

A collage of various images representing different aspects of life, including children, adults, and text overlays. The central text reads "Annual Report 2022". Other visible text includes "PEACE", "Chance to grow", "solutions Welcome... direction Comfort & Protection", "Balance of power", "tragedy", "Find your own path", "A WAY out", "silence", and "SECRET". The images depict diverse people, including children, adults, and a person in a wheelchair, in various settings like outdoors, indoors, and in a forest.

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PRESIDENT'S *message*



I cannot believe that another year has passed. This year once again has gone in a flurry of COVID 19 management in our working lives, in our families and homes and amongst our community. What was a fearful pandemic, has now almost become a day-to-day norm in our lives. I truly believe that one of the skills learnt during this time is that we need to be flexible and adaptable to all that life presents. Even though at times we have all struggled in our work and personal lives, we have to congratulate ourselves that we have all grown stronger.

Throughout this year, I have continued to be amazed at the resilience and tenacity that is shown by all who work at WRISC. Every day they come to work, determined to make a difference in the lives of the clients who access the service.

The organisation has continued to grow and develop in many ways. One such development this year was the introduction of a Program Manager to the Executive. The Board had noted that the Executive were overloaded with accountabilities in their roles. Further discussions led to the decision to introduce the role of Program Manager to the Executive team. This role was created so that teams has a dedicated executive who could focus on them and assisting further development. Ashlea was successful in the role. Whilst she is away on maternity leave, Marg has expertly filled the role. The introduction of this role has now allowed Anita to focus on her position as Business Manager and for Libby as the CEO to focus on the strategic components of the business.

The Board have also been working hard to develop the new strategic plan for WRISC. This process began with development session conducted by Jessica Cadwallader. During this session we researched similar organisations' strategic plans, discussed our current plan and identified key strategic priorities that we would like to focus on moving forward. Many Board meetings have focussed around creating four main priorities and the evidence of success in regards to these priorities. Currently the plan is in draft form and being reviewed by various stakeholders. A big thank you to the Board for the discussions and deliberations that have occurred over the last six months so that a draft of this document could come to fruition.

As I write this report, it is with a heavy heart. This year is my final year on the Board. I have now completed six years as a Board member and three of those as Chair. I would also like to acknowledge that it is the final year for the Deputy President, Meeta Narsi. I am sure she will share in my thoughts that the years have flown by. I cannot thank the Board members, Libby, Anita, Hilary and Sandra enough for all the work that you have done and continue to do. On the surface, it seems effortless, however behind the scenes hard work is being completed to ensure success.

The staff of WRISC, I wholeheartedly applaud you for the wonderful work you achieve every day. Especially in the last, three years when our personal lives and that of our loved ones was at risk. You turned up every day to provide a service to one of the most vulnerable cohorts in our community. Your dedication to your clients is not unnoticed, and I want to sincerely thank you.

Libby, your passion and drive to continue to not only develop the organisation, but also your own professional development is truly inspirational. I have enjoyed working alongside you to progress strategic elements of WRISC

As WRISC moves into 2023, Michelle Hunt will be standing for the role of Chairperson. The Board had decided last year, that a succession plan for leadership on the Board needed to occur to ensure a mentorship would prepare the new Chairperson. I have no doubt that Michelle will be a marvellous fit for this role.

So thank you everyone for the experience of working in such a motivating organisation. I wish you all the best for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Leehane'.

Emma Leehane
PRESIDENT
WRISC Board of Governance

PLANNING SESSION AND BOARD *activities*



3/27/2022

Towards a WRISC Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Report based on discussions with WRISC Board, CEO and others held on 17th March 2022

The WRISC Board is tasked with the development of the strategic planning process and this began on the 17th March 2022. Dr Jess Cadwallader the Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisor in the Central Highlands region facilitated a session with the Board to begin this process for the strategic plan for 2023-2026. From this session, Jess was able to write a report titled 'Towards a Strategic Plan 2023-2026' which included the strategic themes that emerged from the discussions and the Board have used this information to develop a draft strategic plan.

Dr Jess Cadwallader
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS PRINCIPAL STRATEGIC ADVISOR &
CONSULTANT

Feminist Statement:

During 2021-2022 the WRISC Board underwent a process of developing a WRISC Feminist statement.

This process involved the development of a number of draft documents that were reviewed for feedback from staff both individually and from a program perspective. After a number of drafts, the feminist statement was launched on International Women's Day 2022 (*see page 6*).

The statement helps to clarify how WRISC works from a feminist perspective and is used for orientation of new staff and as a guide for existing staff.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S *report*

What a year 2021-2022 has been. COVID-19 finally started to reduce and vaccinations and boosters became more available. Offices were empty, then more active, then empty, then more active again. The community had to learn how to be flexible and do things differently. The political landscape of the world changed and Australia saw a new Government elected with many changes, including far more first nation voices.

And all the while, the incidence and risk to women and their children increased due to COVID-19. The Orange Door became more embedded as part of the Central Highlands response to family violence. Additionally, on the broader landscape, a new risk assessment tool has been gradually introduced, as well as a statewide approach to collaborative practise, and Domestic Violence Victoria (DvVic) officially merged with Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRCV) to become Safe and Equal: Standing strong against family violence. I was also elected to the inaugural Board of this new entity.



On a more local level, The Working Together Partnership project developed the Collaborative Practise templates, the regional allocations group have honed their working together skills, and the regional demand management group also addressed challenges from a regional perspective. The Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee (CHIFVC) was very active with training, working groups, and building on opportunities for collaborative work in many different areas. WRISC is also a continued active member of the Communities of Respect and Equity alliance with Women's Health Grampians leading in this FV prevention area.

WRISC continues to build on many areas of achievements (many of which are reported on elsewhere in this report) including the development of the inaugural WRISC Feminist Statement. Active working and reference groups include: Evaluation, Financial and Risk (FAR), Fundraising, Intercultural and Safer Pathways (IASP), OH&S, Flexible Support Packages, Rainbow Tick, Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) group and Disability Action Plan group. We have also been working on accreditation, working with donors and philanthropic groups, strategic planning development initiated by the Board, and a number of various large and smaller projects. During 2021-2022, there has been intentional work to increase the voice of women and children at WRISC and to this end we have a working group that began the planning process to listen deeply to the voices of women who have experienced Family Violence.

Lastly, WRISC would not function without all the amazing women who work at WRISC, and you will see them mentioned throughout this report. During this time we had three new babies born – welcome baby Gracie, baby Harrison and baby Harley and two staff members who were on secondment Kristen and Suzanne resigned and have furthered their professional opportunities in the world of Neighbourhood Houses (Kristen) and court (Suzanne). Ashlea was recruited to the inaugural Program Manager role, and this role then became part of the Senior Executive Group (with Anita and myself). We farewelled Ash on maternity leave, and welcomed Marg into the role of the acting Program Manager. This new role has opened the way for me to be able to think and develop strategically and this has been a fantastic addition to the strength of WRISC as an organisation. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the staff and volunteer at WRISC we are exceptionally lucky to have all these women as the pillars of the organisation who stand beside, listen to and support all their clients in a manner second to none.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Emma and the Board who diligently, with humour and joy, carry out their governance tasks with professionalism and integrity. Special mention to Emma who has been courageous leading the organisation through some significant document development and Meeta for your consistency and wisdom.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Jewson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'E' and 'J'.

Elizabeth Jewson
Chief Executive Officer

CELEBRATION: May '22



International Women's Day

WRISC FEMINIST *statement*

WRISC is a feminist organisation that places the experiences and needs of women at the centre of our work. WRISC's core business of family violence is understood from a gendered perspective.

WE KNOW:

WRISC, formerly known as the Central Highlands Women's Collective, was formed in 1984 to support local women.

The founding women identified as feminist and WRISC continues to identify as a feminist organisation.

Feminist perspectives are broad.

WRISC understands feminism as a movement that works to challenge and change systems, structures, practices and actions, particularly those that oppress and create inequities for women and girls, with the ultimate goal of a just and equitable society for all.

WRISC's feminist perspective examines power and control in all social, cultural, economic, political and legal structures and strives for an intersectional lens to address fundamental difference in power.

WRISC is a feminist organisation that works to address structural inequalities that oppress women and girls and raises awareness and educates the wider community on this issue.

A feminist perspective does not work unless it values the unique voices and subjective experiences of women and girls.

WRISC works with women and children and we understand the relationship between family violence and how it affects women and their children.

WE VALUE:

Equality and social justice.

The empowerment of women and children.

Inclusion and understanding.

Respect and dignity.

Providing opportunities for women and their children for personal and professional development.

Being listened to and hearing the perspectives of others.

Sharing the power of knowledge and expertise.

Continually striving to examine power and the location of social and personal power as it affects our work and workplace.



Safety, healing and recovery, respecting diverse meanings.

The importance of Aboriginal family lead decision making and what that means to the individual woman.

Accountability to the community, women (including the women who have gone before us) and each other.

