

Father Chris Riley's

**youth**

off the streets®

# ANNUAL REPORT

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2023



# ABOUT YOUTH OFF THE STREETS

Youth Off The Streets is a not-for-profit youth services organisation that supports children and young people aged 12–24 who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and complex disadvantage. We walk alongside them, their families and communities to create safety and provide meaningful opportunities to build a positive future.

Since being founded by Father Chris Riley over 30 years ago, Youth Off The Streets has grown from a single food van to an organisation that provides holistic support services for children and young people in NSW and QLD. These include crisis accommodation and housing services, independent high schools, cultural and wellbeing support for First Nations young people, alcohol and other drugs counselling, youth justice support, training and employment programs, life skills workshops and drop-in centres, among other services.

We are a non-denominational organisation with a focus on early interventions that empower children and young people and strengthen communities.



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## Acknowledgement of Country

Youth Off The Streets acknowledges the traditional custodians of the Country on which we work and recognises their connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

In all our work, we celebrate the culture, learning and spiritual connection that has been shared across thousands of years. We are proud to continue these traditions for future generations – so that all young people who seek connection to Country at Youth Off The Streets may be empowered to find it.



*Some of the names and/or images of young people in this report have been changed to protect their privacy. All quotes and stories are true.*

# CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to present Youth Off The Streets' Annual Report 2023.

It was a challenging year in many ways for the young people we support, as well as their families and communities. Cost-of-living pressures, the impact on First Nations Australians of the Voice to Parliament referendum, and family ties to the unfolding tragedy in the Middle East were among the additional stresses our frontline staff worked hard to support our young people through in 2023.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released the results of the 2021 Census this year. It came as no surprise to youth services organisations that a staggering 23% of the country's total homeless population is aged 12 to 24. Youth Off The Streets has joined the youth homelessness sector in calling on the Australian Government to develop a standalone National Strategy to End Child and Youth Homelessness and prioritise tackling this issue for our society's most vulnerable people.

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*As demand for Youth Off The Streets' services grew in 2023, we achieved some remarkable outcomes for children and young people. I hope you feel as inspired as I do by the results shared in this report.*

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We also witnessed our staff, volunteers, partners, funders and community of supporters come together to help children and young people in need. We are grateful for their ongoing commitment and generosity, which made possible many of the achievements outlined in the pages ahead.

In April 2023, the Board was pleased to appoint Judy Barraclough as Chief Executive Officer. Judy brings extensive leadership and operational experience in both the for-purpose and corporate sectors, with specialist expertise in strategy and philanthropy. I would like to thank Fiona Campbell for her excellent service as Acting CEO prior to Judy's appointment.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to my fellow Board colleagues for their guidance, expertise and oversight in 2023. The Board enthusiastically engaged with the Leadership Team in developing Youth Off The Streets' Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and we are excited for the future. The next five years promise to deliver even greater impact on the lives of children and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in Youth Off The Streets.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Fitzgerald".

Anne Fitzgerald, GAICD  
Chairperson

# CEO'S MESSAGE

In my first year at Youth Off The Streets, I have been inspired by the impact our staff, supporters and volunteers make – as well as the strength and resilience of the children and young people we work with.

I'm so proud to be part of a team with such deep passion and commitment at its core. And I'm honoured to play a role in the ongoing legacy of Father Chris Riley's work and vision.

In the face of many challenges for the wider community, Youth Off The Streets provided casework and individual support to around 1,700 children and young people in 2023.

Of the young people accessing our homelessness services, 90% identified domestic, family and sexual violence as a major reason for seeking support.

Across our programs, 84% of children and young people reported facing significant mental health challenges. Nearly two-thirds said that personal barriers stopped them achieving their study or work goals.

Amid these stark figures, it is a testament to the dedication of our community that 2023 was a year of significant achievement for our programs. To name just a few:

- Nearly 14,000 instances of outreach support encouraged young people in NSW and QLD to connect with our Youth Support Services and seek mental health, education, vocational or youth justice support.
- Our First Nations Services provided tailored assistance to 256 young people and engaged over 1,000 more in cultural and community events. They also delivered the thought-provoking and hugely successful 'Walking Together' series of workshops, engaging community groups and organisations to contribute towards reconciliation in Australia.
- In Education Services, 250 young people in Years 9–12 were supported by our six independent high schools, with 125 earning their Record of School Achievement or their Higher School Certificate.

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*After an extensive process of research and consultation, the end of 2023 saw us arrive at an ambitious but achievable Strategic Plan for 2024–2028.*

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Our five-year strategy outlines our priorities: strengthening our impact and expanding our reach. These priorities drive a range of initiatives to help us work smarter and better in service of vulnerable children and young people.

You can read about our service outcomes, advocacy efforts and our new strategy in the following pages.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Youth Off The Streets' dedicated team members and to our supporters. It is your belief in our mission that equips and empowers children and young people to build a positive future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy Barraclough'.

**Judy Barraclough**  
Chief Executive Officer



# 2023 SNAPSHOT

We provided thousands of children and young people with safety, support, practical skills and opportunities to build a positive future.

Here are some of the life-changing outcomes we achieved this year.



## HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

- **463 young people** experiencing or at risk of homelessness were assisted
- **66 of these young people** were housed in our crisis accommodation
- **118 girls and young women** received case management, referrals and information through the Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) we deliver in partnership with the Lillian Howell Project



## EDUCATION

- **250 young people** in Years 9–12 were supported by our six independent high schools
- **111 students** earned their Record of School Achievement
- **14 students** achieved their HSC
- **56 students** enrolled in vocational training through our Registered Training Organisation



## ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- **13,844 instances** of support were provided to young people in NSW and QLD through outreach and engagement programs
- **8,866 instances** of capacity building, living skills and personal development support were delivered to children and young people



## CULTURAL SUPPORT

- **256 First Nations young people** received tailored assistance through case management and wellbeing support
- **1,000+ young people** participated in cultural workshops or community events
- **40 young people** obtained support through the Youth Koori Court



## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

- **129 young people** accessed casework and counselling to overcome substance misuse
- **42 families** engaged in casework



## YOUTH JUSTICE SUPPORT

- **2,010 instances** of support were provided to help young people navigate the justice system and address their individual challenges
- **392 young people** involved with the justice system received specialist casework support
- **136 young people** in youth detention centres in NSW and QLD participated in **50** group work sessions



## STREET WALK

- **89 young people** received after-hours support over **191 nights** in Sydney
- **32 children and young people** received after-hours police support



## FOOD VAN

- **8,800+** meals served
- **351 nights** of operation

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US EMPOWER CHILDREN  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEED.**

# WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US

Every year, we give young people the opportunity to provide feedback on our services and share their perspectives on issues that affect them. The results of these annual surveys help us understand their needs to deliver the best support possible.



In 2023:

- **90% of young people** who completed our annual survey rate the **quality of service** they received as **good or excellent**
- **92%** reported that the services they accessed helped them **deal more effectively with their challenges**
- **89%** said they would **recommend Youth Off The Streets** to a friend in need of support



## WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THEIR CHALLENGES, WELLBEING AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT

In 2023, young people accessing our services participated in Mission Australia's Youth Survey. Their responses showed that:

- **84%** have **mental health concerns**
- **61% face personal barriers** to achieving their study or work goals, compared to 40% of all survey respondents
- **46% feel supported** by their parents or guardians, compared to 66% of all survey respondents
- The **economy, housing and homelessness**, and **crime, safety and violence** are the issues they believe are most pressing in Australia today



"Mark Twain once said, 'Give every day the chance to become the most beautiful day of your life.'

