



# Annual Report 2023



the infants' home  
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

*Giving each child, every opportunity—  
today and tomorrow, since 1874*

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## Acknowledgement of Country

*The Infants' Home acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, learn, work and educate. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging in the spirit of reconciliation.*



# About The Infants' Home

The Infants' Home, originally established as the 'Sydney Foundling Hospital', was founded in 1874 as a home for abandoned infants, known as 'foundlings', and unmarried mothers with children. In 1876 we settled in Ashfield and changed our name to 'The Infants' Home'.

In 2023 we provided integrated early childhood education and care, early intervention and health services to over 1,400 children, from birth to school age, and their families.

At least thirty per cent of the children and families enrolled in our onsite services receive targeted support and early intervention due to living in vulnerable circumstances or having complex needs. We significantly exceeded this in 2023, with almost forty percent of our enrolled children and families requiring and receiving the additional, specialist integrated support we provide.

Our purpose is to have a positive impact in our community. We achieve this by:

- > Providing high quality, evidence-based services.
- > Focusing on children and families living with disadvantage.
- > Addressing social justice and inequality.
- > Building partnerships for societal change.

## Our Patrons



Mr Dennis Wilson, husband of Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AO KC, Governor of New South Wales.



Mrs Linda Hurley, wife of His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Rt'd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

## Our Services

Our services comprise: onsite integrated early childhood education and care and early intervention; family day care services across metropolitan Sydney; community playgroups; parenting programs; family support and case management; an early intervention and wellbeing hub; and postnatal services.

*In 2023 almost 40% of the children we supported were living in vulnerable circumstances or had complex needs.*

## Our Vision

A society in which each child is given the chance in early childhood to develop their abilities to meet life's challenges and opportunities.

## Our Mission

*Each child, every opportunity—today and tomorrow.*

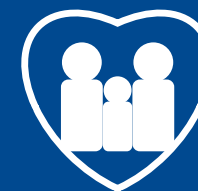
## Our Role

We provide early education, intervention and other services for children before they go to school, particularly those with vulnerabilities. We do this in an environment in which the value and dignity of every child is recognised. We advocate for children by providing advice to individuals, community organisations, the sector and government.

## Our Values



Integrity



Inclusion



Partnership



Excellence



Discovery

# President's Message



2023 was a year of change and renewal as we began to recover from the challenges of the past three years. We set forth as a committed and resilient community to continue to improve education, wellbeing and outcomes for young children

and their families, especially those impacted by disadvantage, disability and complex circumstances.

Like many, we struggled with rising operational costs due to inflation, cost of living pressures and ongoing workforce shortages which led to increased costs for agency staff to meet ratio requirements. Decreased utilisation of our childcare programs because of rising service competition in our local area, government preschool policy and changing enrolment patterns also took a toll. However, despite ending 2023 with an operational deficit of \$317,772, with prudent management and our commitment to

optimising our operations and diversifying our revenue streams, we are confident that we will return to a more financially stable outlook in 2024.

## Strategic Projects

We continued to implement our strategic plan to enhance our services, expand our reach and ensure a sustainable future. A strategy Steering Committee oversaw the progress of five strategic projects throughout 2023.

- > **Offsite Expansion** Toward the end of 2023 we entered negotiations to open a new early childhood education and care centre in an area of need. While negotiations have not yet been finalised, this opportunity, should it come to fruition as we hope, will be an important milestone in achieving this objective.
- > **Early Intervention** We piloted our Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub in May, with our first therapeutic group. Individual Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology services commenced in June. The Hub will continue to expand in 2024 as we build our client base and offerings to support our early intervention approach.
- > **Improving Fundraising** In March we hosted a 'Friends of The Infants' Home' event, to reconnect with our donors and supporters following the tribulations of the pandemic. We continue to implement new strategies to grow our fundraising and corporate partnerships, with a focus on leveraging the opportunities that will be afforded by our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024.
- > **Unlock the Ashfield site** Throughout 2023 a range of property improvement initiatives were

undertaken to maximise our site's potential, and to create future opportunities for the utilisation of our unique spaces.

> **Employer of choice** We rebranded our 'Human Resources' as the 'People and Culture' team to reflect our more modern, people-focussed and flexible approach to meeting staff needs and implemented several initiatives to improve staff access to learning and development and work-life balance.

## Board Renewal

In November we were pleased to announce the appointment of three new Directors, Melly Sah Bandar, Yash Sodhi and Peter Wallace. Each new Director brings to us a wealth of experience and expertise, and I look forward to working with them to achieve our strategic goals. We also bid farewell to long-serving Board Members Anthony Kutra in May 2023, Hugh Humphrey and Dr Peter Hendy in November 2023, and Lindsay Smartt in February 2024. I thank Anthony, Hugh, Peter and Lindsay for their unfailing commitment to their roles as Board Directors at The Infants' Home over many years.

I am deeply grateful to our leadership team and staff for the work you do every day. Without your diligence and professionalism, we would not be the organisation we are. I look forward to working together in 2024 as we celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, reflect on our remarkable legacy and enter an exciting period of renewal and growth, inspired and guided by our achievements, experiences and learnings over the past 150 years.

**Mary Verschuer, President**

*Mary with Peter Bayliss from ANZ Herbalife Nutrition at the Time to 'Connect, Welcome Back Friends of The Infants' Home' event in March.*



# CEO's Message



This was a year to reorient and revitalise ourselves and our organisation as we settled into post-pandemic life. We were keen to begin preparing for our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024 and for the next exciting chapter of our organisation's work to

help young children access their pathway for future wellbeing and success.

One of our greatest challenges in 2023 continued to be the significant workforce shortages plaguing our sector, especially in relation to qualified Teachers and Educators. Our teams worked hard to minimise the potential impact of this on our children and families, and they demonstrated resilience and agility. We also continued to experience reduced enrolments and changing enrolment patterns, requiring us to attract multiple families to fill each licensed place.

Despite these challenges, it was heartening to be able to reinvigorate the many plans and aspirations that had been put on hold or scaled back during the previous three years, and much was achieved.

## 2023 Highlights

### Our People

- > Implemented a communications strategy to support staff to understand the Child Safe Standards and their responsibilities within their role to promote a culture of child safety.
- > Introduced an online Learning Management System (LMS) for all staff to support our ambition of being a learning organisation.
- > Held several staff events to foster staff connection and wellbeing.
- > Introduced an annual 'Wellbeing Day' in addition to annual leave entitlements.

### Our Services

- > Piloted the Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub offering individual therapy and therapeutic groups for children aged up to 9, and parenting support.
- > Saw significant growth in utilisation of our free community playgroups.
- > Launched an Instagram page to connect with more people in our community.

### Our Partners and Supporters

- > Held a face-to-face event for our donors and supporters to thank them for their support and to share some of our plans and aspirations for the coming years.
- > Revitalised our weekly Corporate Volunteer program.
- > Received corporate sponsorship and support from Goldman Sachs and Deloitte to undertake special projects and staff engagement events.

### Infrastructure

- > Improved site security with the introduction of CCTV and key code gate access.
- > Undertook major building and maintenance works to improve functionality, safety and aesthetics across our site.
- > Upgraded our Wi-Fi technology as part of our IT Strategy.
- > Refurbished our meeting and training spaces to improve functionality.
- > Increased our focus on cyber security, including staff training.