Strengthening relationships between women and their children.

WE DO:

Listen to women's perspectives and respect their choices, acknowledging the power of service delivery providers over clients in this space.

Provide services for children and their families, which can at times include liaison with male care givers when assessed as safe.

Provide a safe space for all.

Partner with other feminist organisations to advance feminist goals and objectives.

Work to transform fundamental difference in power or structural inequities using an intersectional lens and includes but is not limited to gender, sexuality, race, religion, faith, ethnicity, disability, economic status and age.

Respectfully challenge views or behaviours that can contribute to a person's oppression, as well as challenging and reflecting on our own views and behaviours to ensure we don't collude with oppressive behaviours.

Encourage feedback and are open and responsive to such.

Celebrate women's successes.

Promote ourselves as a feminist organisation in publications, submissions, job adverts and other organisation materials.

Share our understanding of the historical struggle of the women's liberation movement and its influence on the past and future.

Build community through a woman only workplace.

Critically reflect on our knowledge, values, and actions.

At WRISC, our shared understanding of feminism is reviewed two yearly to ensure our perspective grows and changes to meet the demands of the WRISC community and the changing nature of feminism.

TREASURER'S *report*



I am proud to be able to present to you my first Treasurers report.

The audited 2021/2022 financial year reports present an operating surplus of \$473,109, and a nett equity position of \$2,263,480, an increase of \$473,109 on the previous financial year.

Once again WRISC engaged the services of CountPro Audit Pty Ltd to undertake a complete and thorough Audit and review of accounting procedures. We are pleased to report there were no matters identified as requiring improvement.

Key highlights of the 2021/2022 Financial year:-

- Donations received of \$178,515, an increase of \$127,312 on the previous year
- Board resolved to support a new traineeship position for an aboriginal woman out of Retained Funds, after successful application for additional government funding for this position was also received
- The board approved the passing of the 2022/2023 Core Budget surplus of \$33,900 (including endorsing the allocation of \$50,000 of unspecified donations to allow for additional team members due to increased demand for our services)

This strong financial position will enable WRISC to continue to provide support to the many women and children affected by family violence. The surplus generated also allows WRISC to undertake continued improvements and development over the upcoming financial year.

Our key focus for the next 12 months:-

- Develop a long term strategic financial plan to utilise funds for optimum service delivery
- Continue to focus on diversifying our income streams and promote WRISC in the community with a view to increased donations
- Complete due diligence on Information Technology within WRISC to ensure we continue to provide a great support service to those women and children who require our services

I would sincerely like to recognise the efforts of the team at WRISC who so diligently and efficiently prepare the Financial Reports for the Board Meetings each month. I would also like to thank my fellow board members for their ongoing support in my new role as Treasurer, and for their continued and ongoing passion and dedication to WRISC.

I look forward to another exciting and successful year working with everyone at WRISC.

Meegan Dunne
WRISC Board of Governance

Profit & Loss Statement for the year ended 30th June, 2022

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
REVENUES		
Government Grants	3,780,641	3,656,129
Investment Income	3,378	7,412
Other Revenue	263,103	216,587
TOTAL REVENUES	4,047,122	3,880,128
EXPENSES		
<u>Salaries and Wages</u>	2,032,265	1,911,306
Salaries On-costs	198,983	168,557
Depreciation	104,092	148,156
Client Costs	656,668	624,449
Reimbursements – Berry Street	304,170	263,248
Repairs & Maintenance	22,868	16,453
Interest Expense	16,681	19,975
Other Expenses	238,286	219,281
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,574,013	3,371,425
OPERATING SURPLUS	473,109	508,703

Balance Sheet as at 30th June, 2022

	2022	2023
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Bank	1,744,491	1,275,092
Investments	870,000	870,000
Property, Plant & Equipment	398,090	490,360
Other Assets	35,841	34,958
TOTAL ASSETS	3,048,422	2,670,410
LIABILITIES		
Income in advance	16,564	1,873
Other Liabilities	768,408	878,196
TOTAL LIABILITIES	784,972	880,069
NET ASSETS	2,263,450	1,790,341
EQUITY		
Accumulated Surplus	806,763	648,519
Specific Purpose Reserve	1,456,687	1,141,822
TOTAL EQUITY	2,263,450	1,790,341

Please Note:

The Summary Statements have been derived from and are consistent with the full audited Financial Statements which are available on request from the Chief Executive Officer.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU'S) *reviewed*



Raven Collective Services and Training and WRISC

New and reviewed MOU's

- *Ballarat Regional Multicultural Centre (BRMC)
- *CatholicCare
- *Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA Ballarat)
- *Cafs Ballarat)
- *Meredith Primary School
- *Mount Rowan Primary School
- *Pyrenees Shire Council
- *Raven Collective Services and training Inc.
- *UFS-Little Children Big Outcomes

Memorandum of Understanding are an important part of working with other agencies. These documents help to foster positive working relationships and explore options and opportunities for collaborative work together. It is not unusual that once an MOU is developed, surprising and unexpected collaborations also develop. Sometimes the process can take years and other times the development happens very quickly. WRISC has an MOU register and Sandra works regularly to identify those MOU's that need to be reviewed and updated.



Mount Rowan Secondary College and WRISC



Interfaith Walk for Peace

Ballarat Interfaith Network walk, an interfaith focus on peace through Indigenous, Christian, and Islamic wisdom starting at BADAC (Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperation) in Main Road, via WRISC Family Violence Support in the CBD, finishing at the Anglican Christ Church Cathedral in Lydiard St South. All welcome. No bookings required.

Sunday 20 March, 2-4.30pm | Main Road

Speakers:

Margaret Ellis (event co-ord), Anita Koelle (WRISC), Fiona White (Salvation Army Chaplain)



NEW PROGRAM MANAGER *role*

WRISC is excited to introduce the Program Manager role, newly created in November 2021. This role provides a valuable level of support for all staff of the organisation, and works closely with the senior executive and team leaders to meet the operational needs of staff and the organisation. This role also provides more opportunity for WRISC to broaden community connection and involvement through strengthening ties with professional networks and formal bodies. This is an exciting new position that is still in development as we explore the possibilities and potential.

The Program Manager has played a key role in recruitment in recent months. This has been a very busy time with significant staff changes including long-time staff members moving on to new adventures, several staff welcoming new additions to their families, and others challenging their skills through taking on more senior roles to cover temporary vacancies.

The Program Manager has supported WRISC to participate in a number of projects, including some that address recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The Mandatory Minimum Qualifications project supports staff to upgrade their qualifications to better meet the new industry standards; a big thank you to staff who took up the challenge of work-study-family, we value your commitment. WRISC is continuing to work through the project of aligning with

the MARAM Framework to ensure that we are collaborating with the wider social welfare sector to better respond to the complexities of family violence. Another smaller project successfully delivered was the Local Community Access Grant project which supported WRISC service users to access COVID safe measures including vaccines, PPE, reliable information and testing kits. WRISC is also part of the New Graduate Program, coordinated by Family Safety Victoria, that supports the recruitment and retention of new employees in the Family Violence and Sexual Assault support sectors. Again, thank you to the staff members participating in this project.

WRISC also is excited to be involved in an innovative accommodation project that supports families facing homelessness, partnering with Catholic Care to support women and families in need to access safe and stable accommodation. This has been a productive partnership addressing a pressing need in the Central Highlands Region.

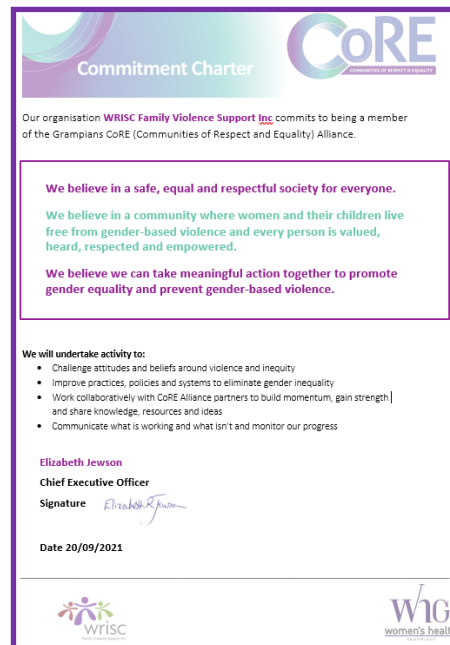
A big thank you to all WRISC staff and our supporters who have supported the introduction and development of this position. Looking forward to the next 12 months.

Margaret

ACCREDITATIONS

April '22

Updating and reviewing WRISC documents is an imperative part of WRISC's business. This process ensures that we have reliable and robust systems to use to carry out our business. Organised regular meetings with the document review working group, and in 2022, this was expanded to the leadership group who now also take responsibility for updating documents in their area of expertise. There is also a Board working group who update documents relating to the Board.



Royal Commission into Family Violence, Victoria

Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence was completed in 2015.

The Commission made 227 recommendations to reduce the impact of Family Violence in our community.

