

Annual Review 2022-2023





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Where we work.

In addition to our office locations, we provide social, emotional and practical support in homes, schools and communities throughout the Diocese of Wollongong

 Campbelltown

 Wollongong

 Shellharbour

 Nowra



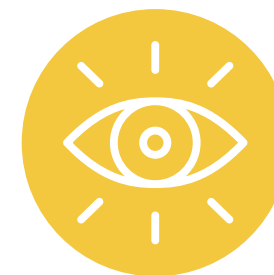
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

CatholicCare acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country on which we live and work, the lands of the Dharawal, Yuin, Dharug and Gundun- gurra Nations. We recognise Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.



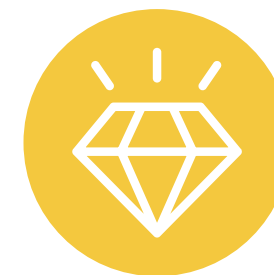
Mission

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we seek to bring joy to those we serve by enabling growth, healing, and hope. By delivering effective and high quality social services, Catholic-Care helps to build the social and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.



Vision

For inclusive, thriving communities where the human dignity of all is respected and valued.



Values

- **Dignity:** Everyone is worthy of respect
- **Integrity:** Always do the right thing
- **Compassion:** Be empathic and responsive
- **Equity:** Some people need extra support

Foreword.



Bishop Brian Mascord
Bishop of Wollongong

Welcome to the 2022/23 Annual Report for CatholicCare Wollongong. This publication is a snapshot of this important Diocesan Pastoral Work and its operations as it is mandated to care for and serve.

At the essence of who we are is the way we express our love for one another which in our Christian context is an expression of our love of God. Given the challenging times in which we live, CatholicCare makes a significant contribution to people's lives. The call of CatholicCare is to reflect the loving, compassionate face of Christ to all by reaching out in various ways, and in the process helping, to give a quality of life that every human being deserves.

I am proud of this work carried out in the name of Christ and the Diocese of Wollongong to assist thousands of people; with staff working tirelessly and treating everyone with the respect they deserve.

I thank and congratulate Michael Austin and the whole of CatholicCare for

their commitment and resolve to play a significant part in helping alleviate some of the pressures experienced by so many.

I take this opportunity to also thank the members of the CatholicCare Advisory Council for sharing so generously your experience, knowledge and time. I particularly thank Chair Franca Facci and Council member Kieran Biddle who celebrated over 15 years of service in late 2022.

Again, I express my prayerful gratitude to all involved at CatholicCare in our Diocese for making a difference to those on the peripheries of our society and the vulnerable experiencing personal struggles in their lives. May God continue to bless you all and those you serve.



Franca Facci
CatholicCare Advisory Council (CAC Chair)

On behalf of the CatholicCare Advisory Council, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the large numbers of people, who in many diverse capacities, are involved with CatholicCare.

Special thanks go to our employees who are the lifeblood of CatholicCare Wollongong, working to support some of our most vulnerable people in our communities. I convey my deep appreciation to Michael Austin and his entire team for the manner in which they bring the Mission of the agency to life. Special thanks to Tony Eid who acted as agency Director when Michael took a well earned extended break in the middle of the year.

Thank you to Bishop Brian for his ongoing support for the work of CatholicCare throughout the Diocese and to our dedicated Advisory Council members who contribute guidance and governance to the organisation in a very professional manner.

As an organisation working with other like-minded agencies who are committed to serving those in need, our capacity to make a difference depends on mutual collaboration and engagement with others to create a

more just and inclusive society. We extend our warm thanks to our partners and collaborators.

To our clients and participants – thank you for placing your trust in us. We know what a privilege it is to enter your lives, especially in times of vulnerability. Please know, our aim is always to value human dignity over everything else.

We operate in a context of a complicated labour market, complex funding models and great human need. Our breadth of services can only continue with the resources, both staffing and financial, and a resolute commitment to Mission, that is manifest behind the scenes. As Advisory Council Chair, I am very proud of our collective achievements and am confident that CatholicCare will continue to deliver high quality as well as highly valued services into the future.