### Advocacy

- > Worked with the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Best Practice Network to develop the discussion paper on *Early Childhood Intervention and Therapeutic Supports for Children and Young People under Age 16*. Through this network we made submissions to many inquiries.
- > Participated in a range of sector consultations including the NDIS Review panel, the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) consultation and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) inquiry into the costs of childcare.

I extend my gratitude to the government bodies, philanthropic organisations, corporations and individuals who continued to support us in 2023. Without your generosity we would not be able to deliver the high-quality services and early intervention support that makes it possible for young children and their families to thrive, achieve and create positive futures for themselves.

Thank you to our staff for their amazing work in 2023, and for their loyalty and commitment to our mission. Every one of you demonstrates tremendous patience, resilience and passion for best practice in education and care for the children and families across our services. I am so proud to work with such a dedicated team. I also thank our Board for their unwavering support of our team. I look forward to celebrating our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with you in 2024.

**Elizabeth Robinson, Chief Executive Officer**

# Our Impact: 2023 Top Five



**150** families received coordinated early intervention and family support

There are three tiers for the delivery of integrated early intervention and early childhood education programs in our childcare centres by our team of educators, allied health therapists and child and family practitioner (social worker).

Tier 1 is the foundation of our practice for delivering our high quality integrated educational programs and benefits all children.

Children requiring Tier 2 support receive more focussed early intervention, with planning conducted collaboratively by the centre director, the child's focus educator and their family.

Children and families receiving Tier 3 support have complex needs and/or the child may have a diagnosed disability or developmental concerns. These children and families are allocated a family coordinator, and a team is created to work collaboratively to provide coordinated early intervention and family support, usually over an extended period. Tier 3 support frequently includes liaison and coordination with external services who may also be working with the family. We are grateful for the support we received from the NSW Department of Education, the Woodend Foundation and Inner West ClubGRANTS to deliver some of our targeted early intervention services.



**472** children and **447** parents/carers attended our supported community playgroups

Our supported community playgroups are facilitated by qualified early childhood Educators. They provide children under school age with the opportunity to participate in quality early learning programs before starting school and help parents and carers to enhance their parenting skills, build their social networks and connect with other services and supports.

This year our playgroups included: the Baby Time Playgroup for children from birth to 12 months; the Pathways Playgroup for children not currently attending formal early childhood education and care; the fortnightly Saturday Fathers' and Male Carers' Playgroup for children from birth to school age; and the Red Bug Playgroup for children from birth to school age.

Our Baby Time Playgroup meets a gap in existing programs and is co-facilitated by an Educator and a Child and Family Health Nurse. The playgroup helps new parents/carers to understand and support their child's health, development and wellbeing and assists them to build their social networks and to connect with services in the community.

Our playgroups are offered free to the community. We are grateful for the support we received in 2023 from the NSW Department of Education, the James N Kirby Foundation and Inner West Council for our playgroup programs.



**90** children transitioned to school from our early childhood education and care services

Our early childhood education and care programs include a focus on helping preschool aged children to develop their social, emotional and cognitive abilities to start school with sound foundational skills and positive dispositions for learning. Prior to their transition, children and families are supported to connect with and become familiar with the school the children are going to, and with school settings and routines.

With generous support from The Rali Foundation, we also delivered a targeted school transition program for 10 children impacted by disadvantage, complex life issues, health concerns and/or disability. The 'From Strength to Strength: Supporting Children's Transition to School' program uses a holistic approach to prepare and support vulnerable children to transition to school and help their families to build confidence and networks to advocate for and support their child during and after they transition.

*In 2023 almost 40% of the children we supported were living in vulnerable circumstances or had complex needs.*





**232** placements in our targeted integrated early intervention groups

Our integrated team, comprising centre directors, educators, and allied health therapists, works collaboratively to engage with children and their families to identify children's current and emerging needs, and the level of intervention or additional support they may require. The team creates specialised, targeted integrated group programs, designed with focus children in mind, which are delivered to groups of eight to ten children within our mainstream early childhood education and care programs.

This year 33 targeted integrated groups were delivered, with group programs addressing a range of learning and development areas including language, literacy, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics), social skills, communication and play, emotional regulation, school readiness and fine and gross motor development. Several of our integrated groups were funded by grants in 2023, and we are grateful for our funders' support.



**188** families received postnatal support services

Our Sydney Hope Cottage Postnatal Service combines a comprehensive range of postnatal health and support services for families of infants and children aged from birth to five years, provided by our Child and Family Health Nurses. Families receive professional support with issues such as breast feeding, sleep and settling, routines and parent wellbeing. Our Child and Family Health Nurses also assist families to connect with other child, health and family services in the community.

Families can receive support through home visits, face-to-face clinic bookings, a weekly drop-in clinic and/or phone consultations. 149 home visits and 251 phone consultations were conducted in 2023.

This program is primarily funded through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) program, without which it would be unable to operate.



## Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub

In 2023 we piloted a new Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub in line with our strategic focus on creating additional child and family services that reflect our purpose. The Hub allows us to provide therapeutic support to children up to age nine enabling us to meet the needs of children and families both within our immediate network, as well as within the wider community, many of whom have experienced long waitlists for services elsewhere.

Our Hub's services include:

**Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy**  
Individual Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy for children aged up to nine years, delivered in the child's home, in community locations or onsite at The Infants' Home.

**Therapeutic Groups**  
Therapeutic Groups provide support to children in small group settings where their social skills development is also supported. Each group is facilitated by therapists from The Infants' Home's Allied Health team.

**Parent Capacity Building**  
Parent Capacity Building programs include webinars for parents to support their child's learning, development and wellbeing, and bespoke parenting groups.

# Our Impact in Numbers

## Early Childhood Education and Care

- 376** Children attended our onsite Early Childhood Education and Care centres
- 419** Children attended our Family Day Care services across Sydney
- 90** Children transitioned to school from our early childhood services
- 57** Suburbs across the Sydney metropolitan area in which we provided Family Day Care services

## Early Intervention and Family Support

- 33** Integrated Early Intervention Groups were delivered for children in our Early Childhood Education and Care centres
- 232** Child placements in our targeted integrated early intervention groups
- 150** Families received intensive, coordinated early intervention and family support
- 123** Free supported community playgroup sessions were delivered
- 472** Children attended our supported community playgroups
- 447** Parents/carers attended our Supported Community Playgroups

## Postnatal Services

- 188** Families received Postnatal Services from our Sydney Hope Family Cottage Child and Family Health Nurses
- 400** Postnatal support home visits and telehealth sessions were delivered by our Sydney Hope Cottage Child and Family Health Nurses

## Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub

- 19** Children were supported through individual occupational and speech pathology and assessments
- 3** Therapeutic groups were delivered, supporting an additional five children to those also receiving individual therapy
- 1** Parent Capacity Building session was delivered—'Introduction to the NDIS'

## Parenting Programs

- 49** Parenting program participants
- 6** Parenting programs were delivered



## Healthy Meals

- 42,093** Healthy meals were served for children, including children with special dietary and health needs



# Advocacy and Sector Engagement

## Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Best Practice Network

A key area of our advocacy in 2023 was our participation in the ECI Best Practice Network, a group of not-for-profit providers of early intervention services and/or early childhood education operating across NSW, VIC and the ACT. Our CEO Elizabeth Robinson worked with the Network to create a discussion paper on early childhood intervention that highlights the risks of the current system for vulnerable children who may miss out on the supports they need at critical points of their development. The paper, released in March, sought to prompt discussions around opportunities for improvement, and to inform and influence policy decisions. Elizabeth attended several government and sector consultations alongside her Network colleagues throughout the year to discuss early childhood intervention and therapeutic supports for children. The Network will continue to advocate for locally delivered targeted foundational supports as recommendations from the NDIS review are implemented.