One of these is recommendation #209 which refers to mandatory minimum qualifications.

WRISC has been able to support four staff to enrol in further study.



Darcie, Aboriginal Program

I am currently studying the Graduate Certificate in Social and Community Services at Federation Uni. WRISC have made it very easy for me to be able to study by providing support with study days, flexibility and equipment. It's been very insightful so far to learn more around the theories we use in social work when working with clients as we do.

Tracy, Family Violence Outreach Program:

I am currently studying the Graduate Certificate in Social and Community Services, at Federation University, Ballarat Campus. WRISC have been very supportive in undertaking this field of study, to up skill my qualifications in the University level education space. The support provided by WRISC has included support with course fees, device support and support to attend lectures, during work hours. The course is of great value, in terms of my learnings and providing opportunities for a deeper level of understanding, with my current work practice.

Jodie, Aboriginal Program

As part of the recommendations that came from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, a number of staff were required to upskill their qualifications. I have always wanted to complete the Bachelor of Community and Human Services, and my ultimate goal is to obtain Master of Social Work, which I will follow on with. While it's a big workload on top of an already busy role, it has been really satisfying to know that I am on my way to hold my certificate. I'm very lucky to have such great support, not just at home but also at WRISC to complete this Degree because it is a challenge, but one that I am up for.

Chloe, Van Go Children's Counselling Therapy Program:

Currently I am in my third year of study at Federation University. I am working towards obtaining a bachelor degree in Human Services and Entrepreneurship. This degree brings together skills in community services, advocacy, project management, grant writing and innovating ways to solve challenging social problems.



To find the full report and recommendations. Visit the [Royal Commission website:](http://rcfv.archive.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/Report-Recommendations.html)
<http://rcfv.archive.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/Report-Recommendations.html>

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS INTEGRATED FAMILY VIOLENCE *committee*

Leading and advocating for a strong family violence system in Central Highlands Victoria.

OUR PURPOSE

why do we exist?

Do you believe that no-one should live with violence and that all people should be safe, respected and valued? So do we. Knowing that gender inequality is a key driver of family violence, we want to see a future where gender equality is the norm. The principles that underpin the integrated response system include a shared understanding of domestic and family violence across all services, prioritising the safety of those who experience violence, and a proactive approach to information sharing.

who does our work effect?

The scope of our work covers four key areas:

- The primary prevention of violence against women and children
- Post-crisis response services for women experiencing domestic and family violence
- Children impacted by family violence
- Services for perpetrators

Our work serves the people and communities of the Central Highlands. The Committee does this by creating value for the social service system and the stakeholders within it and works to identify, prioritise and respond pro-actively and strategically.

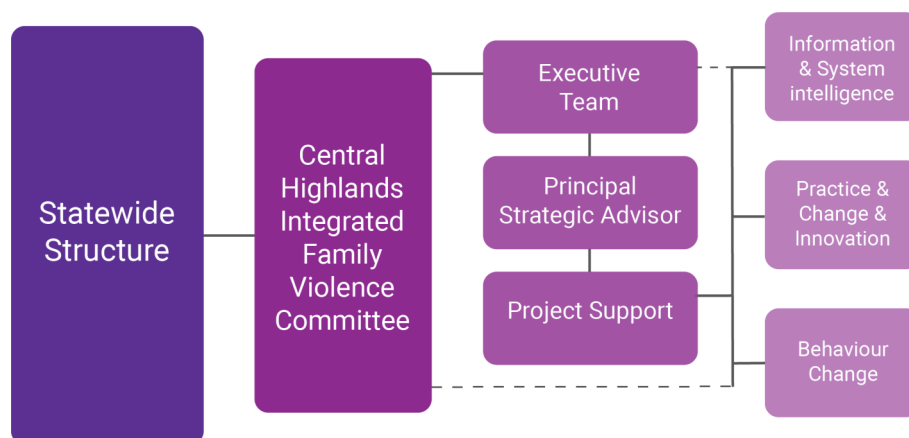
so how do we make change?

We believe that together we can change and improve the social services system in the Central Highlands so it can prevent family violence, intervene earlier, effectively respond and enable recovery.

The CHIFVC does this through three principal working groups that:

- Identify, prioritise and respond to issues and opportunities in the current system
- Drive practice change and innovation
- Influence positive change in attitudes inside and outside the system

Collective Impact Framework shapes and guides the work of the Committee based on a Common Agenda. All participants have a shared vision for change and commit to a joint approach.



www.chifvc.org.au





Safety, Equality, Opportunity for all people

WRISC Philosophy

Family violence is a widespread social problem that affects people, mainly women and children, in the most personal areas of their lives. Our work with women and children who experience family violence is directed by a feminist philosophy. Our responses to family violence take into account the needs and experiences of people from diverse backgrounds and communities. This means that we believe all people, women, children, and men, have the right to live free from violence and be safe. Family violence is not acceptable in any community or culture.

We believe positive change is possible on an individual, community, and systemic level. We seek to support and empower the women and children, and provide them with the information, resources, and support they need to make positive choices in their lives.

Our Vision

Safety, equality, and opportunity for all people.

Our Mission

To promote respectful relationships through services which enhance the safety, autonomy and wellbeing of women and children.

Our Values

The organisation works from a feminist perspective, and values: Innovation, Integrity, Respect, Trust

Acknowledgements



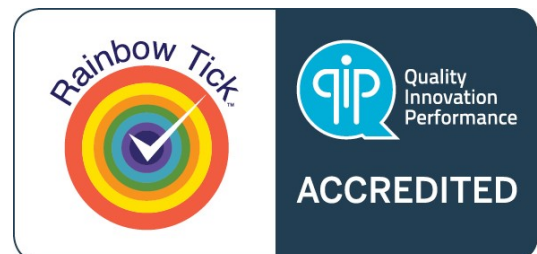
We acknowledge the Wadawurrung Peoples as the traditional owners of these lands and waters and we pay respect to Elders past and present.



WRISC acknowledges the support of the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services for the provision of funding. This support is sincerely appreciated.



WRISC is inclusive of women from all backgrounds, gender identifications and experiences and offers an environment which is free of exploitation and discrimination



SERVICES OFFERED *at WRISC*



OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Case management support to women and where relevant, their children.

Support includes:

Assessment and safety planning
Advocacy and case collaboration
Family Violence Court support for clients
Support to access community and service support

Groups

Women's Family Violence Support Group
'Steppin' Out' Walking Group

ABORIGINAL PROGRAM (HOLISTIC APPROACH)

Intake and Intensive Case Management

(can work in partnership with BADAC and other agencies)

Support includes:

Assessment and safety planning
Advocacy and case collaboration
Family Violence Court support for clients
Support to access community and service support

Groups

Aboriginal Girls group: (Primary & High School ages)
Aboriginal Boys group: (Primary & High School ages)
Family Violence court support
Cultural Women's Group

VAN GO CHILDREN'S CREATIVE THERAPY PROGRAM

Individual counselling using creative therapy.

Support includes:

Single session therapy assessment
Individual counselling using creative therapy
Mobile therapy in a purpose built van (VGM)

Groups

Groups run in response to community needs
Parent and Caregivers Groups
Children's creative therapy groups

Across all programs WRISC also has brokerage to:

- ⇒ Access and establish private housing
- ⇒ Access safety and security equipment for the home
- ⇒ Link in with a wide range of community and service supports
- ⇒ Manage other family violence related costs
- ⇒ Flexible Support Packages (FSP's)

Our Team

YE 2022

35 Staff: Y/E 2022
3 Full-Time
28 Part-Time
4 Casual
2 Volunteers

WELCOME

Carolyn
Charlie
Jodie
Melissa (*casual*)
Nicole (*casual*)
Suzanne

PARENTAL LEAVE

Ashlea
Mikala
Sarah

SECONDMENT

Suzanne

FAREWELL

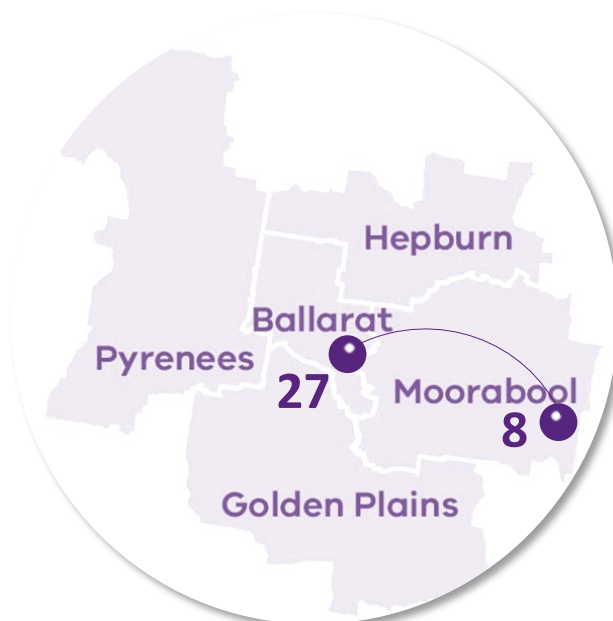
Barbara (Barb)
Bianca (*casual*)
Kristen
Lyndel
Mandy
Pranisha (*casual*)

FAREWELL

Kristen has worked at WRISC for many years and has come and gone in different roles along the way. Kristen is a trail blazer in terms of her advocacy, knowledge and expertise in the Family Violence space and embodies what it means, to be an authentic leader. WRISC overall and especially the FVOP team, are richer for her support and leadership, during her time at WRISC.