Michael Austin
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

It has been another strong year for CatholicCare, with robust stewardship enabling us to continue to deliver on our mission. We continue to proactively identify both the strategic risks we need to anticipate and manage, along with the opportunities that lay ahead to further develop CatholicCare as we enact and expand our mission.

Since 1980, we have continued a proud legacy of providing support services to individuals, families and communities throughout the Diocese of Wollongong. With the considerable need in the community, 2022/23 saw a significant growth in demand for

services. I am proud of the compassionate, dedicated and professional work of our whole team in responding to our communities in times of need. This past year CatholicCare delivered services to more than 21,400 people across the Diocese.

Even though the job market has been a challenge, we have focussed on recruiting and retaining highly skilled, motivated and talented people, investing in them to ensure they are at the peak of their professional disciplines. We have spent time and energy ensuring our mobile workforce have the tools and support required to work as best they can. Given the nature of our work, we maintain high standards because this is what our communities deserve.

Other operational areas of focus have been a maturing of our project management abilities, risk management, reporting mechanisms and cyber security and introducing a Program Logic/Theory of Change Model ensuring we consistently measure our impact.

I would like to thank all levels of government, Catholic Education, clergy, schools, parishes and other supporters particularly the Campbelltown Catholic Club for partnering with us. These relationships and partnerships are invaluable in our work.

I sincerely thank Bishop Brian for his encouragement and support for

our work and to me personally. To Franca Facci, CatholicCare Advisory Council (CAC) chair, John Akele as our Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) Chair and all our CAC members, we are indebted to you for your commitment and guidance.

I acknowledge the steadfast contribution and commitment of our Executive Leadership Team and the entire CatholicCare workforce for their professional commitment to clients and one another. I feel extremely fortunate to work with such dedicated people, which is the key to CatholicCare's continued success in bringing our mission to life.

In October 2022, I reached a personal milestone of 30 years working in catholic social services. To coincide with this milestone I was fortunate to take a long service leave break to have extended time with my family and trek part of the stunning Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory, which was a truly inspirational experience. I would like to recognise and sincerely thank Chief Operations Officer Tony Eid, who acted as CEO during my leave.

We operate in a sector that continues to be very dynamic. I am continually grateful for, and constantly draw upon our Mission and Values, knowing they are our purpose, our anchor and our compass in living out CatholicCare's works of service.



Vale Fr Michael Mullins SM

We were extremely saddened to learn of the unexpected death of Fr Michael Mullins SM on Monday July 10, 2023, the 58th anniversary of his priestly ordination.

Fr Michael, a Marist priest and clinical psychologist had a long-standing connection to CatholicCare, dating back to the 1980's, when he worked for us as a psychologist.

Fr Michael's particular gift and expertise was working with systems and leadership groups and those in leadership positions within the Church, to engage more effectively in their ministry to a postmodern world. He established an international research and consultancy group, the Refounding and Pastoral Development Unit in 1990, whose aim it was to collaborate with and enlarge the capacity of individuals and groups within the Church in order to exercise leadership for Mission.

Over that time and right up until weekend before his death Fr Michael

was a constant source of support to CatholicCare. He presented to our whole organisation at Staff Days and our Leadership, Managers and Mission Team had the privilege of working closely with him, where he always challenged us to fully grasp our Primary Task, to take up leadership roles appropriately and respond creatively to contemporary pastoral issues.

Being both a priest and psychologist gave Fr Michael a unique understanding of our work. His mentorship, wise counsel, gentle humility and generosity of mind and spirit will be greatly missed.

We will of course, ensure his legacy lives on as we live out our Mission.