## Sector Engagement

- > Lisa Doyle, Occupational Therapist, assisted with moderating the Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Program (ECICP) transition to school webinar, held for families and professionals in the Inner West. The webinar was hosted by ECICP and Kindred, with presenters from NSW Public schools, private school association and ASPECT.
- > Ana-Luisa Franco, Community Learning and Engagement Manager, was a guest speaker for an Industry and Community Project Unit at the University of Sydney, providing an overview of the ECEC sector, workforce challenges and how they support children and families.

- > Staff participated in online Q&A sessions for parents on transition to school with representatives from Ashfield, Croydon and Marrickville West Public Schools and on community supports for children transitioning to school with local service providers CABL and Metro Assist.
- > Family Day Care Sydney Wide participated in a 12 month funded pilot of the Australian Education Research Organisation's (AERO) early childhood learning trajectories. Educator Support Officer Catherine Jackson was the Lead Coordinator, with seven educators trialling the implementation of the learning trajectories in their services, with a view to commencing staged roll outs to the rest of the educator cohort in 2024.

## Interagency Participation

The Infants' Home participated in several interagency groups throughout 2023, including:

- > The Inner West Professional Playgroup Network for community playgroups coordinators in Sydney's Inner West
- > The Inner West Child and Family Interagency
- > The Burwood Child and Family Interagency
- > The Canterbury-Bankstown Child and Family Interagency
- > Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Program.

## Student Placements

We supported nine student placements: four Bachelor of Early Childhood Teaching students; three Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care students; one Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care student; and one Year 10 Work Experience student.

## Consultations, Steering Committees and Discussion Groups

Staff from The Infants' Home participated in the following in 2023:

- > The Healthy Homes and Neighbourhoods (HHAN) Steering Committee. The Infants' Home has been part of HHAN since it was founded in 2015.
- > NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) consultation on Early Childhood Education and Care affordability, accessibility, and consumer choice.
- > Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) ECEC Inquiry Consultation.
- > Thrive by Five 'Early Learning and Disability Symposium - the life changing impacts of early education for children with disability.'
- > ACECQA Review of NQF Staffing and Qualifications Regulations.
- > Early Years Strategy Consultation.
- > NDIS Review Consultation.
- > Family Day Care Australia's study into the family day care workforce in Australia: Attracting the next generation of family day care educators.



# Discovering their Community: Kali, Seb and Finn's Story

Kali\* began attending our Baby Time Playgroup with Finn when he was eight weeks old.

Finn had been quite unwell as a newborn and had spent time in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). As a new mum, with little support around her, Kali felt anxious, and was initially unsure of how to interact with Finn. She was also timid with the playgroup facilitators other parents and carers. Kali also experienced issues with breast feeding and Finn was not gaining weight as quickly as expected. Both Kali and her partner Seb were struggling and lacked confidence in their parenting skills.

During her early visits to playgroup, Kali was able to observe other parents with their babies and she began to share with them share her anxieties, fears and frustrations. Kali also spoke with the Child and Family Health Nurse who co-facilitates the Baby Time Playgroup, who provided Kali with both emotional and practical support to build her confidence and parenting skills.

Seb began attending our Fathers' and Male Carers' playgroup with Finn. When Seb first came to the playgroup, he was also anxious and did not seem confident in his care of Finn. However, as time passed, Seb's confidence grew, and he began to build relationships with other dads and he has been able to share both the joyous and not so joyous times of being a parent with them.

Kali and Seb didn't have the community around them that they had anticipated they would before Finn was born. However, they have now forged relationships with other families through the playgroups, creating a community they can connect with and rely upon.

Kali and Seb are now much more relaxed and confident in their parenting skills. They continue to attend the playgroups regularly, and are relishing their parenting journey, knowing that they are great parents to Finn.

*\* Names changed for privacy*





## 'Time to Connect, Welcome Back Friends of The Infants' Home'

In March we hosted our 'Time to Connect, Welcome Back Friends of The Infants' Home' event to thank our donors and supporters for their generous support of our organisation. This was the first opportunity since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 that we had been able to come together in person.

We began the with a lovely Acknowledgement of Country, delivered by our Gorton House preschool children and Early Childhood Teacher Nicky Roditis. This was followed by a screening of a short video we had commissioned to celebrate our history, work and supporters in the lead up to our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024.

Our Children's Services Manager Mariam Christodoulos and Senior Occupational Therapist Justine Tarrant then spoke about our integrated services and how our work helps vulnerable children and families, many of whom have been turned away by other services because they believe these families are "too hard" to support.

Our President Mary Verschuer concluded the formal proceedings by sharing with our guests some of our plans and aspirations as we move toward our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024.

The second half of our event program saw our Board, staff and guests come together to talk, reconnect and share a lovely afternoon tea.



*(L-R) Board Director David Jarjoura and long time supporter Michael Wight .*



*(L-R) Board Director Sarah Michael and Alison and Ralph Stagg from The Rali Foundation.*



*(L-R) Staff members Ana-Luisa Franco and Mariam Christodoulos with Amanda Kirton, President of Kambala Old Girls' Union (KOGU).*



*(L-R) CEO Elizabeth Robinson, Board Director Hilary Johnston-Croke and Club Ashfield President Lorraine Freeman.*



## Partnerships for Parenting Programs

In 2023 we were fortunate to partner with the following organisations to deliver several free parenting programs:

- > Sydney Local Health District (SLHD)
- > Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS)
- > Metro Assist
- > The Rev. Bill Crews Foundation.

### Our 2023 Parenting Programs included:

- > Bringing up Great Kids
- > Cool Little Kids
- > Baby Bonding Program
- > Tuning in to Kids
- > Circle of Security.



*The 'Baby Bonding Program' nurtures and promotes a secure attachment in the parent-child relationships from 28 weeks of pregnancy to baby's first steps.*

## Being and Belonging in our Community

The Infants' Home was honoured to attend our friends' and supporters' events in 2023.



*Fair Wealth Australia's AGM and cheque presentations to charities.*



*The Infants' Home stall at the Ashfield Community Market.*



*Club Ashfield Annual Mass and ClubGRANTS presentation.*



*Inner West Council Grant Recipients Reception.*

## 2023 Highlights



*A visit from long term supporters Ralph and Alison Stagg of The Rali Foundation. Pictured from left: Children's Services Manager Mariam Christodoulos, Ralph, Alison and CEO Elizabeth Robinson.*



*The Kitchen Garden, which the children help to plant, maintain and harvest, continued to thrive.*



*Thu Zar Bo, Vasuki Manjunathan and Sonia Bustillo were recognised for 25 years of service at our 2023 AGM. Pictured from left: Thu Zar, President Mary Verschuer, Vasuki and CEO Elizabeth Robinson.*



*Our free weekly postnatal drop in clinic helped ensure that our Child and Family Health Nurses were easily accessible and could provide families with timely, professional support.*



*A visit from HMAS Sydney. Pictured from left: Chaplain Martin Monaghan, LCDR David Maddison Executive Officer, CEO Elizabeth Robinson and WO Russell Kerney Command Warrant Officer.*



*Families gathered on our main lawn to enjoy our annual Carlos by Twilight event.*



# Finding a Path to Success: Tarnya, Jacob and Zahra's Story

Tarnya's\* middle child Jacob (pictured top right) had a significant language delay by age three and had difficulty engaging with others and regulating his emotions. His Community Health team suspected that Jacob had an intellectual disability and thought it unlikely that he would be able to attend a mainstream school in the future. Jacob was later diagnosed with Level 2 autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and ADHD.

