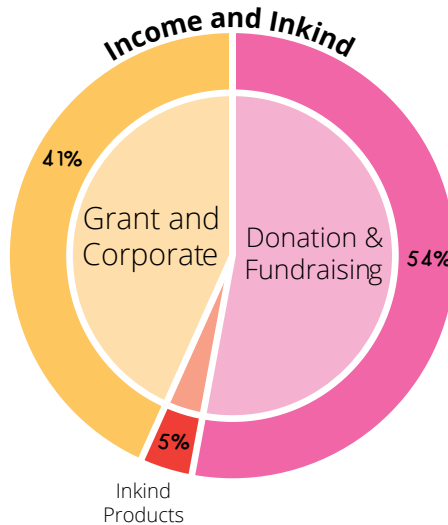
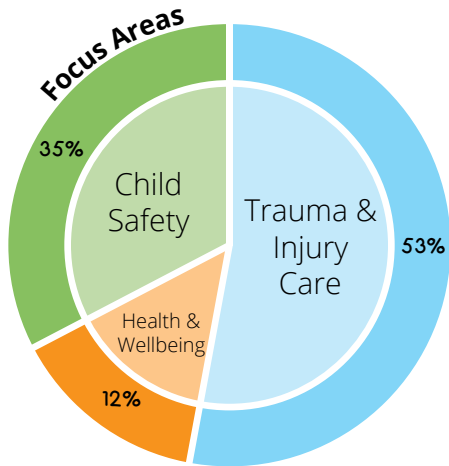
Education Programs	\$463,798.00
Trauma and Injury Care (TIC) Recovery Programs	\$327,143.00
Administration	\$36,364.00
Annual Rent	\$635.00
Depreciation	\$2,332.00
TOTAL	\$830,542.00
Surplus	\$14,590.00



A full copy of our financials, notes and commentary as at 30 June 2023 can be viewed online at

www.kidsfoundation.org.au

YOUR MONEY



Examples of what we do with your money and the support we have provided our young people:

Tom was burnt in a house fire at young age and was later adopted by his foster mum. For 20 years Tom underwent over 150 surgeries and struggled with his partially amputated foot as a result of the fire. Amputation and attachment of a prosthetic lower limb was recommended. This surgery came at a cost, with out-of-pocket fees totalling \$35,000. KIDS raised the money for Tom, who now walks, runs and has taken on a KIDS Youth Leadership role.

Two 18-year-old participants needed cars, however didn't have the ability to fund them. One of the cars had to be less than 5 years old, under than 50,000km, automatic, and could fit a wheelchair to meet the NDIS requirements. These cars cost around \$30,000 - \$35,000 so KIDS Foundation donated \$2,500 and helped them to fundraise. Within a year both had cars and a new sense of independence. They're now able to socialise with their friends and can transport themselves without the added challenge of public transport.



Tianna



Fletcher



In the 2022-23 financial year, it was estimated there was more than 5,400 hours of volunteer time and inkind services donated, valued at \$85,000.

MEDIA STORIES

NEWS NOOSATODAY.COM.AU

Camp aids kids' recovery

By Margie Maccoll

Survivors of trauma, burns and life-changing injuries converged on Noosa last weekend as part of the Kids in Dangerous Situations (KIDS) Foundation's Together Achieving New Goals and Opportunities (TANGO) Equine Camp.

Eighteen young people aged 13 to early 20s and eight mentors travelled from across Australia for a weekend packed with activities and the chance to be and grow together.

After a show on the Gold Coast and an equine centre visit to experience the power of human-horse connection at Eamundi, the group headed to their stay at Ocean Breeze on Hastings Street from where they visited local restaurants, had a dip in the ocean then tested their artistic skills at a Sip and Paint session.

One participant said "just being here with everyone" was the best part of the weekend for her.

The camp is one of a number of injury recovery programs initiated and managed by the KIDS Foundation which was established 30 years ago by Ballarat and now Noosa resident Dr Susie O'Neill.

"TANGO responds to the transition from teenage years to adulthood which is particularly hard for children affected by injury and burn trauma. Surgery is necessary to help young bodies accommodate growth.

"There are matters of self-image and personal esteem unique to the individual that also arise in these important years. The program provides a comfortable haven for young survivors to set goals and create their own opportunities," Susie said.