Mandy worked at WRISC for just over 5 years and brought with her a depth of expertise and experience from her Social Work career. Mandy was a valued member of the Family Violence Outreach Team and before she left WRISC, played a key role as the Team Leader for the team.

Barb, one of our amazing Creative Arts Therapists, worked at WRISC for four and a half years. In that time contributing a wealth of knowledge and experience to the team in the Van Go Program and supporting women and children with compassion and playfulness. We wish Barb well and thank her for her work and dedication to the women and children at WRISC.



DEDICATED SERVICE

Over 5 years

Alison
Hilary
Libby
Sarah
Suzanne
Tracy

Over 10 years

Kelly
Sandra

Over 30 years

Anita



ORIENTATION OF NEW STAFF

All new staff participate in a dedicated half day orientation information session which feedback suggests to be extremely valuable. This was offered twice in 2021-2022

SPECIAL projects

FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT GRADUATE PROGRAM

"The Family Violence and Sexual Assault Graduate program provides organisations a valuable yearlong opportunity to support and develop their graduates in strengthening their skills and knowledge of the sector, and build confidence in their roles.

To enhance our learning, state-wide online workshops were provided throughout the year on important topics surrounding family violence and sexual assault, including; reflective practice, trauma, vicarious resilience, health and wellbeing, developing practice wisdom, gendered drivers of violence against women, and intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination, power and privilege.

Every month we take part in 'Communities of Practice' facilitated by the Learning and Development facilitator, which involves graduates from various organisations regularly meeting on zoom, to reflect on challenges, successes, progress and learnings. These meetings offered a safe and supportive space that focused on caring for ourselves in the work that we do, and connected each of us in our gradual shift from student to practitioner. We were further supported with a funding allocation to access professional learning and development opportunities, a reduction in workload, regular supervision, and support from the Learning and Development Facilitator.

It has been an invaluable experience to have this support as we continue to learn and grow in our roles. I highly recommend all new graduates within the organisation to take part in this wonderful opportunity." **Ari**

ENHANCED PATHWAYS TO FAMILY VIOLENCE WORK PROJECT 2021

WRISC held a third and final year position as part of the Enhanced Pathways to Family Violence Work Project in collaboration with Berry Street during 2021. As an active contributor of the project, WRISC attended the community of practice workshops and supported Berry Street with administrative processes.

The first, mid-year and final project reports are completed timely and these reports included WRISC's & Berry Street's placement student's summary, project deliverables and financial status.

WRISC & Berry Street initially planned accommodating 12 student placements sharing as 30% Berry Street and 70% WRISC. These figures are double for WRISC compared to last year and a significant step for Berry Street as no student placements were held at Berry Street in 2020. WRISC & Berry Street met the target specified in the organisation's Service Plan. Berry Street provided placement positions to 3 students and WRISC is 9 students.

The project supported WRISC, Berry Street and students of the various programs from certificate level to post graduate and some of our graduates successfully became employees of the main stream agencies in the region. The project enabled us to develop strategies to support the staff and placement students with different strategies and this led us to continue providing service and placement opportunities during challenging COVID-19 environment. " **Senim**

COVID-19 PROJECT



The COVID-19 targeted vaccination was conducted between April and June 2022. This project involved supporting women and children to receive vaccinations, especially the booster shot. We targeted reducing hesitations in our women by providing information to the staff and the women, booking appointments, and developing a COVID pack with flyers about the vaccine, sanitizers, wipes, and masks.

Our women very well received this, and the project was successful.



CASE MANAGEMENT *snapshot...*

WOMEN AND CHILDREN YE 2022



Every 3 months the Chief Executive Officer prepares an evaluation report for the Board. This is in collaboration with the evaluation working group, and whilst this is still developing the purpose of the report is to use all forms of feedback to improve our service delivery. This report will continue to develop based on women's voices and with an intersectional approach.

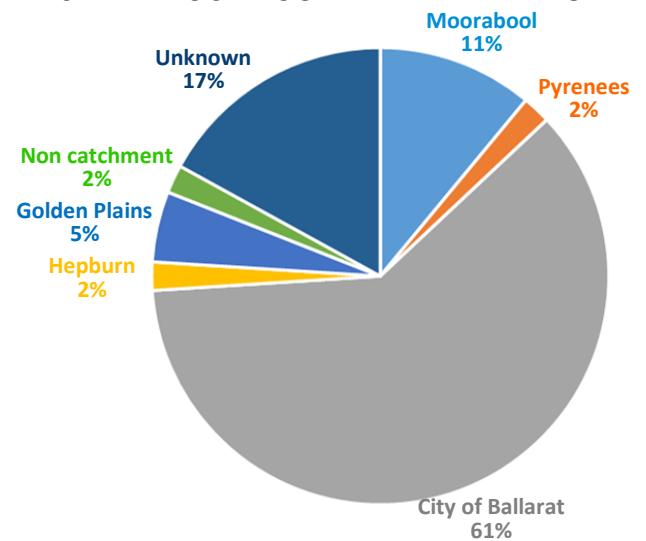
ABORIGINAL and/or TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER



30%

The Aboriginal Program continues to support First Nation women and children to access our services

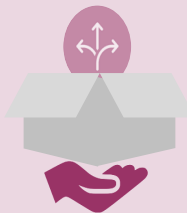
CLIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS



CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE



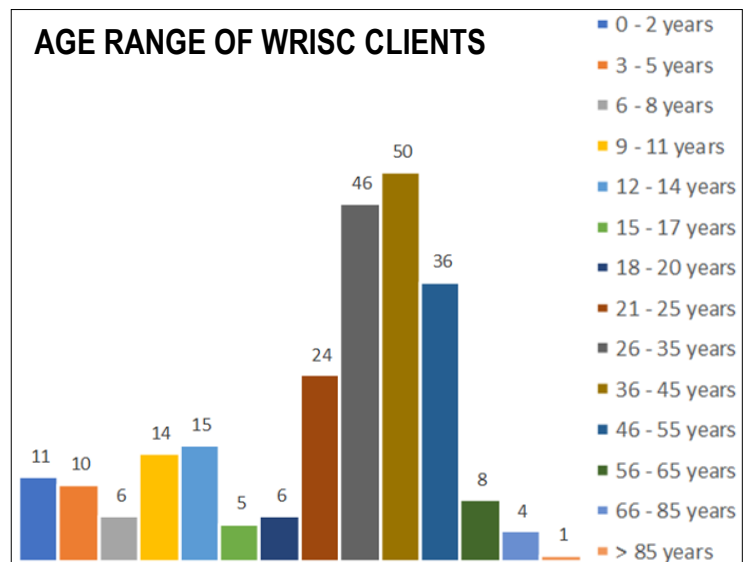
FLEXIBLE SUPPORT PACKAGES (FSP'S)



WRISC approved 378 FSPs for the Central Highlands region (including some from City of Melton LGA) for the 2021/22 financial year.

Our target was 326 FSPs. Therefore we exceeded our target by 52 packages which is by 16%.

AGE RANGE OF WRISC CLIENTS



FAMILY VIOLENCE OUTREACH PROGRAM *report*

Governance and Sustainability

- Case Managers at WRISC took part in two rounds of data collection for Family Safety Victoria, to support the new Case Management Framework, that was released in June, 2022
- The team participated in a Team Building and reflective day in 2022, which was facilitated by Kristen. It was an extremely meaningful day, which enabled many opportunities to reflect on the work that we do at WRISC and the skills that each of us brings to the team

The team continues to take part in the Internal Advisor process, where it gives teams the opportunity to share constructive feedback to their Team Leader and create opportunities for learning and growth across WRISC

Workforce

There have been many changes this year for the team, with staff leaving, staff taking extended leave, staff secondments and staff taking on other roles within WRISC. This has provided opportunities for the team to experience different leadership styles and there were many opportunities for shared learning. We have had staff go on and return from Maternity Leave and have secured some long term case manager roles, as well as extending some contract roles. The team have continued to support multiple students from different Universities and courses, as well as being supported by relief staff when required.

Service Delivery

- Case Management support is the core support that our team continues to provide, since the opening of the Orange Door in Ballarat. The team also provides daily duty worker support, for external agencies, secondary consults or direct self-referral enquiries
- The Steppin' Out Group continues to provide support for our Women to gather monthly, to get out in nature, exercise and build relationships and connections with others

WRISC Women's Group was able to re-commence in 2022, after a long break with COVID restrictions. The group are meeting weekly during school terms and are currently an open group, with women attending when they can. The group provides a safe and supportive space for people to make connections and share experiences, as well as learn from one another and share resources.