A Speech Pathologist who was working with Jacob told Tarnya about The Infants' Home, explaining that children can attend our mainstream early childhood education and care centres and receive early intervention support from our Speech Pathologists and Occupational Therapists within the daily program.

Tarnya brought Jacob to The Infants' Home and at the intake meeting was heartened to find that our Children's Services Manager, Mariam, and Senior Occupational Therapist, Justine, were empathetic and committed to learning all they could about Jacob's strengths and challenges. They reassured her that Jacob would experience genuine inclusion in our service and be supported to develop to his full potential. This was a huge relief for Tarnya who had previously experienced her eldest child being turned away from other early childhood services because he was deemed 'too difficult' to include due to having additional needs.

Jacob enrolled in our Johnson House early childhood education and care centre in 2020, and Tarnya's youngest child Zahra (picture bottom right) enrolled in Johnson House in 2021, when she was three. Zahra, who has ADHD, also needed early intervention support to help her develop her self-

confidence, speech, social and self-regulation skills. Tarnya was grateful for the way in which the team got to know Jacob and Zahra so that they could create focussed learning and early intervention strategies for them. Jacob and Zahra were supported to participate in day-to-day play, learning and routines in the centre, as well as in targeted early intervention groups. Tarnya says that to truly thrive, *"Kids need to feel safe and that they belong"*.

Tarnya appreciated the regular communication she received about her children's progress. Twice-yearly meetings with the integrated team, comprising the centre director, educators and allied health therapists, were meaningful opportunities to review and further plan for Jacob and Zahra's progress toward the goals that had been identified collaboratively by Tarnya and the team.

The integrated team shared ideas and strategies with Tarnya for supporting Zahra and Jacob's learning and development at home, and they assisted her to prepare an application for NDIS support for Jacob. The team suggested that Jacob might benefit from starting school later than his required start date, and they assisted Tarnya to apply for an enrolment exemption for him. The additional year at Johnson House gave Jacob the opportunity to develop to his full potential. He gained confidence, developed his learning and play skills, engaged with and built friendships with other children and was able to make a successful transition to mainstream school.

Jacob started school at the beginning of 2023 and continues to do well, and Zahra took this next big step in 2024.



Tarnya says, *"I look forward to watching Zahra's continuous growth and development as her parent because of the strong foundation Johnson House preschool provided her throughout these vital early years of her [learning] journey"*.

*\* Names used with permission.*



# Celebrating 150 Years of The Infants' Home

In May 2024 we mark 150 years since the founding of The Infants' Home.

Sydney was a harsh city in its early years, especially for unmarried mothers. With nowhere to turn, tragically they often abandoned their babies or turned to infanticide and suicide.

A group of courageous women fought against accepted wisdom, the Church, the press and prominent citizens of the day to establish a home for abandoned infants and unmarried mothers with children. On 15 May 1874 the Sydney Foundling Institute was established in Victoria Street, Darlinghurst. This was the first and only home in Australia at the time to cater for abandoned children and to provide accommodation for unmarried mothers and their babies.

After two difficult years in the inner city, philanthropist Thomas Walker suggested The Infants' Home relocate to bigger premises, a house called 'Gorton', on Henry Street in Ashfield. Walker, a successful pastoralist and banker, paid £3,000 in 1876 to buy and donate to us our current 4.5 acre property. From then on our organisation was known as The Infants' Home.

Since our founding to the present day, The Infants' Home has evolved and innovated to meet the ever-changing needs of children, families and the wider community, always with a focus on helping those children and families most in need due to complex and difficult life circumstances.

In 1897 our first kindergarten was opened onsite to provide stimulation for the children in residence—the first of its kind for children in Australian institutional care. In 1972 we ceased offering residential care, with long daycare centres taking its place. Moving away from our previous model of institutionalised care enabled us to offer flexible care options for all families. In 1974 this was further enhanced as we became one of the first organisations to offer family day care as part of a Federal Government pilot scheme.

In 2013 we expanded our service with the addition of two new licensed childcare centres, increasing our capacity to care for many additional children each year.

Today The Infants' Home provides integrated early childhood education and care and early intervention within our mainstream onsite centres, as well as an allied health service, family day care, postnatal services, playgroups and parenting programs.

Throughout 2024 and 2025 we will be hosting events and activities to commemorate our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year with our community. Information about our 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations will be made available on our website ([theinfantshome.org.au](http://theinfantshome.org.au)) and on our social media pages (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn).



*Etching of 'Gorton House', 1880s.*



*Photograph of babies at The Infants' Home, from the personal photograph album of Louise Taplin. Louise was The Infants' Home Matron from 1886 until her death in 1901, at the age of 41.*

# Finance Report

The Infants' Home maintains a strong financial position with net assets of \$11.7 Million. In 2023 the organisation delivered a net deficit of \$317,772 due to the challenges of decreased utilisation and a continuation of lower fundraising revenues.

Changing patterns of enrolment post the COVID pandemic, with many parents working from home, has meant a need to attract and retain multiple families for each licensed place. The introduction of free preschool care has also reduced the number of days that families utilise our services.

Beyond utilisation, we were also impacted by adverse weather events which required unplanned expenditure on repairs to our centres. Workforce shortages, particularly of early childhood educators and teachers, led to increased costs in agency staff to meet ratio requirements.

Despite the prudent management of costs and increased childcare fees there was still a decline in free cash. The decline was much less than in the prior year and the Board and Leadership team continue to work towards reversing this trend.

The Infants' Home is a charity, relying on philanthropic support to deliver diverse early intervention and capacity building services in our early childhood services and the community. Our community work, targeted towards vulnerable

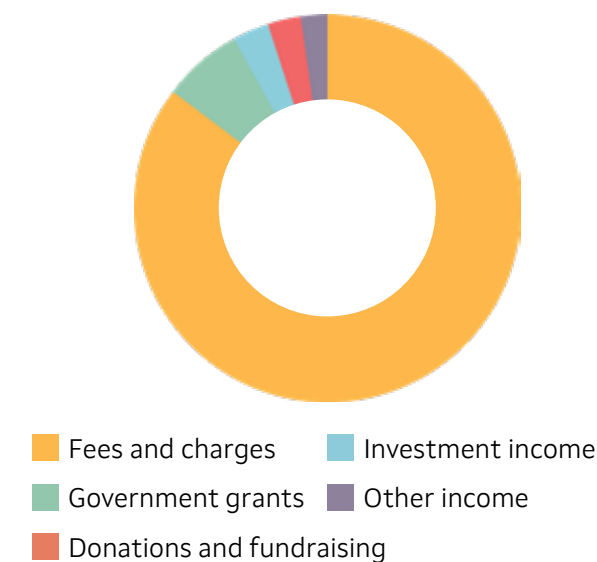
members of our community, includes free or low-cost programs. The Infants' Home greatly appreciates the flexibility and trust of our funding providers in enabling these programs to continue.

