



Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
 operating as **Yes Unlimited**
 (formerly YES Youth & Family Services)
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Yes Unlimited is all about investing in people and building better communities.

We are a not-for-profit, community-based organisation and have been delivering a range of services and supports in Albury and surrounding areas since 1983.

Yes Unlimited is a Company Limited by Guarantee and proud to be locally governed by our Board of Directors who bring a mix of skills, experience and community perspectives to the strategic direction of our organisation.

Our team of over 45 staff are passionate about our community, and believe that everyone should have access to the resources, knowledge and supports they need to thrive.

Yes Unlimited acknowledges the funding support provided by NSW Department of Communities and Justice during the 2019/2020 financial year.

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Vision, Purpose, Values

Yes Unlimited acknowledges the First Australians as the traditional custodians of the continent, whose cultures are among the oldest living cultures in human history. We pay respect to the Elders of the community and extend our recognition to their descendants.

Our Vision:

Future generations without homelessness by 2050.

Our Purpose:

Investing in people; building better communities.

Our Core Values:

Clients First

- ✔ We are deeply on our clients side
- ✔ We are eternally optimistic and don't give up
- ✔ We actively support clients autonomy

Leaders in Practice

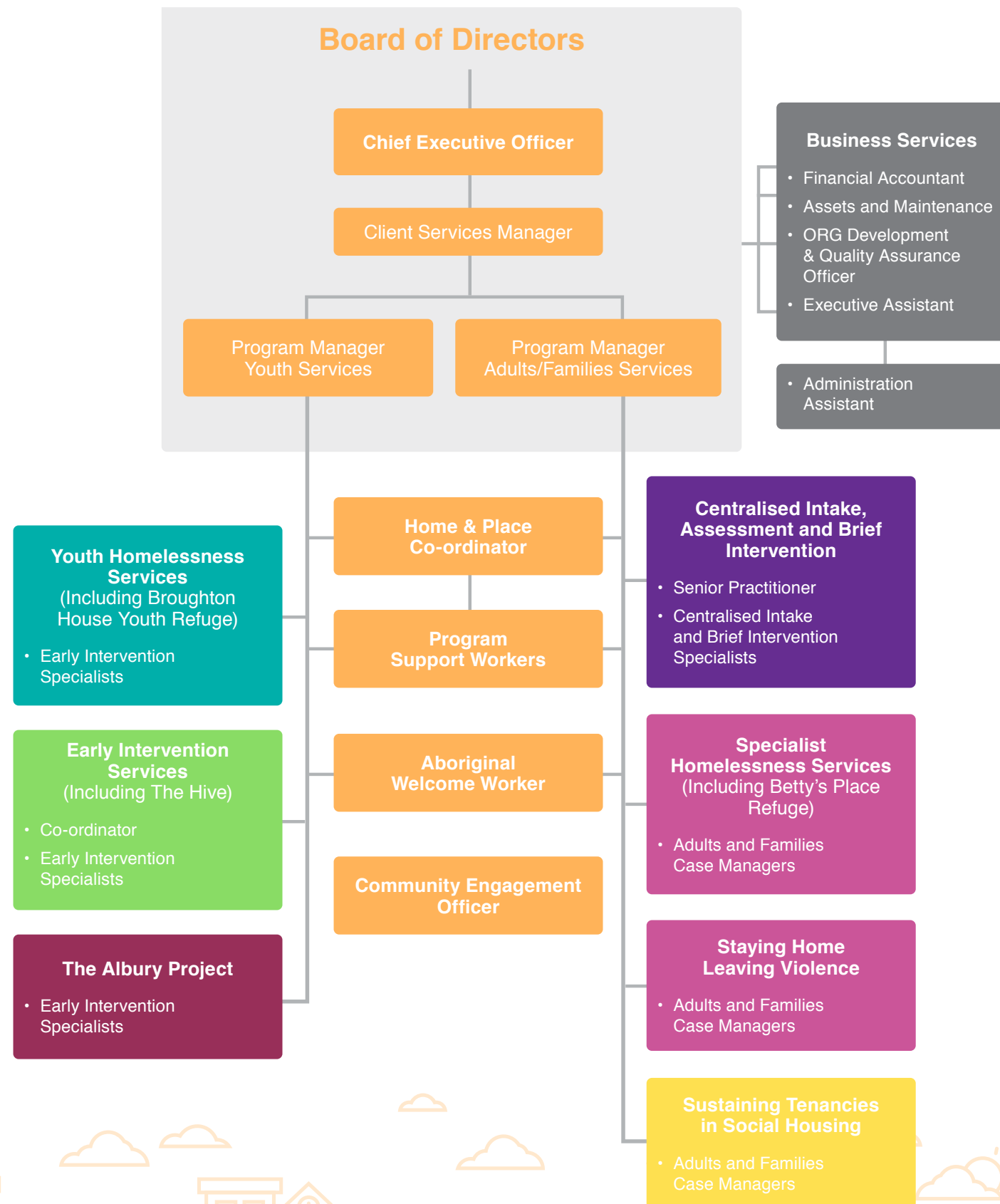
- ✔ We remain constructively discontent
- ✔ We are brutally honest with ourselves
- ✔ We are creative, innovative and purposeful
- ✔ We have unusually high expectations of ourselves and others

Doing it Together

- ✔ We compulsively build partnerships
- ✔ We capitalise on the diversity of our people
- ✔ We build dynamic teams



Organisational Chart



Our People

Board of Directors

Dave Gaukroger
Chairman

Heather Downey
Vice Chair

Tracey Fraser
Secretary

Jennefer McCrum
Treasurer

Dianne Sutherland
Director

Janet Osborne
Director

Megan Pearce
Director

Michael Brigden
Director

Allan Mason
Director

Executive Team

Dianne Glover
Chief Executive Officer

Jon Park
Client Services Manager

Tam Quinn
Program Manager – Youth Services

Kira Pace
Program Manager – Intake and Adults/
Families Services

Cara Smillie
Executive Assistant

Business Services

John Davern
Financial Accountant

Deb Ferrara
Assets and Maintenance

Lia Carle
Administration Assistant

Bec Glen
Organisational Development / Quality Assurance

Centralised Intake Team

Jacqui Devlin
Senior Practitioner

Joanne Campbell
Forward Gonekai

Anna Gates

Chris Cameron

Kelsey Wrobel

Adults/Families Team

Robyn White

Liam Colvin

Charlie Harsant

Renee Whitehead

Paul Andrews

Katrina Warnock

Roslyn Twycross

Laura Power

Jane Dickinson

Emily Woodfall

Specialists

Serena Kent
Home and Place Co-ordinator

Davina Jackson
Aboriginal Welcome Worker

Michelle Milligan
Community Engagement

Youth Services Team

Kate McGrath
Early Intervention Co-ordinator

Elizabeth Cattell

Jelena Keljin

Josie Daly

Craig Rogers

Madeleine Reid

Amy Tobin

Kristy Phillips

Jade Clements

Ryan Harris

Brett Sanderson

Program Support Team

Tika Paudyel

Samantha Whittet

Shelbie Strauss

Kylie Owen

Leah Gabriel

Deegan Jackson

Sarah Lockwood

Rachel Pettit

Kelsea Pygram

Celeste Schaeffer

Yes Changemakers

(Youth Participation and Leadership Group)

Macky Cusick

Hunter McDowall

Hannah Emerson

Ilona Moss

Jasmin Ward

Volunteer Youth Mentors

Abbie Ridley

Craig Garvey

Daisy Franz

Glenys Atkins

Jessie Yasby

Josh Richards

Lareina Hosking

Samantha Pond

Shelbie Strauss

Tracey Meacham

Chairman's Report



There have been so many words written about 2020 already that it feels almost redundant to attempt to describe the effect that COVID-19 has had on our lives. We have lost count of the number of times that we have heard the words unprecedented, catastrophic, and unpredictable, however at Yes Unlimited one of the words to describe 2020 is "success".

After half a decade of constant changes within our sector, working non-stop to find innovative ways to adapt to these new realities, our plan for the last year was to consolidate on our successes, and plan the structures within our organisation that would continue to serve us into the future. Despite the need to respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have still managed to execute on our plan and finish the year better prepared for the decade ahead.

Yes Unlimited has seen a 55% growth in staffing over the last few years as a result of the additional programs that we have been implementing, such as The Albury Project, Staying Home; Leaving Violence, and Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing. These programs are all wonderful additions to our portfolio of services, and enhance our ability to support our clients.

To support this organisational growth we have invested in the leadership structures and capabilities at Yes Unlimited. We have created senior roles to provide support for the expanded workforce, and the opportunity for further career growth within our teams. Megan Pearce and I have completed a diploma in Not For Profit governance,

supported by Yes Unlimited, and Program Managers Kira and Tam are undertaking the Advanced Leadership Program, through Women & Leadership Australia, having both qualified for scholarships to support their study.

In addition to structural changes within our programs, we have also enhanced our support capabilities to better manage the growing organisation that we are today. Our Community Engagement Officer, Assets and Maintenance Officer, and Organisational Development and Quality Assurance Officer will provide support to our program teams and the executive to allow them to maintain focus on their goals, with the confidence that these vital functions are being properly administered.

We have continued to build on our strong relationship with the NSW State Government, with visits from Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Gareth Ward, and Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Mark Speakman. Our thanks goes to the Member for Albury, Justin Clancy, for his strong advocacy on behalf of Yes Unlimited, and his support of our work and our mission. It has been gratifying to be able to share our vision with some of the decision makers within the NSW Government, and advocate for the systemic change that we believe is required to see future generations without homelessness.

Embedding new structures, identifying areas that require change, and supporting the growth of your staff are not easy tasks, so we are fortunate to have a CEO with the skill and passion of Di Glover to continue leading us. This year Di celebrated twenty years at the helm of Yes Unlimited, she has shepherded us through challenging times and built an organisation and a culture that is the envy of our peers. Thank you Di, your dedication and commitment to Yes Unlimited, its staff, and the people it serves is unfailing, and we all owe you a debt of gratitude for what you have achieved. It was fitting that this year Di was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award in the NSW Specialist Homelessness Services Good Practice Awards.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of all of the staff, including the executive team, who have continued to ensure that we put Clients First, even in the face of a global pandemic.

Thank you to the board of directors for your contributions across the last year. In particular I would like to acknowledge Tracey Fraser, Jennefer McCrum and Allan Mason as they complete their first year on the board, the addition of your skills and insight to our team makes us a stronger and better organisation, and we value your experience and your fresh perspectives.

While 2020 has been often referred to as a year of uncertainty, at Yes Unlimited we have spent our time wisely, building the structures that will prepare us for the future, and reinforcing the foundations of our successes, our team and culture. We look ahead with anticipation for what is to come

Dave Gaukroger
Chair, Board of Directors



Executive Team Report

To say this year has been unprecedented would at this point be, well... preceded. As with the rest of world COVID-19 has disrupted, challenged and pushed Yes Unlimited to work in new ways, many of which we'll happily discard when this over, although equally there have been some valuable adaptations that we'll keep moving forward. Considering this context, we are so proud of how the organisation has risen to the challenges, and maintained a commitment to our values and work with the community in the face of an ever-changing situation. The organisation continues to grow with a staffing team of almost 50 people, new programs, new initiatives and an expanding sphere of influence in the community sector. It is a pleasure to present the 2019/2020 Annual Report and our reflections on the year that has been.

While we are yet to see the lasting impacts that will inevitably unfold following the COVID-19 pandemic, the spotlight on issues such as homelessness, housing affordability, domestic and family violence and poverty more generally should be a flashpoint for policy change and a greater investment in real solutions. The temporary increase of the Job Seeker payment by the Federal Government saw many in the community services sector, Yes Unlimited included, reporting reduced demand for emergency food, rent arrears, and other assistance. As COVID-19 escalated, state governments across the country

quickly provided immediate temporary accommodation to anyone who was homeless, and excitingly NSW followed this with the new Together Home program, an evidence-based Housing First model which has been shown to work internationally. Additionally, the Victorian government has announced an extraordinary investment in social housing as part of its COVID-19 recovery plan.

All of this rapidly introduced innovation and resourcing raises some questions - have we really been doing our best to address these issues at a societal level? Are the individual crises and the hardship experienced by people on daily basis, pre-COVID-19, not equally deserving of a "pulling out all stops" type of response? We don't need a pandemic to tell us that in a country like Australia the continued prevalence of homelessness, when we know what works, is unacceptable. We hope that the lessons learned during this time catalyse long awaited movement in this space. We thank Katherine McKernan and her team at Homelessness NSW for both their support through COVID-19 and the leadership they have shown in advocating for increased affordable housing and advancements in homelessness responses.

Although COVID-19 has dominated much of our energy this year, the work we set for ourselves 12 months ago has continued to progress with some notable highlights to mention:

Our People:

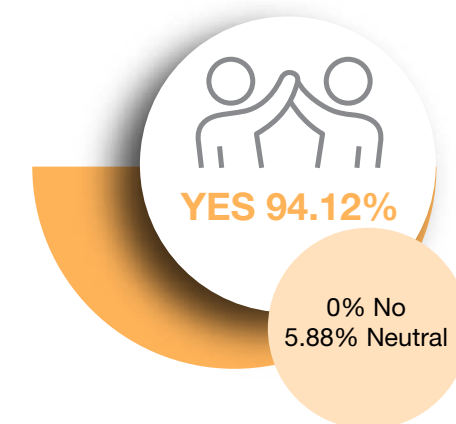
With a growing staff team has come an increased focus on ensuring the culture, integration and wellbeing of our teams is maintained and nurtured. A core tenet of our Model of Practice is that if we are to expect our staff to 'contain' the trauma and distress that often comes with this type of work, then we need to have systems, support and personal development work in place to ensure that our people themselves are 'contained'.

With the continued development of our comprehensive supervision model, trauma-informed group processes, Personal Development Plans, regular training, an expanding leadership team and our Employee Assistance Program we

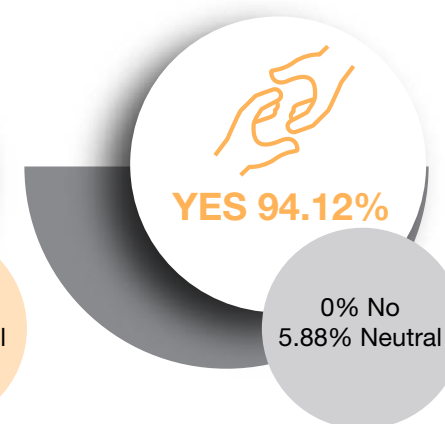
believe we are well on the way to growing the emotionally intelligent, attuned and values-driven workforce we need to do this work well. While working from home was initially forced upon us to a degree far greater than most of us would have liked, the benefits of a better work-life balance, and opportunities for staff to step outside the crisis work is something we have now adopted as part of our normal way of working. Recent staff surveys and consultations have been glowing, showing a strong sense of connection to the organisation, and the meaningfulness of the work, demonstrating the effectiveness of structures we have implemented around this.