"All of you have given me this chance. You have given me an amazing amount of confidence and trust in myself and the path on which I'm continuing. Now, I have another reason to keep walking." – Zoey\*, 17



## SABRY'S STORY

When I was 16, I left my home for a Youth Off The Streets refuge.

The move out was very sudden and very stressful.

I grew up with a conservative single mum, and she disagreed with my values. There were times when she wouldn't let me go to school at all, but thankfully, my teachers were very supportive. They connected me with Youth Off The Streets.

I was worried about leaving my mum at first. But when I visited the refuge, I remember meeting other residents and realising, 'Okay, I feel safe here'. The youth workers, Erin and Tiana, also made the refuge amazingly welcoming.

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*Youth Off The Streets later assisted Sabry into transitional accommodation with a friend he had made at the refuge. At the same time, he began Year 12 and completed an artwork that was selected for HSC ARTEXPRESS.*

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After I finished high school, I started rebuilding my relationship with my mum.

I also started emailing and calling theatre directors, asking them, 'Are you guys offering any costuming or set design jobs?' Soon afterwards, I was offered a costume design and set design position at a theatre near me.

I want to study a degree in design and theatre management at university. But right now, I'm balancing my passion for drama with my two part-time jobs, plus the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) – it's a youth-led forum run by Youth Off The Streets, empowering young people to generate ideas and have their say in the services they access.

With the YAG, I weigh in on important issues like youth employment, mental health and domestic and family violence. I'm able to contribute my own ideas and hear other people's. We work well together and I'm very confident about what I can bring to the team.

In a world run by adults, it's very good to hear the thoughts of young people.



"With the Youth Advisory Group, I weigh in on important issues like youth employment, mental health and domestic and family violence. I'm able to contribute my own ideas and hear other people's. We work well together and I'm very confident about what I can bring to the team." – Sabry

# A SAFE AND STABLE PLACE TO CALL HOME

We offer a range of homelessness and housing support services to young people aged 12–24. Our goal is to provide specialised, holistic support to young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness – through early intervention programs, individual case management, crisis accommodation, tenancy assistance and transitional housing.



We were privileged to support **over 463 young people** experiencing or at risk of homelessness in 2023.



**345** young people were assisted by our **Inner West Youth Homelessness Service**, accessing crisis accommodation or housing support, casework and referrals to other services.

- **90%** of these young people identified domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) as the main reason or a contributing factor to needing support
- **40%** identified as culturally or linguistically diverse
- **24%** identified as having a First Nations background
- **86%** had an income below the Australian poverty line
- **64%** of these young people received support to sustain a tenancy or prevent eviction
- **19%** were housed in one of our two crisis accommodation services, receiving support for an average of 73 days
- Their main reason for seeking support was a combination of DFSV, financial difficulty and the housing crisis
- **58%** identified a mental health diagnosis on intake



**118** young women aged 13–17 were supported with case management, referrals and information through the **Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP)** that we deliver in partnership with the Lillian Howell Project.

- **77%** of these young women had an income below the Australian poverty line
- **76%** identified family breakdown or DFSV as the main reason for seeking support

In 2023, we assisted:

- **10%** more young women to gain a secure lease
- **46%** more young women to obtain an income

## TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE



We helped **50 young people** access temporary emergency accommodation.

We also helped **49 young people** access and settle into transitional housing on their way to living independently.

**160 days** was the average length of support we provided to each young person – a significant increase on the previous year and evidence of the challenging housing environment for young people.



## STREET WALK AND FOOD VAN

**Our after-hours response** reaches out to at-risk children and young people, providing practical support to improve their safety and wellbeing.



**Street Walk supported more young people in 2023, achieving some notable outcomes:**

- **89 young people** were provided with after-hours support through Street Walk – a **61% increase** from 2022
- **32 children and young people** received after-hours police support
- **37 volunteers** assisted Street Walk



**The Food Van operates in inner Sydney most nights of the year and connects young people to the support services we provide at Youth Off The Streets. In 2023:**

- **8,800 meals** were provided over **351 nights** of operation
- **686 volunteers** provided **nearly 1,500 hours** of service
- Our **corporate partners** GPT, Taboola, Goldman Sachs, Macquarie Bank, Edward Lifesciences and Sony volunteered consistently across 2023, with the Sony Foundation providing volunteers for five shifts every month
- The Food Van generated **additional community support** through donations of clothing, bedding, food and toiletries



# OPENING DOORS TO EDUCATION

We offer children and young people a range of opportunities to reconnect with education, develop life skills and build strong foundations for future careers.



To read our Annual School Reports, scan the code or visit the [independent high schools page at youthoffthestreets.com.au](https://youthoffthestreets.com.au)

With flexible learning programs for young people in Years 9–12, our **six accredited and independent high schools** offer an alternative for young people who have disconnected from mainstream education or are at risk of disengaging from school. Our high schools comply with the Australian curriculum and the NSW Education Standards Authority while responding to the specific needs, interests and talents of our students.



In 2023, we saw continuously high levels of student engagement:

- **250 young people** received support through our schools
- **189 students** in Years 9–12 completed their grade
- **111 students** were eligible for their **Record of School Achievement**
- **14 young people** attained their **Higher School Certificate**

Students took part in a range of learning programs and events. Highlights included the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, visual arts classes, the RAW Challenge, the Bower Tiny House Project and sports carnivals and gala days. These opportunities gave young people the opportunity to develop skills, build self-esteem and socialise in a positive environment.

## SAFETY, BELONGING AND WELLBEING

Alongside our focus on academic achievement, we foster a sense of safety, belonging and wellbeing in our students. Our schools offer a range of wellbeing initiatives, psychology and counselling services, the practical and emotional guidance of Student Support Youth Workers, and domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) prevention and support.

In 2023, **over 140 students** received ongoing DFSV support and **35 formal or informal safety plans** were completed in collaboration with students.

## DEVELOPING THE YOUTH OFF THE STREETS EDUCATION MODEL

In 2023, we made significant progress with the development of our Education Model – a research-based initiative to document the restorative and inclusive educational framework developed over many years within Youth Off The Streets.

Grounded in Father Riley's educational philosophy, the model combines the experiential wisdom of our staff with rigorous, evidence-based research. Currently in the refinement stage, the model will be launched and implemented across our high schools in 2024.

## ASPIRING FOR GREATNESS

Our ASPIRE program is an alternative learning program designed to support First Nations students in Years 9–12 to complete their studies and continue onto employment.

The program engages in community consultation, culturally appropriate teaching strategies and activities that empower First Nations young people to stand strong and proud in their connection to culture.

Last year, 49 First Nations students engaged with ASPIRE's learning opportunities – a 68% increase from 2022. Activities included cultural workshops, referrals to Aboriginal organisations, mentoring programs, visits with Elders and community leaders, cultural camps and community events.