Fundraising remains a challenge for the organisation, especially in a climate of rising cost-of-living pressures on households and stiff competition for philanthropic support. Successful grant applications enabled The Infants' Home to run important early intervention programs and improve learning environments in our early childhood centres. We are grateful for the support from our loyal donors and supporters, whose generosity allows us to ensure each child has every opportunity—today and tomorrow.

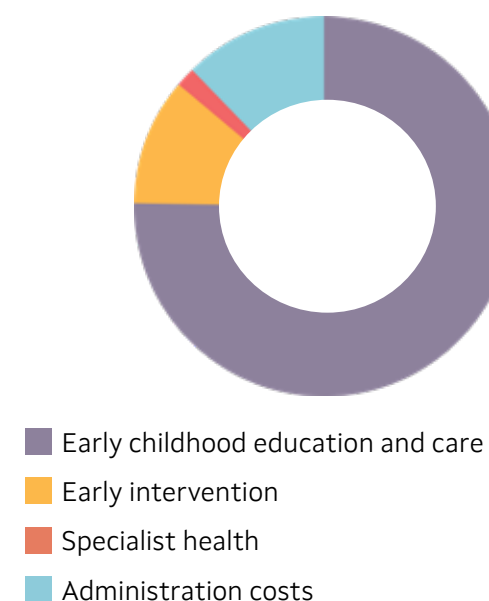
The Board and Leadership team continue to execute on our Strategic Plan that is designed to optimise our operations, diversify revenue streams, and return sustainability. We recognise that there remains uncertainty in the industry and broader economic outlook, and that it will take time to for our strategic initiatives to achieve fruition.

As we enter our 150<sup>th</sup> year, The Infants' Home continues to adapt our service delivery with a strong commitment to find new ways of meeting our mission to support young children and families.

## Revenue



## Expenditure



# Financial Results for the Year Ended 31 December 2023 \*

Financial Results	2023	2022
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue from operations</b>		
Charges and fees	7,621,207	7,552,238
Government grants for operating purposes	638,480	516,366
Donations, fundraising and grants	249,673	355,452
Investment income	236,166	268,426
Other income	207,643	103,151
	<u>8,953,169</u>	<u>8,795,633</u>
<b>Expenditure from operating activities</b>		
Employee costs	7,412,349	7,428,720
Materials and services	1,442,205	1,649,789
Depreciation	397,204	387,691
Finance costs	57,826	54,523
	<u>9,309,584</u>	<u>9,520,723</u>
<b>Other revenue and fair value changes (FVPL)</b>		
Government grants for capital use purposes	-	-
Bequests	2,597	10,206
FVPL – Debt investments	36,046	(87,391)
	<u>38,643</u>	<u>(77,185)</u>
Net (deficit) / surplus	<u>(317,772)</u>	<u>(802,275)</u>

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Fair value changes FVOCI - Equity investments	253,360	(482,669)
<b>Total comprehensive Income / (deficit)</b>	<u>(64,412)</u>	<u>(1,284,944)</u>
<b>Summary of Net Assets</b>		
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash & investments	5,607,111	5,126,827
Receivables	48,623	242,394
Property & equipment	8,023,554	8,173,261
Right-of-use & other	114,972	141,716
	<u>13,794,260</u>	<u>13,684,198</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Payables	754,652	778,370
Contract liabilities	447,137	243,728
Lease liabilities	21,178	59,471
Provisions	898,729	865,653
	<u>2,121,696</u>	<u>1,947,222</u>
Net Assets	<u>11,672,564</u>	<u>11,736,976</u>

\* Copies of the audited financial statements are available on request.





## Our Leadership Team

### Elizabeth Robinson

MBA, LLB, MA, BA (Hons), GAICD

#### Chief Executive Officer



Elizabeth has 25 years' experience in for-purpose leadership, including over a decade as a Chief Executive Officer. With a career spanning early childhood education,

early intervention, people and organisational development, and communications and marketing, Elizabeth provides strong governance, risk, strategic and operational management. (Joined 2017).

### Mariam Christodoulos

B.Ed.(Early Childhood), Diploma of Children's Services, Diploma of Leadership and Management

#### Children's Service Manager (Centre-based Services)



Mariam is an early childhood teacher with over 20 years' teaching and management experience. Committed to social justice and inclusion, Mariam oversees our integrated centre-based

services, building consistency, quality and high levels of service delivery for all stakeholders. (Joined 2004).

### Steve Hughes

BA (Hons), ICAEW, AICD, FCA, Certified CEO

#### Chief Financial Officer



Steve has over 30 years' experience in the private sector in Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer roles across global and SME companies. He brings strong strategic, financial, and operational expertise to the organisation. (Joined 2022).

*In 2023 we farwelled Children's Service Manager (Family Day Care), Janice Francis. We thank Janice for her contribution and wish her well for her future endeavours.*

## Our Board

### Mary Verschuer

MBA, MScSoc, BAppSc, FAICD

#### President



Mary is an experienced non-executive director currently Chair of Maxiparts (ASX:MXI) and on the board of Redox (ASX:RDX) and Forestry Corporation of NSW. She has experience in audit and

risk and people committees. Prior executive roles included CEO and President with global scope across a range of industries, including engineering, mining services and packaging. She has extensive experience in developing and executing strategy and integrating acquisitions. Mary was on our Board from 2008 to early 2015, returning in 2017. Member since 2016 (with a period of absence in 2015-16). Meetings attended 7/7.

### Hilary Johnston-Croke

M.Ed, B.Sc (Hons), PGCE, Grad. Dip (Theology), GAICD

#### Vice President



Hilary has extensive professional and governance experience in education, from early childhood to tertiary, as a teacher, educational leader, and school principal.

Hilary is currently a non-executive director of The University of Notre Dame Australia and the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, and Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Global Leaders Program, University of Wollongong. Member since 2017. Meetings attended 5/7.

### Sarah Michael

RN, GAICD

#### Director, Member of Audit and Risk Committee



Sarah is a registered nurse with over 40 years' experience in the health sector in hospital, government and private sector roles and currently holds a senior management position in Clinical Governance and Safety at

St Vincent's Health Australia, the largest Catholic not-for-profit healthcare provider in Australia. Sarah has specific expertise in clinical governance, compliance and risk, policy development, organisational change, benchmarking and reporting. Sarah has participated in a number of state and national initiatives focused on patient safety, aged care, oversight of organisational COVID-19 response plans and more recently cyber security. Member since 2017. Meetings attended 7/7.

### David Jarjoura

GAICD

#### Director (Treasurer from February 2024)



David is an experienced nonexecutive director with over twenty five years in executive and board roles in the public, commercial and not-for-profit sectors. David was non-executive

director of MyHouse where he led strategic development and business restructuring. He currently has a portfolio of board appointments and experience in providing consultancy services to various clients. Member since 2022. Meetings attended 7/7.