Staff Satisfaction Survey Results

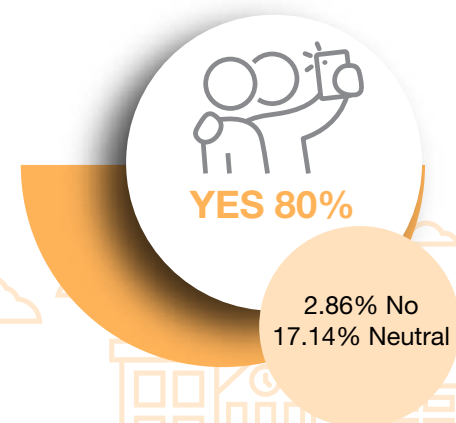
Do you enjoy our organisation's culture?



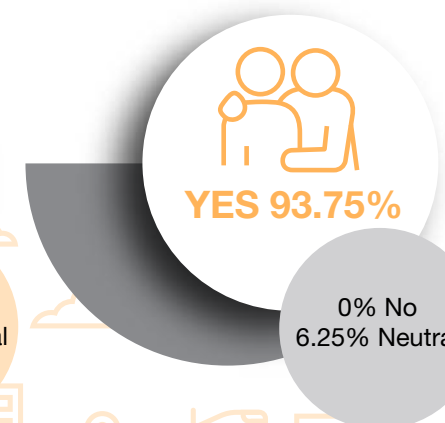
Do you find your work meaningful?



Do you feel connected to your coworkers?



Are you supported to self-care?



Executive Team Report

Our Community:

We were pleased to welcome our long time partners from Griffith, Linking Communities Network, to co-locate with us at the Hub after they successfully took on the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. This is a key service for the local domestic and family violence (DFV) response and formalising a partnership through a co-location provides an important opportunity for greater integration with our Staying Home Leaving Violence program and Betty's Place Women's Refuge.

Also in the DFV space, Yes Unlimited has been working closely with Amanda Cohn and the Border Domestic Violence Committee and were thrilled to launch a collaborative project "A Case for Change - Family and Domestic Violence in Albury Wodonga" this year. Consulting with key stakeholders, including people with lived experience of DFV, this research and development project will examine the widely acknowledged systemic issues at a local level, as well as the current model of Betty's Place Women's Refuge to set out a clear agenda and set of recommendations for our future work in this area.

Our Systems:

By 2024 all Specialist Homelessness Services will be required to meet the Australian Service Excellence Standards in order to receive funding. While this accreditation will be a substantial body of work for the organisation, the internal process and systems development that this will require has come at a perfect time in terms of accommodating our growth and changing organisational needs. The critical consideration for us as we enter this new stage of growth is ensuring that our values and culture, our model of practice and our capacity to innovate and flex is maintained and supported by a robust organisational infrastructure.

Our Influence:

Yes Unlimited published two articles in the National Homeless Magazine 'Parity', co-authored with Associate Professor David Mackenzie and Dr. Tammy Hand, this year, documenting the story of the Albury Project and the adaptive practices adopted during COVID-19. We've been active in the Albury -Wodonga Regional Deal working groups, regular meetings with ministers, local MP's and departmental leadership, presenting at the annual Homelessness NSW conference, speaking on panels regarding drug policy reform, and a variety of other forums. We are so pleased to see Yes increasingly operating in spaces where the opportunities to influence the systems we operate in are genuine and wide reaching.

After a disruptive 2020, our energy over the next 12 months will be concentrating on really getting the organisation back on track with the following three focus areas.

Recovery:

Understandably there is a high level of fatigue both within our local service systems and the wider community. It's important that we allow the time and space for people to catch their breath and recalibrate to the new normal, whilst preparing to respond to the lasting impacts of this pandemic such as unemployment, escalations in mental health issues, implications of economic recession and the challenges that are still yet to unfold.

Re-integrating

Integrating both internally as an organisation and within our wider systems has been a central piece of work for Yes Unlimited leading up to COVID-19, and this prior work in many ways positioned us well to handle the pandemic. With social distancing, lockdowns, office closures, border closers and restrictions on movement, true integration has been difficult. We know that integrated teams and service systems get better outcomes for clients and we look forward to the benefits that come with investing in this area.

Re-gearing for Growth

Inevitably growth comes with new opportunities and challenges and we are ever conscious of the pitfalls that can emerge if this is not thoughtfully navigated. Modernising policy and processes, expanding internal leadership, and the further development of organisational infrastructure will be essential in positioning us to achieve our core purpose of 'Investing in People: Building Better Communities' in new and exciting ways.

While we always acknowledge the people who make up this amazing organisation, with the challenges of this year in mind the gratitude is particularly heartfelt. A sincere thanks to our staff who have had to wrestle with home schooling, lock downs, working from home, and border crossings as well as having to rapidly adapt practice approaches, roll out new processes overnight, participate in epic Zoom marathons, and undertake people-focused work from a distance. This has been a year where the organisational energy and culture could have easily flagged and stagnated, yet with their dedication it has continued to thrive.

A special congratulations to our Assets Manager, Deb Ferrara, who reached her 10-year anniversary with the organisation this year. Deb has been through many re-incarnations at Yes Unlimited and has played a critical role in building organisational processes and systems as we continue to grow. Thanks so much for everything you've given the organisation Deb.

Thank you to our wonderful Board of Directors who volunteer their time to keep us thinking big, drive our future thinking and provide a steady hand when things get rocky.

Most importantly thank you to the people who allow us to enter their lives in times of hardship, vulnerability or injustice and never cease to inspire us with their resilience and courage.

We look forward to another year of progress in 2021.

Dianne Glover

Chief Executive Officer

Jon Park

Client Services Manager



Deb Ferrara



Di's Milestones

An important milestone for Yes Unlimited CEO, Di Glover

2019-20 saw our beloved commander in chief Di Glover turn 20 - in CEO years! - and also receive a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Homelessness NSW Specialist Homelessness Services Good Practice Awards.

Throughout her 20 years as CEO of Yes Unlimited, Di has nurtured the organisation from a small, youth-focused NGO with under 20 staff and an annual budget of \$900,000, to one of the central services in the regional area of Albury and surrounds, now with 50 staff and an annual budget of \$5 million.

Di is a consummate innovator with a particular 'bent' for localised systems change. During her time at Yes Di has led a number of important initiatives aimed at creating long-lasting, systemic change. These include our co-location project that saw 4 separate homelessness services create a 'one-stop-shop' at The Hub; introducing a Centralised Intake Model for homelessness services in Albury; and more recently the realisation of The Albury Project (Community of Schools and Services Model), all of which have broken new ground in terms of regional service delivery.

More broadly, Di is well respected in the sector, had chaired, led and participated in numerous local forums, panels, committees and boards.

Di leads authentically from the heart and anyone who has worked closely with her knows that timing is one of her key strengths as a leader. She knows when to let things be and trust the process, and equally when to be firm and take a stand. Di regularly states "I don't care about the * _____ (*insert: funding, guidelines, criteria, etc) - we are here for the clients!", and firmly holds all of us at Yes Unlimited accountable to our organisational values: Clients First, Doing it Together and Leaders in Practice.

We at Yes could not be more proud of Di nor think of a more worthy recipient for a lifetime achievement award, after 30 years of genuine dedication to making a difference for people experiencing homelessness, 20 of those within our organisation. Congratulations Di!



Introducing Michelle - Yes Unlimited's Community Engagement Coordinator



Michelle Milligan

This year we were excited to introduce a new role for Yes Unlimited: the Community Engagement Coordinator. There is so much goodwill in our local community, with a growing number of people donating money, their time and other forms of support to enhance and raise awareness about the work we do and the issues we care about. For some time we have been thinking about how to really mobilise and make the most of this group of supporters and collaborators, which led to the introduction of this role. Long-time Yeser Michelle Milligan jumped at the chance to get amongst the action. Here's a little snapshot about Michelle and the new role.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your journey with Yes Unlimited?

I was raised in Lavington and attended local schools; I am now raising my own children in the same community. I am an animal lover and have 3 sausage dogs and a cat. I love live music and doing bush walks – Albury has some amazing tracks for this.

I have been in this field for 12 years, after completing a Diploma in Community Services, I commenced working at The Place Youth Centre in 2009. During my time at The Place, I developed strong connections with the youth programs and staff across Yes, which made the transition easier in 2014 when The Place joined Yes and became The Hive Youth Resource Centre. It's been amazing to have had so many opportunities since joining Yes and I am excited to have taken on this role and to be stepping into the new spaces that this role is taking me.

Why do you do this type of work?

I have an interest and passion about my community, I'm a people person and believe a lot of my values and beliefs are from my Grandparents and direct family. My Grandparents would always have an open door, a hot coffee and chat for anyone who needed it, and I always admired the care, no-judgement and generosity they would share with anybody that may have needed it. These values motivated me to undertake study and build a professional career where I can not only work directly with people, but the broader community to promote connection, understanding and resilience.

What have been the highlights of the role so far?

Meeting people, promoting the work of Yes Unlimited – exploring how we can effectively raise awareness of homelessness and other important issues, attending fundraising events organised by community, sitting in different spaces/teams. Seeing that the community does care and they are in this with us – Investing in people, building better communities.

What do you think are the best ways people can support the work of Yes Unlimited?

The continued support and goodwill that Yes Unlimited receives from the community still astounds me, often people want to know how they can help. From this, staff worked on having a clear process for Community Donations and Contributions. This allowed us to further build on partnerships with local charities who are set up to manage and distribute donated goods appropriately. We encourage donations such as toys, bedding, toiletries, and similar items, to go to these suitable services.

Discussing the Community donations and Contributions process also allowed us to share ways that people can support Yes. This includes Cash or voucher donations, which allow us to be creative in several ways including maintaining our therapeutic spaces, investing in people's talents, providing targeted group work or directly distributing vouchers that people can use, for example; a parent using a voucher to purchase Christmas or birthday presents for their child.

Providing opportunities, such as work experience or volunteering in our Youth Mentoring Program, contributes greatly to the work YES does. Without Volunteers or people wanting to provide experiences, some of our programs would not exist.

Write to our local MP, sign petitions, and discuss local and national issues with anyone that will listen!

If you could say one thing to people who want to do something about homelessness, domestic and family violence or other community issues, what would it be?

Let's make sure we are talking about issues we are seeing, hearing and experiencing – having these conversations takes away the stigma and builds a community with shared understanding and responsibility for these issues!

“I had the pleasure of nominating Michelle for the Youth Action Youth Worker of the year award in 2017, and whilst she has worked in the field for many years, Michelle's passion for people and community is still so strongly reflected throughout all of her work. Michelle is known for going above and beyond in all of her work and works tirelessly to improve young people's experiences and promote positive opportunities for community connection. She always finds ways to extend herself and invest in developing young peoples' sense of self, passions, aspirations and broader community connections and resources.”

Tam Quinn

Program Manager Youth Services

It's been another huge year of growth for our Adults and Families Service Spectrum as we bring on new staff, take on new programs and further develop our existing suite of services. In hindsight our consistent efforts to integrate our Adults and Families services last year has really prepared us for challenges of COVID-19 and working from a distance. While many of our plans for this year were upended, we have by no means slowed down, and hope you enjoy reading the program reports that follow.

As our Adult Service Spectrum grows we've gradually been making adjustments to our organisational structure to accommodate the changing needs of the team. We were pleased to welcome Jacqui Devlin to a new senior role in the Centralised Intake, Assessment and Brief Intervention team to provide day-to-day leadership at the Hub. Serena Kent, who has been based with our youth team for over ten years, has taken on the new role of Home and Place Coordinator, working across Betty's Place, Broughton House and our transitional housing properties, to ensure consistent and high-quality placement provision. This expansion of leadership capacity is timely, as the rapidity of our growth has really stretched us over the last few years. On a similar note we have also increased our office space at Betty's Place and plans are underway for the re-development of the Hub office space.

Our presence in the domestic and family violence (DFV) space has increased over the past couple of years, and the systemic issues that exist have become more apparent to us as our understanding of the sector grows. In NSW there is no single entry-point for DFV, and there are multiple agencies with different funding requirements working in the space, with cross border challenges adding further complexity. This is confusing enough for people working in the sector to navigate, let alone people trying to access support from this system. While much improvement has been made, the NSW response to DFV still has a way to go, and alongside the Border Domestic Violence Network we were excited this year to launch the Case for Change - DFV in Albury Wodonga project. This project will analyse the DFV support system in the border area in order to develop a local reform agenda.

We can only do this work when we do it together, and we greatly appreciate our ongoing partnerships with Homes Out West, Linking Communities Network, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, St Vincent De Paul, VERTO Tenants Advice, DCJ Housing, Wellways, Carevan and many other local services.

I want to finish by saying a big thank you to our staff for their flexibility, patience, and forgiveness as we've grappled with such a tumultuous year. I'm so proud to lead and be part of this team that cares deeply about the work we do and the people we do it for.

Kira Pace

Program Manager Adults and Families Services



Centralised Intake, Assessment and Brief Intervention (CIAB) based at The Hub at 562 Macauley Street provides the first response for people experiencing homelessness and related issues in Albury and surrounding areas. CIAB aims to offer a warm and welcoming environment where people can stabilise after an initial crisis, provide immediate short-term support and facilitate easy access to the wider service system as required.

It's hard to believe that it's been just on five years since Yes Unlimited introduced the CIAB model in Albury following the NSW Going Home Staying Home Reform. It has undoubtedly become an important fixture in the local service landscape. Since its initiation the approach has constantly evolved as we test and learn ways to better respond to issues as they present and manage local demand for services. Creating a physical space that feels welcoming, calm and safe at the Hub has been critical to this, as has been the role of Welcome Workers who are the first face a person sees when they walk in the door.

Given the CIAB response is so tied to the physical space and face-to-face connection, COVID-19 posed a particular challenge and has required a radically different application of this model, from a distance. With the Hub doors closed, staff moved to a home and away team, an intercom was

installed at the front door and much of the work took place over the phone or via Zoom. While we were disappointed to limit the face-to-face work so drastically, there were some unexpected gains, with more people attending initial appointments and a degree of increased engagement for some people, as we were just a phone call away. There have also been some great examples of the local service system pulling together and we greatly appreciated the efforts of Foodshare and Carevan in working with us to provide emergency assistance through this time. We will definitely take these learnings moving forward, however it became even more clear to us just how irreplaceable the face to face work is, particularly when people are distressed, and we were very excited to re-open the doors later in the year.

A pressing problem arising from COVID-19 for our clients has been the impact on the local rental market. As people bunkered down and became less mobile, the rental market closed up and the rental vacancy rate in the Albury region has consistently remained below 1%. For people on a low income who already have a difficult time accessing affordable housing this has had drastic consequences. The Job Keeper and Job Seeker increases, as well as more flexible access to temporary accommodation through the Department of Communities and Justice, have provided a stop-gap with short-term options in hotels and caravan parks, however as these are being wound back, we are starting to see the ongoing impacts.