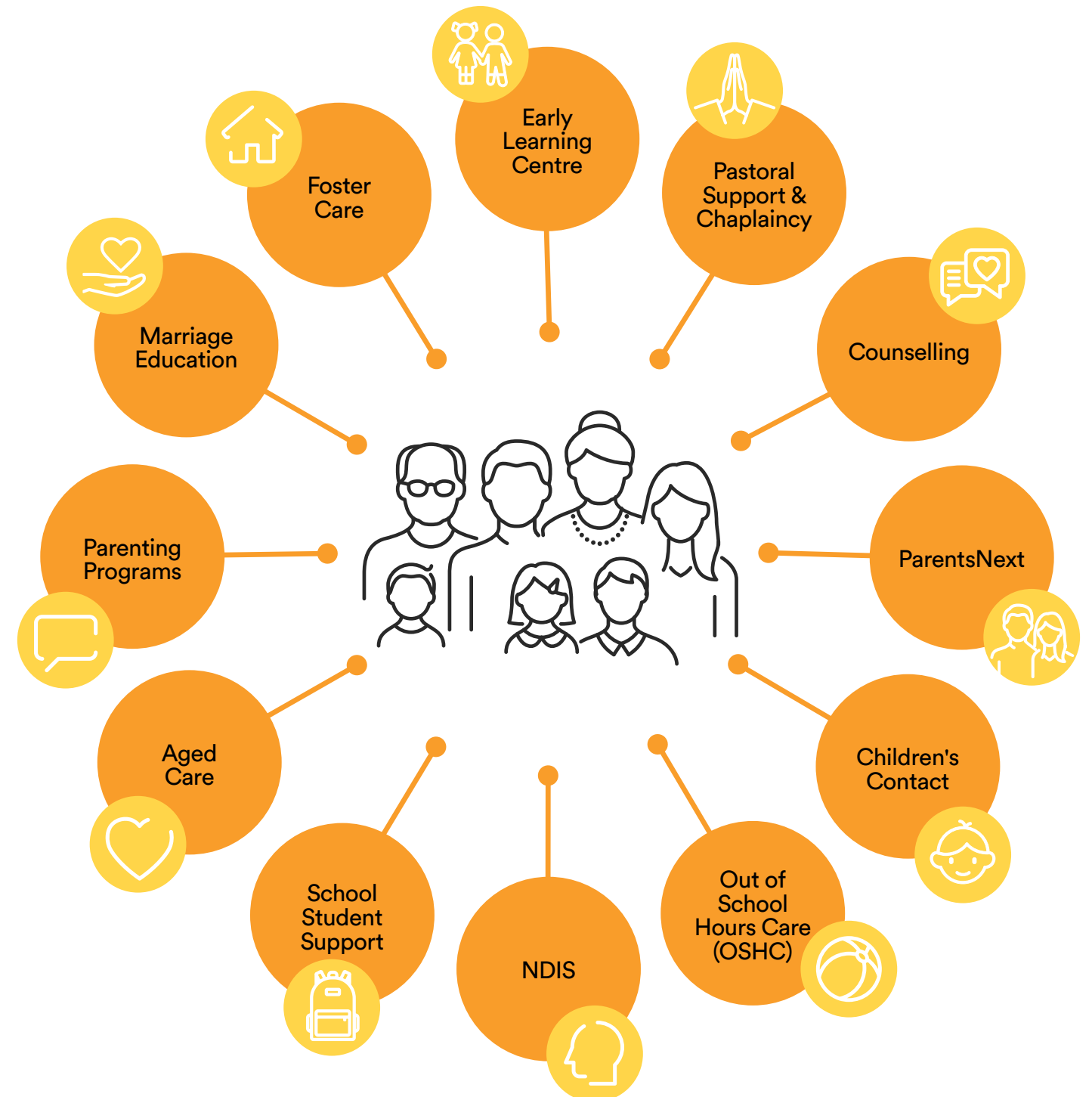
May he rest in eternal peace.



Our Services.

CatholicCare is the social services agency of the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong, covering the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Macarthur and Southern Highlands Regions. We support people to establish and build positive relationships and connected lives. Our aim is to help people through difficult times to help them achieve self-reliance and realise their full potential. We also advocate for social equality and prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable.

CatholicCare is an inclusive organisation committed to helping anyone in need regardless of religious beliefs.



Our Impact.