As a **Registered Training Organisation** (RTO Code 41450), we deliver several nationally accredited vocational education and training (VET) courses to our school students. In addition, we connect young people with bespoke opportunities to learn skills that interest them.



In 2023:

- **56 young people** enrolled in **vocational training courses** through our RTO
- **62 young people** achieved a **Statement of Attainment**
- **Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways, barista training** and **construction** were the three most popular areas of learning

We also commenced an expansion of our courses to offer more variety to young people accessing our services, as well as opportunities for external students of any age to learn from Youth Off The Streets' unique sector experience. Additional VET options introduced include community services, small business skills, health support and youth justice.

## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

In 2023, we were pleased to support 18 students completing the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze program and two students completing the Silver program.

These students from Craig Davis College, Chapel School and Step Up were able to celebrate their achievements by meeting the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward himself.

The Prince visited Sydney as patron of the program, which equips young people with life skills for further education and employment.

"Throughout my Duke of Ed journey, I found I could do more than I thought I was capable of. I'll always be grateful," says Ana, a participating student.

Special thanks to Dooleys Catholic Club Lidcombe and ClubsNSW for supporting this transformative program in our schools.

# NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

For 20 years, our National Scholarship Program has celebrated the talents and strengths of young people who show extraordinary promise but lack the support and resources to reach their potential.



*Pick Up Truck Pictures  
Scholarship sponsors Eric and  
Rebecca Bana with recipients  
Monica and Lisa, accompanied  
by CEO Judy Barraclough.*

Each year we offer young people across Australia a \$6,000 scholarship towards further education or training. Recipients also gain a mentor to help guide their educational journey throughout the two-year program.



In 2023, our **sponsors and mentors** helped us achieve record-breaking results:

- **37** scholarship recipients
- **12 new sponsors**, in addition to **15 existing sponsors**
- **30 new mentors** recruited and trained, in addition to our existing cohort of **50 mentors**
- **428 scholarship recipients** since the program began in 2004

“My mentor has been a guiding light through my scholarship journey, consistently checking in on my progress and wellbeing. Their unwavering support has been instrumental in keeping me motivated and focused on my goals. I’m deeply thankful for their dedication and genuine interest in my development.” – Aya\*, scholarship recipient

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to host our annual awards in person. Scholarship recipients, sponsors, mentors, supporters and carers came together to recognise the efforts of these extraordinary young people in pursuing their educational goals. The event also acknowledged the achievements of recent program graduates, who can access ongoing support from their mentors and program staff as they progress in their careers.

“Thank you for supporting me throughout the past two years. I feel lucky and proud to be a scholarship recipient, and I’ve felt support when I needed it the most. I’m so grateful for all the doors this scholarship has opened to me.” – Noor, scholarship recipient





## ELODIE'S STORY

Two and a half years ago, I was a student in a mainstream school.

I went to school every day, did my homework diligently and joined in extra-curricular activities. I had a wide circle of friends and a vague idea of what I wanted to do when I finished school.

Fast forward to two years ago.

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*My mental health was at its lowest. I was in and out of hospital. I couldn't go to school. I stopped doing any activities and I lost a lot of friends.*

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I missed an entire school year.

Then my parents heard about The Bowen College, one of Youth Off The Streets' high schools. I visited and the staff were all so supportive. I felt like this could be a good place for me to get back on track with my school stuff.

At the beginning of 2023, I started Year 10 at The Bowen College. I remember sitting with our School Manager, Liz, and my teachers and caseworkers, Tim and Matt. It was my first Individual Learning Plan (ILP) meeting and I decided to go big or go home – so I set my goals for the year.

These goals were:

1. to maintain decent attendance
2. to do well in my assessments
3. to get my Record of School Achievement (RoSA)
4. to transition back into mainstream school at the end of the year

It was a rocky start. There were times when I couldn't make it through the day. But my teachers and support workers were with me for every step.

There were a lot of fun educational moments. Camp was definitely a highlight. I also loved volunteering at the zoo, cooking, helping at La Perouse Primary School, painting the mural for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), visiting the rehab centre and completing a barista course.

Now, 10 months later, here we are.

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*Each term, my attendance has consistently been above 92%. I passed every assessment and got my RoSA. And this year, I'll be starting Year 11 at a mainstream high school.*

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To say I'll miss Bowen is an understatement. I am so sad to be leaving, but I am so thankful to all the teachers and staff at Youth Off The Streets!



“Thank you for all the opportunities and guidance, and for keeping me on the right track.” – Elodie

# CARE, CONNECTION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Our Engagement and Support teams operate in Greater Sydney, the Hunter region in NSW and Logan in QLD. They provide holistic support based on both the immediate needs and the longer-term goals of each child or young person.



In 2023, we provided:

- **13,844** instances of support to young people through engagement activities at our **drop-in centres and outreach programs**
- **8,866** instances of **capacity building, living skills and personal development support**, enhancing young people's ability to meet everyday challenges
- **2,110** instances of **homelessness and housing support**, ensuring young people could access relevant services and address personal challenges
- **221** sessions of **cultural support** in collaboration with our First Nations Services team, ensuring Aboriginal children and young people's cultural identities were honoured through culturally safe and respectful services

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## THE CITY PROJECT

'Communities Inspiring and Teaching Youth' – also known as the CITY Project – engages a small group of volunteers to implement community initiatives that address issues impacting young people.

In 2023, we developed the '**Community Building and Participation Toolkit**' in partnership with volunteers from Community Minds. This comprehensive resource aims to help other citizens and community workers to build strong, connected and thriving neighbourhoods.



In addition:

- **330 community members** had contact with our services through CITY Project events
- **8 events** were led by volunteers, including 'care kit' distribution to people experiencing homelessness in Canterbury-Bankstown
- **7 group consultations** with young people were held to gather ideas for community engagement and wellbeing

## ENGAGING WITH THE MAITLAND COMMUNITY

In 2023, our Hunter Valley Engagement and Support team collaborated with local authorities, charities and community partners to address anti-social behaviour among young people in the Woodberry area.

At the request of local Crime Prevention Officers, the team devised an outreach program that would encourage young people to connect with our services and engage in positive community and recreational activities.

*They chose Fridays after school at a local skatepark, hosting a barbeque and offering a range of sports, arts and crafts, music and other activities.*

"We provide food because a lot of the young people haven't eaten much throughout the day," explains Ben Armytage, a youth worker with the Hunter Valley team. "The cost of living means many of their families are struggling to get food.

"Some will just come along for the sausage sizzle. Some of them will stay and play basketball. Some will come up to us and start to share what's going on in their lives. Then we can provide individual help, justice support or casework – whatever they need.

"We also engage with families and can refer them to the services they need to get help."

*The outreach program has quickly established itself as a safe haven in the local community. In six months of operation, 700 instances of support were provided to young people. Staff raised awareness of Youth Off The Streets – and advocated for the needs of local young people.*

"I've helped some incredible young people who just need some support and guidance to achieve what they want to do," says Ben.

"It's amazing to become that safe, steady influence that many young people don't have in their lives."



"I've helped some incredible young people who just need some support and guidance to achieve what they want to do.