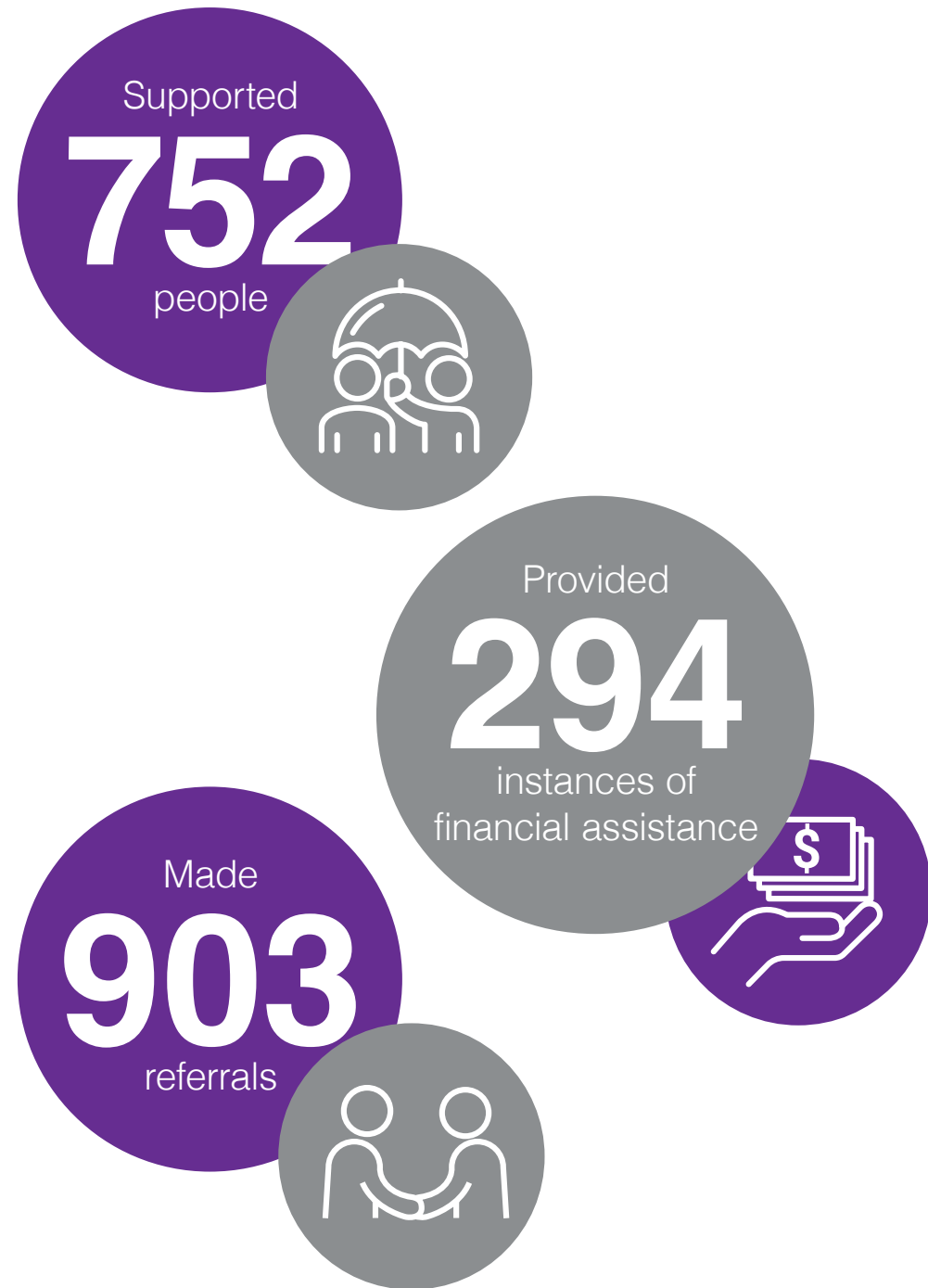
Aside from COVID-19 there has been some great progress through 2020. Internally, we have made an important investment in refining our response to domestic and family violence and integrating the CIAB response with our Staying Home Leaving Violence program. The co-location with the Women's Court Advocacy Service at the Hub has been an amazing addition and greatly improved our collaborative work, given they are just down the hall. We have been increasingly working alongside Wellways with clients who have a mental health condition or disability. Given almost 60% of clients who present to CIAB have had a previous mental health diagnosis, this an essential partnership and we thank the team at Wellways for all the great collaborative work this year.



Centralised Intake, Assessment and Brief Intervention

Centralised Intake, Assessment and Brief Intervention

In the 2019-2020 financial year CIAB:



"I approached the hub seeking help as myself and my son were victims of domestic violence, after explaining my situation to Yes staff they then went through many options with myself regarding safety, one of those being victims of crime they helped complete and support me through the process. Our claim was accepted and payed out within a very short amount of time, which was a surprise to me as I had encountered much difficulty navigating this prior. I thank the Yes team for making my life just that bit easier and better"

CIA Client

"My experience at the hub couldn't go any better, the Yes staff was really resourceful and went out of their way to help with all my requests"

CIA Client

"After what I went through with my ex-partner, it was comforting to know that I had Yes Unlimited there to support me. They rang me multiple times to see if there was anything I needed and to see how I was doing. Always so patient and caring"

CIA Client





The Together Home program is a \$36.1m investment by the NSW Government that was established to support people rough sleeping across NSW during the COVID-19 pandemic into stable accommodation, linked to wraparound supports. Based on Housing First principles, its key aim is to transition people away from homelessness and into long-term, stable housing, whilst improving overall personal wellbeing. Local community housing provider Homes Out West provides access to private rental properties through a 'head leasing' arrangement and partners with Yes Unlimited to provide intensive, trauma informed support to clients to address the underlying factors that may have contributed to their experience of homelessness.

The Together Home program was announced mid-2020 as the NSW government looked to transition people who had been temporarily accommodated in hotels and caravan parks during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic into other accommodation options. Housing First models frame housing as a human right that should not be dependent on people engaging with support or becoming 'housing ready' before being able access stable accommodation. The model has been on Yes's radar for some time and while it has been a very rushed start we are excited to be able to test its application in Albury. As described by the Canadian Housing First Toolkit (2020), Housing First models are characterised by five principles:

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements.
2. Consumer choice and self-determination.
3. Individualised, recovery oriented and client driven supports.
4. Harm reduction.
5. Social and community integration.

We have re-assigned two staff members who will work with up to eight clients over two years across the Southern Murrumbidgee area. So far, five people have been successfully housed and are actively engaging with Yes's support.

Whilst we welcome the expansion of Housing First models and the appetite from the NSW Government to try something different, as well as the opportunity to further collaborate with our partners Homes Out West and Housing NSW, it is with some mixed feelings. The Together Home program is a frustrating example of an increasingly narrowed policy focus on visible, rough sleeping, and, given it was initiated with no additional housing stock, a continued neglect of an investment in social and affordable housing. A key challenge of its rollout so far has been the close to zero percent vacancy rate in the local private rental market, meaning it has been difficult to procure properties. This limits property choices for clients and challenges delivery of the model, with choice being a fundamental tenet of successful Housing First approaches.

This critique aside, it's been a great opportunity for Yes Unlimited, Homes Out West and Housing NSW to work collaboratively through the locally established Client Referral Assessment Group, furthering our collective response to complex situations. The learning through this new approach will undoubtedly carry future implications for our practice response.



New York

75% of people who participated in the **New York Pathways Program** spent an average of

4 years
stably housed

compared to **48%** receiving a standard response



Canada

In a five-site study with over **2,000**

Housing First Program participants spent an average of **73%** of their time in stable housing over 24 months

compared to **32%** in the control group



Europe

4 **Housing First** projects in Europe achieved housing retention rates of between

80% to 90%



Melbourne

After **2 years**

70% of people in the **Street to Home** program were in independent secure accommodation

After four years **75%** of **Journey to Social Inclusion** participants remained in stable housing.

Reference: Council to Homeless Persons, *Housing First*, 2018



LCN Conference

Betty's Place Women's Refuge provides crisis accommodation combined with a comprehensive program that includes individualised case management and wellbeing supports. In addition, case managers provide outreach support to families, in particular women and children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and those experiencing domestic and family violence in our local community.

It has been a big year for us in the DFV space and we are excited to see the local sector starting to resemble something that is closer to a system than a dispersed array of programs. The partnership and Hub co-location with Linking Communities Network's WDVCS has been a major enhancement for service delivery locally, closing the gap on what were two fragmented DFV services. Seeing the way that these previously separate service components are beginning to come together, the strengthening role of the local Safety Action Meetings, and the focus on systems development from the Border Domestic Violence Network, has brought us much optimism and we believe we are seeing the early stages of genuine, locally driven reform.

Betty's Place was required to reduce its capacity due to COVID-19 early in the year to ensure we were able to meet the requirement of social distancing and isolation. While we were initially concerned about the impacts of this, interestingly we observed the demand for crisis accommodation reduce during this time. With more options to access temporary accommodation (hotels or caravan parks) either through DCJ Housing or being self-funded with the increases to Job Keeper/Job Seeker, we found

that many women were choosing to take this option, rather than come enter communal refuge environment. It makes inherent sense, given shared living is difficult at the best of times, that women, particularly those with children, would want to avoid having to navigate living with others during a period of acute crisis, and we know there is a lesson for us to take from this. As part of the 'A Case for Change - DFV in Albury Wodonga' project, we're excited to be taking a deep dive into the current model of Betty's Place, and developing a plan to build on the important legacy of this service in modernising how we deliver crisis accommodation and associated supports to women and children.

We had the great pleasure of attending the Western NSW Domestic Violence Regional & Rural Conference in Griffith as a team in late 2019, hosted by Linking Communities Network. The content was moving, inspiring and informative and it was wonderful spending time with our regional counterparts and absorbing the energy of the event as a team. Being in the work on a day-to-day basis, it's easy to forget the gravity of DFV as a national social issue. The toll it takes on communities is huge, and there is a strong need for us to look to the big picture for solutions.



Lavington Lions Club Inc. - donation presentation

“Murray River WDVCS (Linking Communities Network) have been made to feel welcomed, valued and respected as a Domestic Violence Specialist Service by Yes Unlimited staff and management, joining together to streamline referral processes to provide appropriate responsive support to our mutual clients. The relationship we hold together complements core values in providing quality client-centred services and is a positive model of co-located likeminded services working effectively together to achieve great outcomes and options for people experiencing DFV.”

Jasmine Coromandel Manager
Murray River WDVCS



Staying Home Leaving Violence

The Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) program based at Betty's Place focuses on supporting women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence (DFV) to remain in their own home if they choose to or find alternative housing quickly, as well as providing support that enhances their sense of safety and stability. It is an intensive, needs-based case management model that works with key agencies such as the Police, Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS), health services, Housing NSW and other services as part of a collaborative response to DFV.

As we enter the second year of SHLV, our attention has been primarily on refining what we offer through the program and how we integrate it with Yes Unlimited's internal services and the relevant external services. The increased use of Safety Smart Watches, certain security items (thanks Bunnings Albury!), and access to the Immediate Needs Support Packages through Victims Services has seen an improving localised response to immediate safety issues. Over 200 women and children received either case management or case coordination through SHLV in the 2019/2020 financial year.

We are starting to see some great examples where clients have accessed multiple services and, as a result of the strong collaboration between agencies, it has felt like a single, seamless response (see case study). It has taken a concerted effort to achieve this kind of approach, given our DFV service system design is characterised by ad hoc funding arrangements and program structures, however when we see the outcomes we can achieve by doing things differently we know it's worth it. There is still a lot to be done in the space and we look forward to continuing the progress in 2021.

Case Study

An Integrated Spectrum of Services

Claire is 36 years old, residing in a social housing property with 4 children. Claire was initially identified at a local Safety Action Meeting as being at serious risk of harm from her ex-partner. An Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) was in place however she had not really engaged with services up to this point, other than a worker from her social housing provider who oversaw her tenancy. Working closely with her social housing provider, Yes Unlimited was able to support a referral into our Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing (STSH) program, which allowed us to have a discussion about the types of support this program could provide. Claire was pleased to hear she could access security lighting,

security cameras and specialised counselling focused on domestic and family violence. In preparing for an upcoming court appearance, the SHLV case manager organised a meeting with the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, which made Claire more comfortable in accessing court support on the actual day.

Following a breach of her AVO by her ex-partner, Claire was able to use the security camera footage to provide video evidence of the breach to police. Claire described this experience as a positive one, and feels safer and more confident in reporting breaches in the future.

(Names and details change for confidentiality)

“Everyone at Yes was extremely respectful and I am forever grateful for the service”

SHLV Client 2020



Cut It Out DFV Forum for Hairdressers and the Beauty Profession:
L-R Michael, NSW Police; Katrina, SHLV Yes Unlimited; Jesmine, WDVCAS



Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing

The Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing (STSH) pilot program works with people living in social housing to provide support around a range of issues that may have an impact on their tenancies, with the aim of preventing people from needing to enter the homelessness system due to losing their social housing tenancy. Supports provided vary widely and include practical and financial assistance, assistance to navigate social housing processes, referrals to more specialised services, and general supports to improve people's wellbeing. Yes Unlimited provides the service directly in Albury and sub-contracts to partner agency Linking Communities Network in Griffith. The program is funded for a four-year pilot period entering into its third year in 2021.

We've continued to have some great successes in STSH this year, while at the same time spending quite a bit of effort working through some of the problematic elements of program design and influencing how the program will look if it extends beyond the pilot period. Signs of this extension are promising, with further trial sites being rolled out in a number of other NSW locations. The opportunity to work hand-in-hand with our local Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Housing team has been invaluable and it is particularly exciting that through this program we are able to provide a response to a previously under-served group of people.

Since the program's commencement in April 2019 we have worked with over 240 people in Albury. The supports we provide are wide and varied, including assistance with property care, referrals to specialist services, navigating unmet maintenance requests, and frequently offering a listening ear to people who need it. The importance of a home being more than simply a house is acutely evident in STSH, and alongside all of the practical things

we do, supporting people to feel safe, secure and connected is the most critical aspect of the role. We've had some great experience working alongside other services, including Westside Community Centre, Mission Australia and Intereach and fostering these kinds of relationships will be an important focus for 2021.

The increased Job Seeker payment in response to COVID-19 had a stark impact on STSH clients and we quickly saw a rapid decline in issues such as rent arrears, emergency food requests and other financial crises. A number of clients mentioned that this was the first time they hadn't lived payment to payment. We think this highlights that while the program is aimed at sustaining tenancies much of what we do is actually responding to a degree of relative poverty, that will only ever be truly resolved with big picture societal change. With this in mind we want to acknowledge the strength and courage of the people we've worked with in STSH, who, despite not always getting a 'fair go', rise above it and keep going.

In late 2020 we submitted a review to DCJ highlighting the areas we believe could be improved in the STSH program design. These include:

- Caseloads: Given the need and complexity of the work, one case manager working with up to 60 clients does not allow for the intensity of support required.
- Incentive payments: The funding model of this pilot included additional funding based on outcomes achieved, aiming to incentivise services. As a values driven organisation Yes Unlimited is not incentivised by funding and the process for reporting against this has been a significant administrative burden.
- Prescriptive program structure: Rigid guidelines around client numbers, referral processes, and timeframes has limited the extent to which we can innovate and be creative within this program.



STSH Case Manager Renee

We are very grateful to our local DCJ Commissioning and Planning team as well as DCJ Housing for working with us in identifying these issues and embracing a learning mentality within the context of a pilot, having already taken on some of the changes suggested. With a few tweaks we think this program has amazing potential and we would love to see it continue into the future.