5059

children in Catholic school communities accessed counselling and early intervention to support their social and emotional wellbeing



99

children and young people at risk found a safe and stable place to call home

146

ParentsNext clients commenced employment

11,667



students supported through the Pastoral Support Program



105



Foster Care households

736

youth in Juvenile Justice accessed chaplaincy support services

36



couples entered into married life with a clearer picture of their own and each other's expectations and better skills to help them cope with the inevitable issues that arise in relationships through Marriage and Relationship Education

11

new foster care households were approved



430

people focused on their parenting and relationships skills to improve family life



823

older people accessed Aged Care services to help them live well in their home and community



82

children enrolled at CatholicCare Early Learning Centre, Shellharbour



1166

counselling sessions were held

21

children and young people in foster care are on an adoption, guardianship or restoration pathway

339

families experiencing separation carefully navigated supervised visits and changeovers of children using Children's Contact Service



236

people found someone to talk to about their relationships through counselling

280

people living with disability increased their independence and community connections.

2224

children of working families enjoyed activities in a safe environment before and after school care

Ageing with Confidence.

The Committee for the Aged advises on key issues affecting the wellbeing of older parishioners.

The mission of the committee is to contribute to the wellbeing and inclusion of older parishioners by providing information, referral & opportunities to connect with support services.

In response to this mission, we held three 'Ageing with Confidence' information sessions across the Diocese in 2023. The sessions were targeted at older parishioners their loved ones, equipping them with practical knowledge to make informed decisions and provide peace of mind in their later years. The sessions covered the following topics:

- 1 Navigating the My Aged Care system
- 2 Carer Supports
- 3 Planning ahead for legal matters and funerals



Presenters at the events included My Aged Care, CatholicCare Aged Care specialists, local solicitors and funeral directors and the Carers Gateway.

There were 211 attendees (Macarthur 78, Illawarra 80 & Shoalhaven 53) and all three sessions were well received.

Feedback Forms were completed by 132 people with 88 including comments. The combined data showed that a rating of 8/10 or higher was given by 86% of respondents for the organisation of the session and by 80% for the helpfulness of the information and the likelihood of recommending the session to others.

'Thank you to all involved in organising. Much appreciated. Now able to grow old joyfully and gracefully'.

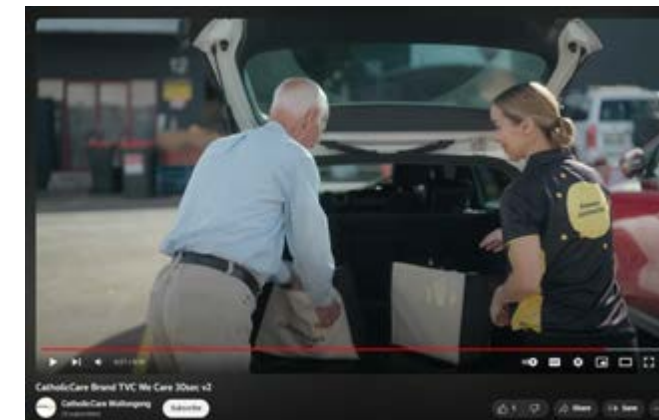
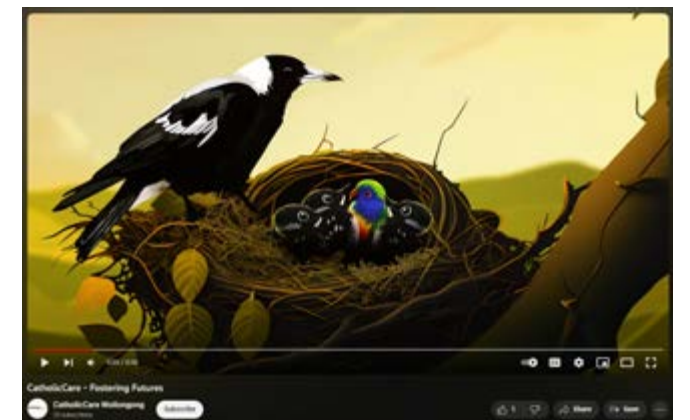


Extending our reach.

