ACWA
Association of Children's Welfare Agencies

CCWT
Centre for Community Welfare Training

Annual Report

2020-2021

About ACWA

The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) is a leading non-government peak body for the NSW child and family sector. We have a long history of advocating for vulnerable children, young people and families.

ACWA works closely with our members, other community service sector peaks, and a broad range of government and non-government stakeholders, to bring about effective reform that will achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Our Centre for Community Welfare Training (CCWT) delivers effective and accessible training that is focused on strengthening the skills and capacity of the child and family sector workforce to deliver quality services to children, young people and families in need.

Our Vision

A truly civil society based on equal opportunity and social inclusion that actively nurtures the wellbeing and civic contribution of all children, young people, families and communities.

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The year in review

Chair report

It's been another demanding year for the sector. The impact of the June outbreak of the highly infectious COVID-19 Delta strain brought with it new challenges that we continue to grapple with as we strive to ensure continuity of our services.

Despite significant hurdles, ACWA has remained focused on making improvements to our sector to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable communities, families, children and young people.

In the past year, ACWA has worked to progress a number of initiatives aimed at bringing about long lasting improvements to the sector, and to the broader community. On the advocacy front, it is pleasing to see ACWA consistently working in partnership with our members, fellow peaks and government colleagues, in identifying and developing solutions to a range of critical issues facing the sector. Meanwhile, our CCWT team has again shown they are able to quickly pivot between face-to-face and online training delivery as needed, and have worked rapidly to add crucial COVID-19 relevant content to their online training portfolio as new advice and information emerges.

Adapting delivery of services to the ongoing risk of COVID-19 is poised to be one of a number of challenges for our sector over the coming year. ACWA is well placed to play a vital role in helping member agencies meet these challenges.

At an organisational level, ACWA is looking forward to moving to its new permanent home in Sussex Street, Sydney in early 2022, and to welcoming visits from members and stakeholders as we move back to face-to-face working.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, stakeholders, ACWA staff and Board Directors, who make a vital contribution to ACWA's ongoing efforts to improve the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families in NSW.

Nigel Lindsay

Chair

CEO report

As ACWA's Chair has noted, it has once again been a challenging year for the sector due to the impact of COVID-19. ACWA's current focus is working with member agencies on examining COVID-19 legal and policy issues which need to be addressed to ensure that the child and family sector can meet their Work Health and Safety and industrial obligations. Our agencies are having to meet these obligations in a rapidly changing environment due to the opening up of our community, at the same time as maintaining their very strong commitment to providing quality services for the children, young people and families they serve.

The year in review

Despite this very challenging environment, it has been a privilege for ACWA to see the strong commitment shown by member agencies and the sector more broadly to working with us on a number of important initiatives. These include:

- Highlighting the need to address market failure in insurance in relation to public liability cover, particularly cover for sexual and physical abuse, that has left NGOs exposed to unacceptable levels of financial risk—further information on developments in this area will be released very soon.
- Our collective advocacy on the need to maintain funding of critical family preservation services.
- Our joint work with the ASU, DCJ and other stakeholders to broker arrangements aimed at enabling the residential care sector to access and rapidly deploy additional staff if COVID-19 impacts their service viability (DCJ has also agreed to fund these business continuity arrangements if required).
- Utilising experts from our sector to work with ACWA's consultants, DCJ and Rebbeck Consulting on updating COVID-19 infection control guidelines.
- We recently engaged Spark Helmore lawyers to provide ACWA with six months of legal advice on COVID-19 related issues. We have also established a member-led steering committee to identify the most pressing legal issues facing the sector and to source examples of quality COVID-19 policies and risk management tools to share with agencies to avoid them having to reinvent the wheel.
- Working alongside our member agencies and DCJ to reduce the number of children and young people in ACA placements.
- Working with AbSec, DCJ and our member agencies to commission and guide the joint PSP data project being led by the Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP). The final project report is due to be completed in December and will provide recommendations for reform.
- Our very close work with Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) providers in successfully advocating for a substantial increase in the funding of ITC and ITC-SD programs.

- Our regular meetings with member agencies on the expansion of innovative home-based care models for children and young people for whom there is currently no suitable option within the existing system.
- Our involvement with member agencies who are keen to support system transformation across NSW, via key government agencies, NGOs and community leaders working more effectively together on delivering the best possible service system for vulnerable children, young people and their families. While we have recently seen some very encouraging developments in this area, particularly in South Western Sydney, there is much more to be done before we can be confident that we are on the road to substantial and lasting service system reform.
- Working with AbSec and member agencies to successfully advocate for a joint Government/NGO Workforce Development and Training Strategy. The work to develop the strategy will commence early next year.
- With support from member agencies, we have secured a commitment from DCJ to develop a joint NGO/departmental approach to commissioning child and family related research. We plan to launch this initiative via a face-to-face forum in the first quarter of 2022.
- The establishment of a joint ACWA/CCC/ DCJ steering committee and working group to identify, and seek to address, unnecessary administrative burdens—while progress has been made, there is much more to be done in this area over the next year.
- Ongoing work with DCJ and other stakeholders on delivering arrangements which promote better collaboration around Children's Court proceedings.
- The co-design and development of e-Safety resources specifically targeting children and young people in OOHC and their carers—member agency support for this work has been greatly appreciated.
- Working with providers, AbSec, DCJ and other stakeholders on identifying potential system improvement initiatives aimed at better supporting children in OOHC with disability (our comprehensive report on this issue was recently released).
- Producing a significant number of submissions and papers which have been referred to throughout this report.

Additional priorities for the coming year

Over the coming year, ACWA plans to focus on progressing a number of key projects, these include:

- Working with, and on behalf of, our member agencies in connection with the upcoming negotiations with DCJ relating to the PSP recommissioning process.
- Supporting AbSec and Aboriginal community controlled organisations in rolling out the *Aboriginal Case Management Policy* and advocating for greater progress to be made in addressing the recommendations of the *Family is Culture* Report.
- Capitalising on the outcomes of the ACCP's PSP data review, by seeking to ensure that the right arrangements are put in place to embed the improved capture and utilisation of PSP related data and integration with the broader PSP operating system.

- Ongoing advocacy for broad scale service system transformation.
- Working alongside AbSec and DJC to commence the preparation of a workforce development and training blueprint for our sector—it will be critical for this work to draw heavily on the workforce development and training expertise that already exists across the NGO and government sectors.
- Continuing to advocate for a joined up, and data driven, approach to foster care recruitment, assessment, and support—this work will also need to 'tap into' the carer recruitment initiatives that are already underway in a number of districts across NSW.
- Working with the Parenting Research Centre and other key stakeholders on tracking and contributing to the progress of the various initiatives underway to enhance the service system response to young people who experience problematic and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Consistent with the OCG's commitment in her report on the leaving care monitoring program, that she 'will explore with the peak bodies, the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) and the NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation (AbSec), opportunities to establish a sector advisory group to consider her office's report and the review of Permanent Care standards', we will continue to work with our partners to better support young people after they leave care.
- Continuing our work with member agencies in advocating for a stronger partnership between the child and family and education sectors focused on improving educational outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

A note of thanks

ACWA would achieve very little without the strong support and active participation of valued colleagues and partners across the sector.

It is very important for me to acknowledge the incredible leadership shown by our member agencies and their commitment to working with ACWA on initiatives aimed at strengthening the service system so that it better meets the needs of children and families requiring support. In this regard, it is a great privilege to have our colleagues at AbSec working alongside us.

It is also important to acknowledge the willingness of DCJ over the past year to work with ACWA and our member agencies on a suite of important issues. Similarly, we appreciate the preparedness of the Minister and his staff to listen and respond to matters that ACWA has raised, along with his support for strong and effective collaborative practice between the NGO and government sectors.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to my Board for sharing their wisdom and giving me guidance throughout another year. It is a privilege to serve a Board with such a strong desire to continually look for ways for ACWA to better serve our member agencies and the wider community.

Steve Kinmond

Chief Executive Officer

Sector development and systems advocacy

Responding to the COVID-19 Delta outbreak

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 Delta strain in June this year and resulting lockdown, responding to the challenges of COVID-19 has again become an urgent focus for our sector. ACWA has been actively engaged in advocating for the needs of providers and the vulnerable children and families that we all serve during this time.

Advocating for our sector workforce

When new rules were announced regarding the movement of workers within the most affected LGAs, ACWA quickly mobilised to clarify that workers within the child and family services sector were included within the category of 'authorised' workers who were both required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and had priority access to same. ACWA also worked to ensure vaccine access for the sector's workforce, prompting the Government to clarify that frontline workers delivering care to children and young people living in residential care environments were included in the list of priority groups for the COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

Active involvement in the framing of COVID-19 infection control guidance

ACWA also worked with the sector, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and Rebbeck Consulting to update the COVID-19 Infection Control Guidelines for ITC/residential care providers which we helped develop in 2020. The updated guidelines draw on the practical experiences of providers in managing COVID-19 situations involving the more infectious Delta strain, and include updated infection control, vaccination and testing advice.

In consultation with DCJ, ACWA also produced a 'lessons learned' fact sheet drawn from our regular forums with providers about the practical challenges they were facing in dealing with COVID-19 in ITC/residential out-of-home care settings.

Working with the sector, DCJ, the ASU and the PCYC, ACWA also identified staffing options to augment the existing ITC/residential care sector workforce in the event of staffing shortages. *A Contingency Staffing Options for out-of-home care Providers* flowchart sets out options including workforce sharing between providers, accessing community services workers who have been stood down due to public health orders, and utilising PCYC workers if necessary.

ACWA also set up an advisory panel of provider representatives with experience in responding to COVID-19 situations. The panel's role is to respond to requests for urgent advice from providers who are dealing with an unfolding case. It will also include representatives from DCJ and NSW Health if, and when, required.

Vaccine Advocacy

ACWA has requested that government require mandatory vaccination of all workers providing residential care and ACAs for children in out-of-home care, while also calling for government to begin a dialogue with the non-government community services sector about what other areas of service provision might require the ongoing mandatory vaccination of workers. To-date, the Government hasn't responded favorably to this request, although we note that it recently published a public health order covering those individuals who work with people with disability.

ACWA is advocating strongly for clear government leadership in terms of vaccination policy and related WHS and legal issues that the sector is grappling with as we move towards 'living with COVID'.

Case Study: Vaccination and COVID-19 Safe Workplace Planning

The 'opening up' of NSW in October and emergence from the COVID-19 lockdown has raised new challenges for providers, with each of them having to develop a position on how they will protect their vulnerable client cohort as well as their staff while at work. To help avoid multiple providers simultaneously reinventing the wheel, ACWA facilitated a COVID-19 mandatory vaccination and workplace risk assessment forum in late September which attracted over 130 participants, including member agencies, other peaks, and the ASU.