Ponderings from Davina . . . Yes's Aboriginal Welcome Worker

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan China, there was a time when all was simply 'normal' as opposed to being the 'new COVID Normal' we hear so much of today. Pre COVID, I flickered in and out of the Hub space lapping up opportunities spent liaising with clients, colleagues and our community. BBQ Breakfasts continued to be popular each Wednesday morning, once there I would work alongside staff from Wellways, Carevan and St Matthews. The BBQ Brekky had many regular attendees who as my rapport with them developed would share with me what their current housing situation or dwelling was actually like.

It's been a genuine privilege to participate in the Albury-Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service 'Women's Circle' at Glenecho which always guarantees the telling of a story of personal triumph over a more challenging period experienced in one's life. It really becomes evident that of all the many therapeutic outcomes this process can provide, simply sharing some bright coloured off-cuts of material, paints, scrapbooking decorations and half a day of one's time to be creative in exploring and expressing a shared culture and experience, is incredibly healing in its own right. Women would speak of their growing confidence and I enjoyed being available to link and refer anyone in need of support or information to the most appropriate service.

Our local Community Working Party (CWP) moved closer to finalising the Community Action Plan: 2020-2025 with ten focus areas identified for our local area each having its own goal and objective to be achieved. Of those ten focus areas it was identified that Yes Unlimited could be a potential partner in working alongside the CWP and other

government and NGO's in the following two focus areas;

Housing: Unsustainable tenancies leading to homelessness, sustaining affordable housing. The goal of the CWP here is to work with community to provide education to sustain tenancies, decrease overcrowding in properties, increase Indigenous home ownership, decrease homelessness.

Justice: Limited support/understanding within the Justice system for people experiencing domestic violence, mental health issues and criminal behaviour. The CWP's goal is to support preventative programs and events to assist in decreasing numbers of Aboriginal people entering the system. Aboriginal people are over-represented in the criminal justice system and the objective is to reduce youth representation by 11-19% and representation of Adults by 5%.

Goals were being kicked by all in each of these areas of community engagement until one Wednesday morning on my arrival at St Matthews I found a group of familiar faces sitting in the rotunda, grim faced and pointing towards a sign stuck to the door stating that COVID had for the time being claimed the weekly BBQ breakfast as one of latest casualties. Within days COVID had changed the way my game was played. My gallivanting around town was over.

Under the helpful and encouraging watch of my fellow Centralised Intake team I was based at the Hub for the very long and entire period of the mandatory lockdown. Captain Finance 'aka John our accountant' was a steady presence providing a level of safety and comfort to our newly appointed team as we coasted through the stormy and uncharted next few months together.

Fortunately during this time I did have a Practice Meeting project to work on and deliver to the Yes Team which was the screening of the Australian documentary 'In My Blood it Runs'. Originally the idea had been to view and screen the film at the Hive as a whole team, so initially I had some disappointment that COVID meant that viewing the film as a team in person was not going to be viable. However just as this film showed many examples of both the resilience and resourcefulness of Djujan and his family, resilience has been required as we worked through the many COVID challenges - our resourcefulness found ways to adapt quickly with enthusiasm to continue to meet the needs of our clients and the wider community. Our Yes Team bunkered down for a haul, not even knowing how long the haul would be lasting for.

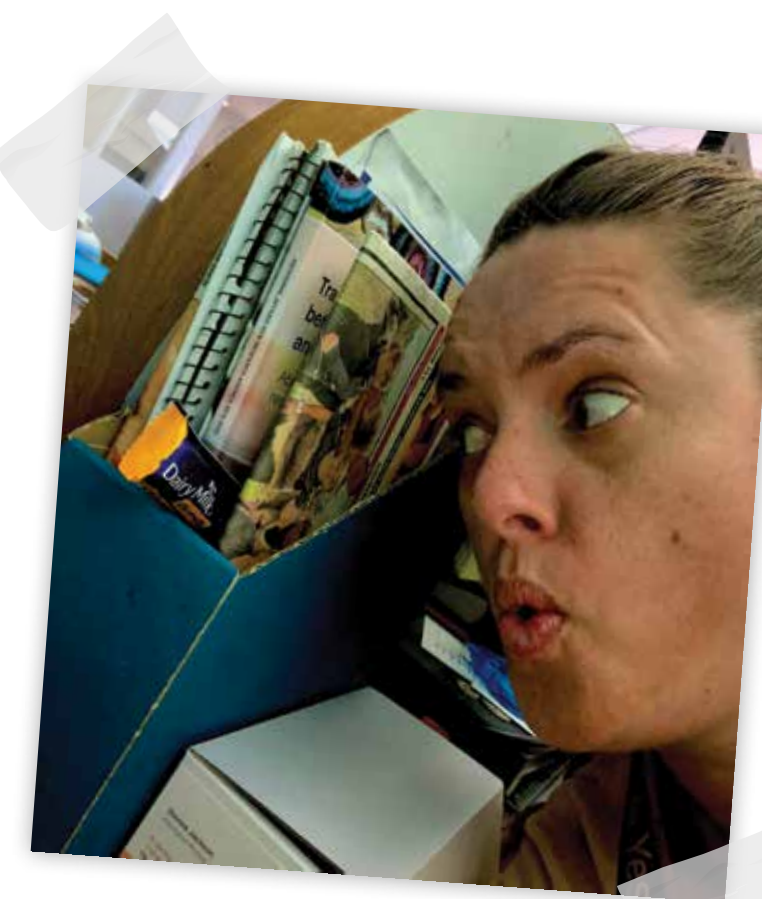
So, the thought of sharing the viewing experience of this film excited me. Without having the benefit of sitting down, yarning and sharing life experiences intimately with another person, the use of film to deliver the story was the closest to providing a similar experience. The telling of stories and the listening to true life tales is personally my favourite way of learning about another person and also about myself. Traditionally stories would be told seeking to teach those who listen. I thought the film In My Blood It Runs had the ability to immerse each viewer into the world of the story teller, to experience the characters - that was part of what I had hoped to achieve by sharing the film. For each of us to allow ourselves to be immersed into a world we may not have personally experienced.

The opportunity to witness up close the challenges found inside the classroom sitting alongside Djujan or to walk along beside his Grandmother imprinting footprints on Country with the purpose to teach tradition, teach language, a hope to imprint culture deep inside the mind of each child. To feel the worry of Grandmother as her walking tracks can no longer be seen in the dust just as with each

generation a mild diluting washes over ancient cultural traditions. It was to feel that. My other hope was for the film to create some discomfort in each of us and for that discomfort to spark a deep thought and discussion about the potential and need for an ATSI education system, the need to reform the juvenile justice system and for us all to come together in addressing the racism that continues to remain in and negatively impact our Country.

Our united discontent can pave the way for positive change in our community and for our whole Country. That is what we here at Yes Unlimited do, so let's continue to strive for it!

Davina Jackson,
Aboriginal Worker



The youth team started 2020 with grand plans of consolidating practice and processes, furthering our vision of an 'Integrated Spectrum of Youth Services'. After working through a number of hurdles in the previous year with departmental delays in the Albury Project and feeling a little stuck in a 'holding pattern' while higher level detail was worked through, we were ready for a big year of progress. These good intentions were quickly scuttled with the COVID-19 crisis and instead the year was spent adapting our approach, learning how to work from a distance and ensuring we maintained a response to the young people who use our service.

The pandemic undoubtedly hit all young people hard, with schools closed, milestone events cancelled, and isolation from peers, at a developmental stage in their life when we know these factors are critical. For young people who were already experiencing challenges and hardship, things were exacerbated further and we are only just beginning to understand some of the issues emerging from this time, particularly around mental health, youth unemployment and social isolation. This will continue to be an important issue on our radar as we look to next year and start planning for how we might be most responsive to these unfolding challenges.

I want to acknowledge the creativity and commitment that this year has demanded of our youth team. I'm so proud of the way they have adapted with the ever-changing situation. From online Kahoot games, appointments at the park, masks in vehicles, Zoom case conferences, extreme cleaning regimes and managing work from home, to running online challenges for the whole organisation in an effort to keep a sense of connection, we made things work and learned a lot along the way. While virtual engagement can never replace face to face connection, we can definitely see how valuable this can be in widening access and will undoubtedly become part of our normal practice to some degree. It was great to be able to share some of this learning by co-authoring an article for Parity, Physical Distancing — Social Connecting: Youth and Family Practice in the Covid-19 Crisis.

The turmoil of 2020 aside, the role of young people in national and global change movements should be a source of great optimism. The 'School Strike for Climate' and other climate action, Black Lives Matter, Raise the Age Campaign and protests around changes to university funding have all reflected a generation that is thinking seriously about the kind of future they want to be part of. To dismiss 'millennials' as self-absorbed and frivolous is a critical mistake that undermines their voice and costs us the opportunities that their contributions present. It's a genuine privilege to play a role in supporting and enabling the Yes Changemakers and other young people to have their say and influence change – even when it's contentious!

With things settling down we have been able to get many of our plans back on track and can see some amazing opportunities coming for 2021. Most excitingly is the really different level of collaboration that is happening locally at the moment, and while this kind of intense partnering/service integration is demanding and complicated at times, we can already see young people getting a better outcome as a result. As the partnerships within the Albury Project continue to strengthen, and the different aspects of our youth service delivery (Broughton House, The Hive, The Albury Project) become more of a single integrated response, Yes Unlimited, our partners and schools are well on track to growing an innovative youth access point in the Albury area.

Tam Quinn
Program Manager, Youth Services

Chapter 2: Responding to Youth Homelessness in the Covid-19 World

Physical Distancing — Social Connecting: Youth and Family Practice in the Covid-19 Crisis

Sandy Meessen, Team Leader, The Geelong Project, Barwon Child Youth and Family, Kate McGrath, Senior Early Intervention Specialist, The Albury Project, YES Unlimited, Dr Tammy Hand, University of South Australia, Associate Professor David MacKenzie, University of South Australia

Since earlier this year, the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted on countries around the world, spreading rapidly in many places and producing an alarming death toll for particularly vulnerable groups in society. The national response to the Covid-19 crisis has involved shutting down restaurants and cafés, not allowing people to congregate at events such as conferences or sporting venues. Mid-March 2020, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), followed shortly after by New South Wales (NSW), declared states of emergency. At around this time, orders were issued for people to self-isolate for 14 days if they have the virus. Social distancing was promoted to limit the contagion. On 25 March 2020, major sections of the Australian economy were shut down and Australians everywhere urged to 'stay at home' unless obtaining food supplies, requiring medical services, exercising, or engaged in essential work or study.

These necessary measures not only have affected businesses all over Australia, but especially have impacted on the work done in the human services sector. This includes the work we do in communities implementing the 'Community of Services and Schools' (COSS) Model of early intervention.¹

The Covid-19 Crisis and the COSS Model

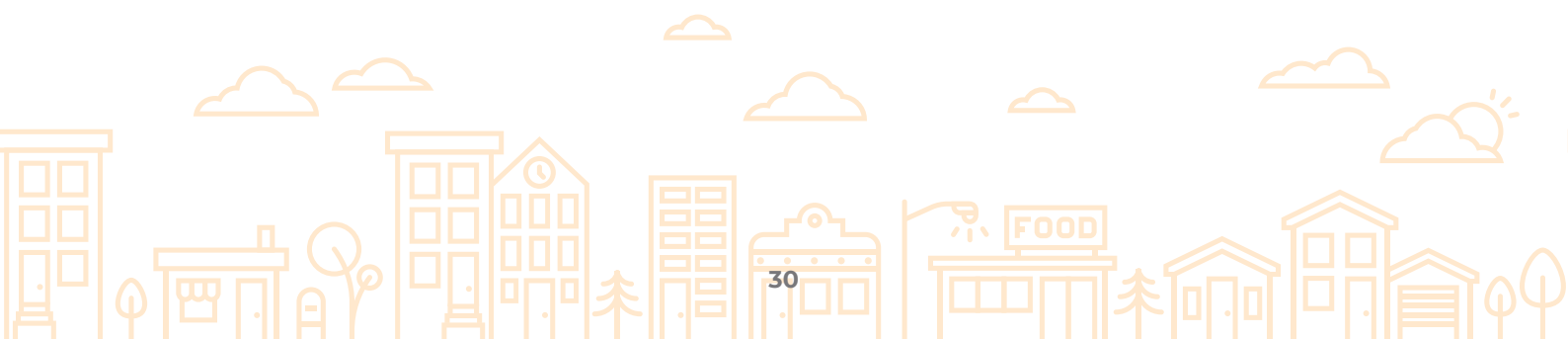
The Geelong Project is expanding to seven schools in Geelong. The Albury Project is one of two pilot projects in NSW and has just completed its second screening for risk in the Albury schools. The challenge for both community collectives is how to operate despite restrictions on face-to-face contact. This article is a report from a discussion amongst COSS Model

workers in Victoria and NSW as we all attempt to rise to the challenge.

A seminal innovation in COSS Model is population screening for risk using a series of validated indicators on the Australian Index of Adolescent Development (AIAD) survey instrument, combined with local knowledge from schools and a brief screening interview. The purpose of the population screening is to identify young people at-risk so that youth and family workers (the COSS early intervention workers) can intervene supportively to resolve issues before the onset of full-blown crises. As such, this is a new way that

data is being used in a real-world collective impact model, the COSS Model, to inform practice and address the social and educational outcomes for vulnerable young people, including the prevention and early intervention of youth homelessness.²

If data from the AIAD and local knowledge (where available) suggests that a young person is vulnerable or at-risk, then support and intervention can be delivered pro-actively and before full blown crises have developed. This methodology allows risk to be rigorously assessed and a pre-crisis response appropriately delivered.



Both *The Geelong Project*, led by Barwon Child Youth and Family (BCYF), and *The Albury Project*, led by YES Unlimited, had completed the administration of the AIAD Surveys to the total student populations in February–March of this year just as the Covid-19 Pandemic was beginning and Australian governments moved in response to the crisis. Across these two sites, there are 10 secondary schools and approximately 7,300 students. The students' answers to the AIAD Survey questions were analysed by Upstream Australia (the bridging organisation that provides the systemic backbone support to the COSS sites and advances the COSS implementation and development work³ to identify which young people may be at-risk of a range of factors.

Then the Covid-19 crisis in Australia began to ramp up. This included social distancing measures, schools were systematically limiting the non-school employed people that were able to enter school premises, and there were associated changes to face-to-face practices that YES Unlimited and BCYF would usually undertake when working with young

people. In hindsight we were lucky that the in-school survey-related tasks had already been completed by this stage — another of the Australian COSS sites was not so lucky, having to postpone the date for their AIAD survey implementation until a time when students are back on campus.

This left us in an unusual and uncomfortable situation. We now had lists of names of students from each of the ten schools — students who potentially needed support. The usual next step would be for all of the AIAD-identified at-risk students to engage in a brief screening interview with a member of the local COSS collective to talk with the young person about what is occurring for them within the school, home, and peer environments, to ascertain their level of risk, and to find out how we can support them and their family. These screening interviews are usually undertaken face-to-face on school grounds and the various support work interventions put in place post-screening interviews are also usually undertaken face-to-face in a variety of locations — hence the unusual and uncomfortable situation.

So, what were we to do?