This year, CatholicCare Wollongong launched two television commercials for the first time. The overall objective of our television strategy was to generate greater awareness of CatholicCare and some of our services across the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Macarthur and Southern Highlands regions. These television ads were developed as a part of multi-channel brand and service campaigns which include a variety of touchpoints.

Our CatholicCare Brand Awareness Campaign was launched in May. The television commercial highlighted some of the work we have been doing to support individuals in our community for over 40 years at any stage of life. This ad ran on WIN Illawarra, Channel 10 (Illawarra) and Digital TV (Illawarra, Macarthur, Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands). The television ad was supported with out of home advertising in shopping centres, social media, print and radio advertising. This campaign raised awareness for all services, helped our recruitment objectives by showcasing who we are and communicated our overall mission.

These campaigns raised awareness for all services, helped our recruitment objectives and communicated our overall mission.



ABOVE: Stills from the Foster Care Recruitment Campaign Youtube video: ["Is It In Your Nature?"](#)

ABOVE: Stills from the CatholicCare Brand Awareness Campaign Youtube video: ["CatholicCare Brand TVC We Care"](#)

In June, we launched our Foster Care Recruitment Campaign titled "Is It In Your Nature?". The purpose of this campaign was to raise awareness of foster care and highlight the urgent need for carers in the community. For this campaign we wanted to break the mould, spark conversations, and capture the attention of people who otherwise might not have considered becoming foster carers. For the television commercial, we used animations of various Australian animal families with a fostered addition to showcase the benefits of fostering and to represent diversity in a subtle way. This campaign was rolled out via WIN Illawarra, Channel 10 (Illawarra) and Digital TV (Illawarra, Macarthur, Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands), radio advertising, social media advertising, SEM and SEO.

The Pastoral Support Program celebrates 10 years.



Pastoral Support Workers operate in Catholic primary schools and high schools to support the emotional and social wellbeing of students. They deliver creative programs to help students understand their emotions and the world around them, with a spiritual context.

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School is one of the 18 schools across Illawarra, Macarthur and Shoalhaven which currently receive chaplaincy support.

Acting Principal of Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Ange Crandell, shared that the help of their Pastoral Support Worker has been incredibly important in building the children's self-awareness skills. "We're setting them up for the best possible future of going out into the world and doing good for others", she said.

18 schools across Illawarra, Macarthur and Shoalhaven currently receive chaplaincy support from CatholicCare.

In the past 12 months, Pastoral Support Workers have delivered 49,642 occasions of service across 18 schools.

The help provided by Pastoral Support Workers is important as there is

"I've had kids come back to me and say, 'I feel like I belong just because you heard me [and] you listened'", he said.

a burgeoning need for greater mental health support and programs to help students manage complex emotions and situations.

"Kids who might not have opened up before have started expressing themselves", said Grant, the Pastoral Support Worker of Stella Maris Catholic Primary School. "I've had kids come back to me and say, 'I feel like I belong just because you heard me [and] you listened'", he said.

CatholicCare Wollongong salutes our Pastoral Support Workers and their vital work with students and the school community.

Client and participant testimonials.

Aged Care clients family

"On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to give you all a big hug and say a big thank you for your wonderful service, seamless communication and your amazing workers who connected with my parents so well and provided a great service – the Community Support Workers were even able to administer eye drops when no one else could!"

ParentsNext participant

"It is a safe environment to engage with others, encourage each other and truly empower one another."

School Student & Family Program student

"This service was helpful in teaching me some new skills that I can use to help others who are going through a tough time. The service also allowed to feel more comfortable telling my parents about my mental health."

Counselling client

"All the staff that I dealt with were lovely and compassionate. The counselling helped me to deal with personal struggles and issues. The staff were very understanding, with my needs."

Foster Carer

"The CatholicCare team stayed constant from my training till my introduction with Emily*. Since having Emily, I've had a great support worker and she's always been there for me if I need her." *name changed."