Forum participants expressed a strongly held view that government needed to make clear its position on whether it requires 'frontline' workers of recurrently funded agencies to be vaccinated. Participants also called on government to support sound decision making in relation to workplace risk assessments and staff vaccination requirements across the sector, including through the prompt appointment of key specialists, including expert health advisors, to provide support to the sector at this critical time.

Arising from the Forum, ACWA has worked with providers and other partners to develop a multi-layered approach to meeting the future COVID-19 workplace challenges. This consists of:

- The development and rollout of a baseline COVID related risk assessment and management course. Two of these half day sessions have already been delivered with both attracting significant participant numbers—so far, 130 people have attended with additional courses to be run on November 10 and 17.
- In consultation with the sector, we are developing a register of legal issues regarding the various obligations on providers to appropriately respond to the risks and challenges posed by COVID-19. We have engaged Spark Helmore Lawyers for a period of 6 months to provide us with legal advice on these and other issues as they emerge which will be shared with the sector.
- We will be working with our lawyers, AbSec, DCJ and our member agencies, on identifying the core components of providing a response to COVID-19 that meets WHS, industrial and other legal requirements. This work will need to consider the spectrum of challenges raised by COVID-19, including when and how agencies might need to take action in relation to unvaccinated workers.
- ACWA is seeking to obtain examples from providers of COVID-19 risk assessment/management resources (and related processes) with a view to sharing these with the sector. We will also be liaising with a consultant who has been engaged by NCOSS to develop basic risk templates for the community services sector.

Critical issues impacting the residential out-of-home care sector

In the last financial year, providers of residential care services including Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC), Significant Disability (ITC-SD), Interim Care Models (ICM), Supported Independent Living (SIL) and general residential care, have continued to face a range of challenges, including significant cost pressures, increasing administrative burden, sourcing housing stock and staff shortages, insurance market failure, and as outlined on **page 10**, the resurgence of COVID-19 in NSW required residential care providers in particular to swiftly respond to an evolving set of circumstances.

Throughout this year, ACWA has continued to advocate strongly on behalf of providers by facilitating regular sector consultations and meetings with DCJ, with the aim of maintaining a focus on the need to:

- Identify potential practice and system enhancements that could lead to greater efficiencies within the ITC system, while building a case for increased funding of this critically important service area.
- Address the specific and complex issues affecting non-ITC 'general' residential care providers, including business certainty, given the obvious ongoing need for their services.
- Strive for consistent approaches to residential care provision across the state, particularly in relation to ensuring that non-ITC 'general' residential care providers become a more recognised and embedded option in caring for those children and young people who will continue to need their support.

Pleasingly, on the back of ACWA's advocacy, we can report that the financial year ended with a breakthrough regarding an uplift in ITC funding with increases of 13.2% for ITC and 16.6% for ITC-SD services coming into effect from July 2021, following an independent review process.

While this funding increase is a welcome recognition of the financial pressures facing providers in delivering these intensive services to the state's most vulnerable children and young people, there is still much work to be done both to secure adequate ongoing funding of the ITC Program and to bring about consistency across the residential care service system. ACWA will continue to actively promote Government/NGO co-design approaches to achieve the best possible funding and operational model going forward.

Here's what some of our member agencies said they valued about ACWA's response to COVID-19 during our recent pulse check survey:

"Ability to pivot business to meet the sector needs during COVID-19."

"Quick response during COVID-19 to set up agencies for success."

"Representation of the Fair Work Australia problem-solving process with ACWA, DCJ and ASU to vary award conditions in residential care to cope with COVID-19."

"Leadership of the sector/departmental negotiations during COVID-19."

Permanency Support Program (PSP) Outcomes Data Review Project and related work

In early 2021, work began on a project to examine how best to efficiently and effectively capture core PSP data in order to drive continuous improvement across the sector, and to maximise positive outcomes for children, young people and families who come into contact with the child protection system.

The PSP Data Outcomes and Review project was established and jointly commissioned by ACWA, AbSec and DCJ, and is being undertaken by Professor Leah Bromfield and her team at the Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP).

In the first phase of this project, the ACCP undertook analysis of PSP documentation and consultation with both the department and the non-government sector to settle a PSP Basic Program Logic and PSP Outcomes Logic. These documents were then brought to the Project Advisory Group (PAG) (which includes ACWA and several member agencies) to test the researchers' understanding of the logic ahead of the development of a preliminary Draft PSP Road Map. The Road Map outlines a set of dashboard indicators that would ideally provide a clear picture of the functioning of the PSP on an ongoing basis, as well as suggestions for other data on the PSP that would need to be collected less regularly (i.e. practice audits, contract management, evaluations).

Broader sector consultation has more recently been undertaken with PSP providers to examine the relative importance and feasibility of the suggested indicators from the perspective of service providers, with feedback used to inform the final PSP Data Road Map. This project is in the final approval stage and we hope to be able to share the final document with the sector in the coming months.

Alongside this work, ACWA has continued to engage with providers and DCJ on critical matters relating to PSP implementation, including placement matching, carer recruitment, the vexed issue of administrative burden (see **page 16**) and the need to put in place an operating environment that effectively tracks and responds to the data relating to both the efficiency of the business processes and the downstream outcomes for children and young people.

ACWA is keen to pursue joint work with DCJ and the sector to ensure that these and any other issues impacting the successful delivery of the PSP are addressed and improved upon ahead of the re-commissioning process, which will commence in 2022.

Vulnerable children and young people with disability

"Falling through the gaps? Delivering the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children and young people with disability."

In October 2020 we commenced a project to examine the extent to which children and young people with a disability in out-of-home care may be missing out on the practical supports they need, and to identify ways to leverage the project findings to support ACWA members to access the necessary supports, and navigate a complex service system, including through advocacy and facilitation, developing tools, resources, and training.

It was recognised from the outset that the project insights would also be likely to be relevant to vulnerable children with a disability more broadly.

ACWA is grateful for the valuable contribution DCJ and AbSec and ACWA member agencies have made to the project. Our information gathering process cast a wide net including interviews with ACWA member agencies and a range of other organisations and individuals, then a survey, followed by a series of workshops around key themes. Overall, more than 70 individuals contributed to the project via one or more of the above engagement activities.

The project report was tabled to the Board of ACWA in June 2021 and has since been finalised through engagement with DCJ and AbSec.

It appears that a significant proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care have some level of disability or are at risk of developing psychosocial disability. It is clear that there is a real risk that these children and young people could 'fall through the gaps' in terms of accessing the supports they need to achieve the best possible future.

The project identified that the factors contributing to this risk are multi-dimensional, so there is no simple solution. However, what is clear, is that more can be done collectively to address the issues identified through the project to date.

The main issues and themes to emerge from our consultations can be summarised under the following areas:

1. Intake Assessment and Information
2. Workforce and Carer capacity building
3. NDIS systems & processes
4. Intersections between systems—Child Protection, Disability, and other systems
5. Cultural considerations in supporting the needs of children and young people with disability in Out of Home Care
6. Transitions points—with a focus on leaving care
7. Building in the Voice of the Child.

Through our consultation process, ACWA member agencies and other stakeholders have provided us with a range of potential strategies and initiatives for consideration which will require further review, analysis, prioritisation, and resource consideration.

To be successful, the next stage of the project will require a truly collaborative effort between the government and non-government sectors, and critically, with the direct involvement of young people, consistent with a child focused and rights-based approach.

We look forward to building on this preliminary work through 2021-22, to improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people with disability.

Promoting the expansion of innovative home-based models of care

ACWA recognises the critical need to explore home-based models of care for the most vulnerable children as an alternative to staffed, residential models, in line with the intent of the Therapeutic Home Based Care (THBC) model under the Permanency Support Program.

As we noted in our last Annual Report, our call for more transparency around ACA and residential care data highlighted the number of often very young children in alternative care arrangements (ACA), special care and out-of-guidelines (OOG) placements. This made clear the need to expand the availability of innovative home-based carer models. Pleasingly, DCJ supported our THBC proposal last year for higher levels of carer allowance, relaxed formal qualification requirements and more flexible eligibility criteria for children and young people to enter the program, in order to increase the pool of available carers.

This year we have built further on these efforts. Following an initial sector-wide roundtable in November 2020, a Steering Committee was formed, and work undertaken to map existing innovative home-based arrangements with a view to establishing consistent guidelines under which such placements might be approved.

Having obtained 'in principle' agreement from DCJ, the Steering Committee has been working intensively with DCJ, case managers and providers to explore bespoke innovative home-based options for a small, targeted cohort of children identified through consideration of the 'highest' needs, based on the age of the child, CAT score, length of time in care and current circumstances. Given that many of the identified children have a level of disability, this aligns well with our other major ACWA project, which considers ways of enhancing outcomes for children and young people with disability in the out-of-home care system, (see **page 14**).

We welcome the contribution of those member agencies that have engaged with us in relation to these placements. We recognise that for each child the challenge is likely to be significant, the solutions won't present easily and may not eventuate for some time, if at all. A key aim of this work is to pave the way to establishing a clear mechanism by which other children, including those at risk of coming into care, can be more appropriately supported and cared for in home-based arrangements. However, it is important for us to all recognise the need to substantially expand the numbers of children with high needs who can be accommodated within arrangements of this kind.

ACWA has demonstrated "really clear communication and understanding of the issues", "clear and positive leadership", "creativity" and "willingness to collaborate"

2021 ACWA Member & Stakeholder Pulse Check Survey response

Case Study: Streamlining PSP administrative processes

This year ACWA has taken significant steps to highlight a range of critical issues in relation to the delivery of the PSP, not least of which is the administrative burden experienced by NGOs in implementing the program. This issue was one of a number discussed at a meeting we convened between the ACWA Board and DCJ Deputy Secretaries in June this year. As a result of our advocacy on this topic, and related action by the Children in Care Collective (CCC), the DCJ Deputy Secretaries committed to setting up a joint working group with DCJ and ACWA/CCC representatives to progress the concerns raised by both bodies about various forms of administrative burden.

ACWA suggested that an important starting point for our ongoing joint work via this newly established working group was to consolidate the issues identified via both ACWA and the CCC in a tracking schedule, along with the actions that DCJ had already taken to solve problems worked on with ACWA last year through the then labeled, 'Administrative Burden Working Group'. That group focused on dealing with the administrative problems that were able to be more readily resolved, whereas now, the focus needs to shift towards those issues requiring more complex and sustained effort.

Following on from an initial workshop with providers that DCJ convened in July, ACWA has played a key role in advocating for the establishment of a three-tiered governance process which will involve a steering committee comprising six senior executive representatives from ACWA/CCC member agencies and DCJ representatives to monitor the progress being made in tackling the most burdensome administrative issues identified by the sector. The steering committee will be supported by a series of practitioner-led working groups tasked with coming up with practical solutions to the issues identified, and when different views emerge that can't be solved, these items will be escalated to the steering committee for deliberation, which in turn, can be escalated to the DCJ Deputy Secretaries when necessary.