Stakeholder Collaborations

The Orange Door, Victoria Police, Ballarat Courts, Child Protection, Lifeline Ballarat (WRISC ASIST Training 2021), Central Highlands Library, as well as other local Welfare support services such as CAFS, Ballarat Community Health, Uniting, CatholicCare and BADAC. Working collaboratively is a big part of the Case Management work that we do and we value these connections with other services and the opportunities to work more closely, for the benefit of our clients.

Tracy
Team Leader

Finally Free



Ending of an era,

Ending of a stage.

5 beautiful children,

Freed from a cage.

No more name calling,

No more fear,

No more walking on egg shells,

We're finally out of here.

On to smiles, freedom, and peace.

Long, hard road ahead.

But after all is said and done,

It's time for lots of laughter and fun.

Laughing, smiling, freedom to be,

Who we are and

Who we choose to be.

The time is here,

The time is NOW!!

Bianca



ABORIGINAL PROGRAM *report*

Yarning Circle:

Yarning Circle has continued to provide a fun and safe space for the children that attend. Unfortunately, Covid has impacted some of the activities being held, but the children participated at 100% when they were able to attend. Over the year, we did activities such as; bowling, pottery, picnics in the park, sessions to create the artwork and meaningful words for the strength cards project, and always finishing the term with a celebration at Pizza Hut all you can eat.

Program name change:

We are in the process of changing the name of The Aboriginal Program in collaboration with Tammy Gilson (DELWP). The name of the program will be meaningful to the woman we support and also the land that we live and work on, and will come from traditional Wadawurrung language. We are looking forward to announcing the new name very soon.

Senior Worker Role:

Congratulations to Darcie who has accepted the position of Senior Worker for the Aboriginal Program. Darcie has worked in the program for 4 years and has extensive experience in working with First Nations woman who are experiencing family violence.

Welcoming Rachael and BADAC co-location.

Rachael was welcomed to the Aboriginal Program in January and we welcome her experience and knowledge in this space. Rachael has begun co-location with BADAC one day per week. This has been invaluable not only to the WRISC Aboriginal Program but also to BADAC and the community to build relationships and ensure that we are all working collaboratively.

Group Cultural Supervision:

The Aboriginal Program has started working with Rhianna Milliken who is providing us Cultural Supervision as a group. These sessions are a safe space for workers to speak openly about the challenges we face in our work using a cultural lens. Rhianna provides us with a non-judgmental ear and a wealth of cultural knowledge that is invaluable to our team and the support that we provide our most vulnerable woman that we support.

Working in collaboration with BADAC

The Aboriginal Program has been working closely in collaboration with BADAC where we have begun co-location every Tuesday. BADAC has been very welcoming and we all see the importance of how working closely together benefits not only the workers but the clients and community. Strengthening this relationship has allowed us to work more collaboratively for the woman and children that we support. We look forward to continuing to work together in this capacity going forward.

Traineeship:

WRISC were the grateful recipients of a grant to employ a Trainee and support them to complete Certificate IV Community Services. The Traineeship will be an Identified Position and offered to a First Nations woman. We are looking forward to recruiting in this position and giving the successful candidate a great start to their career as a Family Violence worker.

Jodie
Team Leader

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT PACKAGES (FSP'S) program

The Family Violence Flexible Support Package (FSP) Program is a Victorian Government statewide program administered by Family Safety Victoria. Provider Agencies (agencies who hold FSP funding) are located in each of the 17 Department of Families, Fairness and Housing geographical areas. Provider Agencies also include some Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and two statewide targeted family violence support services for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and LGBTIQ communities.

WRISC is the Provider Agency for the Central Highlands region and City of Melton. As well as Melton, WRISC covers the City of Ballarat and Shires of Hepburn, Moorabool, Golden Plains and Pyrenees.

Family Violence Flexible Support Packages (FSPs) deliver personalised and holistic responses that assist child and adult victim-survivors of family violence to access support, move out of crisis, stabilise and improve their safety, wellbeing and independence.

FSPs are by nature flexible and tailored to the needs of the victim-survivor. Types of supports may include housing stability,

health and well-being, counselling, education/work support, social/cultural support and other practical or material needs. The needs of children are included. Children can also apply for FSP funding in their own right as victim-survivors of family violence.

An important component of the FSP Program is to fund the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI). Funding is used to implement a Safety Audit of the victim survivor's home, and then to purchase safety and security responses as recommended. This may include property modifications and technology to enable victim-survivors to remain safely in, or return to, their homes and communities, or relocate to a new home.

WRISC's role as FSP Provider Agency is to administer the FSP Program in the Central Highlands Region. WRISC is responsible for the management of funding, receipt and assessment of applications and allocation of funding. WRISC also supports and liaises with our partner Applicant Agencies which comprise both specialist and non-specialist family violence agencies. This is done by the FSP Team - Alison as FSP Manager, Hilary as FSP worker and Anita and Sheree in their roles as Business Manager and Assistant Business Manager respectively. It

is a team effort!

The last year has seen significant change with the implementation of the online FSP Portal. The FSP Program is now managed within this Portal in terms of submission of applications, assessment of applications, allocation of funding, recording payments and budgeting/acquittal. WRISC's role has been to oversee and manage the implementation of the FSP Portal within the Central Highlands region and City of Melton. This has included the setting up of WRISC as Provider Agency on the Portal and supporting partner Applicant Agencies to register and onboard authorised staff. All workers engaging with the FSP Portal in a whole variety of roles have undergone significant training and upskilling.

It is important to mention the impact on the FSP Program of the Covid-19 pandemic as it is considered an essential service. Challenges have included unpredictable demand, increasing complexity of applications, increased monetary size of packages and coverage in case of staff illness. Despite these challenges the FSP Program at WRISC continues to grow and strengthen due to the dedication and hard work of the FSP Team.

Alison Crofts, FSP Manager

Lisa is a mother with 2 children, ages 14 and 11 years. Lisa has a long history of family violence perpetrated by her current partner and biological father of the children. As a result of the high level of risk to Lisa and her children, a planned leave was implemented to enable the family to leave the family home and set up home in a new, safe location unknown to the perpetrator. The family had to leave with very few possessions.

Family Violence Flexible Support Package funding was used to facilitate the planned leave and support the family with funding to provide essential items in their new home. Emergency accommodation was funded prior to the new property being available. Funding was used to purchase essential furniture, whitegoods and household items. School uniforms were purchased for the children to attend their new schools. Family violence counselling sessions were also funded to support Lisa in her recovery from family violence.

Soula has been separated from her former partner for 6 months. He was removed from the house they shared by police after an incident in which Soula was assaulted. A Family Violence Intervention Order prevented Soula's former partner from coming to the home, contacting her, attending her place of work or using proxies to carry out the above. This intervention order was breached on a number of occasions and her former partner has been charged by police.

Soula would like to remain in her present accommodation because it is near her place of work and family support. Because of the risk posed to Soula, a Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) Audit was carried out on Soula's property to assess safety needs and to make recommendations for improvements. Family Violence FSP funding was used to pay for the PSI Audit and the recommendations required to upgrade the safety of her home.

Please note that these stories are written as examples of WRISC's work supporting victim-survivors of family violence and do not use the exact experience of any individual client. Names are fictitious.

VAN GO

Children's Creative Therapy Program

2021-2022 Financial Year Snapshot



Number of cases: 216

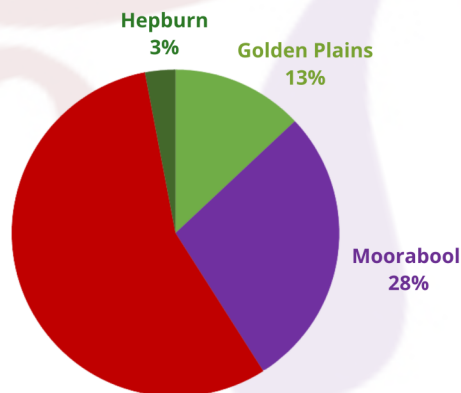
*This helps represent when clients have left and come back to our service



Carers: 66
Children: 137



Clients identifying as ATSI: 19%



Client LGA



Engaged schools: 17



Age groups

0-5: 34%
6-11: 46%
12-17: 20%

VAN GO team



FACEBOOK

Van Go Children and Teen's Creative Corner

The Van Go Children's Creative Therapy Program team designed the children and teen's creative corner Facebook page for all children and teens to help them understand their big emotions. It provides activities in creative and engaging ways and gives valuable resources to help parents and carers support their children and their relationships. Many members of the community from Ballarat and Moorabool assisted Van Go Children's Creative Therapy Program during Covid-19 to make sock puppets. These puppets supported the team to engage children in therapy online when we were unable to deliver face-to-face sessions. With such a strong response from the community, the



team of Van Go chose to use them as our Facebook mascots. New activities and resources are uploaded regularly.