**Melissa Collins**  
*M.Bus(HRM), GAICD*  
**Director**



Melissa is an executive leader with demonstrated success in facilitating transformational business and cultural change, proven governance capability and a passion to make a difference in both not-for-profit and commercial environments. After two decades in management consulting and financial services, Melissa made the switch to the for-purpose sector working with dynamic charitable organisations. Melissa has significant experience in delivering projects, leading change and general management. She is mum to a small child and is an Inner West resident who is grateful for the services The Infants' Home provides to her local community. Member since 2022. Meetings attended 5/7.

**Peter Wallace**  
*MBA, BCom (Accounting&Finance), ACA, FAICD, FGIA*  
**Director**



Peter has over 25 years' experience as a company director over 30 groups of companies in industries including distribution, financial services, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and retail. Peter's career spans private equity, corporate advice, non-executive directorships and financial control. He has primarily worked with emerging growth companies providing sound, independent, creative and experienced counsel. He is currently non-executive chairman of ASX listed Ambertech Limited and non-executive director of Carte Blanche Australia Pty Limited. Member since 2023. Meetings attended 1/1.

**Melly Sah Bandar**  
*MSc, BA (Accounting), CPA (Indonesia), MAICD*  
**Director**



Melly has a broad background and strong foundation in strategic commercial and financial planning, reporting and digital transformational program and change management. She has extensive experience in audit and risk and investment committees. Melly has over 20 years' experience in delivering business and digital transformational projects and has consulted extensively in this area for ASX50 companies, government, and state-owned corporations. Melly has worked in Australia, New Zealand, USA and Indonesia. Member since 2023. Meetings attended 1/1.

**Yash Sodhi**  
*MBA, BCom(Finance), GAICD*  
**Director**



Yash is a senior executive with a track record of transformation in roles spanning strategy, M&A and finance. He has served on regulated boards through periods of change including strategy formulation, regulatory change, M&A and technology migration. As an executive, Yash has served in senior roles across a range of industries including health, insurance and asset management. He has also worked in investment banking and advised Boards and Executive teams on corporate and capital markets transactions. Yash is currently Chief Strategy Officer at Medibank and previously served as Chief Financial Officer at Challenger Funds Management. Yash is an inner west resident and father to a young child. Member since 2023. Meetings attended 1/1.

**We thank the following Board Directors who we farewelled in 2023 and 2024 for their service:**

- > Anthony Kutra (Member 2008-2023)
- > Hugh Humphrey (Member 2015-2023)
- > Dr Peter Hendy (Member 2017-2023)
- > Lindsay Smartt (Member 2016-2024)

**Our Advisers**

- > Architects: David Burke of Brewster Murray Pty Ltd
- > Auditors: HLB Mann Judd
- > Solicitors: Mark Streeter of Streeterlaw
- > Visiting Medical Officer: Dr Eleanor Brumby



The Infants' Home Child and Family Services is committed to good governance and meeting our obligations as a charitable organisation. The Board has adopted an 'if not, why not' approach to reporting on governance. In this Annual Report, The Infants' Home affirms that it is compliant with the governance standards for charitable organisations established by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) Not-For-Profit Governance Principles. The Infants' Home meets these governance standards as follows:

## ACNC Governance Standards

- > **Standard 1: Purposes and not-for-profit nature** The Infants' Home was founded in 1874 as a charitable organisation and has spent almost 150 years working to bring about positive and lasting social change through the care and education of young children, especially those who are vulnerable or at risk. Governing documents and information about our charitable purpose is available on the ACNC website.
- > **Standard 2: Accountability to members** The Infants' Home is open and accountable to its members. Each year an Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held, and members are provided opportunities to ask questions and vote on resolutions. Annual Reports, including financial statements, are provided to members as well as made available on the ACNC website.
- > **Standard 3: Compliance with Australian laws** The Infants' Home is aware of and compliant with all Australian laws, regulations and codes of practice related to our business. Controls are in place to protect the organisation's finances and assets.
- > **Standard 4: Suitability of Responsible Persons** The Infants' Home has conducted extensive due diligence checks to ensure that its Responsible Persons are fit and proper persons eligible to serve on the governing body.
- > **Standard 5: Duties of Responsible Persons** The Infants' Home Board is aware of its legal responsibilities and act in the best interest of the organisation. New Board

Directors receive an appointment letter, governance documents and an induction. Conflict of interest is appropriately managed. A Board review is undertaken annually.

- > **Standard 6: Maintaining and enhancing public trust and confidence in the Australian not-for-profit sector** The Infants' Home joined the National Redress Scheme in 2020 and has a strong commitment to child protection. The Infants' Home recognises its role as a historic residential care facility and issued an apology to children in institutional care (available on our website).

## AICD Not-For-Profit Governance Principles

- > **Principle 1: Purpose and Strategy** The Infants' Home's purpose has been consistent since the organisation was founded in 1874: to bring about positive and lasting social change through the care and education of young children, especially those who are vulnerable or at risk. Our Strategic Plan is aligned with our purpose.
- > **Principle 2: Roles and Responsibilities** All Directors are validly appointed and understand their responsibilities. Board Committees have been established with clear terms of reference. Where responsibilities are delegated to the Leadership team, there is sufficient Board oversight, reporting and regular review.
- > **Principle 3: Board Composition** Directors are elected by members at the AGM. Vacancies are filled by the Board through a transparent, merit-based process. A skills matrix is maintained, and efforts are made to ensure Board diversity. Succession planning for Board, Leadership, and key roles within the organisation, is actively pursued.
- > **Principle 4: Board Effectiveness** New Board Directors are inducted to the organisation and their responsibilities. Meetings are well chaired and supported by clear agendas, papers, and minutes. The Leadership team regularly present to the Board and a Board/Leadership strategic planning day takes place annually. Board performance is reviewed annually.

- > **Principle 5: Risk Management** Effective risk management is a key concern for the Board. The Risk Management Framework, including Board Risk Appetite, is regularly reviewed. The Board receives comprehensive reports about risks, incidents, and how risk is managed
- > **Principle 6: Performance** The Board undertakes an annual budgeting process and sets clear priorities and performance measures. Reports against targets are provided at each Board meeting, for both financial performance and organisational key performance indicators. The CEO receives an annual appraisal
- > **Principle 7: Accountability and Transparency** Communication with members and other stakeholders occurs via a variety of channels: newsletters, website, social media, and annual reports. The AGM provides members with an opportunity to hear an update on operations, review finances and ask questions of the Board. Board Directors receive no payment for their services.
- > **Principle 8: Stakeholder Engagement** Feedback is actively sought from The Infants' Home stakeholders, including members, families, donors, supporters, customers, community partners, staff and more. The Infants' Home practices, policies and procedures are aligned to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- > **Principle 9: Conduct and Compliance** The Board has a code of conduct which sets out expectations. All staff and volunteers receive a comprehensive induction to the organisation. At each Board and Committee meeting the Chair seeks disclosures of conflict of interest.
- > **Principle 10: Culture** The Infants' Home values of Integrity, Inclusion, Partnership, Excellence and Discovery are embedded throughout the organisation and are evident in decision making, policies and procedures. Culture is measured through staff engagement surveys, performance reviews, and annual employee awards.



# Becoming Confident Parents: Jo and Dan's Story

A family who had recently welcomed twin girls were referred to our Sydney Hope Cottage Postnatal Service as the new parents were feeling overwhelmed and were also very isolated as their family resides overseas. The mother, Jo\*, had a history of anxiety that was exacerbated during the postnatal period.