"It's amazing to become that safe, steady influence that many young people don't have in their lives." – Ben



# HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET BACK ON TRACK

Young people seeking support from Youth Off The Streets face a diverse and complex array of personal challenges, often related to experiences of trauma.

Our Engagement and Support and Specialist Interventions teams deliver programs that empower young people to make positive life choices and overcome barriers to building a healthy and productive life.



## YOUTH JUSTICE

Young people involved in the justice system have access to our holistic support services. These include specialist casework, court support, diversion programs, therapeutic pathways and outcomes, as well as bail, prison pre-release and post-release support.



In 2023:

- **392 young people** engaged in **specialist casework**
- **2,010** instances of support were provided to assist young people to **navigate the justice system and address their individual challenges**
- **50 group work sessions** were provided to **136 young people** in detention or at risk of involvement with the justice system



## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Our Dunlea Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Youth Service is designed for young people aged 13–19. The service empowers them to take control of their substance use by providing a comprehensive initial assessment, individual and family casework support, counselling and health promotion that reduces harm.



In 2023:

- **129 young people** were provided with **AOD-specific casework and counselling support**
- **42 families** were supported with **family casework**, including access to the 'Engaging Adolescents' parenting program

"I used to feel shame and guilt about my past. But now, I can use my experiences to help other people. I want them to know that you should never give up hope or stop believing that things can change." – Connor

## TAJ'S STORY

Taj, who had disengaged from mainstream education, found a renewed love for learning after enrolling at Youth Off The Streets' Chapel School.

"It's definitely better," Taj explains. "Here, the teachers help you so much more, and you can actually have a conversation with them."

A major reason was his involvement in the ASPIRE (Aboriginal Students Participating in Real Education) program, sponsored by our corporate partner, RBC Capital Markets.

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*ASPIRE reconnects First Nations students with their culture and history, empowering them to reach their full potential (see page 13).*

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Crystal Ferguson, a Student Support Youth Worker, helps facilitate ASPIRE.

"Watching Taj learn and grow has been amazing," she says. "He's really come out of his cocoon and turned into a beautiful butterfly."

Taj found common ground with Crystal as she helped him connect with culture through learning activities such as regional excursions, traditional cooking and handicraft workshops.

Meanwhile, he explored career options with work experience facilitated by Chapel School.

Taj was offered a placement at Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo. However, the logistics to get there presented a challenge.

Crystal volunteered to drive him from Sydney to Dubbo. Helping Taj make the five-hour journey brought him closer to his dream of becoming a zookeeper.

Taj was responsible for daily feeding and cleaning up after the animals, making the most of the opportunity to learn from his supervisors. Chapel School covered his living expenses for the duration of the trip.

Crystal was impressed by the self-sufficiency Taj displayed.

"He was working very long days, and still got up every morning to be there on time," Crystal says. "I think it reflects how strong-willed, practical and kind Taj can be."

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*Now, Taj can't wait to complete his next work placement as he studies zoology at TAFE.*

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He is grateful to every Chapel School staff member and supporter who made his journey possible and helped set him on the path to his future career.



"Now, I know what to do at the zoo – and where my future is." – Taj

# CONNECTING TO CULTURE

Our First Nations Services support the social and emotional wellbeing of young people through a range of programs, including cultural mapping, mental health support, case management and Koori Court.

The team also works with every area of Youth Off The Streets to ensure the needs of First Nations young people are reflected in our services and programs.



In 2023:

- **1,000+ young people** participated in **cultural workshops or community events**
- **256 First Nations young people** received **tailored assistance**
- **40 young people** were supported through **Youth Koori Court**

Our **First Nations Services** team facilitated a range of community events, cultural camps and mentoring. These activities allowed young people to learn traditional practices, stories and customs with community Elders.

The team's focus centred on **enhancing wellbeing** and **community engagement** in regional New South Wales, bolstering trust within Aboriginal communities to improve our service outcomes. They also maintained a high standard of holistic support in metropolitan Sydney, with an emphasis on **self-determination, resilience** and **cultural empowerment** in the programs accessed by young people at our schools and refuges.

In Sydney and Dubbo, the team introduced a structured, non-residential **rehabilitation program** for mental health and alcohol and other drugs (AOD) use. This program – incorporating group work, counselling, recreational and social activities – helped young people develop coping skills, stay motivated to change substance-use behaviours, and gain a strong cultural identity.

Aftercare is another important component of the program, providing First Nations young people with support for as long as needed to ensure sustained progress.



## WALKING TOGETHER

Youth Off The Streets' **Walking Together Project** comprised a series of workshops based on the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Led by First Nations and non-Indigenous trainers, this initiative enabled communities to contribute to a fairer and more just Australia.

In 2023, over **2,500 individuals** from diverse community and faith-based organisations nationwide attended workshops. Regardless of cultural background, participants were empowered to voice their perspectives on reconciliation and explore how as a society we can walk in unity with First Nations Australians.



# EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK

In 2023 we made significant progress towards embedding a robust impact measurement framework across Youth Off The Streets' services and programs.

By having a consistent approach to collecting data and analysing outcomes, we can better understand how our services are impacting the lives of the children and young people we support.

Measuring our impact also enables us to continually improve our service delivery, maximising outcomes for children and young people now and in the future, and demonstrating our effectiveness to funders, partners and other supporters of our work.

Our key program evaluation initiatives in 2023 included:

- Aligning our **evaluative methodology** with relevant external frameworks, including the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework, the QLD Human Services Quality Framework, and the Aboriginal National Social Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Framework.
- Developing a **'Program Logic' for core support programs** across Youth Support Services, Education Services and First Nations Services to define our programs' intended impacts and goals, the sequence of intended effects and which activities are to produce which effects, and where to focus outcome and process evaluations.
- Developing **data and evaluation toolkits** for program leaders, encompassing a theory of change for core programs to underpin measurement efforts and a data map indicating where information is coming from, where it is stored and how frequently it is measured.
- Establishing a **regular cycle of program data collection** and reporting by managers to highlight program performance, outcomes, gaps and improvement areas.
- Engaging the Sax Institute to examine the **Youth Justice Program Logic** implemented across our Engagement and Support programs. This work has supported alignment to best practice and evidence-based interventions, as well as positioning our work for purposeful social impact and outcomes for children and young people.

Through our work this year in developing our Strategic Plan 2024–2028, impact measurement emerged as an ongoing priority.

Some of our key initiatives will include **developing an organisational theory of change** to underpin our research, evaluation and impact measurement work; **redefining our impact measurement framework** in collaboration with the Sax Institute, based on the principles of evidence-based continuous improvement; and **implementing evaluation systems** that are culturally responsive and reflect the cultural diversity and specific needs of children, young people and their communities.



"I have seen many young people on a downward spiral flourish and grow at Youth Off The Streets. When these young people come back to visit years after graduating, telling us what they have achieved and how grateful they are – and offering to give back to current students – I am reminded how lucky I am to be part of Youth Off The Streets."  
– Beth Zeschke, Teacher, EDEN College

# ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

By working closely with sector organisations and peak bodies, advocating with all levels of government and running public awareness campaigns, we aim to increase understanding of the challenges faced by children and young people and create long-term social improvement.