One of those survivors achieving a long-



KIDS Foundation group stop for a snack outside Noosa Surf Life Saving Club.

Picture: ROB MACCOLL

held goal was Spencer who recently realised an ambition to be an actor.

Through a connection, Susie was able to recommend Spencer for a role in a blockbuster movie and he got the part, acting alongside some Aussie stars.

"It was amazing," Spencer said.

"I got to meet some very famous people and made a best friend, Sean, out of it. Hopefully I'll lead to a career."

KIDS Foundation ambassador Matt Theile, 27, comes along to the camps every year to

enjoy the camaraderie, re-connect with old friends and make new ones.

He said it was good to see the little ones build their confidence through the camps.

"You see a change in their perspective. When they first come to the camp they're very shy and won't open up. After the first camp there's a dramatic change in their confidence," he said.

Susie said a lot of the young people had similar injuries and could support each other and share advice.



Maggie, Spencer, Dr Susie O'Neill, Donald McKill, Little Jo Power, Matt Theile and Mady with a Smile for a Child cheque for \$5000 for KIDS Foundation.

She said it was the tenacity and courage of survivors that continued to inspire KIDS Foundation staff and supporters.

"The ability of survivors to move forward in their lives has given the KIDS Foundation the resolve to develop programs aimed at assisting recovery and at preventing childhood injury in the first instance," she said.

The camp was made possible thanks to the support of Ocean Breeze, Smile for a Child, Consolidated Property Services and the Petstock Foundation.

"The work of KIDS Foundation is heartfelt. This camp is enabled by the generosity of individuals and business, that support Smile for a Child and by the energy of founder Susie O'Neill, the KIDS committed staff and local volunteers working with the KIDS Foundation", said Smile for a Child's, Glenn Packeridge who presented the foundation with a \$5000 cheque from the Noosa charity during the weekend.

After the retreat the young people will engage in an ongoing mentoring program."



Early Learning Centre

SeeMore Safety Program

Each year, Newlands ELC works with the KIDS Foundation to deliver a safety education program that teaches strategies to help the ELC children to 'Think Safe, Play Safe'. The Foundation regularly provides resource materials to the ELC that are used to teach a safety program to children throughout the year. The program aims to prevent childhood injuries and increase safety awareness.

For more information, please go to the website <http://kidsfoundation.org.au>.

Children are quite knowledgeable when it comes to safety, but reinforcing learning about the importance of safety occurs on a regular basis. The children are reminded about safety within the home and at the ELC and to be aware of hazards in their environment, such as water spills, uneven surfaces, hot surfaces, etc.

2 THE COURIER Saturday October 28, 2022

NEWS

Horses to help kids recover from trauma

BY MICHELLE SMITH

BALLABAT'S KIDS Foundation is spinning the skills of some very special assistants to help children recover from injury and trauma. Hired racetrack workers will take on new careers as illustrators when the organisation adds equine therapy to its camp program next month.

KIDS Foundation founder Susie O'Neill has created the Child and Retired-Racehorse Movement, or CARM, in part out of her own family tragedy.

Ms O'Neill's grand-daughter Bella died last year at just 20 days old from the rare genetic disease spinal muscular atrophy. On a family holiday also last month, Bella's older sister asked Ms O'Neill to go for a horse ride with them.

"I absolutely loved it and realised I was really missing that horse-human connection I had many years ago," she said.

That led to the family buying a ranch just a stone's throw from the KIDS Foundation headquarters in Ballarat Airport and the arrival of 'grainie girls' Titan.

"Then I started looking at all the children in KIDS



KIDS Foundation founder Susie O'Neill with horse Titan and inset with program characters SeeMore Safety and CARM. Inset picture by Laciara Bence

across of homes and I wanted to provide a really positive experience for the horses as well," she said. "Horses can really read a human's emotions."

She had also received feedback from kinder teachers who use the foundation's See-More Safety Program of the growing need to address mental health in children.

"A lot of teachers said mental health is the biggest issue since COVID and asked

if there was anything in the See-More program to cover mental health and wellbeing ... so we have created See-More's friend CARM, who is a horse, who will help children understand their feelings."

CARM has four differently coloured hooves to help young children express their feelings through colour and comes with a children's book about a lady who rescues retired racehorses.

Ms O'Neill has also created

the inaugural Horseracing Day, on March 23 next year, to raise funds and awareness for the CARM program and highlight the power of the horse-human connection.