ACWA is playing the Secretariat role for the NGO sector and has been working very productively with the DCJ Director OOHC, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning and her team to coordinate and prioritise the issues being sent to ACWA by member agencies. The first working group meeting in October will focus on issues related to ChildStory given that ongoing challenges with the use of this data platform has featured strongly in sector feedback. The Executive Director, ChildStory, will be leading the discussions with the working group and will be developing a plan of action.

Leaving care and aftercare initiatives

Care leavers deserve high quality and easily accessible support to help ensure their ongoing safety, welfare and wellbeing as they transition to independence as young adults. In NSW, an interagency support system, mostly funded through DCJ and underpinned by legislation, standards and a charter, aims to ensure support is provided to those leaving care. Despite the aims of this system, too many care leavers are still not receiving the basic support they require to meet their needs. Too often they transition from care into poverty, homelessness, incarceration and from being young people considered 'at risk' to being 'a risk' as young adults.

ACWA continues its work in strengthening the supports for young people who are leaving care—much of which is done via our role in convening the Transition to Independence Forum (TIF), co-chaired by CREATE. The TIF brings together a broad range of practitioners from ACWA member organisations as well as peaks such as AbSec and Youth Action, and agencies like Legal Aid NSW and other youth-oriented service providers The TIF also includes a focused segment of the meeting to collaborate with government partners, most notably DCJ as well as other agencies as requested, such as the OCG, NSW Health and Juvenile Justice.

Following a call for expressions of interest, a small working group within the TIF was formed during the year, predominantly comprised of individuals who work in specialist aftercare services, to identify systemic problems faced by care leavers. The group's work (and subsequent paper) strongly focused on the critical need for care leavers to be able to access adequate financial support.

ACWA recently prepared a summary of the working group's paper which highlighted that potential improvements could be made in the following critical areas:

- Consistency in policies, procedures and practice
- Streamlining financial systems including clear timeframes
- Clear review and appeals processes
- Cultural safety and inclusion
- Improving ongoing accessibility for care leavers to relevant services and support
- Increased support for care leavers in custody
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities for aftercare support for the OOHC sector
- Emergency and immediate assistance.

The summary document (and detailed paper) is intended to inform proposed work arising from the recent audit report by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG)—*Report on the leaving care monitoring program 2020-21* which identifies 'a need for a sector wide discussion about supports young people should expect to receive after they have left care.'

The summary also seeks to complement other work undertaken in this sphere, such as the recently released report by the Children in Care Collective, *More Care Required*, along with the very significant contribution which is being made by the National Homestretch Campaign which has been advocating for extended care.

In her report, the Guardian has said she 'will explore with the peak bodies, ACWA and AbSec, opportunities to establish a sector advisory group' to consider her office's report and the review of Permanent Care standards.

ACWA is keen to work with our partner peak, AbSec, and other critical stakeholders, including (but not limited to) DCJ, the CREATE Foundation NSW, and Legal Aid NSW on examining how we can best improve the aftercare support system.

Enhancing the sector's practice in relation to Children's Court proceedings

Our 2020 Forum on Care Proceeding in the Children's Court focused on how to strengthen collaborative practice so that non-government service providers are more actively engaged in key steps of the court process, including greater collaboration between service providers and legal representatives, and with Permanency Coordinators, as well as increased participation in Dispute Resolution Conferences. This initiative was supported by the President of the Children's Court, and this year we have worked with the Children in Care Collective (CCC), DCJ and the Court to progress the necessary work identified at the forum.

Identified concerns include the need for collaboration between agencies and DCJ when circumstances materially change, to determine whether the matter needs to be brought before the court again to consider the order's ongoing appropriateness; and the need for DCJ to play a more active role in ensuring contact between the Child's Representative and relevant agencies is encouraged.

ACWA met with the DCJ Deputy Secretary and Legal representatives in July to discuss the type of policy and operational improvements that could be made to enhance collaboration in this critical area. In this regard, we noted that while the Permanency Case Management Policy encourages collaboration with respect to court proceedings, there is limited information about what this actually involves, and that making the necessary changes to the policy, combined with developing a checklist for use by DCJ and providers which outlines the key steps in the collaboration process and the escalation points when there is disagreement, would assist.

ACWA also agreed to develop an FAQ document for use by DCJ and providers about key aspects of Children's Court proceedings. The intention is that this document will also form part of the Permanency Case Management Policy.

The Court has also supported the proposal for ACWA and CCC to draft a Practice Direction for its consideration relating to the role that it can play in ensuring that steps have been taken to effectively engage agencies when court proceedings are underway when this is not evident from documentation at key stages of the process, such as during dispute resolutions conferences and where providers have different views to DCJ about proposed care orders.

DCJ has formed a working group with ACWA and the CCC to progress this work.

Children and young people with problematic and harmful sexual behaviours

Following an approach by the Children's Court, ACWA is working with stakeholders to establish a cross-sectoral community of practice focused on prevention initiatives relating to sexually harmful behaviours among children and young people generally, as well as those in care. Peer to peer abuse is a particular focus, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation. In addition to the Court and member agencies, we are engaging with the e-Safety Commission, NSW Health, DCJ, Westpac (Community Safety Grants Program), the Association of Independent Schools and the Parenting Research Centre (PRC).

ACWA member agencies have provided very valuable insights into the type of advice and services that providers need to access in order to provide the necessary support to this high-risk cohort of children and young people, and their families/carers.

Following our discussions, ACWA has engaged the PRC to survey the NSW and national landscape (post the Child Abuse Royal Commission), regarding policy and practice initiatives for prevention and responses to children and young people with problematic and harmful sexual behaviours (PHSB). The work is focused on the role and contribution of NGOs in the child and family welfare sector in preventing and responding to PHSB, and how they can support the implementation of the broader interagency framework for preventing and responding to children with PHSB being progressed by the NSW Health Ministry, which includes designing a policy and legislative model that seeks to support referrals to therapeutic treatment for children and young people.

The PRC work will also include the development of resources for the child and family services sector to help workers, families and children and young people understand the services available and how to navigate the service system.

NSW Health has indicated that it is likely to develop a resources hub on its website early next year so that providers can access reliable advice from a trustworthy source, given the mixed quality of resources available in the public domain. The resources hub will leverage the work that PRC is doing on behalf of ACWA.

This project also complements our work in developing online safety resources for children and young people in care via our e-Safety online grant and leverages our participation in the Westpac Safer Communities grants program, which is making a significant investment in this issue. And it will also dovetail with the Power to Kids project being led by member agency, MacKillop Family Services, which has received an Impact Scale grant from Westpac to extend the program nationally to all residential care providers.

"ACWA is consistent in its focus to enhance service capacity and outcomes for CYP"

2021 ACWA Member & Stakeholder Pulse Check Survey response

Case Study: Responding to insurance market failure

Following approaches from a number of member agencies, ACWA held an insurance and workers compensation forum in March to discuss concerns about the growing difficulty agencies were facing in obtaining insurance cover for physical and sexual abuse, and the increasing costs of Worker's Compensation insurance.

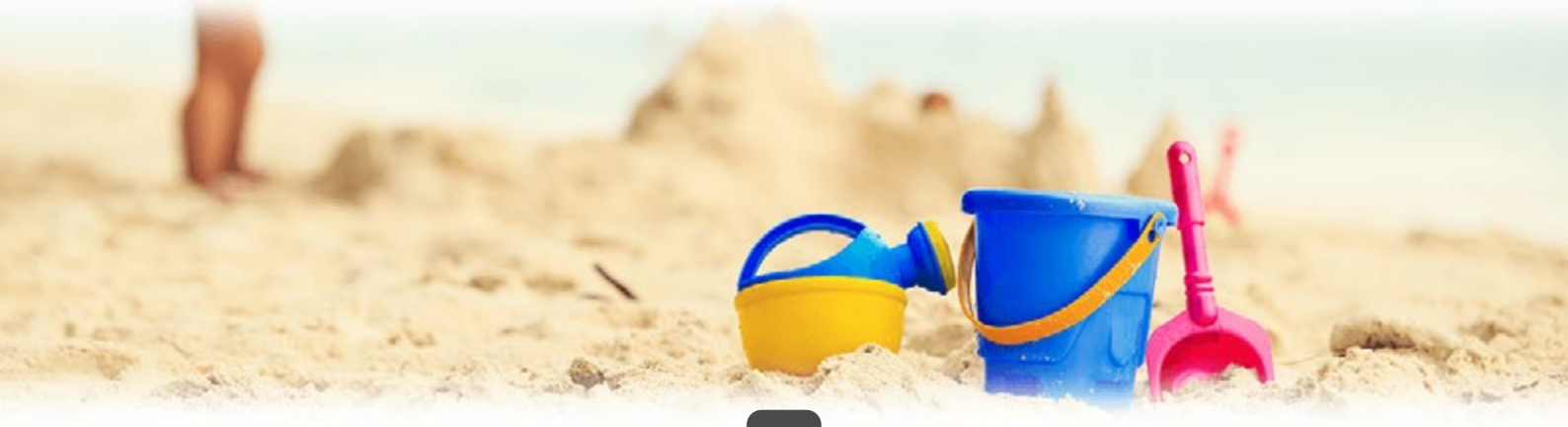
The Forum also heard from an insurance specialist, Neil Ball from AIRS, about the factors behind the current challenges and how they were likely to worsen, particularly in relation to physical and sexual abuse cover. Following the Forum, ACWA published a position paper, setting out a plan of action.

After initially maintaining an open mind on possible solutions, it became clear that insurers were rapidly exiting the market, creating more and more difficulties for agencies. At the first meeting of our insurance and workers compensation steering committee at the end of April, it was decided that, given the mounting evidence of insurance market failure, ACWA should call on government to intervene and itself provide insurance to out-of-home care and SHS providers.

Meanwhile we continued to hear from more and more agencies whose existing insurers are not offering renewal, and who are facing significant difficulty in sourcing alternative insurance cover. In an effort to prompt more immediate action, in partnership with AbSec, NCOSS and YFoundations, and working with some of the large faith based providers, we made a direct appeal to government for urgent interim support for agencies. In late June we forwarded a joint letter to the Treasurer supported by the peaks and over 40 providers.

In late August, Minister Henskens responded positively, indicating government would provide a temporary financial indemnity for out-of-home care and youth homelessness providers contracted by DCJ where they are unable to secure insurance to cover claims for alleged incidents of sexual and physical abuse. The Minister also committed to working with other states on a long-term national solution to the problem of insurance market failure in relation to our sector.

While we welcome this development, we note that there is still much to be done in this area. Together with YFoundations, we will continue to advocate on behalf of the sector for a sustainable long-term solution to this issue.



Keeping children and young people in care safe online

Following ACWA's success in securing a grant under the e-Safety Commissioner's Online Safety Grants Program to design and deliver a suite of online e-Safety resources for the out-of-home care sector, co-designed with young people in OOHC and their carers, progress on this project has tracked well above expectations, and has exceeded original projections regarding stakeholder engagement.