*NSW Minister for Youth Justice, the Hon. Jihad Dib MP – pictured here with CEO Judy Barraclough – attended an outreach session in Bankstown. Minister Dib learned about our youth justice programs and accepted an invitation to visit our *Aspire to Inspire* program at Reiby Youth Justice Centre.*

## SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

In 2023, our sector engagement and advocacy activities focused on a range of issues that impact the children and young people we support.



### YOUTH HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

In our submission to the Australian Government, we called for a standalone **National Child and Youth Homelessness and Housing Strategy**. Unaccompanied young people who become homeless do not have the same resources or coping strategies as adults; they require accommodation and support models suited to their age and development, independence and presenting issues. We advocated for a whole-of-government and community approach to end child and youth homelessness in Australia.

Our staff also presented at the National Child and Youth Homelessness Conference and consulted on the NSW Homelessness Strategy – Youth Action Plan, among other initiatives to help drive systemic change for young people facing homelessness.



### YOUTH JUSTICE

This year we continued to advocate for **early intervention and prevention programs** that address the root causes of youth offending. We also called on governments to raise the age of criminal responsibility to a minimum of 14.

Our activities included a submission to the QLD Government Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, providing recommendations for **social policy and funding investment**. Youth Off The Streets was also represented on the NSW Youth Justice Throughcare Steering Committee, supporting **better practice and collaboration** between government and non-government organisations for young people experiencing connection to the justice system.



### DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (DFSV)

DFSV is a leading cause of youth homelessness in Australia. **Over 90% of the young people** who access our Inner West Youth Homelessness Service (IWYHS) have been impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence. Within our independent high schools, almost **60% of students** require ongoing DFSV support.

Through our participation in the Domestic Violence NSW Sector Development Working Group, we advocated for **greater investment in education, prevention and early intervention programs** that meet the specific needs of young people who fall through the cracks in service responses geared towards adults and children with adult carers.



## FIRST NATIONS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2023, our **Walking Together reconciliation workshop** was delivered nationally to a range of communities and organisations.

In youth justice, our **First Nations Services team** represented us on the NSW Corrective Services Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Committee and the Youth Koori Committee.



## ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Poor learning outcomes affect young people's life-long employment prospects, health, relationships and reliance on welfare. Disconnection from education also has a significant economic and social impact on the Australian community.

However, mainstream education settings do not suit all young people, particularly those who have experienced significant adversity. Our **Education Services** represented Youth Off The Streets on the NSW Association of Independent Schools Special Assistance Schools (SAS) Principal Reference Group Committee, which advocates for systemic sector improvements to better meet the social-emotional needs of students.

This year, we also consulted with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian on alternative education services, and liaised with federal and state education ministers on SAS advocacy and funding.

## YOUTH HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

In addition to pro bono radio and television advertising throughout the year, Youth Off The Streets ran three public awareness campaigns in 2023.

**The day my life changed.**

Ellie\* was 14 when her mum passed away. Soon after, her violent father kicked her out of home. Still grieving the loss of her mum, she spent months trying to find somewhere safe to live.

Last year, nearly 40,000 young people like Ellie asked for help from homelessness services across Australia.

She was supported by Youth Off The Streets. She was offered stable housing, counselling to deal with her trauma, and help getting back to school.

Without the right support, children and young people are at risk of becoming trapped in lifelong cycles of homelessness, poverty and poor mental health.

**Youth homelessness matters.**

Learn the true facts every Australian should know about youth homelessness. Search 'Youth Off The Streets' on search the Q&A code.

**YOUTH OFF THE STREETS IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY ANE MEDIA UNWEAVED SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE TO HELP SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL AUSTRALIAN WOMEN.**

- Our successful application for a \$260,000 grant from the Are Media Foundation resulted in **full-page advertisements** highlighting the scale of youth homelessness in 13 issues of leading Australian magazine titles including Australian Women's Weekly. The eight-week campaign reached a **combined total readership of 8.72M**.
- Leading up to Youth Homelessness Matters Day on 19 April 2023 and during Homelessness Week in August, we ran **digital campaigns** to raise awareness of youth homelessness. Websites that ran our advertisements included Seven News, Nine News and SBS.





# FUNDRAISING

As cost-of-living pressures impacted personal finances and the fundraising sector as a whole, the kindness and generosity of our donors in 2023 was truly inspiring.



*Our Lipstick Luncheon raised \$130,000 in 2023.*

This year we received **\$8.6 million** from **6,422 donors**, who made a total of **22,560 gifts** – including contributions from our **1,302 Street Lights Partners**.

These dedicated regular donors, many of whom have supported us for over a decade with monthly contributions, play a vital role in sustaining Youth Off The Streets' services and programs. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for their continued generosity, which enables the children and young people we support to thrive.

We also acknowledge those who chose to leave a gift in their Will to Youth Off The Streets. Last year, we received **39 bequests** totalling **\$4.5 million**. These generous donors have created a legacy of positive change for children and young people in need.



## NEW WAYS OF GIVING

As requested by many of our loyal supporters, in 2023 we introduced **BPAY** to provide an alternative payment method to cheques and credit cards. We experienced a significant uptake for the Christmas season appeal, with **11%** of donations made via BPAY.

In 2023, we also partnered with Safewill to offer an ongoing **50% discount** on their online Will writing services, with users able to leave a portion of their estate to Youth Off The Streets.



## LIPSTICK LUNCHEON

We were delighted to host our seventh annual Lipstick Luncheon in May. The **300 attendees** at the sold-out event enjoyed insights from MC Stephanie Brantz alongside panellists Lucy Bloom, Deborah Wallace APM, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis MP and Sadia, a National Scholarship Program recipient. They shared insights into our cause with a blend of humour and heartfelt stories.

Through the luncheon and generous prize donations auctioned during the event, we raised an impressive **\$130,000** for our services and programs.



## 50/50 CASH RAFFLE

In 2023, our 50/50 cash raffles generated over **\$49,000** for Youth Off The Streets. The raffles' unique structure means that half of the funds collected go to the raffle winner, while the remaining half directly support our services for children and young people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage.



## RETURN AND EARN

Through our partnership with Return and Earn and network operator TOMRA Cleanaway, Australian recyclers raised **\$120,800** to support children and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

From April until November, Youth Off The Streets was featured on reverse vending machines across NSW, where the 10-cent refund from each drink container could be donated. High school students – including our own – were keen participants, alongside corporate partners including Pitcher Partners, who hosted in-office collections and promoted the campaign through their networks.



*Students at The Bowen College share a message of thanks to NSW recyclers.*



## SYDNEY TO SURFERS – ROBBO'S RIDE

In a test of courage and endurance, over 90 cyclists journeyed up the east coast of Australia in support of Youth Off The Streets through the annual Sydney to Surfers – Robbo's Ride.

Hosted by Engadine Rotary, the 2023 event raised **\$197,000** for our services. Over the past 25 years, this iconic event has raised an incredible **\$3.9 million** and involved over 100 young people from our Cycle of Courage program, alongside many accompanying cyclists, volunteers and staff.



## COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

**Are Media** hosted a 'Staff Home and Beauty Sale' event, raising over **\$20,000** to support children and young people. 'Run for the Hills', a **Rotary Club of Castle Hill** event, raised **\$10,000** in a day of fun family activities. Meanwhile, **Apt Wealth Partners** assembled a team of eleven for Sydney's iconic City2Surf race, raising an impressive **\$7,000**.