A decision was taken to convene a teleconference. On Thursday 9 April 2020, Upstream Australia hosted a teleconference with workers from the three funded Australian COSS sites. Altogether 21 people joined that conversation. The main purpose of the teleconference was to discuss the changes in practices required due to Covid-19 especially with regards to population screening and how support work can be carried out to vulnerable and at-risk young people.

We don't claim to have all of the answers to these practice dilemmas, however, like so many others, we are working to respond as swiftly as possible but also appropriately. The question is how this can meaningfully be done. Below we share some of our practice changes and reflections for how we are working to best support vulnerable and at-risk young people in this time of crisis.

Screening Interviews

Changing our way of screening young people identified by the AIAD survey as at-risk, from face-to-face in the school environment to the virtual space in the home environment has been a necessary and immediate change we have needed to adopt. The way we are looking at facilitating screening in the virtual space is via phone calls, FaceTime, Zoom, and Facebook Messenger. The COSS workers are all experienced youth and family workers and thus can utilise their professional judgement about conducting these interviews in either small regular sessions or in one larger session pending on how the young person is engaging and feeling being asked personal questions. This virtual screening component is in collaboration with the relevant state Departments of Education and partnering schools.

When conducting virtual screening, COSS workers are mindful of the physical environment within which the young people are located. COSS workers ask certain questions to determine the young person's comfort and safety before getting into more in-depth conversations.

Early Intervention and Support Work

Across the sector, service delivery during Covid-19 appears to focus largely on 'essential' services such as Specialist Homelessness Services. However, early intervention prevents the need and demand for more 'essential' services in future, and so to us, it makes sense to continue to run early intervention services, although in a different way. We very quickly put our heads together and asked ourselves: *'what would it take to remain socially connected with and support young people to thrive in this time?'*

To ensure that service delivery to support young people continues, meetings and consultations with key stakeholders and partner organisations are now being undertaken virtually, using applications such as Zoom or Skype Business.

Support work with young people and their families also continues in different ways. For instance, COSS workers are connecting with young people using electronic communications. However, we are acutely aware of the digital divide and thus acknowledge that some young people and families do not have ready access to computers, smart phones, and/or internet. To ameliorate this, where possible lead agencies are facilitating access to mobile phones and internet dongles to clients.

To keep young people feeling connected to the community and the support agencies, BCYF and YES Unlimited are developing a suite of online resources for young people to access, such as mindfulness activities, Covid-19 information, connection to activities, fitness apps, links to virtual museum tours etc. Such resources are also being sent to young people individually where appropriate. Our usual face-to-face drop-in programs with young people have also been moved to online. For example, YES Unlimited has created a 'Virtual Chill Out Space', operating from The Hive Facebook page every weekday afternoon. This online drop-in session, which has thus far been very popular, includes various activities such as online Kahoot Games, connecting people through House party applications and Zoom. To increase

the fun, there is a regular Kahoot every Wednesday, where the winner gets a large pizza of their choice delivered to them at a time of their choosing. This online drop-in centre has gained local media interest.⁴

The types of support work offered to families has changed. Given that so many people have lost their jobs, COSS workers are spending increasing time supporting parents and young people to navigate the Centrelink processes and advocating on client's behalf more frequently. COSS workers are also accessing supermarket vouchers and assisting with home delivery of food supplies to COSS young people and their families. The frequency of these types of support acts for COSS clients is unusual but useful and eminently justifiable under the circumstances.

While group work programs cannot be offered as an in-person experiences, group spaces are being offered using virtual platforms such as Zoom. There is also the option of running modules with young people individually if that is what they would prefer.

Online Schooling

Schools will be teaching online from Term 2. However, a number of COSS clients do not have access to appropriate IT equipment to aid their studies. As such, COSS lead agencies are in the process of liaising with the schools and funding bodies to assist with the provision of IT resources, so that young people can remain engaged in their education.

In certain cases, COSS workers are liaising with the partnering schools in identifying students that are at-risk and eligible to attend school physically in Term 2 as a protective factor.

Family and Domestic Violence

We are expecting, and already beginning to see, an increase in family and domestic violence at this time. This is worrying. The isolation and social distancing measure imposed by Covid-19 are not ideal for young people who experience family violence. COSS staff in one State have added an additional family violence questionnaire (from the MARAM framework) for workers to ask when safe to do so, if they suspect family violence is occurring. When it has been assessed that there is a risk

of family violence, COSS staff refer appropriately to Child Protection and/or other appropriate agencies. Whether the Care and Protection system responds to these notifications is variable and out of our control, however, what is constant is that the COSS work remains engaged with these young people and vulnerable families notwithstanding.

So, what does this mean for the future?

Despite the speed at which these changes have been implemented, we are also, nevertheless, acutely aware of the potential ethical ramifications for online and virtual practices. In response, policies have been written and staff training undertaken. Ongoing conversations and reflections on these practices continue.

We are constantly learning more and more from, and being inspired by, the young people with whom we work, especially at this time. We have asked ourselves the question, 'is this move to the virtual world more uncomfortable for us or the young people with whom we work with?' and wonder how our practices will change in the time after Covid-19 restrictions.

In human relations, the richness of face-to-face conversations and interactions cannot be replaced by e-mails or video chats, however, after the Covid-19 crisis has passed, we may find that telecommunications do help us operate more efficiently in various innovative ways. It will be interesting to see how this plays out.

Endnotes

1. For more details see MacKenzie D and Hand T 2019, 'Place Matters... Place-based 'collective impact': A New Service Delivery Paradigm', *Parity*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 4-5, and MacKenzie D 2018, *Interim Report: The Geelong Project 2016-2017*, Melbourne: Swinburne University and Barwon Child Youth and Family Services. <https://apo.org.au/node/133006>
2. MacKenzie D and Hand T 2019, 'Data Matters: Using data in a collective impact research and development project and the backbone role of Upstream Australia', *Parity*, vol. 32, no. 6, pp. 16-17.
3. Ibid.
4. O'Sullivan J 2020, 'The Hive Youth Resource Centre hosts virtual 'chill out' sessions to keep social connections during Covid-19 crisis', *Border Mail*, 1 April 2020. <https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6706190/albury-youth-centre-a-hive-of-virtual-connection-during-coronavirus-lockdowns/>



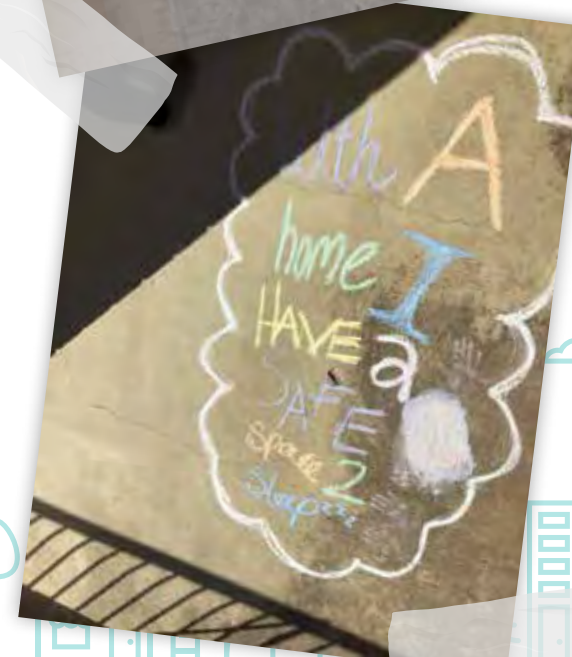
Broughton House Youth Refuge is a Specialist Homelessness Service that provides crisis accommodation alongside a comprehensive support program including individualised case management, wellbeing support and living skills development. Broughton House has four bedrooms as well as two self-contained semi-independent units onsite. Broughton House staff work with both residents within the refuge and on an outreach basis with young people in the community.

With the high level of community uncertainty this year, Broughton played an important role in holding some of the fears and distress of young people as they navigated this alongside an experience of homelessness. Providing an environment that is emotionally safe and therapeutic for residents is always a priority in our refuge environments, however it was an especially important focus in this context. With reduced accommodation capacity, our team split with a home and away arrangement, pressures on rostering, and expectations on young people to social distance, we were required to work in ways we have not needed to before.

A number of client scenarios also pushed us to work differently and it was exciting to get creative in how we made these placements work. Being a communal environment, we have generally maintained a clear no pets policy, however when a young person presented with a certified 'service' dog, we were able to introduce some processes that made this a great success. We also had a young resident who spoke little English, and, by using a phone translation app and working closely with the Red Cross, we ensured they were able to access the wider support systems they required. Our Program Support Worker team has continued to grow and it's been a real highlight to see the work they have undertaken in building consistency between our two refuges, Broughton House and Betty's Place.

From a systemic perspective we were pleased to contribute to Associate Professor David Mackenzie's 'Youth Homelessness; Making a difference' submission to the Inquiry into Homelessness in Australia House of Representatives, as well as contributing to Yfoundations submission to the NSW Inquiry into Child Protection and Social Services System.

The issue of children and young people under 16 years old entering into homelessness services continues to be an issue despite a significant



push from the sector for genuine policy change. Yes Unlimited alongside most of the NSW youth homelessness sector has been very vocal around this and we continue to assert that refuges are not a suitable response for this age group and that current responses from the child protection system are inadequate. This has been raised repeatedly, most notably by the NSW Ombudsman report More than Shelter- addressing legal and policy gaps in supporting homeless children (2018), which among other things called for clearer departmental protocols, greater support from child protection to Specialist Homelessness Services and increased outcome monitoring for children who enter homelessness services. This year, the Centre for Evidence and Implementation released their final report Evaluation of the Homeless Youth Assistance Program (2020), highlighting similar issues yet again. We continue to see these children and young people present to Broughton House and quite frankly, we believe they deserve better.

This year Broughton House:



Supported

120

young people with accommodation or case management

29%

identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander



Provided

2130

nights of accommodation

Messages from Broughton House residents in response to 2020's National Homelessness Week theme of "Everybody Needs a Home"





Youth Resource Centre

The Hive Youth Resource Centre aims to create a safe, accessible and welcoming space for young people to attend and participate in a wide range of recreational, educational, therapeutic and developmental activities. The Hive aims to provide young people with 'Somewhere to Go, Something to Do and Someone to Talk to'. The Hive is open to young people for Chill Out after school hours Wednesday to Friday

- a facilitated space in which young people can engage in recreational activities and receive support, information and referrals, if required. The Hive runs a number of structured therapeutic group work programs, which change per term based on needs and trends within the schools. A free School Holiday Program runs at the end of each term, and combines recreational activities such as rock climbing, laser tag etc. with educational and developmental activities such as Sexual Health, and Employment workshops.



The Hive - during upgrades

After beginning to work from home early in the year our team introduced a 'Virtual Chill Out Space' which ran from the Hive Facebook page every afternoon. This was really important during a period of significant isolation for young people providing an opportunity for them to continue interacting with both our service and each other. This included online Kahoot Games, connecting with young people through the HouseParty app and Zoom, free screenings of the films 'In My Blood It Runs' for National Reconciliation Week and '2040' for World Environment Day, a mix of virtual tours such as Disneyworld rides, Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park, art galleries and museums, and hosting

Netflix Parties. We also invited young people to share their talents/hobbies by making short recordings, such as Origami Making and bracelet making tutorials, and then uploading them to our Facebook page. As an added fun bonus, we put some prizes up for grabs, with the winner of Kahoot Wednesdays getting a large Pizza of their choice delivered to their door at a time of their choosing! Making the most of the shutdown period we capitalised on the opportunity to undertake further upgrades to The Hive space, which is well worth the investment given our lease on this ideal building has been renewed to 2029. This included new flooring, painting, new feature walls

in the foyer, new TVs and gaming station (soon to include the recently released PlayStation 5!) and a revamped counselling/meeting room. The space is looking fabulous and conveys the kind of therapeutic environment that we strive for.

The team has been putting in a substantial amount of work in shaping a Program Logic for our Targeted Early Intervention (TEI) funded services, articulating the way in which the activities and tasks we undertake through the Hive are purposefully linked to the outcomes we want to achieve for young people and their families. This has been a really useful process in conceptualizing the intent of the somewhat intangible 'mixed-bag' of work we do through the Hive. It was great to sign a five-year funding contract for TEI this year, a much longer contract period than is usual, giving us a wider scope for future planning and development of the Hive and related services.

While this rapid shift in service delivery taught us so many things about how to creatively engage young people, we were thrilled to end the year by coming back to the irreplaceable face-to-face work we know and love. Chill out and group work has recommenced and we've delivered groups such as Climbing Rox, Feeling Fantastic, Food for Thought, cooking groups and RAGE. We've been gradually shifting the direction of our school holiday program to be more targeted in terms of its alignment to The Albury Project and to young people who have been identified as needing additional support through COVID-19. With the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health and social isolation we think youth-focused services like The Hive will be critical as our community navigates some of the unfolding fallout of this period. 'Somewhere to Go, Something to Do and Someone to Talk to' has never felt more pertinent as a slogan for our service than now.

"The Hive has been through a lot this year, with temporarily shutting down in March April due to Covid, which was a necessary part of keeping youth and our community safe in this time. I didn't like not being able to come to the Hive, it made me feel very segregated from the world because we couldn't go anywhere during lock down. I'm glad the Hive is open again because I like having people that I can talk to in person, instead of feeling like they're not in the same room as me".

Macky - Yes Changemaker Aged 17



Upgrades completed at The Hive during its shutdown period

The YES Changemakers

Changemakers is Yes Unlimited's youth reference committee, a group of local young people who meet regularly to discuss youth related issues, inform our organisation on how to respond to these issues and work to achieve social change on the things they care about.

This year has looked very different for the Changemakers and has been a new experience for everyone; with online meetings, taking taxis to events, and of course wearing masks and social distancing. The majority of the Changemakers meetings were held over Zoom due to the closure of the Hive space, which at times was a bit of a barrier due to poor wifi connections and broken devices. This year has also brought with it new issues that the Changemakers discussed in meetings such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, Raise the Age Campaign, and Tik Tok in the media. Changemakers have had to be very flexible this year and adapt to an ever-changing climate, which in turn has built resilience and a broader way of thinking about ideas and creative ways to engage online. Through all this, Changemakers have persevered and have accomplished many of their goals for this year, which include:

- Sending a letter to local Members of Parliament across the border from a youth perspective on the issue of Homelessness in the community, as part of National Homelessness Week.
- Being consulted on parts of the Hive renovation.
- Consulting with Yes Unlimited staff and learning about their roles across the organisation in online meetings, including

Elizabeth from Broughton House, Davina, Yes's Aboriginal Worker and Michelle, regarding Community Engagement.

- Designing an 'R U OK Day' Poster that was put up within Murray High School, shared amongst Yes staff and the Hive Facebook page.
- Creating Changemaker profiles, as a 'meet the 2020 Changemakers' broader introduction.
- Discussing the 'Youth Generation Collaboration' that is being developed this year with other youth services across Albury-Wodonga.
- Attending the 'Albury says Fund Our Future Not Gas!' Global Day of Action at the office of Sussan Ley.
- Organising and designing posters for the Hive-Oween (Halloween themed) reopening of the Hive space in October.
- Meeting with Davina to organise a movie/documentary screening at the Hive in November, to advocate for and continue the awareness of the Black Lives Matter Movement.
- Organising the Hive Christmas dinner for local young people.