The first tranche of the co-design process has been delivered through consultations with over 350 sector stakeholders and experts from more than 35 organisations, as well as many individuals, across the country. A significant number of young people who participated in these workshops were Aboriginal or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The consultations have also involved young people with learning difficulties, and cognitive impairments, as well as those suffering trauma related disorders and conditions. The young people were in numerous care types including foster care, kinship care and residential care.

The support of ACWA's member agencies to help facilitate a strong level of participation in these consultations has been greatly appreciated. ACWA's Project Team would like to particularly acknowledge member agencies that have coordinated workshops on our behalf—Settlement Services International and South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation. Their workshops enabled specific communities to feel comfortable and supported to contribute their thoughts and concerns. We have also received excellent support from UPA, LWB, Wesley, Uniting, SYFS, OzChild and Allambi Care. Individual sessions were also facilitated with caregivers by Lifestyle Solutions in NSW, WA and NT.

The project has also included interstate consultations (contracted by ACWA) led by our partner peaks including PeakCare in Queensland, the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CfECFW) in Victoria, and Families and Children Tasmania (FACT). A care leaver consultation was also coordinated by the Salvation Army Crossroads West, a member agency of the Western Australian peak (CAFAWA) through their transitions program. The CREATE Foundation has also conducted a series of 'deep dive' workshops both in NSW and nationally. This collaborative approach has ensured national coverage of young people and carers involved in the consultations.

ACWA's Project Team has been highly impressed with the thoughtfulness and knowledge of the young people who were involved in our consultations. Interest from carers nationally in our project has been overwhelming, with more than double the number of carers targeted for consultations asking, and being allowed, to participate in workshops to share their insights and concerns about online safety issues. This reflects the high level of concern and the challenges faced by many carers in maintaining the safety and wellbeing of young people in their care when they are online.

We have now synthesised the feedback from our workshops nationally, and are currently working with young people to script a brief series of videos being developed for young people and related resources, along with an online training course for carers.

We have had an evaluator embedded throughout the project and so the evaluation component of the project is also tracking well. The project is due to be finalised in the first quarter of 2022.

Workforce Skills Strategy

This year, ACWA has been working towards launching a major Workforce Skills Strategy that will investigate and define the skills needed for a variety of roles in the child and family sector, identify suitable training opportunities, and establish a governance structure that will review and update the skills framework in the future.

The purpose of the strategy is to improve the effectiveness of services and programs offered to children and their families in key program areas. This will be achieved by developing a workforce skills framework and governance structure that ensures that training and other learning activities offered to our workforce reflect the most up to date research on what works, are presented by experts, and are offered in a way that is accessible and compatible with effective adult learning.

The development process has involved extensive consultation with our member agencies and other expert stakeholders, with around 50 member agencies attending our first meeting where it was agreed that a project steering committee would be established.

Given the importance of ensuring that the learning needs of Aboriginal workers are included in the framework, and that the non-government and government sectors are taking a coordinated approach to dealing with workforce issues, ACWA has partnered with both AbSec and DCJ.

We are also delighted to be working with a range of other expert stakeholders including the Australian Services Union, Curijo, Da'Vange Group, Parenting Research Centre and several universities.

The benefits of developing and implementing a successful integrated strategy for those already in the workforce include:

- Providing clarity in relation to the required core skills, knowledge and attributes that workers must demonstrate to perform a suite of roles that are common across the sector.
- Making sure that staff who hold these common roles, receive the core training and related skill development (including supervision, reflective practice and coaching in adult capacity building) that is deemed essential to performing their responsibilities.
- Achieving greater consistency in relation to both the content and quality of training on offer to the child and family services sector.
- Increasing the portability of training and other workforce development activities across the sector, with the related benefit of minimising the need for the retraining of staff who transfer from one organisation to another within the sector.
- An efficient and integrated workforce skills and training operating environment that:
    - at the systems level, provides for the continuous refinement and enhancement of developing the skills of the workforce, based on a planned and evidence-based approach to the professional development of the workforce; and
    - for individual workers, establishes an efficient and effective framework for embedding learning into their practice, as part of providing workers with ongoing support for their professional development.
- A more efficient and targeted use of the resources dedicated to training across the child and family services sector.
- Career and academic pathways through AQF framework and CYF sector, including progression into leadership roles.
- Examining COVID-19 workforce recovery and enhancement strategies.
- Integration of national initiatives in terms of federal and state funding and other state/territory programs (particularly for agencies with cross-border responsibilities).

This project will commence in late 2021, once an appropriate consortium or individual has been engaged to carry out the work.

Broader sector advocacy

In addition to our system reform work, ACWA continues to advocate on a range of issues affecting our members, the sector, and the wider community.

This year's advocacy issues at a glance

Maintaining funding for critical family preservation services

Obtaining DCJ's support for a joined up and integrated NGO/DCJ approach to child and family related research

Telepractice: The next phase

Support mechanisms for parents involved in formal statutory child protection interventions

Establishing an Educational Outcomes Steering Committee

Seeking a collective response to insurance market failure

Supporting ITC and ITC-SD providers in demonstrating the need for a funding uplift

Advocating for a sector steering committee to respond to the OCG's Leaving Care Review

Seeking priority vaccination status for child and family sector workers

Sector engagement and consultation

ACWA has convened various forums throughout the year for our members agencies and key stakeholders to come together to learn, share knowledge and expertise, and identify solutions to critical issues facing the sector.

Event highlights

Therapeutic home based care forum

The Forum was held in August 2020 and involved a full-day provider and DCJ workshop. The focus of the workshop discussions was on making changes to the THBC specifications to increase the use of the model with a view to creating more home-based placements for children and young people currently in ITC/residential care placements. The outcomes of the workshop informed our subsequent work in this critical area of care and led to an amended model for THBC being rolled out. See **page 15** for further details.

Insurance and Workers Compensation Forum

At our March forum, we heard from members about the challenges in relation to maintaining insurance cover for physical and sexual abuse, including rising premiums, insurers leaving the market, and the challenges of seeking more expensive, and less comprehensive insurance offshore. The Forum also heard about the rising costs of workers compensation. See **page 20** for further details.

Residential Care Workers Register Round Table

ACWA's April 2021 round table with OCG and providers delivered an opportunity to discuss concerns regarding the implementation of worker clearance requirements and informed our subsequent submission. See **page 26** for further details.

PSP Review NGO consultation

ACWA convened a meeting with providers and DCJ in May which focussed on discussions around issues common to all providers including:

- The streamlining of complex needs application and approvals processes
- Delays in reconciliation and payment
- Diversity of service provision and the rigidity of the 4-bedroom model
- Referrals and the pressure to take unsuitable CYP into SIL/ICM and general residential care placements
- Access to regular data
- Contract certainty and re-commissioning

DCJ committed to looking at which of the above matters they would be able to address in a meaningful way ahead of its next meeting with the sector.

Event highlights

Expanding Innovative Home-Based Care Models Forum

In November 2020, ACWA hosted an online forum to identify effective models currently operating in the out of home care sphere which could potentially be upscaled. This event, attended by over 70 practitioners, opened with an address by Deputy Secretaries, Simone Walker and Simone Czech, in which they confirmed the need for innovative carer models in the market—particularly given the 700 children and young people in residential and ACA placements, and the fact that a significant number of these kids would benefit from a homelike environment with a carer or carers.

Following this event, ACWA developed a paper outlining consistent features across the models, as well as key differences, such as cost specifications, the nature of supports provided, and carer qualifications and attributes, and has since undertaken focused collaborative work with member agencies to explore opportunities to expand the availability of innovative home-based models for children and young people who are not having their needs met within the existing system. See **page 15** for further details.

Transition to independence forum

ACWA's and CREATE convene the Transition to Independence Forum (TIF). The TIF brings together ACWA members and peaks, as well as Legal Aid NSW.

The TIF also includes a focused segment of the meeting to collaborate with government partners, most notably DCJ as well as other agencies as requested such as the OCG, NSW Health and Juvenile Justice. See **page 17** for further details about the TIF's recently released discussion paper.

ACWA members recently said we were "adept at respecting, listening to and supporting members", and displayed a "strong connection to membership" with "engagement and energy on so many key sector issues"

2021 ACWA Member & Stakeholder Pulse Check Survey response

Submissions

A significant part of ACWA's advocacy work is preparing submissions, working collaboratively with DCJ, NGO partners, other peaks and key stakeholders, in response to government policy formulation and drafting of legislation, seeking to shape emerging policy and regulation in a way that best supports vulnerable children, young people and families. This year, through this collaboration across the sector, ACWA has produced a number of submissions in important topics as follows:

Privacy Codes & the Human Services Dataset

ACWA prepared a joint submission on behalf of fellow child and family peak bodies to the Stronger Communities Investment Unit (SCIU) on its discussion paper relating to the Privacy Codes of Practice for the Their Futures Matters (TFM) Human Services Dataset (July 2020). Former (inaugural) Australian Information and Privacy Commissioner and both Commonwealth and NSW Ombudsman, Professor John McMillan, AO, reviewed and endorsed our submission.

Our submission argued that, in undertaking the privacy impact assessments, the SCIU should consider recommending that the 'Statement of Objectives' includes a statement reflecting that the existence of the Code of Practice does not inhibit the insights gained from the analysis of the linked agency dataset from being utilised for the purposes of targeted child protection work consistent with the objects of Chapter 16A.

National information sharing arrangements

ACWA prepared a joint submission on behalf of fellow child and family peak bodies to the National Office for Child Safety (NOCS) on the issue of national information sharing arrangements. Among other things, our submission highlighted that it is essential that urgent steps are taken to progress the development of a nationally consistent legislative scheme for sharing information in line with the 2017 recommendation of the Child Abuse Royal Commission, which drew heavily from the NSW model.

Draft Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2020

ACWA's submission noted that the Bill provides an adequate legislative framework for the scheme's operation, but we took the opportunity to highlight some key issues that go to the effective implementation of the legislation, including minimising regulatory duplication. We also stressed ACWA's commitment to collaborating with the OCG, AbSec and other stakeholders, in building the childsafe capacity of the sector.

National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

The National Office of Child Safety (NOCS) is leading the design and implementation of Australia's first National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse.

The Strategy was a key recommendation of the Royal Commission and will focus on preventing child sexual abuse in all settings including in institutions, within families, and online.

The Strategy will focus on prevention, including education and awareness raising, supporting children who show harmful sexual behaviours, offender prevention interventions, and giving victims and survivors of child sexual abuse access to the right supports at the right time. It will also consider the unique needs of particular groups.

Our submission focused on the following areas:

- **Information exchange**—we once again stressed the importance of a nationally consistent information-sharing regime.
- **Reportable conduct**—we highlighted the delayed response to the Royal Commission's recommendations around establishing nationally consistent reportable conduct schemes.
- **Sexually harmful behaviours**—we referred to significant recommendations arising from previous inquiries and reviews into this issue, which although supported by leading agencies such as NSW Health, have yet to be adopted, along with emerging challenges that need addressing in the online space in particular.