Special thanks go to the **Australian Chinese Charity Foundation**, whose dedication to nurturing love, care and harmony in the community resulted in **\$50,000** raised for Youth Off The Streets at a charity dinner.

The remarkable generosity of these groups demonstrates their commitment to building a positive future for vulnerable children and young people.

# OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We greatly appreciate the generosity and commitment of our partners and supporters. Thanks to these dedicated individuals, community groups and organisations, children and young people can access the support and opportunities they need to build a positive future.

## CORPORATE PARTNERS

We gratefully acknowledge the support that our valued corporate partners extended to Youth Off The Streets throughout 2023.

## PLATINUM PARTNERS

**UnLtd:** In 2023, **UnLtd** and key partners provided **\$765,948** of in-kind support. Additionally, UnLtd secured media backing through Carat, delivering **\$31,000** via a successful digital campaign for Youth Homelessness Matters Day. We welcomed Bench and Taboola as new partners through UnLtd, with these organisations committed to fundraising, volunteering and supporting school holiday activities. Paramount Ten continued its valued support, contributing **\$8,000**. UnLtd also contributed a generous sponsorship towards our National Scholarship Program.



In 2023, **Future Generation Australia** (FGX) contributed **\$425,795**, empowering our human rights advocacy for First Nations communities. This support enabled impactful nationwide Walking Together workshops on the Uluru Statement from the Heart. FGX also backed our First Nations Services team to offer individual casework to 256 First Nations young people, addressing decreased spiritual and mental health and fostering resilience after the Australian Government referendum.

## Your local club

**ClubsNSW** and the Registered Clubs community, supporters of Youth Off The Streets for over 20 years, contributed **\$415,699** in 2023. This included industry-wide backing via the ClubGRANTS initiative. These funds primarily supported our **Journey to Work** program, offering over 180 employment and skill-development opportunities for young people. With 54 students enrolled in Certificate II qualifications and an additional 30 in pre-apprenticeship workshops, the program empowers young people to transition from school to the workforce with confidence.



**Sony Foundation** donated **\$171,000** to Youth Off The Streets in 2023. Sony Foundation sponsored a young person with mentorship and financial support through the National Scholarship Program and supported the operation of our Food Van. Sony Foundation also sponsored our mental health programs, providing 160 hours of individual counselling for students and 30 hours of family engagement.



## GOLD PARTNERS



## SILVER PARTNERS



Capital Markets



## BRONZE PARTNERS

CSR Limited  
Dooleys Lidcombe  
Catholic Club

Uturn Reuse  
Liverpool Catholic Club  
Minter Ellison

Steadfast Foundation  
Wests Illawarra  
Wilson Parking

## PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our philanthropic partners, who share our commitment to empowering children and young people experiencing disadvantage.

Andrew Pratten  
Charitable Trust

Australian Chinese  
Charity Foundation

Australian Youth and  
Health Foundation

Bagnall Endowment Fund  
Bant Street Foundation  
Beeren Foundation  
Collendina 5 Foundation  
Doc Ross Family  
Foundation

Eden Foundation  
James N. Kirby Foundation  
JLDJS Foundation  
Pacific West Foods  
Ted Dunn Foundation

## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

We extend our sincere thanks to our government funding partners for their contributions in 2023.

### Australian Government

Department of Education  
Department of Health  
Department of Social Services  
Department of Industry, Science,  
Energy and Resources

### NSW Government

Department of Communities and Justice  
NSW Department of Education  
Multicultural NSW  
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet

### Queensland Government

Department of Children, Youth Justice  
and Multicultural Affairs  
Logan City Council

### Local Government

Inner West Council  
Cumberland Council  
Randwick City Council  
The Council of the City of Sydney  
Central Coast Council

### Other groups

Australians for Indigenous  
Constitutional Recognition Ltd  
The Association of Independent Schools

# OUR PEOPLE

Our staff and volunteers demonstrate passion, skill and dedication as they work to support children and young people and strengthen communities.



In 2023, we had:

**201** staff members\* **291** individual volunteers\*

## PEOPLE STRATEGY

We advanced our company-wide people strategy in 2023 through consultations and discussions across the organisation. Our focus on program and process enhancements aim to improve the performance and wellbeing of our staff, ensuring better outcomes for children and young people. The strategy will ensure we continue to attract, retain, inspire and engage our workforce effectively.

We also introduced the Staff Connect Committee in 2023, a new channel of communication between teams and leadership to ensure staff have a voice on matters that affect them.

## WORKPLACE WELLBEING MATTERS

The Sanctuary Model is a trauma-informed approach for fostering an even safer and more supportive workplace for our staff – and for the children and young people we work with. This year, we engaged the MacKillop Institute to gather staff feedback and help embed Sanctuary principles into our organisational practice and culture in 2024.

## NSW YOUTH WORK HALL OF FAME

Two of our incredible staff were inducted into the NSW Youth Work Hall of Fame in 2023. Michelle Ackerman, Director of Youth Support Services, was recognised for her inspiring leadership, expertise and advocacy for children and young people over the last 25 years.

Meanwhile, Youth Worker Kylie Semler was recognised for her compassion and creativity in engaging young people who face significant trauma.

*\*as at December 2023*

## OUR VOLUNTEERS

The driving force behind many of our achievements, our volunteers generously contributed over **21,500 hours** of their time in 2023. From serving meals through the Food Van to managing our op shops, their compassion and dedication offers hope to young people, giving them the strength to face their challenges and move towards a brighter future.

### MENTORING

In 2023, **80 volunteer mentors** supported young people across three programs:

- **General mentoring:** mentors encourage students from our schools to develop support networks and resilience.
- **iDrive:** experienced drivers help learners build confidence and improve their employability prospects as they obtain their 120 hours of experience.
- **National Scholarship Program:** mentors provide recipients with career advice and emotional support over their two-year scholarship journey.

### ON THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

iDrive helps disadvantaged young people gain driving experience with volunteer mentors – overcoming the barriers of cost, car access or reliance on family supervision.

Thanks to the support of donors and corporate partners in 2023, iDrive expanded to **five locations** in NSW between the Central Coast and Wollongong.

Over **35 young people** participated in 2023 and the financial support we received enabled us to cover test and licencing costs for **13 students** – including 11 new learner drivers and two advancing to their P1 licence.

Learning to drive with a trusted mentor fosters maturity and resilience, and helps young people become reliable workforce participants.

Chris, an iDrive mentor of four years, has seen the benefits firsthand.

“I think the greatest satisfaction is opening the door for them to pursue a career with the freedom driving gives them.

“One young person didn’t qualify for a shop manager role because she couldn’t drive. Once she got her licence, she put up her hand to manage multiple outlets across Sydney.

“Her success in getting the job really put a smile on her face.”



### MEET BETTY, A VOLUNTEER AT KEY COLLEGE

Betty, aged 81, has been a Youth Off The Streets school volunteer for over a decade. She started out making sandwiches and has since become a beloved friend to the students.