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/VanGoChildrenAndTeenCreativeCorner/>



Art Therapy relies on the use of creative processes and the therapeutic relationship to help clients explore and express emotions and sensations that might be difficult to articulate in words. Van Go Children's Creative Therapy Program allows our young clients to immerse themselves in an environment that is safe and contained, as they take the lead in exploring their creative curiosities, as well as process and unpack their internal world. Using different materials and sensory experiences, clients can externalize and visually bring into the therapeutic space pieces of their trauma story to make their own meaning and sense of their world.

Each session is different, varied and unpredictable at times because we are working with such individual and colourful



young people, who are at various stages of their healing journey. Art therapy gives ways for fun, imagination, rich and fulfilling experiences, that help build their sense of self, self-regulation strategies and coping mechanisms from the impacts of trauma. With the incredible, self-work that our young clients delve into during these sessions; they are left wondering how a full hour has zipped by, hoping for just 'five more minutes'.

**All images are provided with consent*

FAMILY VIOLENCE CREATIVE AND THERAPEUTIC SERVICES (FV-CaTS) consortium

The FV-CaTS consortium of Van Go, Berry Street and Ballarat Community Health continued to work together and build on our Horizons for providing therapeutic services to children and their caregivers in the Central Highlands region this year. The addition of the FV-CaTS Therapeutic Intake worker role has been instrumental in developing a centralised referral process across the programs and has demonstrated the great value of collaboration between the services. The therapeutic teams of each program continue to meet bi-monthly to offer peer supervision and both the governance group and operational group also meet regularly. This year FV-CaTS came together to hold a Festival of Practice and follow up case study session to discuss and share ideas, knowledge and learnings about the specialised work of these programs. More planning and reflective days are being developed for the consortium as we continue to expand opportunities and services for the shared goal of supporting children and their families.



Believing In
Children,
Young People,
Families &
Their Future.



GROUPS AT WRISC

report

The Group Coordinator in collaboration with the Group Facilitators have been developing a centralised referral process across all WRISC's groups and have piloted and consolidated the process over the year. The introduction of Group Facilitator meetings also provided support and resource sharing across all the WRISC groups and have generated many ideas and areas for future development.

While Groups were significantly impacted by COVID it has also provided the opportunity to re-build and re-think ways to support women and children in group spaces. This year has seen the return of groups such as the Women's Support Group, Yarning Circle Groups for Aboriginal children and the Steppin' Out Women's Walking Group. Some new Groups have also been created in this time such as the Little Children, Big Outcomes under 5's Pilot Group and the Feeling Visible Pilot Group for Young People in schools.

'Steppin' Out' walking group

This is a therapeutic outdoor walking group aiming to restore emotional well-being and physical health. Steppin' Out walks are a positive and healthy way for participants to reflect on their experiences while connecting with nature, and building valuable social and community connections, as well as learning coping strategies such as how to be in the present.



Yarning Circle

The Aboriginal Program facilitates Yarning Circle groups for primary and high school girls and boys that operates each term. This group provides a culturally safe space for kids to build connections, gain new experiences and participate in fun activities that include pottery, art, outings.



Women's group

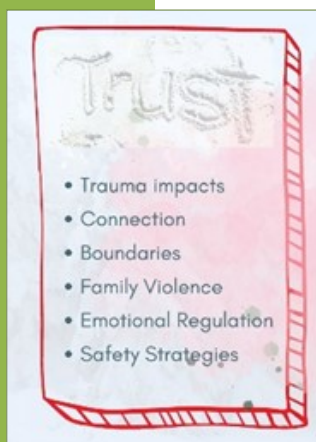
The WRISC Women's group was able to start back again, halfway through Term 1, 2022 after an extended break, like many groups! The group meets weekly during school terms and creates a safe place, for Women to share their stories, provide support to one another and share resources. It is exciting to be back and we look forward to what lies ahead for the groups over the next year, without interruptions!



Feeling Visible Group

Feeling Visible is a sequentially designed program to acknowledge and hold participants experience and impacts from Family Violence in a group setting using a Therapeutic Arts based model. Young people's vulnerabilities to Family Violence are many fold.

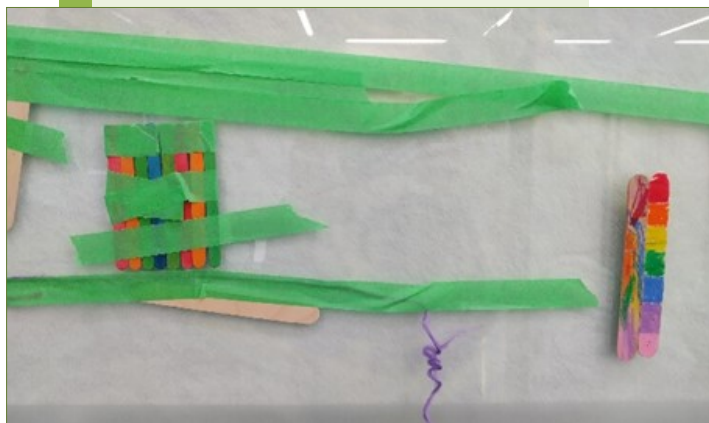
Informed young people develop stronger protective capacities for themselves, their peers and families. Using a Zine participants develop their own stories or an informative document that includes safety planning, emotional regulation queues and available services. This is done over a six week immersive program using arts making. Feeling Visible groups are tailored to a Gr 5/6, Yrs 7/8 and 9/10/VCE cohorts with schools identifying participants.



Little Children, Big Outcomes (LCBO)

The Little Children, Big Outcomes group is a specialised response for children under five who have experienced family violence. Evidence tells us that the social, emotional and developmental wellbeing of children under five is significantly impacted by family violence. Evidence also tells us that children under five have a strong capacity for recovery and recover best when their key safe caregiving relationship is adequately supported.

The Little Children, Big Outcomes group provides a creative play environment that supports mother-child recovery from family violence and enhances the growth promoting capacity of the mother-child relationship. This is a pilot group and WRISC is evaluating the success and the development of the group over time. We have the generous support of the Moorabool Shire Council and UFS Dispensaries to deliver this important program.



WORKING *Groups*

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN



The Disability Working Group, made up of WRISC managers and staff and disability sector leaders, meets every eight weeks with the aim of addressing the barriers to service provision and improve the outcomes for women and children with a disability experiencing family violence.

The Disability Working Group has established an Action Plan to address accessibility barriers and development opportunities in all of WRISC's priority areas.

Currently the Disability Working Group is working on strengthening WRICS's relationships and networks with specialist disability service providers, reviewing WRISC's policies, documents and forms to ensure accessibility considerations are addressed for staff and clients and aligning the Disability Action Plan with WRISC's operational and strategic plans.

EVALUATION

Evaluation Working Group as we are affectionately known have been working towards developing a concrete understanding of the ways WRISC can hold Lived Experts by Experience Voices in the organisation to better inform the ways we work and advocate about Family Violence. A staff survey has been held based on Barb Miles' Billabong concept and is currently being evaluated to consider the wellbeing needs of staff, their work environment, leadership, organisational structures and climate outcomes. We have consolidated the ways Clients can provide feedback to a MailChimp survey and working towards ways to engage past clients in focus groups.

FINANCE AND RISK (FAR)

The Financial and Risk Working Group (FAR) meets up on a monthly basis, and is primarily involved in overseeing and critically reviewing all aspects of the financial and risk management of WRISC.

The key objective is to review and monitor compliance with financial policies and processes, and to conduct a monthly review of the annual budget. A review of key financial reports is undertaken each month, and key decisions made and discussions are held in relation to ongoing financial position of WRISC.

The key continued focus of the FAR group for the next financial year includes:-

- Ensuring all decisions made in relation to our financial position are aligned with the new WRISC Strategic Plan 2023-2026
- Continue to focus on ways to diversify the income stream for WRISC
- Complete due diligence on Information Technology within WRISC to ensure we continue to provide a great support service to those women and children who require our services
- Conduct a review and refresh of the motor vehicle fleet

A special thanks goes out to all members of the FAR working group, who commit time and passion to ensuring WRISC maintains a strong financial position moving forward.

Meegan Dunne, Treasurer

FUNDRAISING

"The Fundraising Working Group's purpose is to formulate long and short term fundraising strategies. Our main focus is the development and implementation of a fundraising plan that is in line with WRISC's vision, mission and values. Forming partnerships with regular donors and increasing our one-off donations is a vital part to further support clients as the demand for our service continues to increase and outweighs our ability to respond."