- **Child safe policies and procedures**—we highlighted the need to take a national and cross-sectoral approach to identifying what good practice looks like in this space—in collaboration with the various regulators and peaks/agencies—with a view to developing model guidance tailored for key sectors.
- **Particular considerations for vulnerable groups**—we also highlighted the issues facing children and young people with diverse needs. This advice was settled in collaboration with SSI (noting that AbSec and other Aboriginal peak bodies will address issues for Aboriginal children and young people in their own submissions).

The Children's Guardian Regulation 2021

The Regulation is focused on providing the detail to support the Residential Care Workers' Register.

ACWA's submission highlighted that we have significant concerns regarding critical implementation issues; most notably, the administrative burden that is likely to result from delays in the provision of information held by the Department of Communities and Justice to residential care providers to inform the mandated worker check, unless a clear and appropriately resourced process is developed.

We noted that ACWA is committed to working with the OCG to help ensure that the implementation of the Residential Care Workers' Register is efficiently executed, and in doing so, we would continue to support our member agencies to identify and put forward practical options for streamlining the checking process.

ACWA Pre-Budget Submission 2021-2022

Our pre-Budget submission focused on the need for government investment in programs and initiatives that will improve efficiency and maintain the ongoing viability of critical elements of our service system and, most importantly, deliver on the NSW Government's Stronger Communities outcome no. 2, 'Children and families thrive', as well as the Premier's Priorities of 'Protecting our most vulnerable children' and 'Increasing permanency for children in out-of-home care'

The funding issues raised included:

- Government investment into large-scale system transformation reform that will improve the efficiency of the system and more effectively address the needs of vulnerable children and families in communities throughout NSW, including addressing long standing issues affecting Aboriginal communities.
- Ensuring that the PSP is adequately funded to deliver the best outcomes for children, by supporting families to successfully maintain placement permanency, particularly where restoration has occurred. Once again, the funding in this area must include initiatives that are directly focused on supporting Aboriginal children and their families.
- Seeking a government commitment to work with the sector on a joint review of the core operational costs to deliver services that avoids any unnecessary nexus between program success and threats to the business viability of small, high quality, out-of-home care services.
- Funding a consistent approach to leaving care and aftercare.
- Providing additional funding to address the shortfall in Intensive Therapeutic Care funding.
- Providing funding to support the design and implementation of a joint Workforce Development and Training Strategy to address the needs of the child and family sector.
- ACWA also took the opportunity to express our hope that the positive gains made in achieving permanency outcomes for children and young people under the PSP would continue beyond the next contract cycle. Critical to achieving this goal, is the need for the PSP contract review and renewal process to be well managed and to instil confidence in the non-government sector that the next funding cycle will allow us all to build on, and enhance, what's been achieved for vulnerable children and families under the first phase of PSP.

Other submissions prepared include:

- NDIA's Discussion paper on Independent Assessments and Access
- Families, Communities and Disability Services Portfolio Miscellaneous Amendment Bill
- The Social Sector in NSW: Capitalising on the Potential for Growth
- Review of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012
- Stronger Communities Legislation Amendment (Children) Bill 2021

CCWT: Supporting a strong and skilled workforce

CCWT Director's report

This year, CCWT has experienced similar challenges to others in our sector and businesses in general across Australia. The ever-present threat of lockdown, interspersed with patches in lockdown, has made the delivery of training a far less straightforward process.

Despite facing multiple hurdles, the skilled team at the CCWT pulled us through successfully once again. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Jo, Julie, Katherine, Krys, Lesley, Louise, Saul and Yasmin. We have also been ably supported by our colleagues in the ACWA team.

Calendar and In-House Program

To maintain our Calendar and In-House training programs our staff and contractors have focused on growing our expertise in delivering online learning. We have anecdotal evidence that online facilitated learning takes about 25% more energy than providing that same learning in a classroom. Our consultants have stepped up to the plate, adjusted their material and delivered 130 workshops through our Calendar program and 170 through our In-House program reaching 2,466 participants.

Data from participant surveys tells us that we scored on average:

- 4.4/5 for the quality of the course
- 4.5/5 for the quality of the presenter
- 3.9/5 for the quality of the venue—this reflects feedback that some people prefer face to face
- most participants said they are likely to actively promote our services to others

Carer Assessment and Resource Training

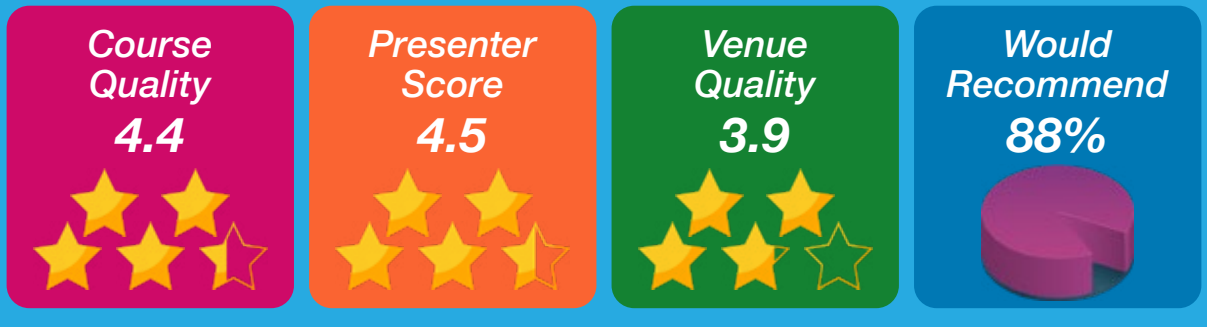
The CART team continues to deliver training in the use of the Step by Step Assessment Tool and Shared Lives resource. They have also moved their workshops online and have continued to meet the needs of the sector by doing so.

Our RTO

CCWT continues to deliver nationally recognised training and assessment in whole qualifications or partial qualifications. We work with organisations and individuals to pinpoint exactly what they need, so that people don't have to do more than is necessary.

Our most popular options for partial qualifications are the Family Group Conferencing Facilitator Training, Child Protection and individual units from the Diploma of Leadership and Management. The Diploma of Leadership and Management and the

Survey results



Average score

Average score

Some people may prefer face to face training

Average score

Diploma of Community Services are our most popular qualifications, and we offer these through a recognition of prior learning process as well as via training and assessment.

Towards the end of this year, we started preparing to deliver our new Diploma of Leadership and Management qualification entirely online. This qualification is tailored to meet the needs of our sector and is now more accessible than ever. Keep an eye out on our website or contact our team for more information.

Other important developments late this year include the Federal Government increasing the level of funding available through state government programs to deliver training in critically important areas. The health and community services sector is one of the fastest growing employment sectors in the country, which means we are ideally placed to access this funding to train our workforce. This financial year we were able to secure $175,000 of fully subsidised training for the sector; since the start of the new financial year this amount has increased to $750.000.

Community Leadership Program

Now in its 12th successful year, ACWA's Community Leadership Program (CLP)* continues to challenge, nurture and foster new leaders in the community and human services sectors. More than 184 professionals from a diverse range of fields including education, health, community services, local councils and peak bodies have graduated from the program.

Due to last year's COVID-19 outbreak in March we were forced to cancel the 2020 CLP program. But the good news is that the majority of these participants rolled over into the 2021 intake which had a very healthy 20 participants.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty around COVID-19, we shifted the program completely online which has helped to achieve ongoing stability for the program, as well as making it more accessible to regional organisations who were able to save on travel and accommodation costs when putting their emerging leaders through the program.

A key draw card for the CLP is that it offers recent graduates the opportunity to apply for the $5000 Andrew McCallum Leadership Scholarship, generously funded by the Office of the Children's Guardian in recognition of Andrew's commitment (as a former ACWA CEO) to future-proofing our sector through the development of its most important asset, its people. The 2020 recipient was Lisa Wollschlager from Office of Safeguarding, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, who used the award to undertake the prestigious Oxford Executive Leadership program.

Linda Watson

Director, CCWT

*We would like to acknowledge that the Community Leadership Program is supported with a contribution from HESTA Super Fund, allowing us to provide an intensive and extensive program that is affordable to community sector organisations.

Case Study: Social Sector Transformation Fund

ACWA was successful in receiving $1million as part of Tranche 3 of the Social Sector Transformation Fund (SSTF) grants. This money is to be used for supporting organisations with leadership and workforce development. Small or medium organisations (with under $5 million in annual revenue) can access this fund if they operate in the health or social services space. The fund is specifically targeting Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and rural/regional organisations.

Under the leadership banner, eligible organisations can access:

- Free coaching sessions for those who wish to improve their leadership skills
- A range of other leadership training options, such as the NFP Sustainability and Leadership Program. Additional options will be available in 2022.

ACWA will also be developing a range of resources/toolkits/modules that focus on specific topics relevant to small and medium organisations. Our initial focus will be on supporting organisations to respond to the challenges brought about by COVID-19. We have already invested in the development and delivery of a seminar covering the basics of risk assessment and management, and how this relates to an organisation's duties under the Work Health and Safety Act. We expect to deliver this seminar to well over 500 people.

Other COVID-19 related topics on offer are:

- Having difficult conversations with staff and clients who aren't following health related rules.
- Having the tough conversations with workers and volunteers about the importance of them being vaccinated.

Other possible offerings include:

- Telepractice resources.
- Effectively assessing and supporting the resilience of the workforce.
- Supporting Supervision—particularly how managers can provide clinical supervision using a trauma informed framework, but also peer supervision models so that staff can support other staff.
- How our workers can support families and children, particularly in the context of domestic and family violence.
- Performance reviews, career planning and advancement (not performance management).

Here's what our training participants told us:

"Great lessons, examples and a good mix of people. Great videos. The facilitator was super knowledgeable and lovely."

"The tutor was wonderful, explained everything super accessibly. I feel more equipped to do my job after this training."

"The interaction was great, the trainer pushed us to think outside the square knowing we knew the answers. Great training, very informative and left me wondering why all community organisations don't do this training for their staff."

"Although it was online and conducted remotely, the facilitator was able to connect all participants and I felt I was still able to hear the opinions and thoughts of other participants and learn from their experiences. It was a great group and a safe space to learn."

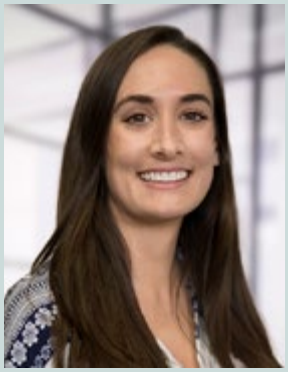
"I found the course, refreshing, interesting, and motivating… The course has helped me to step outside of my own head and see myself, workplace, environment, and others with fresh and understanding eyes."

"Information was clear and the changes made are relevant to the current practices and needs in out-of-home care."

"Of particular benefit were the discussions on child protection concerns with colleagues from a variety of different services and varying levels of experience."