"Changemakers has been pretty good this year, but slow to get everyone coming to meetings. I enjoyed meeting different staff members across the organisation in our meetings and learning about their roles. With the Hive being closed, I felt like I had nothing to do after school. I'm glad that the Hive has opened back up again".

Hunter- Yes Changemaker Aged 16

Yes Changemaker Profiles



Jasmin Ward - age 17

- Q** Why did you decide to become a changemaker?
A "I want to be a changemaker because I want to help the community in any way I can"
- Q** What is your main goal as a Changemaker?
A "to help young people see that looks aren't everything and that it's ok not to match the Disney profile of beautiful and manly"
- Q** What is one thing you're looking forward to as a Changemaker?
A "I'm really looking forward to going to retreat, as last year it helped me make so many new friends and connections"
- Q** What would you say is an achievement of yours so far as a Changemaker?
A "I hope to achieve helping people being comfortable with who they are as people"

Hunter McDowall - age 16

- Q** Why did you decide to become a changemaker?
A "I wanted to make a difference and help people who need it"
- Q** What is your main goal as a Changemaker?
A "to tackle homelessness"
- Q** What is one thing you're looking forward to as a Changemaker?
A "retreat if we have one this year"
- Q** What would you say is an achievement of yours so far as a Changemaker?
A "film launch, third year in changemakers"



Yes Changemaker Profiles

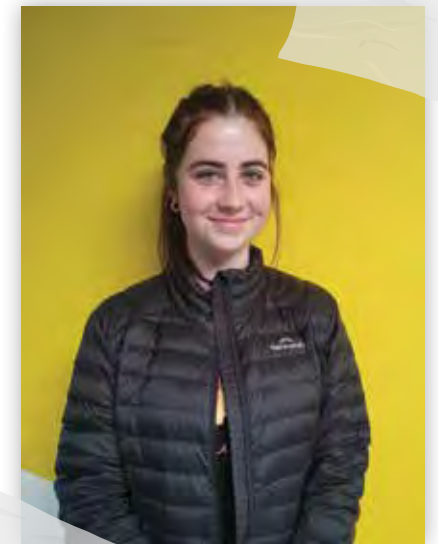


Macky Cusick - age 17

- Q** Why did you decide to become a changemaker?
A "to help and be a part of the community, and to be a part of a group where I get to grow my leadership skills"
- Q** What is your main goal as a Changemaker?
A "to grow my leadership skills and to help the community"
- Q** What is one thing you're looking forward to as a Changemaker?
A "being a part of a group and seeing the changes I can help make"
- Q** What would you say is an achievement of yours so far as a Changemaker?
A "Writing the letter to Sussan Ley about homelessness in our community, lanyard design, homelessness week awareness"

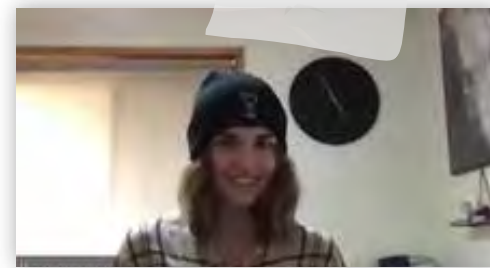
Hannah Emerson - age 16

- Q** Why did you decide to become a changemaker?
A "help out in the community, make a better change in this community"
- Q** What is your main goal as a Changemaker?
A "gain confidence, to be able to work in a team and increase my communication"
- Q** What is one thing you're looking forward to as a Changemaker?
A "new connections, new friends"
- Q** What would you say is an achievement of yours so far as a Changemaker?
A "better with communication, I've worked better in a team"



Ilona Moss - age 16

- Q** Why did you decide to become a changemaker?
A "so I can give young people the voice that I never had when I needed it"
- Q** What is your main goal as a Changemaker?
A "to help young people feel comfortable speaking up about situations that they weren't able to talk about before, and to make a change in our society for things like climate change, etc"
- Q** What is one thing you're looking forward to as a Changemaker?
A "getting to know more people who are like me"
- Q** What would you say is an achievement of yours so far as a Changemaker?
A "So far I haven't had much to do with the Changemakers because of personal issues but I'm proud of our team for taking part in the climate protest"



Changemakers - Maddie & Hunter



A Letter to Local MP's from the Changemakers

Dear Local MP,

We are the Changemakers, a youth reference group within the Yes Unlimited organisation. We meet to discuss and plan around issues facing young people at risk in our community. We also provide a valuable youth perspective to the Yes Unlimited broader organisation, which helps to direct change in our community.

We, as part of the community of Albury/Wodonga, are writing to you about the issue of homelessness in our local area.

Almost half of the homeless population are children and young people, who lack the confidence to seek help, as well as being burdened by the stigma around seeking help. Along with the COVID-19 pandemic still being such a big issue in our community, it has had a huge impact on businesses, causing huge job losses, and because housing is in such high demand, we have minimal housing to offer people. This leaves many without, as well as many young people and families unable to rent through private businesses.

We ask of you to add social housing as a priority to your budget later this year. The budget you choose to put behind homelessness will help hundreds of struggling young people in their attempt to rebuild their life and seek jobs that are still available. It really does sadden us to see so many young people in our community effected by homelessness, and we believe you have the power to change many lives struggling in our community.

Sincerely,
Macky Cusick

on behalf of the Changemakers:

Hunter McDowall
Trea Beach
Hannah Emmerson
Jasmin Ward
Ilona Moss



The Albury Project Story: From Collective Discontent to Positive Action

Jon Park, Client Services Manager, Rebecca Glen, Project Coordinator — The Albury Project, Kate McGrath, Senior Early Intervention Specialist, and Tam Quinn, Program Manager Youth Services, Yes Unlimited*

About Albury

Albury is a regional city, a short hop across the Murray River from the Victorian town of Wodonga. In everyday terms it is Albury-Wodonga but the services in Albury are accountable to Sydney while services in Wodonga are accountable to Melbourne. In many ways Victoria and New South Wales (NSW) are similar jurisdictions but policies and funding and programs can be quite different, sometimes the advantage is on the Victorian side, other times NSW.

As a regional city, Albury is hundreds of kilometres distant from the main centre of power in Sydney. So, dropping into the central office of Family and Community Services (FACs), now Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), is not a short taxi ride or train trip to Ashfield. Many workers and agencies in similar situations grumble about the 'tyranny of distance' and how rural and regional services miss out on opportunities and are under-resourced. It is perhaps debatable whether this is truly the case but it is a common perception. On the other hand, there are some advantages. In a regional context, workers and agencies often seem to be more cooperative and collectively self-reliant. Perhaps, this is the positive side of parochial.

In the early days when youth homelessness was just beginning to be recognised as a social problem in its own right, a group of community activists in Albury established the first local youth refuge, which became known as Broughton House in central Albury. The refuge could support eight adolescents of 12 to 18 years of age and when it started there was only one worker. Over a few years, additional funding through

the Youth Services Program lifted the workforce to four workers. In the wake of the 1982 Senate Standing Committee on Youth Homelessness, an incorporated organisation, the Albury-Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd was formed, and in 1985, the same year that the Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP) was founded as a joint Commonwealth-States-Territories program, the new agency was able to offer an Adolescent Family Counselling Service. As the range of services expanded, our organisation rebranded as *Yes Unlimited*.

The Recharge Conference in 2015

The Yes team had been actively involved with the peak organisation Yfoundations in NSW for many years, including maintaining a position on their board, and attending AGMs and conferences. At one such event, *Recharge Conference* held in Sydney on 6-7 August 2015 on the issue of youth employment, our team attended a Friday afternoon session presented by David MacKenzie on the Geelong Project in Victoria. David laid out the basic features of a model of early intervention and argued a case for system reform along the lines of a systemic roll out of this community-based model. This was not directly about youth employment but it was something fresh and new that spoke to many of our concerns about and critique of the homelessness and youth services systems.

What About Change in Albury?

We could not help but continue to talk about these ideas and how they might be applied in Albury. We actively downloaded whatever material we could get our hands on and in early 2018 after the publicity that followed the February

Youth Matters Forum in Geelong, made direct contact with David MacKenzie of *Upstream Australia*. Yes had already begun reaching out to the Albury secondary schools.

Our local readiness for change in Albury can be found in an article written by Yes Client Services Manager Jon Park, entitled *It's about systems not programs*. The abstract shows the advanced thinking that had been incubating in Albury:

'It is difficult to question the intention of a "no wrong door" approach to homelessness. It is also difficult for service providers not to cringe at the term when looking at the persistently high level of demand, under-resourcing and the consequences of improving access to a system already under pressure. Following the New South Wales reform of Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) Yes initiated a local systems change process in the Albury area that saw the transition to a Centralised Intake, Assessment and Brief Intervention Model (CIAB). In conjunction with four partner agencies this model aims to simplify access, prevent people from bouncing between services, manage the mismatch of demand/resources through brief intervention and provide a structure for services to work as a system rather than the program based responses that had resulted from historical funding arrangements.'

Jon Park reached out to David MacKenzie in late in 2017. The following is taken from a series of e-mails highlighting the early thinking that was going on at this stage of the change process.

We have been having lots of conversations at a local level about trying to do something from a systems perspective in response to the TEI reforms and have had a Geelong type project in the back of our minds for the last couple of years. We recently pulled together a group of a few services who are TEI funded and there has been some energy around this kind of thinking. The challenge in Albury is that we are really the only youth focused service, but we do have a reasonable service infrastructure that could be re-aligned to make something like this happen. We also have strong existing relationships with local schools.

Up to now our Targeted Early Intervention Program funding has been funding our youth resource centre 'The Hive', Adolescent Family Counselling program and a small component of assessment/brief intervention type work. We are also the lead for SHS's in the area, which includes Broughton House Youth Refuge. Recently we have begun to realign these services into more of a spectrum of youth/therapeutic responses with the idea that interventions are designed around presenting needs, drawing on the whole spectrum, rather than the traditional referrals into narrowly defined programs. We think this realignment could be a perfect structure for something like the Geelong project and the access point created through population screening.

Our experience of implementing a centralised intake system for homelessness following the Going Home Staying Home reform has completely sold us on systems based approaches and we get a pretty solid sense that FACS would be more than happy to take our lead if we put up a good model. We are just at a point of trying to work out what we need to know, what's some of the core learning/evidence we should be drawing on, and what it would look like to progress this. Wondering if this might be something we could have an initial conversation about with you either by skype or teleconference?

The availability of the Targeted Early Intervention Program funding and the preparedness of the local FACS Office to support innovation has to be acknowledged as a success factor, with the Albury team taking a big step forward on this basis.

The 6 March 2018 Public Forum

When David MacKenzie agreed to come to Albury to work with us and support our efforts to create a COSS Model site in Albury, he suggested that it might be useful to convene a community meeting of interested organisational and individual stakeholders. This we did, drawing on our work of many years with various Albury services as well as the local schools to develop an invitation list.

The forum was held in the Hive facility and about 60 people attended, including representatives from the Department of Education, Albury High School, Family and Community Services, LaTrobe University, Albury Community Mental Health, headspace, Housing NSW and the Mayors of both Albury and Wodonga. The level of community interest was high. As a spirited discussion subsided, Darryl Ward, the Principal of Albury High School spoke up: 'David, if we do this, are you going to be there to support us?'. MacKenzie smiled, and retorted: 'Well, Darryl, if that's an invitation, then the answer is yes!'

In a written report back to all the organisations and individuals who participated in the event, the Yes team declared that 'we left with a strengthened resolve to pursue some movement in the early intervention space'. A summary of key insights and conservation points reflected back in the written report is quoted below:

A general consensus of frustration in foreseeing the likely trajectory of young people with early indicators of risk and not having the necessary service mechanics in place to adequately respond. Often this means that we are left waiting until a young person shows up with a 'problem' before we start responding.

While there is positive work happening in different spheres this is usually dependent on the significant amounts of good will and relationships built up over

time, which means communication and true collaboration can be fragile. The tendency for programs/ key staff to come and go only exacerbates this problem.

Historically, educational disadvantage and social disadvantage have been framed as separate issues, resulting in schools being expected to take care of one and services taking care of the other. These two issues are fundamentally linked and services or schools cannot address the complexity often involved in these situations in isolation.

By reducing the demand at the 'pointy end', this kind of early intervention model has the potential to impact outcomes of the entire service system i.e. by getting in early the potential to reduce the pressure on acute mental health services, increased school engagement is likely to improve employment outcomes, early support for families means less likely to need child protection involvement etc.

With the right framework and more nutting out of the detail a number of services would be willing to commit to an Albury Project.

Ideally this would be a cross border Albury-Wodonga Project, though the challenges of managing the two different service systems, the number and structure of schools and the vastly different funding buckets could make this a difficult starting point.

David MacKenzie summarised the compelling outcomes of the project in Geelong. Between 2013 and 2016 there was 40 per cent reduction in young people presenting to crisis accommodation services, a 20 per cent reduction in early school leaving and 50 per cent improvement in school disengagement. (See more here in the evaluation report: <http://www.thegeelongproject.com.au/project-achievements/>)

Following the forum and on the basis of the support, and interest within the community, *The Albury Project* was launched in April 2018. A brief was published on the

new initiative, announcing that a collective including Albury High, James Fallon High, Murray High, *Yes Unlimited*, Albury City Council, Headspace Albury-Wodonga, and Albury Wodonga Community Mental Health, began to meet regularly to progress a six-month period of research and development.