“What I love about working with Betty is that she is full of life, such a great personality. When the young people meet her, they feel so comfortable and happy.”  
– Joanna Nicholson, Key College School Manager

Hear Betty and Joanna describe how small acts of kindness make a big difference to the lives of young people:





## FAEZA'S STORY

As a refugee, I feel like it's not one specific time you face challenges. Instead, as you move through different stages of life, you constantly face new challenges.

Moving to university is stepping into the real world. You must learn the skills to keep organised, communicate, manage finances – and how to ask for help. I'm the first in my family to attend university.

When I received my scholarship through Youth Off The Streets' National Scholarship Program, I realised that tertiary education is achievable. I knew I wouldn't get HECS support with my visa, and my father's casual income is all that supports our family of seven. I finally felt able to realise my dream of becoming a human rights lawyer without so much of the pressure I was expecting.

The mentoring program offered alongside the scholarship allows me to explore my future career with someone who's experienced. My mentor, Sathya, is the first lawyer I've met in Australia. She is my role model. I've learned to feel safe asking for help and to be braver since talking to her. Sathya is a very good listener.

I'm interested in working in the humanitarian space because, coming from a refugee background myself, I feel I have a better understanding of challenges people face who come from disadvantage. I can help them.

For now, I work part-time at a high school helping refugee students settle into their education. I feel very rewarded. This experience made me realise I want to make living in Australia easier for other people.

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*The challenges I face teach me to stay organised, to communicate, to ask for help. My responsibilities make me more independent.*

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My advice to people like me? You can build on failure. And you learn lessons with each failure. So don't give up, because trying one hundred times is better than having regrets.





# GOVERNANCE

Youth Off The Streets is a company limited by guarantee. The organisation is currently incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001.

## OUR BOARD

The Board of Directors is our governing body. The Board strives to act in the best interests of Youth Off The Streets and protects company assets by promoting the objectives embedded in our mission, constitution and strategy.

The Board's principal responsibilities are to:

- chart the company's strategic and financial objectives
- monitor the implementation of these objectives
- monitor compliance with regulatory requirements and ethical standards

The Board convenes at least six times a year in addition to holding an Annual General Meeting

## OUR CHAIRPERSON AND DIRECTORS



**Anne Fitzgerald,**  
Chairperson

Anne has over 30 years' experience as a senior executive and non-executive director, spanning industries including the federal government, health insurance and industry associations. Anne is experienced in developing strategy and leading multi-disciplinary teams to achieve implementation. She has a strong background in research, stakeholder management, strategic communications and community engagement and spent a number of years volunteering as a Youth Off The Streets mentor to young people.

Anne is currently CEO of the Talent Development Project and is a Trustee with the NSW Responsible Gambling Fund. She is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a qualified mediator and holds an MBA from the Macquarie Graduate School of Management.



**Pamela Jack,**  
Deputy Chair

Pamela has been a partner in some of Australia's major law firms, specialising in construction law and acting for many of the country's major contractors, ASX 100 companies and public sector clients. Pamela recently retired from Minter Ellison, where she was a leading partner for almost 20 years. Pamela is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and in addition to her role as Deputy Chair of Youth Off The Streets, she is also a director of Two Good Foundation, a social enterprise assisting vulnerable women.

Pamela now runs her own consulting practice and acts as a dispute avoidance board member on some of Australia's most iconic infrastructure projects.





**Craig Davis,**  
Director

After a successful AFL career, Craig is now the Facilities Manager for the University of New South Wales. He was CEO of the NSW Australian Football League (1990–1998), Chairman of Selectors, Sydney Swans (1986–1987) and Deputy Chairman of the NSW Sports Federation (1996–2003), as well as Chairman of the Non-Olympic Sports Task Force (1996–2000). In addition to his significant Board experience, Craig holds a Surveying Certificate from RMIT. Craig has served in governance positions for Youth Off The Streets over many years in different roles, including Chairperson. Craig is Ambassador to Muscular Dystrophy Tasmania.



**Paul Smith,**  
Director

Paul is a Certified Practising Accountant with over 40 years' experience in financial control, internal audit, system implementation, business transformation and process improvement, which he gained across corporate, government and not-for-profit sectors. In addition, Paul has 20 years of Board experience with companies such as Seven Group Holdings, Seven Media Group, Seven West Media, NSW Trains and Countplus.



**David Goldman,**  
Director

David has over 20 years' experience as a strategic, digital and customer-focused senior executive, working in the corporate sector for organisations including The Coca-Cola Company and NewsCorp. More recently, he transitioned into the not-for-profit sector and is currently the Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer of Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife. David is a volunteer mentor at Youth Off The Streets, an experience that inspired him to join the Board. He holds a Master of Commerce from UNSW and a Graduate Diploma in Psychology from the University of Adelaide. He is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Luke Magee,**  
Director

Luke has worked as an IT consultant throughout Australia, the UK and Switzerland. He has managed the complex requirements of SMEs, multinational corporations, and government departments, delivering innovative and industry best-practice solutions. Luke's formal qualifications include a Bachelor of Economics and a Master of Business Administration. He is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Luke first worked with Youth Off The Streets in the early 2000s, when he provided IT services, an experience that inspired him to seek appointment to the Board.



**Tilda Sikes,**  
Director

Tilda is Director, Communications and Change for the Legislative Assembly in the NSW Parliament and has extensive experience in the education and community sectors. She is also on the Board of the NSW Carers Advisory Council. She has previously served on the Boards of organisations such as the Arts and Cultural Exchange, Multicultural Arts Alliance, Community Arts Marrickville and the Greek–Australian Lemnian Association of NSW. Her professional experience includes working at the Department of Education, Premier and Cabinet, Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney Festival and Carnivale. She is passionate about community development, advocacy, the arts and education. Tilda is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Institute of Community Directors.

**Since 2019, Company Secretary Sam Hudson has supported the work of the Board.**

# 2023 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## Consolidated statement of financial position

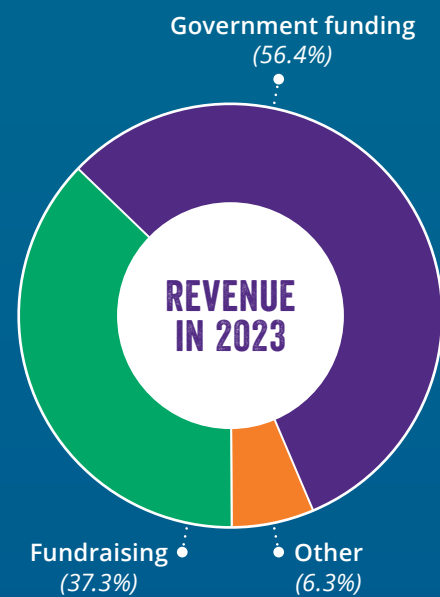
(January–December)

	2023 \$000	2022 \$000
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	26,218	23,327
Other receivables	297	324
Financial assets	616	80
Other assets	533	268
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>27,663</b>	<b>23,999</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Financial assets (investment)	11,197	7,785
Lease assets	303	549
Property and equipment	7,136	7,421
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>18,635</b>	<b>15,755</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>46,298</b>	<b>39,754</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	(2,196)	(1,660)
Lease liabilities	(204)	(284)
Provisions	(2,750)	(2,572)
Other liabilities	(9,842)	(6,838)
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>(14,992)</b>	<b>(11,353)</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	(52)	(195)
Provisions	(930)	(766)
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>(982)</b>	<b>(961)</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>(15,974)</b>	<b>(12,314)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>30,324</b>	<b>27,440</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Contributed equity	4,296	4,296
Retained earnings	26,028	23,144
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>30,324</b>	<b>27,440</b>