Financials

Treasurer's report



The 2020-2021 year has seen ACWA, along with others in the sector, face renewed challenges through the pandemic. Careful financial planning and a flexible training workforce have ensured that ACWA was able to safely navigate the year, out-perform a conservative budget and further grow our presence through investing in a fixed head office.

The 2020-2021 financial year has resulted in an operating surplus of $512,005 excluding COVID-19 subsidies of $397,500, which contributed to an overall surplus of $909,505. This has ensured ACWA is successfully set up to face the continuing challenges and uncertainties of the 2021-2022 financial year.

Revenue generated totalled $4.6m, underpinned by ACWA's training arm. Substantial cost savings were made in the 2020-2021 financial year, with a reduction of $482,842 compared to 2019-2020. Much of these savings were attributable to property and lease related expenses, with ACWA relocating to a lower cost office and the full year effect of closing substantial equipment leases in the prior period.

ACWA continues to hold a strong balance sheet position with accumulated funds of $3,180,327 (FY19/20 $2,270,822). A significant change to the composition of the balance sheet when compared to the prior year is the acquisition of ACWA's own premises (21/110-116 Sussex Street, Sydney NSW 2000) for $4m with an accompanying mortgage of $1.6m. ACWA also successfully tendered for $1m in project funding that is to be spent in the next financial year and is reflected as an increase in Trade and other payables.

The full Auditor's report is published in this Annual Report and our auditors, Stewart Brown, have issued an unqualified report. Accounting for Good continues to provide professional accounting services that are highly valued and instil a strong control framework for ACWA.

On behalf of the ACWA Board, I would like to again congratulate the team for its ongoing commitment to ACWA and thank them for their hard work throughout the year.

Heidi Wilson

Treasurer

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

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ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited is registered as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital under the provisions of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The Directors present the financial report on the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited for the year ended 30 June 2021 and report as follows:

DIRECTORS
The names of the Directors in office during or since the end of the year are as follows. The Directors were in office for this entire period unless otherwise stated.

Deirdre Cheers (Director)	*(reappointed 26 November 2020)*
Nigel Lindsay (Chair from December 2019)	*(reappointed 27 November 2019)*
Mark Valerio (Additional Director)	*(reappointed 26 November 2020)*
Chris Brown (Director)	*(**resigned** 3 September 2020)*
Alan Brennan (Director)	*(reappointed 1 November 2018)*
Simon Walsh (Director)	*(reappointed 26 November 2020)*
Kathy Karatasas (Deputy Chair from December 2019)	*(reappointed 26 November 2020)*
Robyn Miller (Director)	*(reappointed 27 November 2019)*
Lisa Griffiths (Director)	*(appointed 27 November 2019)*
Heidi Wilson (Additional Director, Treasurer)	*(reappointed 26 November 2020)*
Tim Ireland (Additional Director)	*(**resigned** 27 November 2020)*
Grainne O'Loughlin (Director)	*(appointed 26 November 2020)*
Jody Pearce (Director)	*(appointed 26 November 2020)*
John Leha (Additional Director)	*(appointed 1 June 2021)*

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY
The principal activity of the company during the financial year was to bring about positive systematic reform that will deliver better outcomes to the lives of vulnerable children and young people, particularly, those living in out-of-home care in the state of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

OPERATING RESULT
The net result of the company for the financial year was a surplus of $909,505 (2020: surplus of $37,361). The company is a not-for-profit entity and is exempt from the payment of income tax.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS
A review of the operations of the company during the financial year and the result of those operations found that during the year, the company continued to engage in its principal activity, the results of which are disclosed in the attached financial statements.

EVENTS OCCURRING AFTER BALANCE DATE
Other than the possible effects of the matter referred to in Note 18 of the financial statements, no matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the company in future financial years.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

DIRECTORS' REPORT

MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS

The number of meetings each Director was eligible to attend and actually attended during the financial year is summarised as follows:

	Attended	Eligible
Deirdre Cheers	6	8
Nigel Lindsay	7	8
Mark Valerio	5	8
Chris Brown**	0	2
Alan Brennan	7	8
Simon Walsh	8	8
Kathy Karatasas	8	8
Tim Ireland**	0	2
Robyn Miller	8	8
Lisa Griffiths	7	8
Heidi Wilson	7	8
Grainne O'Loughlin*	4	5
Jody Pearce*	5	5
John Leha*	1	1

** appointed during the year*
*** resigned during the year*

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Nigel Lindsay
Chair

Steve Kinmond
CEO / Company Secretary

16 September 2021

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 $	2020 $
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	2,884,363	3,054,712
Trade and other receivables	7	1,247,633	624,608
Inventory		8,027	14,327
Total current assets		4,140,023	3,693,647
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8	4,005,618	10,198
Intangible assets	9	-	-
Right-of-use assets	10	129,047	152,682
Total non-current assets		4,134,665	162,880
TOTAL ASSETS		8,274,688	3,856,527
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	3,058,818	1,137,436
Employee benefits	13	269,493	271,718
Lease liabilities	14	55,167	53,176
Total current liabilities		3,383,478	1,462,330
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	12	1,600,000	-
Employee benefits	13	32,603	31,226
Lease liabilities	14	78,280	92,149
Total non-current liabilities		1,710,883	123,375
TOTAL LIABILITIES		5,094,361	1,585,705
NET ASSETS		**3,180,327**	**2,270,822**
FUNDS			
Accumulated funds		3,180,327	2,270,822
TOTAL FUNDS		**3,180,327**	**2,270,822**

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 $	2020 $
Revenue	4	4,689,351	4,294,192
Other income	4	-	5,857
		4,689,351	4,300,049
Expenses			
Administration expenses		(258,568)	(263,477)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	5	(64,574)	(47,048)
Employee benefits expense		(1,673,849)	(2,228,600)
Consultant fees		(1,569,543)	(882,295)
Training expenses		(72,011)	(210,151)
Property and lease expenses		(63,878)	(464,404)
Other expenses		(77,423)	(166,713)
		(3,779,846)	(4,262,688)
Surplus before income tax		909,505	37,361
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus for the year		909,505	37,361
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		**909,505**	**37,361**

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Accumulated Funds	Total
	$	$
Balance at 1 July 2019	2,233,461	2,233,461
Comprehensive income		
Surplus for the year	37,361	37,361
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	37,361	37,361
Balance at 30 June 2020	**2,270,822**	**2,270,822**
Balance at 1 July 2020	2,270,822	2,270,822
Comprehensive income		
Surplus for the year	909,505	909,505
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	909,505	909,505
Balance at 30 June 2021	**3,180,327**	**3,180,327**

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 $	2020 $
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from customers and government		6,410,028	4,314,884
Payments to suppliers and employees		(4,128,952)	(4,676,635)
Other income		68	6,077
Interest received		7,362	53,957
Interest paid - leases		(10,618)	(7,657)
Net cash flows from operating activities		2,277,888	(309,374)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		-	11,819
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(4,001,908)	(5,270)
Net cash flows from investing activities		(4,001,908)	6,549
Cash flows from financing activities			
Proceeds from borrowings		1,600,000	-
Repayment of lease liabilities		(46,329)	(45,527)
Net cash flows from financing activities		1,553,671	(45,527)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(170,349)	(348,352)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		3,054,712	3,403,064
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6	**2,884,363**	**3,054,712**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Note 1 - Reporting entity

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited (the Company) is registered as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital under the provisions of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 16 September 2021.

Note 2 - Basis of preparation

Statement of compliance
The company has adopted Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements as set out in *AASB 1053 Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards* and *AASB 2010–2: Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements.* These financial statements are Tier 2 general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The company is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards. Australian Accounting Standards set out accounting policies that the AASB has concluded would result in financial statements containing relevant and reliable information about transactions, events and conditions.

Basis of measurement
The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

Comparatives
Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year. Where the company has retrospectively applied an accounting policy, made a retrospective restatement, or reclassified items in its financial statements, an additional Statement of Financial Position as at the beginning of the earliest comparative period will be disclosed. The company has not restated any comparative figures in the current financial year.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements
The Directors evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the company.

Key estimates
Impairment - general
The Directors assess impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluation of conditions and events specific to the company that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amounts of relevant assets are reassessed using value-in-use calculations which incorporate various key assumptions.

Estimation of useful lives of assets
The estimation of the useful lives of assets has been based on historical experience as well as manufacturers' warranties (for plant and equipment) and turnover policies (for motor vehicles). In addition, the condition of the assets is assessed at least once per year and considered against the remaining useful life. Adjustments to useful lives are made when considered necessary.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Note 2 - Basis of preparation (continued)

New and revised standards that are effective for these financial statements
Several amendments to Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations are mandatory for the 30 June 2021 reporting period. These include:

- *AASB 2018-6: Definition of a Business* (amendments to *AASB 3*)
- *AASB 2018-7: Definition of Material* (amendments to *AASB 101* and *AASB 108*)
- *AASB 2019-1: References to the Conceptual Framework* (revises the Conceptual Framework for Financial Reporting)
- *AASB 2020-4: Amendments to AASs - Covid-19-Related Rent Concessions* (amendments to *AASB 16*)

The amendments listed above did not have any impact on the amounts recognised in the current or prior periods but may affect future periods.

New standards and interpretations not yet adopted
Certain new accounting standards, amendments and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for 30 June 2021 reporting periods and have not been early adopted by the company. These include:

- *AASB 1060: General Purpose Financial Statements - Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* (effective for the year ending 30 June 2022)
- *AASB 2020-1: Amendments to AASs - Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current* (effective for the year ending 30 June 2024)

It is not expected that AASB 2020-1 will have a material impact on the company in future reporting periods. AASB 1060 may have a material impact on the company in future reporting periods and on foreseeable future transactions and disclosures since AASB 1060 acts to mandate that the company prepare a general purpose financial report under a new Simplified Disclosure Standard in future reporting periods. The company has not yet assessed the specific financial reporting impacts of AASB 1060.

Note 3 - Significant accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial report are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Income tax
The company is a not-for-profit institution exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*. The company has deductible gift recipient (DGR) status.

Goods and services tax (GST)
Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

Revenue recognition
Amounts disclosed as revenue are net of returns, trade allowances and duties and taxes including goods and services tax (GST). Revenue is recognised for the major business activities as follows:

Rendering of services
Revenue from fees received for services is recognised when the service is provided.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Note 3 - Significant accounting policies (continued)

Revenue recognition (continued)

Grants

Grants received on the condition that specified services are delivered, or conditions are fulfilled, are considered reciprocal. These grants are initially recognised as a liability and revenue is recognised as services are performed or conditions fulfilled. Revenue from non-reciprocal grants is recognised when the company obtains control of the funds.

Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Donations

The timing of the recognition of donations depends upon the point in time at which control of these monies is obtained. Control would normally occur upon the earlier of the receipt of the monies or notification that the monies have been secured.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of twelve months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value and bank overdrafts.