CatholicCare Early Learning Centre – Shellharbour family

"Keep up the amazing education you are providing for our children. Your nurturing and effort to provide authentic experiences for each child and their unique personalities and learning needs is applaudable, thank you so very much!"

Parenting Education Client

"The course has changed my outlook on parenting today, and how that is different from my experience growing up. It was fantastically run by Karen and the group was great."

Children's Contact client

"I'm very grateful and thankful that with the help of catholic care child contact service I have gotten to see and begin to re connect our mother daughter bond. Seeing the progress my daughter is making too each visits is just amazing. And I have gone from worried heartbroken to happy and hopeful."

Aged Care client

"You may just say it's all part of the job but not every company does the job as well as you do. We love the way you make everything so black and white and easy to understand. THANK YOU."

Our People.

AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

381

total number of staff



40

total number of volunteers



41

10.8% male

110

28.9% full-time

115

30.1% aged & disability

340

89.2% female

188

49.3% part-time

41

10.7% corporate

83

21.8% casual

124

32.6% children & youth

101

26.5% family services

YEARS OF SERVICE



0+years
234

5+years
49

15+years
18

3+years
60

10+years
20

Advisory Council.



Top Row: Franca Facci - *CAC Chair*, Gail Maurice, Greg Parish,
Bottom Row: Kerry Hunt, Kieran Biddle, John Akele - *FRAC Chair*, Fr Duane Fernandez - Priest

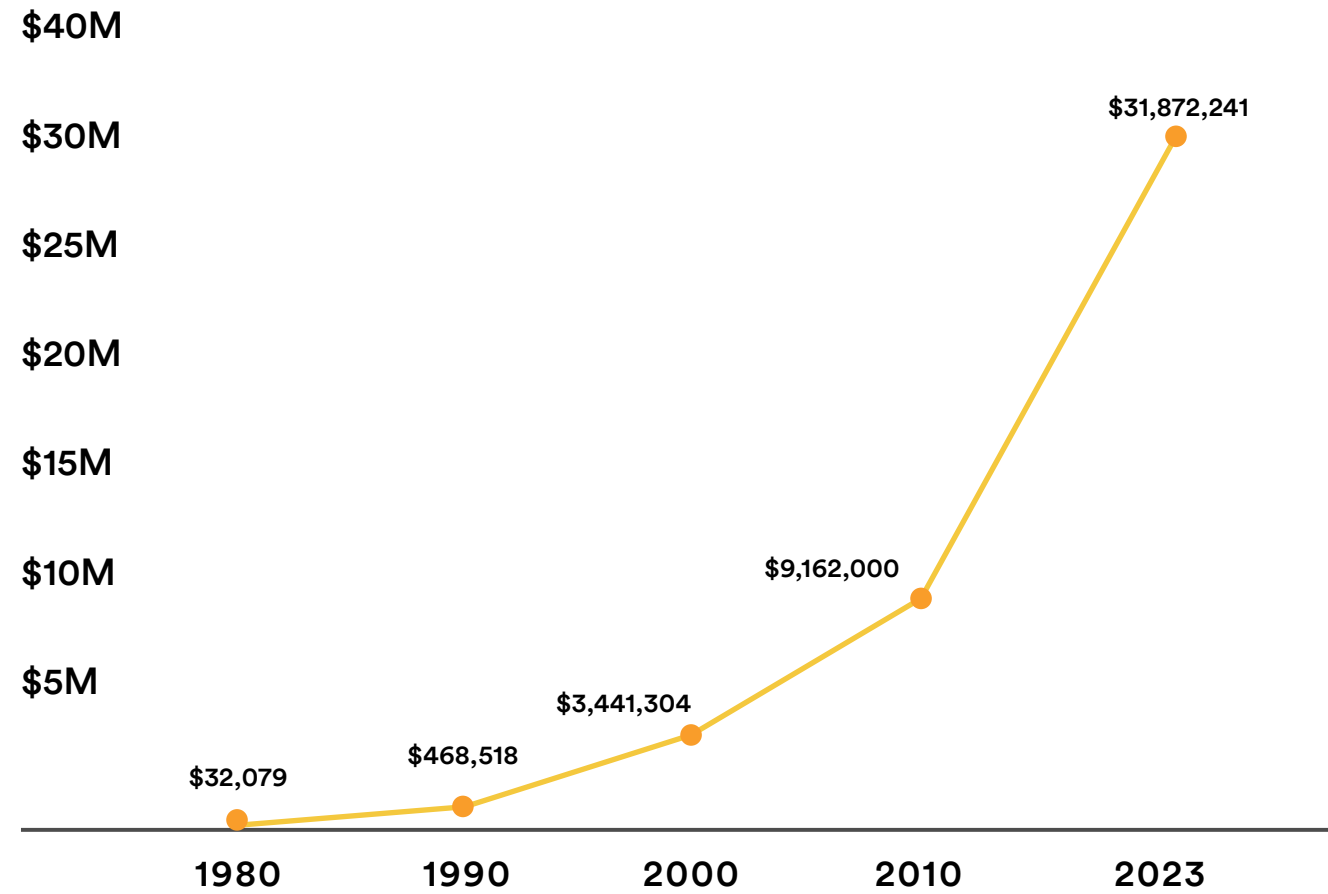
Executive Leadership Team.