If you would like
to donate



INTERCULTURAL ACCESS AND SAFER PATHWAYS (IASP)

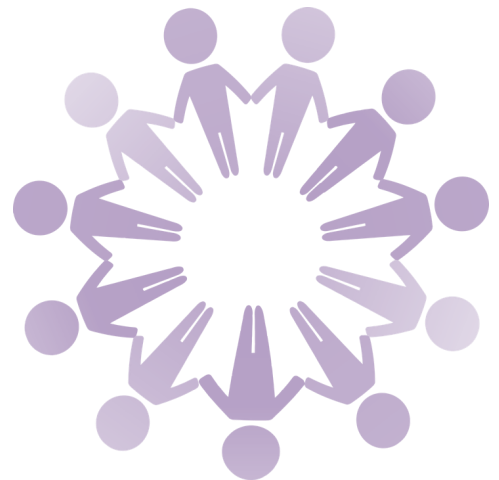
"The purpose of the Intercultural Access and Safer Pathways (IASP) Working Group is to provide an accessible service that meets the needs of women and children from the multicultural communities of the Central Highlands region.

Our group meets every six weeks; follows and updates the action plan. In 2022, we aim to understand the demographic structure of the Grampians region and reach out to CALD communities so that women and children who experience family violence can be supported.

This year, as part of our action plan, we are working on the improvement of WRISC workforce skills when supporting CALD clients, such as ensuring staff across the teams receive cultural competency training. Also, Margaret and Senim attend CHIFVC Safer Pathways Mutual Mentoring group monthly meeting and share any important and updated information with the group members on how to support CALD women effectively."

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

WRISC RAP working group has at least one representative across every team at WRISC. The group meet bi-monthly and other times as required. The group has organised to have Bonnie Chew, from Mirriyu Cultural Consulting, deliver to the whole of WRISC staff, Cultural Awareness Training in line with the WRISC RAP. WRISC have also been supported by Rhianna Milliken who has been delivering Cultural Supervision to the Aboriginal Program.





"After a long period of isolation and working from home due to COVID restrictions, services supporting the specialist family violence network got together to reconnect, welcome new employees and services, and share stories. The services attending were Berry Street family violence case management team, family support services, refuge services PSI Coordinator and perpetrator support services, Child and Family Services Family Violence services, and Magistrates Court family violence support workers, and, of course, staff from the WRISC teams. This morning gathering and lunch was enthusiastically attended and much appreciated by all who participated. Due to COVID density requirements we had to keep the number of attendees limited and hope to participate in another such event soon with more services and staff involved."

Margaret



ORGANISATIONS WRISC WORKS *with...*

A

Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF)
Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapies Association (ANZACATA)

B

Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC)
Ballarat Community Health
Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Centre
Ballarat Health Services
Ballarat Library
Ballarat Psychiatric Services
Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council
Bendigo Bank
Berry Street
Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative

C

Cafs Ballarat
Catholic Care
Central Highlands Water
Central Highlands Rural Health
Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) Ballarat
Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee (CHIFVC)
Child FIRST
Courts Victoria: Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh

D

Department of Education and Training (DET)
Department of Family, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
Department of Justice
Dhelk Dja
Djerriwarrh Health Services
Djirra: Family Violence and Legal – ABTSI specific

E - G

Eureka Mums
Federation University Australia
Family Law Pathway Network
GenWest (formerly Women's Health West)
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative
Grampians Community Health

H - K

Headspace
InTouch (Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence)
Justice Connect
Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG)

L

Lifeline
Local Government
· City of Ballarat: Parent Place
· Golden Plains Shire
· Hepburn Shire
· Moorabool Shire
· Pyrenees Shire

M - R

McAuley Community Services for Women
MIECAT Institute
NDIS-Moorabool
Paul Ramsay Foundation
Primary Health Care Network
Quality Innovation Performance Ltd. (QIP)
Relationships Australia

S

Safe and Equal (DV Vic)
Salvation Army

Schools - Primary (PS)

Alfredton PS
Bacchus Marsh PS
Ballarat Special School
Berry Street School
Black Hill PS
Canadian Lead
Dana Street PS
Darley PS
Magpie PS
Meredeth PS
Newington PS
Warrenheip PS
Yuille Park PS

Schools - Secondary

Bacchus Marsh College
Ballarat and Queen's Anglican Grammar School
Mount Clear College
Mount Rowan College
Phoenix Community College

StreetSmart

T

The Orange Door
Turret Café

U

UFS Pharmacy
Uniting Ballarat
Uniting Victoria-Karrung Housing
Uniting Wimmera

V

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)
Victoria Police
Victorian Women's Trust

W

West Vic Primary Healthcare Network (PHN)
White Ribbon Ballarat
Women's Health Grampians

POP-UP SHOP fundraiser

2 THE COURIER Saturday June 26, 2021

NEWS

Donation call-out for fundraising pop-up

BY ROCHELLE KIRKHAM

A BALLARAT family violence service is calling out for donations of good quality women's clothing to help stock the racks of a pop-up fundraising shop.

WRISC Family Violence Support will run the shop for four days in July with funds raised to boost group program offerings for women and children.

Executive officer Libby Jesson said community donations were important to the WRISC's operations.

"We are focusing on the provision of groups like women's groups and children's groups as part of our priorities for 2021 and 2022," she said.

"To have groups you have to have good support around the groups and the resources to facilitate them."

"We see a real need for groups for women who have experienced family violence for peer support and providing an opportunity for women to come together."

Ms Jesson said the team was completing research around the best provision of group support for children aged zero to five.

"Looking in the future the



FUNDRAISING: WRISC Family Violence Support fundraising working group member Chloe Gyorosi is encouraging people to donate women's clothes to support a fundraising shop. Picture: Kate Healy

groups will be an area for growth. We are hoping fundraising will help us do that," she said.

WRISC and other family violence support services in Ballarat have reported high service demand throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Crime Statistics Agency data showed a 40 per cent increase in family violence incidents recorded to police in Ballarat in 2020 compared to 2019. Ballarat's family vio-

lence rate was well above the state average.

Research shows police are recording increasing reports of children witnessing or being exposed to family violence incidents in Victoria.

The For All Women, From Women, By Women pop-up shop will provide an opportunity for WRISC to engage with the broader community and raise awareness of its work.

It also follows the themes

of recycle, reclaim and re-love.

Fundraising working group member Chloe Gyorosi said women in the community had responded well to the donation call-out so far, but more clothes would be needed to fill the shop.

Donations can be dropped at WRISC's office at 205 Dana Street between 2pm and 5pm on business days until the end of June.

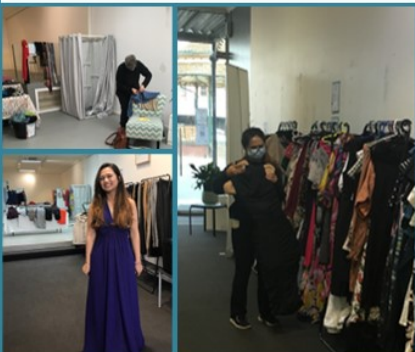
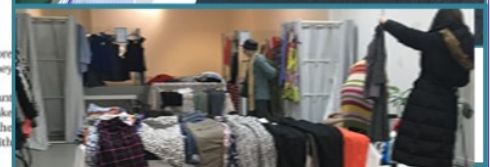
Ms Gyorosi said people

would be able to learn more about WRISC while they shop at the pop-up.

People who may not want to buy clothes can make monetary donations at the store and have a chat with staff about the service.

The shop will operate at 418 Start Street from Thursday July 8 to Sunday July 11.

Contact Orange Door in Ballarat on 1800 219 819 or call 1800RESPECT for family violence support.





END OF YEAR
celebration



Generosity

from our local community

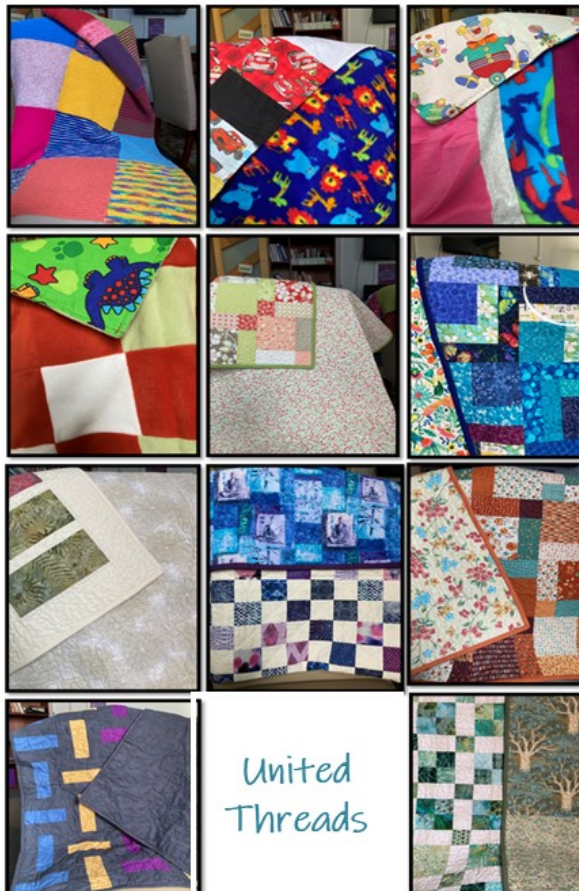


The Turret

Alannah & Madeline Foundation



Bunnings

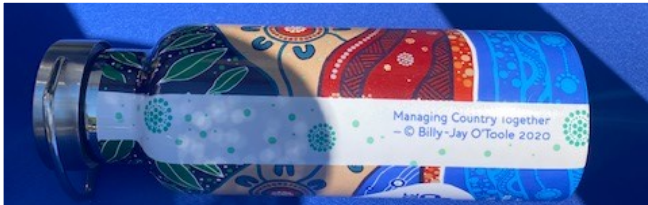


United Threads



Dangerous Females Team

MEDIA RELEASE
Central Highlands Water, Ballarat
 Tuesday 26 April 2022



Partnering to fight family violence, one water bottle at a time .