A Child and Family Health Nurse conducted an initial intake phone call with Jo to gain an understanding of the family's concerns and the areas in which they were needing support, and to begin building a rapport with the family. A home visit was then undertaken in which Jo and her partner Dan discussed their challenges and expectations and were supported to set some achievable goals. The Nurse acknowledged Jo and Dan's feelings and suggested strategies to support them to manage their journey as new parents of twins. During a follow up phone call, Jo and Dan said that while they had had some success, they were still feeling very overwhelmed. The Nurse encouraged them to persist with the strategies and to contact the postnatal service as needed for further support.

Following a family holiday and moving house, Jo felt that she and Dan were back to where they had been when they first reached out for support. At a second home visit, Jo and Dan were reassured that the twins had responded well to

the strategies implemented and that, while the holiday and move had temporarily disrupted their routine, "all was not lost", and that if they persevered with the suggested strategies, they would see an improvement.

Jo requested a further home visit to make sure the strategies and routine she and Dan were implementing were on track. They were clearly feeling more confident and were understanding the babies' cues and behaviours more comprehensively, and the Nurse reassured Jo and Dan that they were supporting their babies in a very loving and attuned way.

In a follow up phone call a few weeks later, Jo and Dan said they had experienced a vast improvement in the twins' sleeping and routines and in their all-round family functioning, and that things were "amazing". During their journey with us, Jo and Dan had grown from feeling hopeless and overwhelmed to feeling confident and empowered as parents.

*\* Names changed for privacy*



# Our Friends and Supporters

## Corporate Volunteer Program

Each year we welcome many teams of corporate volunteers who work with us to contribute their time, resources and skills to: help maintain our buildings, grounds and gardens; raise funds; assist with events; support our children's programs; and help with special projects. As a ChildSafe organisation our volunteers do not work directly with our children, however, their contributions play an important role in maintaining and supporting our operations and our work with children and families. Our volunteers have a real and positive impact on the community we serve.

In 2023 we continued to focus on revitalising this essential program post-pandemic, and we were fortunate to welcome teams from the following organisations:

- > Abacus Property Group
- > Deloitte
- > Dolby
- > DUAL (2 groups)
- > Fidelity
- > Goldman Sachs (2 groups)
- > Herbalife Nutrition
- > HMAS Sydney (10 groups)
- > HSBC (2 groups)
- > JLG
- > Macquarie Bank
- > NAB
- > Nexia
- > Optus
- > PwC (2 groups)
- > Redox
- > SCOR Insurance
- > Westpac (3 groups)

In total we welcomed 278 corporate volunteers over 34 volunteer days, which contributed approximately 1,320 hours to our service. This saved us an estimated \$86,000 which we were able to invest directly back into our programs for vulnerable children and families.

## Individual Volunteers

We are also grateful to individual volunteers Karlyn Robinson, who volunteered a total of 147 hours to research aspects of our history and partnerships, and Lisa Smith who volunteered 156 hours to conduct records searches for The Infants' Home's care leavers and index our digitised historical records. We also thank individual volunteers Sophie Christodoulos, Joanne Reardon and Pete Owens who kindly donated their time in 2023 to support our services and events.

## Partnership with HMAS Sydney

HMAS Sydney of the Royal Australian Navy has a long and rich history with The Infants' Home; since 1965, we have been their adopted charity. During this time, our partnership has seen fundraising parties on the ship's flight deck and volunteer crews who have helped with maintenance on our extensive playgrounds and gardens. In September we hosted a visit from HMAS Sydney V Chaplain Martin Monaghan, LCDR David Maddison Executive Officer and WO Russell Kerney Command Warrant Officer. Following this meeting we were delighted to welcome regular volunteer groups from HMAS Sydney from September to December.



CEO Elizabeth Robinson laid a wreath on behalf of The Infants' Home at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Wreath Laying and Memorial Ceremony for HMAS Sydney II.

## Our Corporate Volunteers in Action



HMAS Sydney volunteers replenishing our mulch heap with fallen leaves from our gardens.



PwC volunteers gave our rose garden a makeover.



Nexia volunteers cleaning one of our children's playgrounds.





Fidelity volunteers getting ready to scrub the BBQ.



Herbalife ANZ volunteers keeping our bird bath in tip top shape for our feathered friends.



Westpac volunteers covering new books for our children with contact.

## Our Community and Corporate Supporters

We thank the following organisations for their kind support for our programs and events in 2023:

- > Australia Day Regatta Incorporated
- > Balloons by Rana
- > Bunnings Warehouse Ashfield
- > Deloitte
- > Fair Wealth Australia
- > Fidelity
- > Goldman Sachs
- > Kambala Old Girl's Union (KOGU)
- > Holman Barnes Group
- > Inner West Voices
- > Let's Play Games
- > Massey Park Golf Club
- > Pandora
- > Specsavers Burwood
- > Symbio Wildlife Park
- > The Beeren Foundation
- > The Presbyterian Ladies' College (PLC), Sydney.

## Our Benefactors

Thank you to the philanthropic foundations and other funders who supported the following programs in 2023:

- > **Club Ashfield** – *Integrated Groups for Children with Additional Needs*
- > **Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks Program** – Sandpits Refresh Project
- > **Herbalife Nutrition Foundation** – *Head Start on Health Nutrition Program for Children*
- > **Holman Barnes Group** – *Fathers', Male Carers' and Children's Playgroup and Getting Ready for School: Early Foundations Integrated Groups*
- > **Inner West Council** – *Sing&Grow Partnership Program for Vulnerable Children and Families*
- > **James N Kirby Foundation** – *Baby Time Playgroup*
- > **The Rali Foundation** – *Targeted Transition to School Program*
- > **The Woodend Foundation** – *Bridging the Gap: Targeted integrated early childhood education and early intervention for vulnerable children.*

## Individual Donors

Thank you to the following individuals who generously supported The Infants' Home in 2023 through individual donations of \$50 or more, and through our Workplace Giving program:

- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| > Venus Abdollahpoor      | > Celeste Li-Voss           |
| > Elissa Ayoub            | > Justin Lucas              |
| > Cilla Barrand           | > Sarah Michael             |
| > Emma Barrett            | > Huma Mirza                |
| > Moushumi Bhattacharya   | > Andrew and Prim Murray    |
| > Sarah Brand             | > Kithavia Naidoo           |
| > David Burke             | > Khristine Anne Naval      |
| > Melissa Carle           | > Julia Odelli              |
| > Binu Chacko             | > Sally Otton               |
| > Ruchika Chhetri         | > Angela Owens              |
| > Mariam Christodoulos    | > Utkrista Paudel           |
| > Des Clarke              | > Gemma Peters              |
| > Ida Clemente            | > Chris Reynolds            |
| > Melissa Collins         | > Kerrie Richardson         |
| > Raimond Coneliano       | > Elizabeth Robinson        |
| > John and Julia Cordukes | > Karlyn Robinson           |
| > Ann Crowley             | > Melly Sah Bandar          |
| > Edwin Davis-Raiss       | > Marlene Shepherd          |
| > Hannah Dence            | > Sanjida Sifat             |
| > Lara Farah              | > Samana Silwal             |
| > Kevin Farmer            | > Lindsay Smartt            |
| > Chris Grundy            | > Siyu Sun                  |
| > Dr Margery Hertzberg    | > Julia and Simon Tregoning |
| > Steve Hughes            | > Mary Verschuer            |
| > Hilary Johnston-Croke   | > Kate Watson               |
| > Sreedevi Koduri         | > Sally White               |
| > Marie Lewis             | > Michael Wight             |
| > Ying Liao               | > Nikki Wong                |
| > Nicole Liu              | > Kunhee Yoon               |



# Corporate Sponsored Events and Projects

The Infants' Home is grateful to receive generous support from corporate sponsors who assist us with events, fundraising and the delivery of programs and services for children and families. In 2023 Goldman Sachs and Deloitte kindly sponsored and volunteered for some significant events and activities on The Infants' Home's calendar.