Trade receivables

The company makes use of a simplified approach in accounting for trade and other receivables and records the loss allowance as lifetime expected credit losses. These are expected shortfalls in contractual cash flows, considering the potential default at any point during the life of the financial instrument. In calculating, the company uses historical experience, external indicators and forward-looking information to calculate the expected credit losses using a provision matrix.

The company assesses impairment of trade receivables on a collective basis as they possess shared credit risk characteristics they have been grouped based on days past due.

Property, plant and equipment

Recognition and measurement

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Cost includes any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management. Purchased software that is integral to the functionality of the related equipment is capitalised as part of that equipment. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. These are included in the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation surplus relating to that asset are transferred to accumulated funds.

Subsequent costs

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Carrying Amount

The carrying amount of property, plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the Directors to ensure that it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Note 3 - Significant accounting policies (continued)

Property, plant and equipment (continued)

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land and capital works in progress, is depreciated on a straight line basis over the asset's useful life commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Motor vehicles	20%
Equipment and furniture	16-33%

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Right-of-use assets

At inception, a right-of-use assets and a lease liability is recognised. Right-of-use assets are included in the *Statement of Financial Position* within a classification relevant to the underlying asset.

Right-of-use assets are initially measured at cost, comprising of the following:

- the amount of the initial measurement of the lease liability
- Any lease payments made at or before the commencement date, less any lease incentives received
- Any initial direct costs incurred
- An estimate of costs to be incurred in dismantling and removing the underlying asset, restoring the site on which it is located or restoring the underlying asset to the condition required by the terms and conditions of the lease, unless those costs are incurred either at the commencement date or as a consequence of having used the underlying asset during a particular period

Subsequently, right-of-use assets are measured using a cost model. The right-of-use asset is depreciated to the earlier of the useful life of the asset or the lease term using the straight-line method and is recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and other comprehensive income in "Depreciation and amortisation".

The company tests for impairment where there is an indication that a right-of-use asset may be impaired. An assessment of whether there is an indication of possible impairment is done at each reporting date. Where the carrying amount of a right of use asset is greater than the estimated recoverable amount, it is written down immediately to its recoverable amount. The resulting impairment loss is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit, except where the decrease reverses a previously recognised revaluation increase for the same asset.

The resulting decrease is recognised in other comprehensive income to that extent and reduces the amount accumulated in equity under revaluation surplus, and future depreciation charges are adjusted in future periods to allocate the revised carrying amount, less its residual value, on a systematic basis over its remaining useful life.

Leases

The company leases equipment on an arm's length basis from a third-party lessor. A lease is a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

At inception of a contract, it is assessed to determine whether the contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. If the terms and conditions of a contract are changed, it is reassessed to once again determine if the contract is still, or now contains, a lease.

Note 3 - Significant accounting policies (continued)

Leases (continued)
The term of a lease is determined as the non-cancellable period of the lease, together with the periods covered by an option to extend the lease where there is reasonable certainty that the option will be exercised, and periods covered by an option to terminate the lease if there is reasonable certainty that the option will not be exercised.

The assessment of the reasonable certainty of the exercising of options to extend the lease, or not exercising of options to terminate the lease, is reassessed upon the occurrence of either a significant event or a significant change in circumstances that is within the company's control and it affects the reasonable certainty assumptions. The assessment of the lease term is revised if there is a change in the non-cancellable lease period.

The company does not recognise leases that have a lease term of 12 months or less or are of low value as a right-of-use asset or lease liability. The lease payments associated with these leases are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Profit or Loss and other comprehensive income on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Lease liability
At the commencement date of the lease, the lease liability is initially recognised for the present value of non-cancellable lease payments discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the company's incremental borrowing rate.

The tenor of a lease includes any renewal period where the lessee is reasonably certain that they will exercise the option to renew. The company has reviewed all its leases and included any extensions where the company assessed it is reasonably certain the lease agreement will be renewed.

The lease payment used in the calculation of the lease liabilities should include variable payments when they relate to an index or rate. Where leases contain variable lease payments based on an index or rate at a future point in time, the company has used the incremental uplift contained in the lease or the respective Reserve Bank forward-looking CPI target for CPI-related increases.

In the absence of any floor or cap clauses in the lease agreements, the company measures the rent for the year under market review at an amount equal to the rent of the year preceding the market review increased by a fixed rate.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not yet paid at the commencement date. Lease payments are discounted using the relevant company's incremental borrowing rate. The incremental borrowing rate used for this calculation is dictated by the tenor of the lease and the location of the asset. The incremental borrowing rate is the rate the company would be charged on borrowings, provided by our banking partners. The weighted average incremental borrowing rate is 4.5%. The following lease payments being fixed payments, less any lease incentives receivable, are included where they are not paid at the commencement date.

Subsequently, the lease liability is measured by:

- increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest on the lease liability
- reducing the carrying amount to reflect the lease payments made
- remeasuring the carrying amount to reflect any reassessment or lease modifications or to reflect revised in-substance fixed lease payments

The unwind of the financial charge on the lease liabilities is recognised in the *Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income* in "Finance costs" based on the company's incremental borrowing rate.

Note 3 - Significant accounting policies (continued)

Intangible assets

Software

Software has a finite useful life and is carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and impairment losses. Amortisation is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate the cost of the software over its estimated useful life of three years.

Impairment of assets

Assets that have an indefinite useful life are not subject to amortisation and are tested annually for impairment. Assets that are subject to amortisation are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use. For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash flows (cash generating units). Impairment losses are reversed when there is an indication that the impairment loss may no longer exist and there has been a change in the estimate used to determine the recoverable amount.

Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the company during the reporting period, which remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability. The carrying amount of trade and other payables is deemed to reflect fair value.

Borrowings

Borrowings are initially recognised at fair value, net of transaction costs incurred. Borrowings are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the redemption amount is recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income over the period of the borrowings using the effective interest method.

Income received in advance

Income, other than government contract income, that is received before the service to which the payment relates has been provided is recorded as a liability until such time as the service has been provided, at which time it is recognised in the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income.

Unexpended grants

The company receives grant monies to fund projects either for contracted periods of time or for specific projects irrespective of the period of time required to complete these projects. It is the policy of the company to treat grant monies as revenue in advance in the Statement of Financial Position where the company is contractually obliged to provide the services in a subsequent financial period to when the grant is received or in the case of specific project grants where the project has not been completed.

Employee benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits.

In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may not satisfy vesting requirements. Those cash outflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bonds with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cash flows.

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 $	2020 $
Note 4 - Revenue and other income		
Operating revenue		
Grants and subsidies	1,708,865	1,893,671
Client service fees	2,550,325	2,046,757
Government support - COVID-19	397,500	211,000
Other operating revenue	25,231	88,587
	4,681,921	4,240,015
Other revenue		
Donations	68	220
Interest income	7,362	53,957
	7,430	54,177
Total revenue	4,689,351	4,294,192
Other income		
Net gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment	-	5,857
Total other income	-	5,857
Total revenue and other income	4,689,351	4,300,049
Note 5 - Expenses		
Depreciation and amortisation		
Equipment and furniture	2,884	1,776
Motor vehicles	3,604	5,269
Right-of-use assets	58,086	38,170
Website development	-	1,833
Total depreciation and amortisation expenses	64,574	47,048
Finance costs - leases	10,618	7,657
Note 6 - Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank	2,633,679	430,227
Term deposits	250,684	2,624,485
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,884,363	3,054,712
Note 7 - Trade and other receivables		
Current		
Trade receivables	698,062	402,014
GST receivable	261,084	-
Other receivables	9,259	110,037
Prepayments	279,228	112,557
Total current trade and other receivables	1,247,633	624,608

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Note 8 - Property, plant and equipment

	Land and Buildings	Furniture and Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
	$	$	$	$
At 30 June 2020				
Cost	-	213,313	18,475	231,788
Accumulated depreciation	-	(206,719)	(14,871)	(221,590)
Net carrying amount	-	6,594	3,604	10,198
Movements in carrying amounts				
Opening net carrying amount	-	6,594	3,604	10,198
Additions	4,000,000	1,908	-	4,001,908
Depreciation charge for the year	-	(2,884)	(3,604)	(6,488)
Closing net carrying amount	4,000,000	5,618	-	4,005,618
At 30 June 2021				
Cost	4,000,000	215,221	18,475	4,233,696
Accumulated depreciation	-	(209,603)	(18,475)	(228,078)
Net carrying amount	4,000,000	5,618	-	4,005,618

Note 9 - Intangible assets

	Website Development	Publications	Total
	$	$	$
At 30 June 2020			
Cost	39,665	112,892	152,557
Accumulated amortisation	(39,665)	(112,892)	(152,557)
Net carrying amount	-	-	-
At 30 June 2021			
Cost	39,665	112,892	152,557
Accumulated amortisation	(39,665)	(112,892)	(152,557)
Net carrying amount	-	-	-

Note 10 - Right-of-use assets

	2021	2020
	$	$
Leased equipment - at cost	225,303	190,852
Accumulated depreciation	(96,256)	(38,170)
Total right-of-use assets	129,047	152,682
Movements in carrying amounts		
Opening net carrying amount	152,682	190,852
Additions - new leases entered into	34,451	-
Depreciation charge for the year	(58,086)	(38,170)
Closing net carrying amount	129,047	152,682

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 $	2020 $
Note 11 - Trade and other payables		
Current		
Trade payables	441,349	289,318
Income received in advance	1,632,607	51,662
GST payable	-	30,000
Other payables	984,862	766,456
Total current trade and other payables	3,058,818	1,137,436
Note 12 - Borrowings		
Non-current		
Loans - secured	1,600,000	-
Total non-current borrowings	1,600,000	-
Movements in carrying amounts		
Opening net carrying amount	-	-
Proceeds	1,600,000	-
Closing net carrying amount	1,600,000	-
Security		
Loans are secured by mortgages over the freehold property.		
Note 13 - Employee benefits		
Current		
Annual leave	190,341	205,422
Long service leave	79,152	66,296
Total current provisions	269,493	271,718
Non-current		
Long service leave	32,603	31,226
Total non-current employee benefits	32,603	31,226
Note 14 - Lease liabilities		
Current		
Lease liabilities	55,167	53,176
Total current lease liabilities	55,167	53,176
Non-current		
Lease liabilities	78,280	92,149
Total non-current lease liabilities	78,280	92,149
Movements in carrying amounts		
Opening net carrying amount	145,325	190,852
Reclassification	34,451	-
Repayments	(56,947)	(53,184)
Interest	10,618	7,657
Closing net carrying amount	133,447	145,325

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 $	2020 $

Note 15 - Lease Commitments

Operating lease commitments

Commitments for minimum lease payments in relation to non-cancellable operating leases are payable as follows:

Within one year	11,000	-
	11,000	-

The company is committed to a short-term and low-value hot desk lease. Lease payments are $5,500 per month and terminates in August 2021.