Funds raised will help provide equine therapy programs and camps for child survivors of injury and trauma, deliver early intervention, safety and sensory stimulation programs and return and release retired racehorses.

Ms O'Neill has also created

Susie O'Neill - OAM



AUSTRALIA DAY | 2023

Strength in changing lives

BY MELANIE WHELAN

RALLYING support and funds for a charity has become a much greater challenge in the 30 years since Susie O'Neill founded the KIDS Foundation.

Dr O'Neill said the fact the KIDS Foundation was "the strongest it's ever been" was, in itself, her charity's great strength to keep growing and developing programs to both look after child survivors of traumatic injury and to prevent childhood injury.

There are big plans ahead for the foundation's 30th year and Dr O'Neill said to be awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia was an exciting way, personally and for the foundation, to launch the year. Dr O'Neill said the honour gave credit to all the KIDS Foundation's work.

"The thing I love most about my job is I get to really

help people because we can - and we do - change lives," Dr O'Neill said. "I know we have definitely saved people's lives and are making dreams come true.

"I'm really looking forward to this year."

Dr O'Neill is a qualified pre-school and primary school teacher, with a PhD in education.

It was on an early teaching placement in the 1980s that Dr O'Neill met a girl who had cigarette burns on her hands. This led to Dr O'Neill choosing to devote her studies and career to children at risk.

Not long after this, Dr O'Neill met a 12-year-old boy recovering from injury in a ward with elderly men at the Queen Elizabeth Centre because, at the time, Australia had no rehabilitation centres for children.

In 2000, KIDS Foundation opened its first child reha-



KIDS Foundation founder Susie O'Neill is recognised for her service to children. Picture by Kate Healy

habilitation unit Pete's Place at the QE.

Dr O'Neill said through the "unimaginable tragedies" of others, she found her purpose.

The KIDS Foundation will mark its 30th year with five recovery camps, a new animated e-safety program to roll out to thousands of

children across Australia and a new mental health and well-being initiative for child trauma survivors to help them voice autonomy for their bodies.

Dr O'Neill also plans to re-launch her book *When Bad Things Happen... Good Things Can Grow*, which she launched in late 2021 with

Thai Cave rescuer Richard Harris.

Early next month a group representing KIDS Foundation will be flown to a mystery international location in filming for television show *Adventure All Stars*, a show sending what it bills as a socially conscious cast to explore incredible destinations. The program will screen later in the year on 7plus.

And this is just a taste of the KIDS Foundation calendar.

Recovery camps are particularly special to Dr O'Neill, such as the long-time Moreton Island camp held at a wild dolphin resort. Here, one of the dolphin calves was named Phoenix in honour of the foundation.

The Moreton Island camp was also where young burns survivor Dalton had bonded with a young dolphin, approved by the dolphin's parents as a friend. Both

Dalton and the dolphin died, in separate incidents, in the Toowoomba floods of 2010.

Dr O'Neill said the camp was simply a special place.

Stories are important to Dr O'Neill, becoming part of the story for both herself and the foundation.

This year, one young boy's dream will finally be realised in becoming a movie actor. The boy had been the only one of a small group of burns survivors whose dream on a vision board had not come true. After a couple of chance meetings and interest in his story, Dr O'Neill managed to find him a role in a big budget movie being filmed in Australia.

In the "up-and-down" charity world, Dr O'Neill said stories such as the young actor were true career highlights in empowering people to realise what could be possible.

BY TIM BOTTAMS

AFTER more than four decades helping children as an educator and the CEO of non-profit Kids Foundation, Dr Susie O'Neill isn't taking a break anytime soon.

With her anniversary turning 30 this year, and Dr O'Neill has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the 2023 Australia Day honour list, and she said there's plenty of reason to celebrate.

"It's pretty special because of our anniversary and we're actually in our strongest period we've ever been in," she said.

Having worked as an educator since 1980, Dr O'Neill founded the children's organisation in early 1993 when she visited the Queen Elizabeth Centre with some students.

"When I was there, there was actually a young boy staying in the ward with three 90-plus-year-old men," she said.

"I didn't think the environment was that friendly for children so I met with the director and we created a space called Pete's Place which I think gets about 600 children for day therapy."

She said the organisation has since

gone from strength to strength.

"Me being a schoolteacher, the first young boy, I'd help him with his school work and when it was time for him to leave, there was no support network for burns," she said.