## Goldman Sachs—Sandpit Refresh

In June, as part of their Community Teamworks program, Goldman Sachs undertook our annual children's sandpit refresh across our services. Goldman Sachs kindly covered project costs, including sand purchase and skip bin hire, and provided 15 volunteers to carry out the work of removing and replacing the old sand.



## Goldman Sachs—Early Childhood Educators' Day

In September we welcomed a group of five volunteers from Goldman Sachs to The Infants' Home to assist with our Early Childhood Educators' Day celebrations. Goldman Sachs also sponsored the event, and the volunteers assisted with setting up and running a staff barbeque and a cupcake decoration station.



## Deloitte—Impact Day

Deloitte hosted an Impact Day in October to refresh our grounds and gardens and to run a staff morning tea. 17 volunteers attended the day, topping up our main lawn with new soil, building and planting new Vegepods for our Kitchen Garden, and refreshing our gardens and planter pots. Deloitte also sponsored the day, covering the costs for the gardens, lawn makeover and morning tea catering.



# Developing our People

**122** Staff members were employed at The Infants' Home

**24** New staff permanent members were employed

**64%** Of permanent Educators held a degree or diploma qualification

**46%** Of staff had been employed at The Infants' Home for five or more years

**7** Staff members were undertaking tertiary studies

## Professional Learning and Development

Staff across our organisation had opportunities to benefit from a range of professional learning initiatives throughout 2023. These included:

- > Onsite 'Lunch and Learn' webinar screenings.
- > A series of posts shared via the staff intranet regarding each of the Child Safe Standards, detailing what we are already doing to meet each Standard, and posing questions for reflection to consider what else we can do to strengthen our Child Safe practices.
- > Introduction of the Talent Learning Management System (LMS) to enable staff to undertake training online in easy to access 'bite-size' pieces.
- > A regular Reflective Discussion Forum where staff engage in critical reflection and discussion based on a topic focussed on an aspect of working with children, families, community or other staff in early childhood.

- > An interactive Practice and Pedagogy Session on Bottom-Up Brain Development, which was also made available to all staff as a recording.
- > Free and low-cost professional development opportunities listed on the Intranet 'Learning Hub' for staff.

The following training sessions were also arranged for staff:

- > Munch and Move Program
- > Project Management
- > Trauma-Responsive Practice
- > First Aid and Asthma and Anaphylaxis Management (pictured below)
- > Child Protection.

## Family Day Care Educator Professional Learning and Development

- > Online Forums for Educators in were held in March, July and November.
- > In September all Educators completed the mandatory NSW Food Handler Basics Course.

## 2023 Staff Survey Results—A Snapshot

We conducted our Annual Staff Survey in August 2023, and received a 55% response rate. Analysis of survey responses identified areas of satisfaction and those requiring improvement within six broad areas:

- > **Goals and Performance** Most highly rated in this section were opportunities for staff to do their best within their organisation.
- > **Communications** Positive responses in this section included the ability for staff to contribute ideas and feel valued in their immediate team and staff being clear about the expectations for them in their roles. The intranet and CEO updates were the most valued forms of communication by respondents.
- > **Team** Staff felt most positively about their immediate teams and the way they were working.
- > **Leadership** Staff felt positive about the Leadership Team's openness and honesty in communication but rated Leadership's visibility and accessibility low.
- > **Staff Wellbeing** Most highly rated in this section by staff was having someone at work care about them as a person
- > **Organisational Culture** Most positive for staff was the welcoming environment and an environment that embraces identity.





# Staff and Family Day Care Educator Service Awards

## Staff Service Awards

### 5 Years

- > Sahin Afroz
- > Amanda Boogert
- > Angela Owens
- > Zabed Bin Zafar

### 10 Years

- > Priya Christian
- > Sanju Khadgi
- > Nicky Roditis
- > Justine Tarrant

### 15 Years

- > Aruna Ayyadurai
- > Yi Deng

### 20 Years

- > Asima Khan

## Family Day Care Educator Service Awards

### 5 Years

- > Yuan Yuan (Sally) Cao
- > Ultima Celdran Clancy
- > Cass-ahn Grundy
- > Fei Tong
- > Jessica Tong
- > Rachel Wilson

### 10 Years

- > Suzanne Beckman
- > Leanne Blundell
- > Cindi Mercer
- > Ebony Shroot
- > Kim Do

### 30 Years

- > Santina Ilardo

## Celebrating 30 Years with The Infants' Home Family Day Care Service: Santina's Story



Santina began working with children almost 40 years ago, after her second child was born. She had always been interested in working with children, and becoming a family daycare educator was a perfect fit to allow

her work from home while raising her own family. Santina joined The Infants' Home's Family Day Care scheme in 1993 and obtained her Certificate III in Children's Services in 2012.

Santina believes that connecting with community is important for children, and she takes the children in her service into the Haberfield community weekly where they visit the library, attend a local playgroup and explore the environs.

Santina is proud of and deeply values the many long-lasting connections she has made with children and families. She loves that many of the children she has worked with over the years still visit her as adults and talk about their time in care with her.

Santina says, "Being a family day care educator has been a rewarding and fulfilling career, where each day is full of new possibilities. During my time with The Infants' Home Family Day Care Sydney Wide Scheme I have had the opportunity to develop professionally with the guidance and support of professional staff who are always on hand to encourage and support me".





# Celebrating our People

## Harmony Day



*To celebrate Harmony Day in March, the team at The Infants' Home came together to share home-prepared dishes from our diverse cultural and life experience backgrounds.*

## Early Childhood Educators' Day



*Goldman Sachs sponsored and helped run our Early Childhood Educators' Day event in September to celebrate the amazing work of our Educators, Allied Health therapists and support staff. Staff enjoyed a coffee cart, barbeque and cupcake decorating station.*

## RU OK Day



*For 'RU OK Day' in September, The Infants' Home team were invited to a 'Biccies in the Banya Room' event, to enjoy a tasty treat and catch up with colleagues.*

## Farewell Sonia Bustillo



*In July we said farewell to Customer Service Team Leader Sonia Bustillo following an impressive 25-year tenure at The Infants' Home. The team joined a special afternoon tea to thank Sonia for her contribution to the organisation and to wish her well for her retirement.*

## Staff Excellence and Service Awards



*Staff received their 2022 Excellence and Service Awards during our Early Childhood Educators' Day celebrations.*

## Occupational Therapy (OT) Week



*To celebrate world Occupational Therapy Week in October, our Occupational Therapists facilitated a 'Regulation Station' with a variety of snacks for our staff that have either an 'alerting' or 'calming' effect on the sensory nervous system.*



Towards  
**150**  
1874 – 2024  
*Celebrating our past,  
Inspiring our future*

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