Note 16 - Key management personnel

Remuneration of key management personnel

The aggregate amount of compensation paid to key personnel during the year was:	485,765	454,112

Note 17 - Contingent liabilities

At balance date the Directors of the company are not aware of the existence of any contingent liabilities.

Note 18 - Events occurring after balance date

Subsequent to the end of the financial year, there remains a degree of uncertainty in relation to future economic and other impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency control measures and progressive withdrawal of Government emergency support.

At the date of signing the financial statements the Directors are unable to determine what financial effects the outbreak of the virus could have on the company in the coming financial period.

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility to continuously monitor the situation and evaluate this impact including its ability to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

There were no significant events occurring after the balance sheet date.

Note 19 - Members' Guarantee

If the company is wound up, the Constitution states that the full and secondary members of the company contribute only the amount of unpaid membership fees towards the payment of debts and liabilities of the company. At 30 June 2021 the number of full and secondary members was 70 (2020: 59)

Note 20 - Company Details

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:
Level 1, 191 Cleveland Street
Redfern NSW 2016

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The Directors of the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited declare that:

1. The financial statements, which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021, and the Statement of Profit or Loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and:

   (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*; and

   (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the company.

2. In the opinion of the Directors, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Nigel Lindsay
Chair

Steve Kinmond
CEO / Company Secretary

16 September 2021

StewartBrown
Integrity + Quality + Clarity
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021, the Statement of Profit or Loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Directors' Declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Limited is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

a) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended, and

b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the Directors of the company, would be in the same terms if given to the Directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the company on or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Directors are responsible for overseeing the company's financial reporting process.

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ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED
ABN 24 459 406 828

FINANCIAL REPORT - 30 JUNE 2021

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S WELFARE AGENCIES LIMITED

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at *The Auditing and Assurance Standards Board* and the website address is http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx

We communicate with the Directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

StewartBrown

StewartBrown
Chartered Accountants

S.J. Hutcheon
Partner

16 September 2021

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Our people

ACWA Board

Office Bearers

Chair
Nigel Lindsay
Wesley Mission

Deputy Chair
Kathy Karatasas
Settlement Services International

Treasurer
Heidi Wilson
Macquarie Bank

Directors

Alan Brennan
Pathfinders

Deirdre Cheers
Barnardos Australia

John Leha
AbSec

Lisa Griffiths
OzChild

Robyn Miller
MacKillop Family Services

Grainne O'Loughlin
Karitane

Jody Pearce
Veritas House

Mark Valerio
PwC Australia

Simon Walsh
Allambi Care

ACWA extends our deepest thanks to Emma Pollard (Climate Council of Australia) for her support as Board Observer.

ACWA Members

NSW Child, Family & Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation (AbSec)

Adopt Change

Allambi Care

Anglicare NSW West, NSW South and ACT

Anglicare Sydney

Australian Childhood Foundation

Australian Red Cross

Barnardos Australia

Benevolent Society

Blue Sky Community Services (formerly Mid Coast Communities)

Burdekin Association

Burrun Dalai Aboriginal Corporation

Cara House

CareSouth

Caretakers Cottage

CASPA

CatholicCare Broken Bay

CatholicCare Social Services Hunter Manning

CatholicCare Wollongong

CatholicCare Social Services NSW ACT

Central Coast Family Support Services Inc

Central West Family Support Group Inc

Challenge Community Services

Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS)

Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Family Community Care Centre

Connectability Australia

Creating Links

Dunlea Centre

Dusseldorp Forum

Family Spirit

Far South Coast Family Support

Foundations Care

Headstart ABI Service Inc

Kari Foundation Ltd

Karitane

Key Assets

Life Without Barriers

Lifestyle Solutions

Mackillop Family Services

Mallee Family Care

Maranguka Community Hub

Marist180

Marymead

ACWA Members

Mission Australia

Monaro Family Support Services

Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation

Nepean Community Neighbourhood Services

Ngunya Jarjum Aboriginal Child and Family Services

Oakdene House Foundation

Orange Aboriginal Medical Service

Children Australia Inc (OzChild)

Pathfinders Ltd

Phoenix Rising for Children

Platform Youth Services

Playgroup Association of NSW

Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust T/A Allowah Presbyterian Children's Hospital

Professional Individualised Care Limited

Project Youth

Samaritans Foundation

Save the Children Australia

SDN Children's Services

Settlement Services International

Social Futures

South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation

Southern Youth & Family Services

St George Family Support Services Inc

Sydney Stepping Stone Inc

Tresillian Family Care Centres

Uniting

UPA Youth Care

Veritas House

Wandiyali Children's Services

Wesley Community Services

Westhaven Ltd

William Campbell Foundation

Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre

YP SPACE MNC

Supporters of ACWA

Axia Solutions

Andrew McCallum

Carmela Tassone

Connecting Families

Impact Youth Solutions Ltd

Jane Smith

Justine Lee

Morri Young

Ngadhi Family Services

Police Citizens Youth Clubs NSW Ltd

Premier Youthworks Pty Ltd

Sal Consulting Pty Ltd

Social Care Solutions

Wendy Foote

Please note: Entities included in the ACWA Members and Supporters lists include those current as at date of publication.

ACWA Staff

Executive

Steve Kinmond	Chief Executive Officer
Linda Watson	Director, CCWT

Sector Development

Gillian Brannigan	Policy, Learning & Development
Sharon Broady	Executive Officer

CCWT

Julie Fletcher	Registrations Officer
Lesley Furneaux-Cook	Leadership Manager
Louise Mulroney	Learning & Development Project Manager (Step by Step)
Saul Nightingale	Learning & Development Project Manager (Southern Region)
Krys Peereboom	Senior Learning & Development Project Manager
Jo Roach	Learning & Development Project Manager (Step by Step)
Yasmin Stein	RTO Admin Officer
Katherine Wild	Graphic Designer & Applications Support

Farewells

ACWA extends our deepest thanks to the following staff for their long-term commitment, support and service:

Padraig Dorrigan	(former) Executive Officer
Libby McCalman	(former) Communications Officer

External Consultants

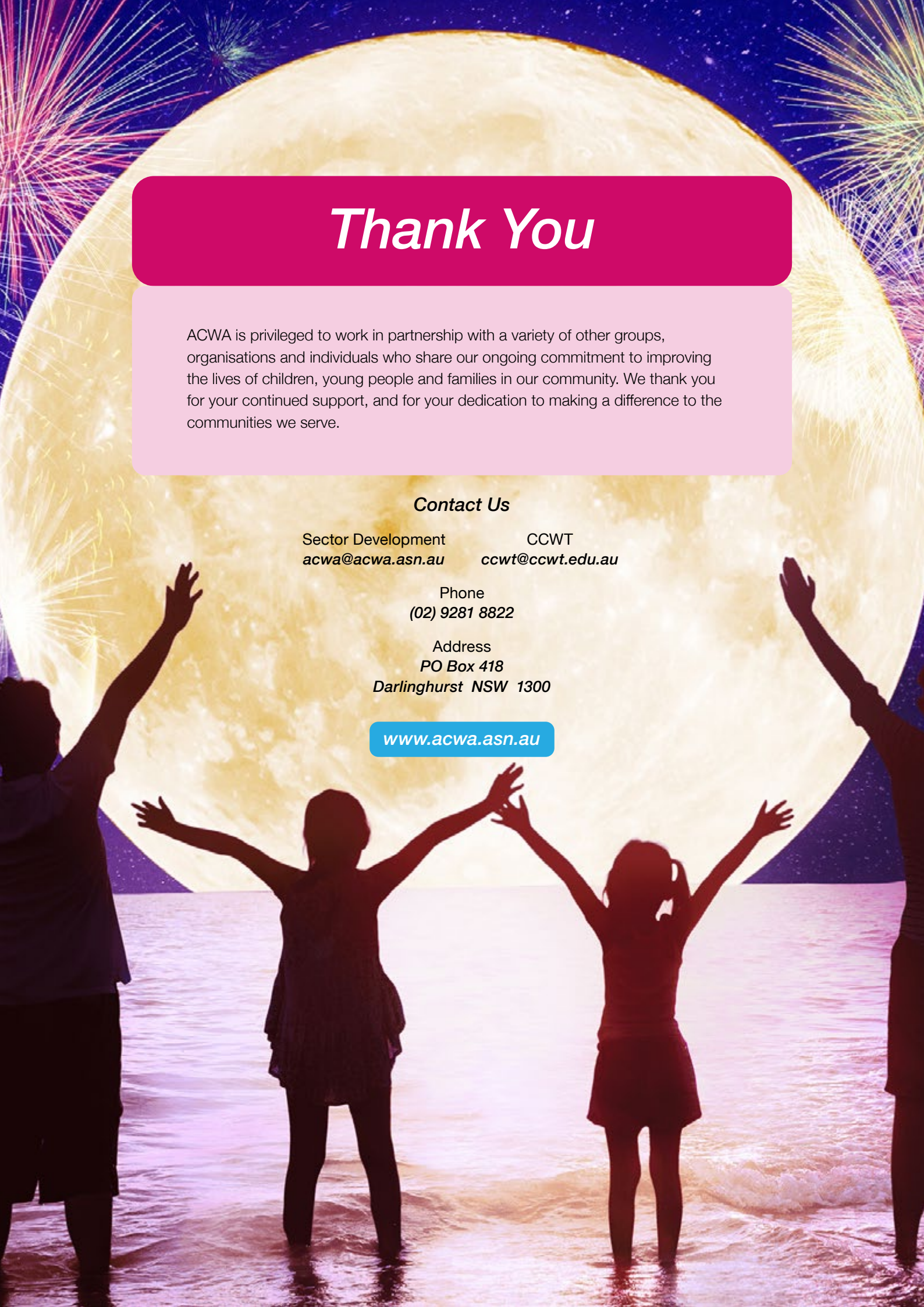
John Agapitos	IT Manager/Technical Support
Lyn Ainsworth	Consultant, Disability Project, Alternative Care Arrangements
Julianna Demetrius	Consultant, e-Safety Online Grant Project Lead, PSP Reforms, COVID-19 Taskforce
Martina Donkers	External Evaluator, e-Safety Online Grant Project
Annette Michaux	Parenting Research Centre, Problematic & Harmful Sexual Behaviours Resource development
Dr Jodie Park	Consultant, Business Development Manager
Susan Priivald	Consultant, Alternative Care Arrangements
Vincent Riordan	Consultant, Insurance and Communications
Carol Tran	Account Manager, Accounting for Good
Cliff Shen	Accountant, Accounting for Good
Duc Nguyen	Assistant Accountant, Accounting for Good
Yao Wu	Assistant Accountant, Accounting for Good

Secondments

Lauren De Matos	Executive Assistant to CEO

Thank You

ACWA is privileged to work in partnership with a variety of other groups, organisations and individuals who share our ongoing commitment to improving the lives of children, young people and families in our community. We thank you for your continued support, and for your dedication to making a difference to the communities we serve.



Contact Us

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