Top Row: Cheryl Tarantola - *Aged Care & Disability*, Kathleen Burgess - *People & Culture*, Moye Prichard - *Finance & Enterprise Development*, Michael Austin - *Chief Executive Officer*
Bottom Row: Roseanne Plunkett - *Family Services*, Tony Eid - *Chief Operating Officer*, Michelle Ferrara - *Children & Youth*, Narelle Austin-Eames - *Quality & Risk*, Hiep Nguyen - *Executive Manager Information Technology*

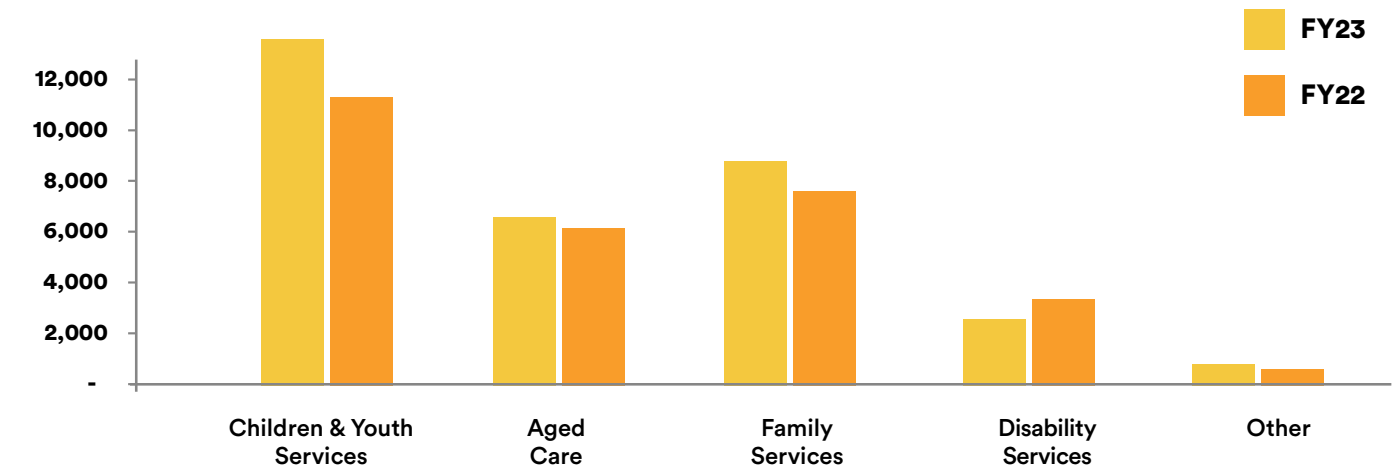
Financial Summary.

Revenue.