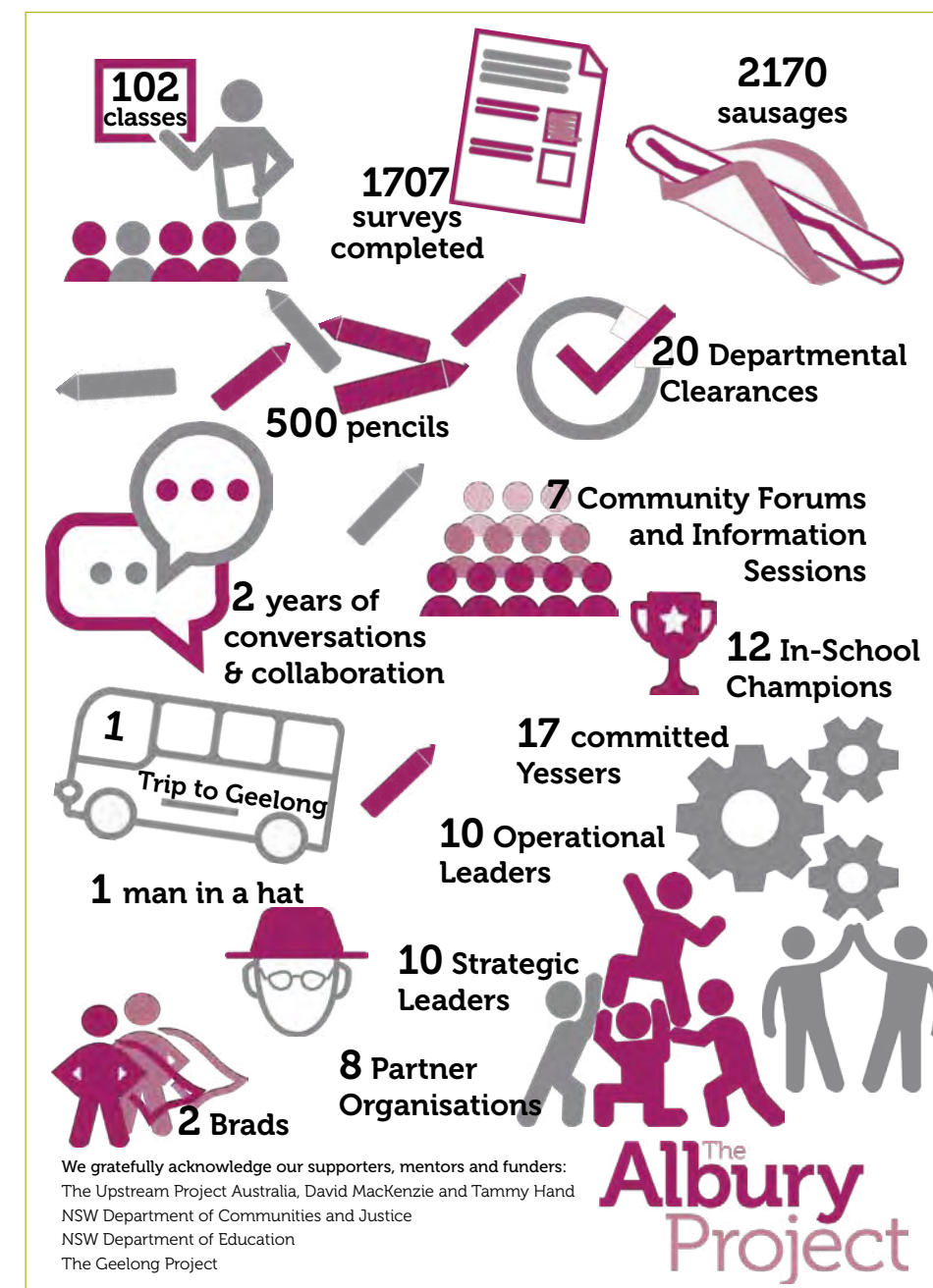
Associate Professor David MacKenzie and *Upstream Australia* were committed to provide ongoing support for the project, including high-level expertise, and access to the learnings and materials used in *The Geelong Project* and support with lobbying and advocacy.

Two local units of FACS NSW showed interest in the potential of the model by granting up to \$60k seed funding to support the research and development phase. As part of this process, *Yes Unlimited* began an internal realignment of its counselling and early intervention services, gearing them towards the potential rollout of *The Albury Project*.

Thus, *The Albury Project* embarked on a journey of development that was fuelled by an aspiration for local system reform but with no guarantee of major government funding. The invitation was issued to all those in Albury who saw the need. The journey would take around 30 community sector and education staff to Geelong in November 2018 to meet with people involved in the rollout in Geelong. An outreach to government began in an attempt to identify a funding pathway that would support the change process. Other services with a potential role in the project were engaged to explore what participation would look like and the support of wider community was seen to be a crucial factor in the long-term future of sustainable change.

The ongoing discussions explored the following questions:

- Who are the key stakeholders at different levels that need to be involved and consulted with?
- How do different parts of the service system fit into *The Albury Project*?



• What does a sustainable funding model look like for *The Albury Project*?

• What are the operational details and logistics we need to understand before starting?

• What would be an achievable starting point and implementation plan for a rollout?

From these early stage conversations, there was clearly a unanimous commitment to implementing an approach that brings together schools and services in a united front for young people experiencing disadvantage. The strong evidence base of the 'community of schools and services' approach, its verified outcomes and the scope for

locally driven innovation saw the community quickly get on board to support this development.

We would claim that *Yes Unlimited* has really striven to innovate in practice by designing interventions that realign our suite of services into a spectrum of youth responses — with the intent to create a system that flexibly 'bends' around the young person. The Yes goal is that interventions should be designed and tailored for a young person and their family, so that rather than young people forced to 'fit the program box' the support fits the needs of the young person and their family. This approach enables and requires staff to work beyond traditional program roles, with an ability to move with a client across the



and energising. *The Albury Project* remains truly owned by the partners in the 'community collective', who are heavily invested in leveraging and realigning existing resources to effect the local system-level change.

The Albury Project was in an excellent position at the beginning of 2019 to implement the COSS population screening soon after being awarded the USS pilot tender. Progress was paused, however, as the two participating Departments; Education, and Family and Community Services — worked through an inter-departmental MOU, which included reviewing and resolving issues about privacy. The first population screening was able to be completed in August 2019, and in March 2020 the second population screening was accomplished expeditiously, only to have the Covid-19 pandemic crisis roll over everything.

Covid-19 is certainly a new challenge for everyone, but the needs of disadvantaged young people and families remain to be addressed notwithstanding.

Over the course of three years, *The Albury Project* has taken what was a mixed bag of directionless frustration with a system that was not working well enough, and turned it into a bottom-up community reform process oriented to early intervention. Two elements have been critical to this significant change:

- (a) the rigorous architecture and practical tools of the COSS model to rally around and to galvanise a collective vision
- (b) a cultural milieu within the partnership of vulnerability and safety that has facilitated real innovation and risk-taking.

It is a firm belief within *The Albury Project* that young people belong in communities, not in programs, and the community of schools and services model for local system reform represents an important step forward in doing things differently and more effectively.

* We are so grateful for the ongoing support of Dr Tammy Hand and Associate Professor David MacKenzie of Upstream Australia.

The Albury Project

Using a Community of Schools and Services model, The Albury Project supports young people to respond to factors in their life that could increase their chances of one day becoming homeless, or leaving school early. The project is a locally driven, systems-based response to young people showing early indicators of risk. Embodying true early intervention, The Albury Project aims to pull schools and services together in an integrated matter, proactively identifying young people requiring support before risk factors escalate or a crisis of some kind occurs.

COVID-19 disrupted The Albury Project to a similar degree to the rest of Yes Unlimited, and indeed, the world, by rendering careful planning (temporarily) redundant, and presenting unanticipated problems to solve, barriers to overcome, and new pathways to explore. Specifically, for The Albury Project, it initially meant severely restricted access to current and potential clients, schools, and to team mates as the first lockdowns began, impacting operations and timelines at a crucial point in our early identification and support process.



spectrum of services/interventions where needed rather than handing clients over to another program and/or another worker as their situation changes. Our local systems thinking sought to leverage the COSS Model to resolve a reoccurring issue raised by schools that accessing services was inconsistent, with programs coming and going, and only ad-hoc or relationship-based collaboration between schools and services able to be maintained. What we wanted was a different system on the ground for services, for the schools and most importantly for the young people needing our support.

One of the lessons of *The Albury Project* is how important critical thinking and 'constructive discontent' are in driving reform. *Yes Unlimited*, in exploring new ways of delivering early intervention services to young people with the goal of preventing a future need for the organisation's SHS services, was able to visualise how their internal service reform, combined with the COSS model, could create real change in the local service system and for the young people of Albury. This is the power of bottom-up, as opposed to top-down, change. *The Geelong Project* provided inspiration as well as an architectural exemplar and tools for how this change could be implemented.

2019 — The Universal Screening and Support Project

Funding of two early intervention pilot projects was signalled in the five-year *NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018–2023* under a core priority of Focus 1: 'prevention and early intervention' alongside Focus 2: effective supports and responses' and Focus 3: 'an integrated person-centred service system'. In total \$4.8 million was allocated for this work, titled the '*Universal Screening and Support Project*' (USS).

On 7 December 2018, *Yes Unlimited* was advised that our tender for the USS had been successful. Prior to this, *The Albury Project* had already made significant progress. The community development foundations had been laid down. Much of the new collaborative infrastructure was in place — with the COSS Model representing a tangible anchor for the often abstract pursuit of 'collaboration', partners were able to co-design the unique ways of working that would bring the practical elements of the COSS Model to life. With key organisational leaders around the table, the development work had progressed rapidly, with decision-making about commitments and investments able to occur in real-time, maintaining a pace that was both productive



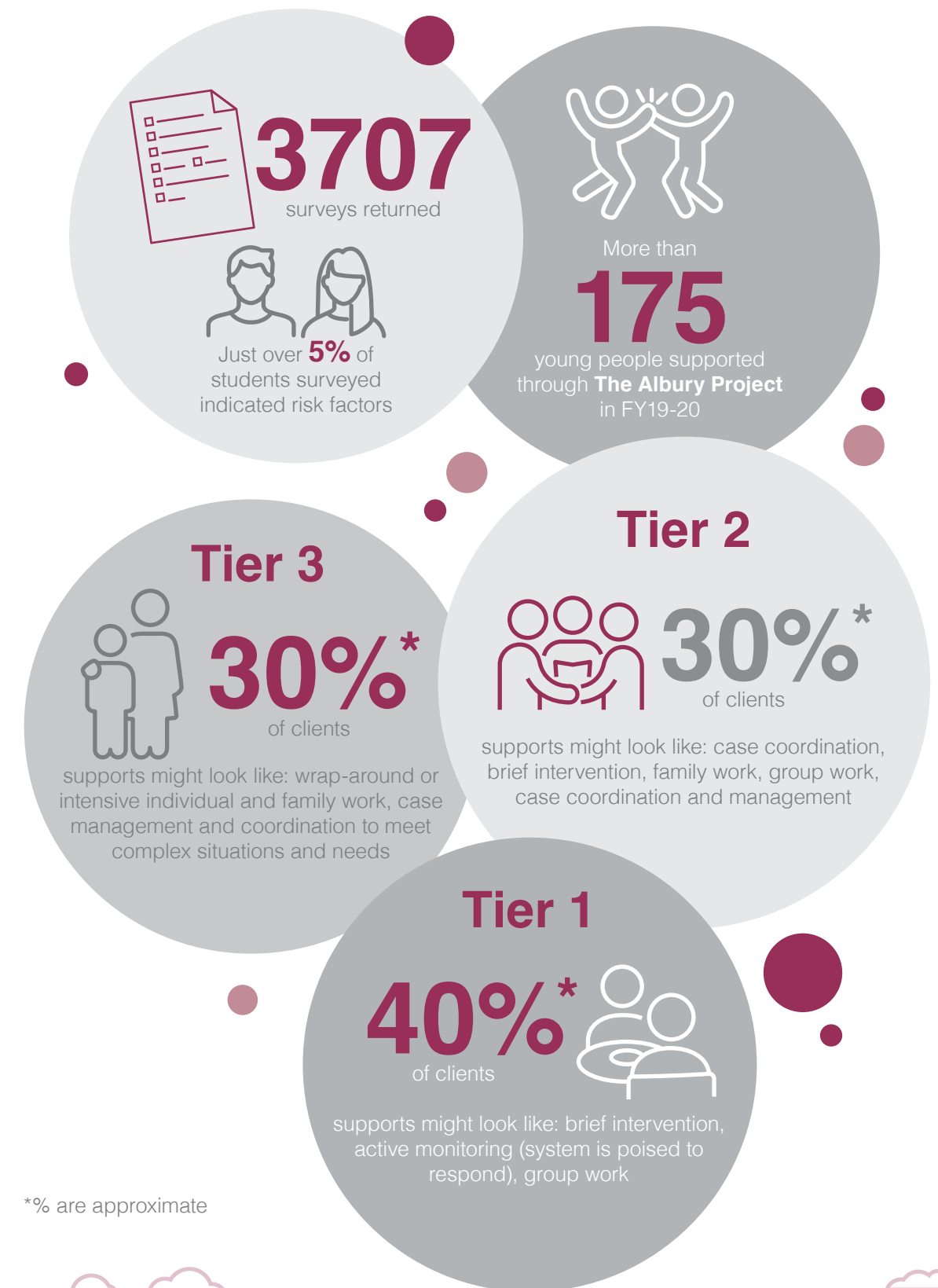
In this reporting period, The Albury Project has undertaken 2 rounds of Australian Index of Adolescent Development (AIAD) population surveying with our three partner schools, in August (Term 3) of 2019, and February (Term 1) 2020. The AIAD is designed to identify young people showing early indicators of risk, with the next step being a screening interview to confirm survey findings, followed by appropriate supports being offered. This process has led to around 214 students across the three schools, who may not previously have been on anyone's radar, being flagged for engagement and potential supports.

With COVID-19 lockdowns beginning at around the same time that the results of the second round of surveys were received, effectively cutting off access to young people, our strong partnerships within the Albury Project were able to be leveraged, with all partners across the project working together to ensure that students identified in the 2020 AIAD survey were followed up, contact details obtained, and further engagement attempted, via distance methods. Although Yes and the other Albury Project partner agencies and schools were busily responding to the crisis in their own contexts, each managed to prioritise the Project within this, and played their part in enabling the work to continue in spite of the immediate challenges faced.

As bigger picture plans were placed on hold, the team took the opportunity to focus on operations, systems and consistency following the implementation of our school based teams and

spectrum of youth services approach. This is a space that will keep developing in each school site and across the project, and we are so appreciative of the commitment of the wider Albury Project team to continually test and iterate within this emergent space that it can be equally as challenging as it is rewarding.

Whilst the population level outcomes that we are aiming for will become more clear in the years to come, the impacts of work with individual clients, as well as our partnerships, system development and continued presence and integration into the schools are more immediate. Schools have carved out dedicated physical spaces for The Albury Project, Yes team members have participated in cross-agency strategic planning, co-authored articles for Parity journal, supported advocacy and funding submissions, and explored opportunities for shared training. Our funders, DCJ, have really come to the table as a developmental partner in the delivery of the pilot Universal Screening and Supports program, through which The Albury Project is funded. Headspace and CAMHS have been able to engage strategically within the school wellbeing landscape. The partner schools' dedication to developing contextual, cohesive approaches to wellbeing, of which The Albury Project is a part, is a strong example of their unwavering commitment to the young people of our community, and the ways that our shared goals of seeing young people thrive provides common ground and motivation for our work.



'A genuine village to raise the child'

IN OCTOBER a group of about 1500 people gathered in the North to discuss the future of education in the region. The 'Genuine Village' was the name given to the event, which was held in the town of Albury. The event was a success, with many people expressing their support for the 'Genuine Village' concept. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.



NEW SCOPE: Albury High School principal David Ward and Albury Mayor James Fyfe speak during the 'Genuine Village' event. Photo: MARGARET WOOD



THREE WAYS: Albury Mayor James Fyfe, Albury High School principal David Ward and Albury Mayor James Fyfe speak during the 'Genuine Village' event. Photo: MARGARET WOOD

It is all to happen over a series of events. The results are to be announced in 2015. The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

HOW IT WORKS

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

ON THE PATH

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.



UNITED: Albury Mayor James Fyfe, Albury High School principal David Ward and Albury Mayor James Fyfe speak during the 'Genuine Village' event. Photo: MARGARET WOOD

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

FLIP THE FOCUS

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

VIRTUAL CHILL OUT!



YOUTH CENTRE a 'hive' of virtual connection. Photo: SHIRLEY

The new Youth Resource Centre at Levington is finding new ways to increase its connections with the region's young people. The centre is a 'hive' of virtual connection.