"We then set up the Burn Survivors network and put together an injury recovery program for kids that had been badly injured or traumatised."

Dr O'Neill's output for the foundation has included writing children's books for their SeeMore Safety program.

Her latest releases are *Let Kids be Kids* and *When Bad Things Happen Good Things Can Grow*. Survivors' Stories of Hope from the Aftermath of Unimaginable Trauma Abuse and Burns.

Dr O'Neill said she's proud of the lasting impact Kids Foundation has had as well as passing on her values to her four children and 11 grandchildren.

"I know for a fact I've saved several kids' lives and that's the greatest achievement," she said.

"I always wanted to make a difference to young people growing up and I've got a lot more work to do there working on a mental health program and the benefits of equine therapy."

AWARENESS AND FUNDRAISERS

Hot Temple Tri 4 KIDS

The Hot Temple hosted the Tri4KIDS again this year raising over \$9,000 which went towards the KIDS Foundation Injury Recovery Camps. Ballarat turned on the weather for the last day of April, with sunshine and a light breeze. 27 athletes completed the Tri, some as individuals and some as teams. It was a huge success with people going outside their comfort zones and doing something that they never thought possible.

The Hot Temple provided an alternative to swimming the 1500m with a 35min core & arm workout some would say it was more challenging than the swim. This was followed by the 40km stationary bike ride in the gym with a little heat to keep everyone sweating. The 10km run course consisting of 5 x 2km laps, looped along Howitt Street and through the carpark which gave the spectators and athletes plenty of opportunities to cheer everyone on.

The event was won by:

Female - Sam Edwards

Male - Bailey Tuddenham

Special prizes were handed out for those that raised the most money:

- Con Palmbras was awarded the prize for raising the most money at \$1460

Special recognition goes to the following for their fundraising efforts:

- Soph and Steph (the Twins) \$1000
- Erika Rees \$750
- Vicki Zelazo \$620

Thanks to Hot Temple for providing the location, bikes, promotion and training for the event in 2023.



Adventure All Stars

Susie O'Neill and Leanne McPherson were invited to star in the 'Legends' episode of Adventure All Stars, filmed in Port Douglas, QLD.

The nationally broadcast show featured past contestants of Adventure All Stars who had been selected to return for the 'Legends' episode. This 3-part special television event featured the best of the past cast members returning for a week of adventure in tropical Far North Queensland.

The 'legends' episode of season 3 aired in July 2023 on 7plus, reaching at least 21 countries and over 45 million households worldwide.



Put Your Hand Up!

The third annual Put Your Hand Up campaign was launched mid-June and ran until the end of July 2023. The campaign objective was to raise funds through online donations and in-person donations at the Melbourne Ice v Sydney Bears ice hockey match.

BossMan ran video and static content via the KIDS Foundation's social media channels to drive traffic to the PYHU landing page, in-turn driving donations.

Through CARM an opportunity presented itself in the form of the Victorian Racing Club. BossMan and the KIDS Foundation worked closely with the VRC to feature the Melbourne Cup at the ice hockey game and on the ice for the first time.

BossMan extended its reach via the Victorian Racing Club, O'Brien Icehouse, Melbourne Ice and Sydney Bears social media platforms, introducing the KIDS Foundation to a whole new audience.

We also welcomed Australian freestyle skier and Olympic gold medallist Jakara Anthony OAM to the campaign this year.

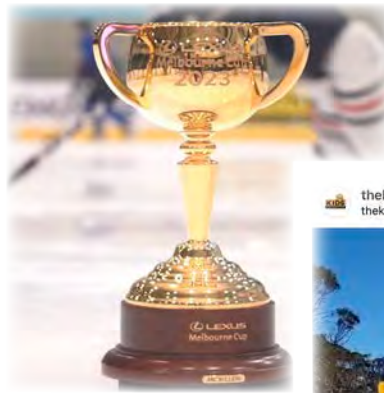
META Activity

During the campaign, we saw over 60,000 users on Facebook view our creative. This was a slight increase of 2% on last year's campaign.

Instagram performed extremely well, with a 207% increase in reach compared to the same period last year!

Website Activity

During the campaign we saw over 2,500 users click through to the Put Your Hand Up donation page. We also achieved a 9.3% increase in new visitors to the website compared to last year's campaign.