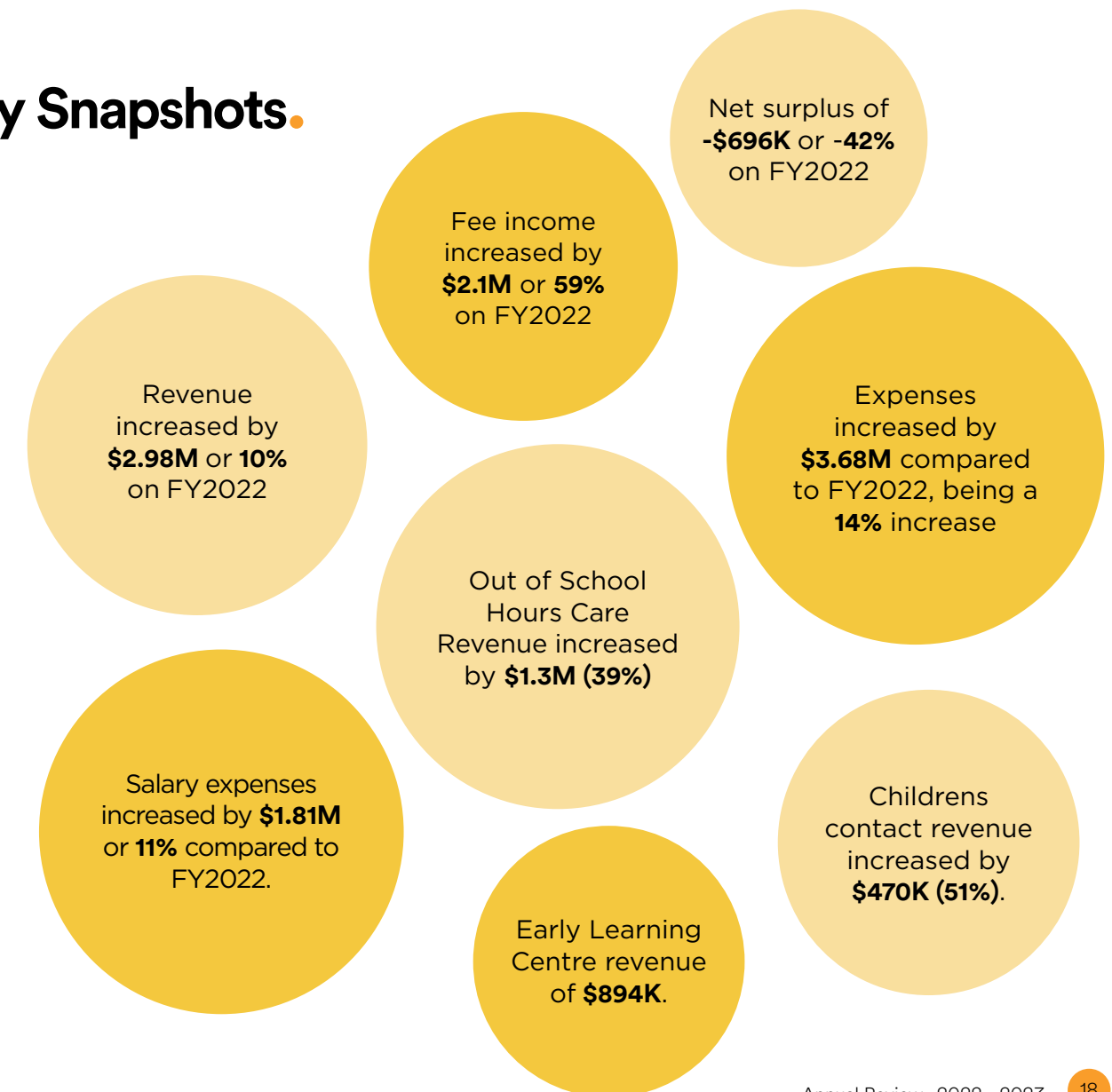


Revenue Trends.

Funding by Program (000's)



Key Snapshots.



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