For the fourth year running, Central Highlands Water (CHW), has donated 100% of the sales of their Choose Tap reusable stainless – steel bottles to local charity, WRISC Family Violence Support.

Today, CHW Chair, Angeleen Jenkin, met with WRISC Business Manager, Anita Koelle and WRISC Aboriginal Program Team Leader Jodie to present the donation of \$10,360. The donation was raised through bottle sales, including CHW's new reconciliation themed 'Managing Country Together' design at the 70th Ballarat Begonia Festival.

CHW's Choose Tap reusable water bottles are also available from their Learmonth Rd office for \$10 each.

Artwork of Billy-Jay O'Toole a proud Wadawurrung Traditional Owner. The featured artwork represents the relationship between CHW and the four registered Aboriginal Parties on which CHW's catchment extends, being Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wurundjeri and Barenji Gadjin.





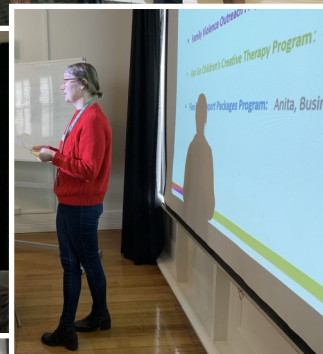
“
My experience as a volunteer has been rewarding in so many ways. Besides meeting many wonderful people, it gives my life a sense of purpose, the opportunity to help, in some small way.

The laughs, friendships and fun are the bonus that makes being a volunteer so rewarding. Thank you!

Sue -Volunteer

MORNING TEA TO THANK OUR SUPPORTERS

29th June, 2022 WRISC hosted a 'thank-you' morning tea for our valued donors for the previous three years. We value our donations from individuals and other organisations very highly and the number of donors has increased markedly during the last three financial years. This 'thank-you' event will now become an annual event.



OUR
sponsors





IN LOVING MEMORY

Elisabeth Meier

Original member of the Central Highlands Women's Collective (CHWC)

In memorial, By Lynden Baxter

I first met Elisabeth in the early 1980's at BCAE (now Fed Uni). I was a callow undergraduate and she a Mature Aged Student i.e. someone over 21 years of age. To me, at the time, she seemed very old (she wasn't) and very wise (she was).

In that group of rambunctious young feminists who formed the Central Highlands Women's Collective (CHWC), that became WRISC, Elisabeth's quiet voice steered a clear course to action. Many collective meetings were held in the lounge room of the Delacombe home she shared with her, then, partner Lyn and children. It was a safe space for us to share our stories, to be affirmed and to ferment our plans. We had the patriarchy squarely in our sites. We imagined revolution while held in the busy domestic cocoon of their home with its demands for school lunches to be cut and washing to be done.

As I shared the news of Elisabeth's death with other early CHWC members the word they used most often to describe her was 'gentle'. And she **was** gentle. Soft as a feather in a wing that cleaves the blue heavens in two.

Elisabeth forged her own path. Born in Austria she moved when a child to Argentina then as a young woman to England, then Australia and later to China to teach English. She lived with courage and curiosity. Testament to her patience and generosity was her attempt to teach me Spanish in 1988 before I travelled to South America. My faculty with languages did not equal hers however she inspired me through her example to value difference while recognising commonality, to be willing to listen (even when I thought I didn't understand) to explore and to take risks.

Elisabeth knew herself. She believed in the strength of women, in equality and in fighting for change.

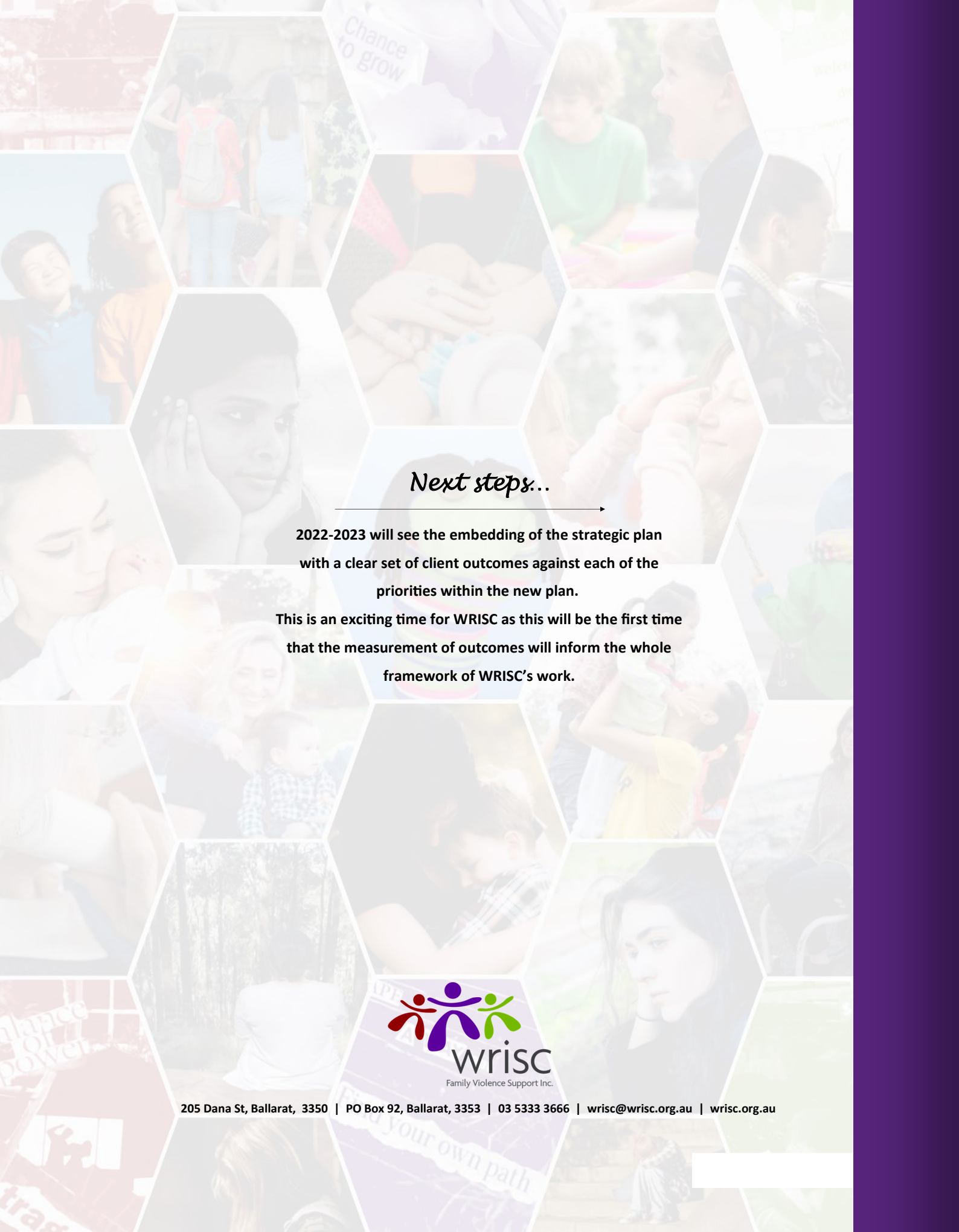
'Viva la mujer que lucha' (Long live the women who fight).

Thank you, Elisabeth, for your kindness and your determination. We carry on. We have the patriarchy squarely in our sites.

***'a funeral
Plain song from a younger woman to an older woman
I will be your mouth now, to do your singing
Breath belongs to those who do the breathing.
Warm life, as it passes through your fingers
Flares up in the very hands you will be leaving
You have left, what is left
For the bond between women is a circle
We are together within it.'***

Judy Grahn, The Work of a Common Woman, 1978





Next steps...

2022-2023 will see the embedding of the strategic plan
with a clear set of client outcomes against each of the
priorities within the new plan.

This is an exciting time for WRISC as this will be the first time
that the measurement of outcomes will inform the whole
framework of WRISC's work.



205 Dana St, Ballarat, 3350 | PO Box 92, Ballarat, 3353 | 03 5333 3666 | wrisc@wrisc.org.au | wrisc.org.au