Key Partners



Noosa Triathlon

KIDS Foundation presented a team of 50 athletes at the 2022 Noosa Tri.

We were well supported by all fundraisers. One fundraiser in particular, by Harris Trade Plumbing Supplies, raised over \$75,000 for the tri this year. The Harris Team consisted of Shane, Mitch and Josh Viney under the guidance of Anthony Abbey.

The KIDS Team were also complemented by the Allsorts Recreation Club, a team of 25 athletes from Sydney who brought their all to the event. A couple of the Allsorts crew were quick on the course and achieved notable results for the event. Rhys Corbishle was the first for the charity wave out of the 182 athletes and Jamie Orr picked up a 3rd for the women in the charity wave.

The KIDS team were supported by many of the athletes families and enjoyed the event. The KIDS tent at the expo was a great introduction for many. The welcome and athlete briefing was held at Piccolino where Susie gave a brief rundown of the KIDS Foundation, and Smile for a child presented the KIDS Foundation with a cheque to continue our injury prevention work in the Sunshine coast region.



HEARTFELT THANKS

A heartfelt thanks goes to the donors and funders who share our vision. We know there are many great causes, and you have a lot of choices when it comes to donating. We are so grateful that you chose to donate to our cause to allow KIDS Foundation to continue doing great work.



The KIDS Foundation acknowledges the generous gift of \$18,000 received from the John Hepworth Memorial Fund. The late Archbishop John Hepworth sadly passed away on December 1, 2021, in Adelaide following complications arising from Motor Neuron Disease. Father John Hepworth spent some of his time at the South Ballarat Parish. In addition to his work in the church Father John Hepworth had: a degree in political science; a Bachelor of Arts degree; lectured at the NT University; in 1998 was elected to the Australian Constitutional Convention; and chaired the Australia-Vietnam Human Rights Committee in South Australia. Father John Hepworth's gift has been attributed to young people we support who are also survivors of abuse, as he was. His resilience showed that when the due process fails you, you can rise above and make a big difference to the world.

OUR DONORS

Aarna Khatri, Abbel Gaspi, AGMAL PTY LTD, Allen, Amy Hobbs, Amy Jones, Anita Will, Anthony Abbey, Art Story SA, Ashleigh Kanoa, Ashley Rowe, Australia Professional Fire Fighters - S.A., Australian Communities Foundation, Baker, Ballarat and Clarendon College, Barter, Bhavim Patel, Bill Fish, Brenda Clark, Brett O'Neill, Britten, Burnslife, Carol Woolgar, Chapel of St George and Michael Inc, Charity TV Global Foundation, Charles Varga, D and S Moss, Dan & Ali, Dav Askan, David Mattews, Dean Russell, DonKenzie Investment P/L, Dulwich Bakery - Pasadena, Elysee, Emma Cursaro, Emma Tuddenham, Erin Kefalas, Felipe Lima, Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust, Gardiner, Giesen, Gloria Yeung, Graeme McMahon, Harold Mitchell Foundation, Harris Plumbing, Henwood, Holman Industries, Hot Temple, Hunt, Ian Batten, JA McKenzie, Jae Cousin, Jane Comer, Janet Miller, Jennifer McKenzie, Jenny Little, Jessica Best, Jessica Kershaw, Jo Stuckey, Joe White Bequest, John Burbergs, John Davis, Johnson, Julie Jacobs, K & H Notting Hill PTY LTD, K & H Willetton, Kai Huang, Karen Jacques, Karl Whitten, Kate Emerson, Kaylene Sirris, KD Merrett, Kylie Harris, Lachlan Hartley, Lisa Campo, Louise Fellowes, Lucas Allen, Maggie Payne, Margie Amarfio, Marie Falduto, Maroondah City Council, Matthews, Melissa Tipping, Metrics Credit Partners Pty Ltd, Michael Ramadge, Miss Amy Jones, Oliver Macmillan-Bell, Petra Olbrechtova, PetStock, Portsea Golf Club, Pratt Foundation, Rheem Australia, Rob Pitts, Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital, Samantha Chiminello, Sarah Gladman, Scott Eathorne, Smile For A Child, Somselle P/L, Stuart Baker, Susie O'Neill, The online eSafety Grants Manager eSafety Commissioner, Tim Gane, Tooley, Trevor Richardson, Wattletree Property, Westfield, Witherden



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