## Consolidated statement of income and expenditure

(January–December)

	2023 \$000	2022 \$000
<b>Revenue</b>		
Government funding	16,931	14,517
<b>Fundraising</b>		
Donations and gifts	7,909	6,248
Philanthropy and partnerships	2,397	2,318
Events, merchandise and op shops	884	481
<b>TOTAL FUNDRAISING REVENUE</b>	<b>11,190</b>	<b>9,047</b>
<b>Other income</b>		
Investments	1,828	36
Other income	55	62
<b>TOTAL OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>1,883</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>30,005</b>	<b>23,662</b>
<b>Less expenditure</b>		
Services and programs	(25,297)	(22,141)
Fundraising and marketing	(1,824)	(1,698)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(27,121)</b>	<b>(23,839)</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>2,884</b>	<b>(177)</b>



To read our full 2023 Financial Report, scan the code or visit the 'Annual Reports and other publications' page at [youthoffthestreets.com.au](https://youthoffthestreets.com.au)



# LOOKING AHEAD: OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2024–2028

We are looking forward to making an even bigger impact on the lives of children and young people in need through the implementation of our Strategic Plan 2024–2028.



To find out more, scan the code or visit: [youthoffthestreets.com.au/strategic-plan](https://youthoffthestreets.com.au/strategic-plan)

Through the research, in-depth analysis, discussion, consultation and iteration that informed our strategy development in 2023, we identified five priorities to meet the most significant challenges facing at-risk children and young people. These priorities give us clear direction for our overarching goal to **strengthen our impact and expand the reach of our services and programs** between 2024 and 2028.



Over the next five years, we will:

- strengthen our response to children and young people by refining our service model
- expand our reach in homelessness services
- increase participation in education and training
- grow our impact with First Nations young people
- expand our housing options for young people experiencing homelessness

Supported by five key enablers – growing sustainable funding sources; strengthening our people and culture; building impact measurement; expanding our influence through brand and advocacy; and optimising organisational capability – our goal is to **support 60% more children and young people** at risk of or experiencing homelessness by 2028.

We are looking forward to partnering with funders and donors, government and non-government organisations, corporate partners and other supporters in this exciting and ambitious next chapter for Youth Off The Streets and the children and young people we support.

## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2024–2028

### OUR PRIORITIES

#### Expand our reach in homelessness

Build our early intervention and prevention programs.

#### Increase education participation

Expand our schools, increase vocational training and grow our scholarships program.

#### Grow our impact with First Nations young people

Increase the reach of our First Nations services and embed culturally responsive practices.

#### Grow our housing options

Provide safe, affordable housing and a path to independence for young people experiencing homelessness.

#### Strengthen our response

Enhance our unique service model and strengthen the quality of our programs through data, evaluation and partnerships.

# WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUTH OFF THE STREETS

Every day, children and young people turn to Youth Off The Streets for help. The demand for our services has never been higher.

There are many ways to support us and give vulnerable children and young people safety, support and opportunities to reach their full potential.

**Become a Street Lights Partner** by donating a small amount each month – and make a big difference to the lives of young Australians in need. A monthly donation from you means we can plan and deliver our services to young people more effectively.

**Create or join a community fundraiser** to support young people experiencing disadvantage. Holding a fundraising event for Youth Off The Streets is a great way to get your community together for a good cause.

**Participate in one of our fundraising events!** Follow Youth Off The Streets' social media channels for event updates or visit [youthoffthestreets.com.au](http://youthoffthestreets.com.au).

**Leave a gift in your Will** to Youth Off The Streets to change the lives of vulnerable young people beyond your own lifetime.

**Our corporate partners** are essential to the work we do – and the life-changing outcomes we achieve. Our impactful partnering opportunities can be tailored to your organisation's objectives and values.

**Investment from our philanthropic partners**, including major donors, trusts, foundations and private ancillary funds, is critical in building our financial stability to deliver long-term positive social impact.

**Workplace Giving** is one of the easiest and most effective ways for employees to support children and young people. Making a pre-tax donation through your payroll also means you receive the tax benefit straight away.

Whether you're giving your skills, experience or time, **volunteering in one of our services, schools or programs** is a rewarding way to help children and young people in need to achieve their potential and thrive.



For more information about supporting us, scan the code or visit: [youthoffthestreets.com.au/ways-of-giving](http://youthoffthestreets.com.au/ways-of-giving)



Or for ways to get involved, scan the code or visit: [youthoffthestreets.com.au/get-involved](http://youthoffthestreets.com.au/get-involved)



## KINAHOI'S STORY

Growing up, I struggled with reading and writing. Studying wasn't one of my strong suits and I never truly engaged with learning.

I got kicked out of my Catholic high school and transferred to a local public school. My parents separated and my mum moved overseas to be with her family. I found it difficult to cope.

Soon, I started hanging out on the streets and getting into trouble with the police.

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*From the age of 14, Kinahoi spent the next four years in and out of youth detention. He struggled to find support during this time – until he met a youth worker from Youth Off The Streets at a local park.*

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Youth Off The Streets would cook barbeques, give us food and chat about life. They provided a safe place to gather. They'd listen to us and try to get us to think about our life choices.

Outside of this experience, I was left to my own devices. It was hard for me to stay on a positive path. I ended up in an adult detention centre. I kept in touch with a Youth Off The Streets youth worker and found support through him – but once I was released, it took me another seven years to turn my life around.

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*The death of Kinahoi's sister changed his perspective. She had always wanted him to be a good dad and a positive role model to his son – and Kinahoi realised that, if he didn't make real change, he could die prematurely as well.*

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I fought for five years to gain custody of my son. I also opened a t-shirt printing business, Custom 88, which has expanded to include a custom garment business, fitness training and a barber shop.

I also formed a group to run from Wollongong to Campbelltown. We raise awareness of Youth Off The Streets' work and raise funds for the Dunlea Alcohol and Other Drugs Youth Service.

Youth Off The Streets helped me along my journey and I want to let other people know that the service is there for them.

I encourage everyone who is struggling to reach out for support. You can reach your goals and do anything you put your mind to.

"Youth Off The Streets helped me along my journey and I want to let other people know that the service is there for them.

"I encourage everyone who is struggling to reach out for support. You can reach your goals and do anything you put your mind to." – Kinahoi







## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Youth Off The Streets Limited ABN 29 100 388 412

Youth Off The Streets is accredited as a Designated Agency and maintains policies and procedures that comply with the benchmark standards of the Office of the Children's Guardian.

Its status as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) is confirmed by the Australian Taxation Office as part of registration requirements for all non-profit entities.

Youth Off The Streets receives certain tax concessions and exemptions consistent with its status as a PBI which relate to Goods & Services Tax, Fringe Benefits Tax and Income Tax.

All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.  
Charitable Fundraising No. 12611

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