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

School homeless data surprise to professor



SPECIAL VISITOR: Member of the NSW State Government, Minister for Education, Skills and Training, Dr. Ian Johnston, visits Albury High School. Photo: TARA THOMAS

Albury High School's annual report has revealed a surprising amount of homelessness among its students. The report is a surprise to a professor.

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.

The cost of rising rental demand



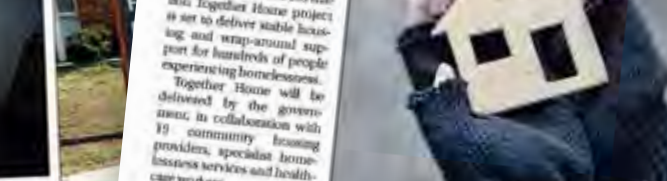
COSTS: You Unlimited chief executive Dr. Claire says many of their clients are experiencing rental stress. Photo: SHIRLEY

The cost of rising rental demand is a major issue for many people. The cost is a major issue for many people.

RENTAL COSTS

The cost of rising rental demand is a major issue for many people. The cost is a major issue for many people.

Homes Out West to deliver project



ALBURY'S Homes Out West has been included as a provider of the NSW state government's new program to tackle some aspects of homelessness. Photo: SHIRLEY

Homes Out West is a relatively small community housing provider and has been allocated eight Together Housing places in Albury. The project is a major issue for many people.

FLIP THE FOCUS

The 'Genuine Village' is a genuine village to raise the child. The event was held in the town of Albury, which is a genuine village to raise the child.



During the 2019-2020 financial year Yes Unlimited received funding from:

- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- Community support and donations

We wish to acknowledge the many organisations, groups and individuals in our community for the time, effort, money and services donated over the past year. We sincerely hope that those who prefer to remain anonymous are aware of our appreciation on behalf of our clients.

Yes Unlimited

- GHJC Pty Ltd
- Residents of Murray Gardens
- CBA Lavington
- Barry Nicholls
- Toyota Material Handling Australia
- Smarts Bakery
- Lyn Luff
- Claire and Tom Doolan
- Commercial Club
- Holy Spirit School
- Susan McCleventy
- Ecosa Center
- City Central Church
- Shelly Damm
- Brady's Social Golf Club
- The Next Step Financial Group

Betty's Place

- Albury Evening Country Women's Association Branch
- Westpac
- In the Market
- Alessi Mazda
- Commercial Club
- IGA East Albury & Springdale Heights Rewards
- Sue Skate
- Country Women's Association Wodonga
- Mitta Mitta Woman's Golf Committee
- Young Parent Group – Wodonga Flexible Learning Centre
- Bunnings Albury
- Toyota Material Handling Australia
- Rosy Seaton & Seumas Dawes
- Traverse Alpine Operations
- Upper Murray Horseman's Association
- Brady's Social Club
- PRD Nationwide Real Estate Albury
- Rotary Club of Albury North
- Brodie Clarke
- Linda Griffiths-Brown
- Jarryd Torney
- Andrew Bennett
- Rodney Bramich
- Braden Oliver

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
ABN: 63 002 580 681

Concise Financial Report
For the year ended 30 June 2020

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Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Revenue	4,988,330	5,062,331
Employment costs	(1,745,821)	(1,782,821)
Advertising and Marketing	(6,257)	(12,534)
Cleaning	(6,447)	(21,112)
Computer Costs	(62,245)	(43,521)
Stationery and Printing	(162,170)	(138,854)
Concurrence and Insurance	(5,478)	(8,898)
Rent	(2,143)	(9,811)
Telephone and Internet	(62,113)	(27,899)
Postage	(8,177)	(21,030)
Motor vehicles	(11,342)	(88,229)
Client Support Services	(1,111,362)	(888,122)
Utilities, electricity and gas	(68,714)	(42,294)
Travel	(6,143)	(46,858)
Gifts	(64,488)	(91,827)
Other	(265,712)	(81,702)
	(4,988,330)	(5,062,331)
Surplus before income tax	0	0
Income tax expense		
Net Surplus for the year	0	0
Other comprehensive income		
Total comprehensive income for the year	0	0

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	427,239	761,736
Trade and other receivables	216,439	342,852
Investments	1,533,918	(1,811,048)
Other current assets	(8,192)	(8,111)
Total Current Assets	2,219,404	1,345,435
Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	1,476,943	(1,132,641)
Right of use assets	444,122	-
Total Non-Current Assets	1,921,065	(1,132,641)
Total Assets	4,140,469	2,212,794
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	(107,962)	(481,812)
Bank liabilities	(41,783)	-
Employee provisions	(2,767,594)	(283,877)
Other current liabilities	(239,619)	(862,348)
Total Current Liabilities	(3,156,958)	(1,628,037)
Non-Current Liabilities		
Bank liabilities	(422,532)	-
Employee provisions	(44,475)	(8,305)
Total Non-Current Liabilities	(467,007)	(8,305)
Total Liabilities	(3,623,965)	(1,636,342)
Net Assets	516,504	576,452
EQUITY		
Reserves	509,145	572,904
Shareholders' Equity	7,359	3,548
Total Equity	516,504	576,452

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Statement of Changes in Equity
As at 30 June 2020

	Reserves	Shareholders' Equity	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	5,238,390	141,361	5,379,751
Net surplus for the year	57,838	-	57,838
Transfer to & from reserves during the year	(28,770)	(28,770)	-
Balance at 30 June 2020	5,267,458	112,591	5,380,049
Net surplus for the year	58,193	-	58,193
Transfer to & from reserves during the year	(207,731)	(82,311)	(290,042)
Balance at 30 June 2021	5,327,820	30,280	5,358,100

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Statement of Cash Flows
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Cash flows from Operating Activities		
Cash received in the course of operations	244,532	189,816
Government and other funding received	1,549,070	2,322,590
Cash payments in the course of operations	(5,353,216)	(3,048,490)
Assets received	39,254	41,532
Interest paid	(12,071)	-
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	1,457,579	291,458
Cash flows from Investing Activities		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(287,188)	(188,394)
Payments from sale of property, plant and equipment	75,337	-
Investments	(153,846)	(31,134)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities	(365,697)	(219,528)
Cash flows from Financing Activities		
Payments of bank borrowings	(26,361)	-
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing activities	(26,361)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in Cash and cash equivalents held	1,065,521	61,900
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	84,396	824,068
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	1,150,017	910,968

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Notes to the concise financial report
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 1. Summary of significant accounting policies

Basic of preparation of the Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report is an abridgement of the full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2020. The concise financial report has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard ASB 1059 - Concise Financial Reports.

The financial statements, including disclosures, are prepared in accordance with the full financial report and are consistent with the full financial report of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd. The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide the same level of understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financial activities of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd as the full financial report. A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report will be sent to any interested party on request.

Note 2. Revenue

The necessary not to be reported the following amounts relating to revenue in the statement of profit or loss:

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Revenue from grants	2,441,218	1,846,134
Revenue from government grants	2,086,144	1,551,131
Capital grant funding	-	17,003
Other revenue	355,074	277,999
Total Revenue	2,441,218	1,846,134

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Notes to the concise financial report
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 6. Analysis of Financial Report (continued)

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2020, the assets were \$2,188,165, compared to \$1,407M as at 30 June 2019, an increase of \$781,067. Current assets including Cash and Cash Equivalents, Trade and other receivables and investments amounted to \$1,116M at the end of 2019/2020 year, compared to the corresponding total of \$1,039M at the end of prior year. An increase in the balance of other receivables of 114,716 from program funding received contributed to this increase, with an increase in other receivables from 2019/2020 year being 114,716.

Property, plant and equipment at the end of 2019/2020 amounted to \$1,279M, an increase from \$1,167M (reported 2019) increase of \$112,000 which comprises of 2019/2020 balance of \$1,167,187. The increase is due to \$454,137 from the newly created right of use assets recognized under AASB 16, mainly consisting of property plant and equipment of \$281,136 of capital additions which mostly represents a number of motor vehicles used in operations, offset by \$133,819 depreciation expense in 2019/2020 and \$38,040 net disposal.

Current liabilities decreased to \$528,844 at the end of 2019/2020 compared to the 2018/2019 closing balance of \$1,121M. The decrease of \$592,156 is due to an increase in other payables and other liabilities from new and ongoing program managed by the company totaling \$5,239M, and decreased interest government funding of \$5,700M. The decrease is offset by increased current liabilities primarily of \$461,717 with a higher portion of debt now reported for long term debt, total \$45,791 recognized at the current year for long term debt under AASB 19.

Non-current liabilities increased to \$462,067 in 2019/2020 from \$18,369 last year. The increase represents long term debt of \$45,791 with the remaining relating to newly recognized lease liabilities under property and equipment lease of \$416,276 under AASB 19.

Statement of Profit or Loss

Strong 2019/2020 operating revenue and funding activities generated a net increase in Cash (and cash equivalents) of \$1,065,521 compared to a decrease of \$61,900 in 2018/2019. The net cash flow is mainly due to an increase in the operational and other income and other assets. The increase in the operating and other income and other assets is due to an increase in the operating and other income and other assets of \$1,065,521 compared to \$61,900 in 2018/2019. The increase in the operating and other income and other assets is due to an increase in the operating and other income and other assets of \$1,065,521 compared to \$61,900 in 2018/2019. The increase in the operating and other income and other assets is due to an increase in the operating and other income and other assets of \$1,065,521 compared to \$61,900 in 2018/2019.

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Directors' declaration
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

The Directors of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd (the Company) confirm that the financial statements of the Company for the year ended 30 June 2020:

- comply with Accounting Standard ASB 1059 (Concise Financial Reports); and
- are consistent with the full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2020 and has been derived from and is consistent with the full financial report of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd.

The full financial report is available on request, as required by the statute.

The Declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the directors:

[Signature]
 Director
[Signature]
 Director

Albury
 17 October 2020

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Notes to the concise financial report
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 2. Revenue (Continued)

a. Disaggregated revenue

The Company has disaggregated revenue into various categories in the following table. Revenue is disaggregated by timing of revenue recognition.

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Revenue recognized at a point in time		
Fees for service	127,225	105,461
Interest - Other Parties	71,775	17,432
Non-current income - Government	228	624
Government - Other parties	44,000	22,847
Other revenue - Other parties	109,888	4,780
Interest - Other parties	18,889	1,918
Revenue recognized over time	176,815	184,224
Revenue recognized over time		
Revenue from government grants	2,126,144	1,588,031
Revenue from government grants	2,126,144	1,588,031
Capital grant funding	-	17,003
Revenue - Other	88,070	21,097
Interest - Other parties	1,000,004	1,870,000

Note 3. Surplus

Surplus before income tax is arrived at after charging the following amounts:

Operating lease expenses	84,419
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Note 4. Events subsequent to Balance date

No events have occurred since the end of the financial year that have significantly affected the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in the ensuing or any subsequent financial years.

Note 5. COVID-19 impact

Coronavirus (COVID-19) was first reported to the World Health Organisation in late December 2019, development through 2020 to date are ongoing and uncertain in respect to both health and safety and for the global economy. The Company has not been significantly impacted by the measures given the Company operates in essential services. However, some equipment that are not been deemed essential further to accommodate the current events and all essential services to which available.

Further, subsequent to 30 June 2020, the Company has implemented a number of measures to ensure the safety of its staff and members. The Company has implemented a number of measures to ensure the safety of its staff and members. The Company has implemented a number of measures to ensure the safety of its staff and members.

Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd
Notes to the concise financial report
 For the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 6. Analysis of Financial Report

The discussion and analysis is provided to assist members in understanding the concise financial report. The discussion and analysis is based on the Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd financial statements and the information contained in the concise financial report has been derived from the full financial report of the Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2020, a surplus of \$491,953 has been achieved. The reported surplus was based on Total Revenue of \$2,441,218. Comparative figures for the prior year, 2018/2019, were a surplus of \$173,238 and Total Revenue of \$1,846,134.

Included in the current year's result was no capital grant funding received. This compares with the 2018/2019 year which included capital grants of \$17,003 which related mainly to the recognition of funding from the Department of Family and Community Services for new housing units at Braughouse House. The underlying surplus excluding capital grants for the 2019/2020 year was \$481,953 compared to \$156,235 for the previous year. Operating income for the reporting year, including operating grants and fees for service was \$2,188,165 which was higher than the prior year of \$1,846,134, an increase of \$342,031.

Operating Grants, including recurrent and non-recurrent grants in 2019/2020 total \$2,086,144 compared with the 2018/2019 year operating grants balance of \$1,551,131. Operating grants represented 85% of total operating income excluding capital grants which is a decrease to the prior year of 83% due to one off miscellaneous revenue received. The overall increase in total revenue is mainly the result of \$1,218M of new or one-off project funding, including the Sustainable Services project, the Albury Project and Spring Home Learning Services. Total COVID grant funding received in the current year to assist in ongoing operations was \$2,126M. Other operating income, including fees for service were comparable to 2018/19.

Revenue from outside operating activities for the 2019/2020 year totalled \$211,717 compared to \$109,003 in 2018/2019. The 2020 increase in other revenue was due mainly to the one-off income items received from a prior period merger settlement of \$45,475, and one off capital grant funding for \$62,242. Revenue increased also by \$42,000 from one off donations received. Profit from the sale of property, plant and equipment also increased by \$54,668 from the sale of motor vehicles in 2019/20. Asset income has increased by \$14,825 with office space in the WUE being used by third parties. Other income balance received, including interest revenue, were comparable to 2018/19.

Operating expenses for the 2019/2020 year totalled \$4,988M compared to \$3,981M in 2018/2019. The 25.1% increase in Operating Expense in 2019/2020 over the previous year is comparable with the increase in overall revenue of \$1,065,521. The increase was mainly due to an increase of up to \$ 8.8 full time equivalent staff along with annual wage increases, leading to a \$687,038 increase in employment expenses. Client support service expenses in the current year increased by \$233,090 from the prior year due to continued growth of the entity leading to further sub-contractors required to carry out services.

Other operating expense increases of significance include interest of \$52,001 due to the new utilisation of right of use assets and liabilities in the current year (reported under AASB 19) leases, with a corresponding offset of \$75,708 in rental expense due to the re-classification. Board expenses increased by \$11,451 driven by increased training and development for new board members, and training by \$25,768 driven by the increase in staff members and staff turnover. Offsetting the overall increase include a reduction in consulting fees of \$17,262 given consultants were not required to assist with financial assistance in 2019/20. All other expenses were comparable to 2018/19.

Depreciation expense in the 2019/2020 year was \$138,819 compared to \$128,834 expense in the prior year. This increase is mainly related to the additions totaling \$490,008 of the right of use assets from the recognition of lease per AASB 19 leases.

2019-2020 Signed Audit Opinion



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Independent auditor's report to the members of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd

Report on the concise Financial Report

The accompanying concise financial report of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income, statement of equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended and related notes, derived from the audited financial report of Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020. The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards.

Auditor's opinion of the Financial Report

In our opinion, the concise financial report Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020 complies with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039 *Concise Financial Reports*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Directors' responsibility for the concise Financial Report

The Directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039 *Concise Financial Reports*, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the concise financial report, the Directors are responsible for Albury Wodonga Youth Emergency Services Ltd's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



Johnsonsmme
Chartered Accountants
Stephen Locke
Director

Albury
27 October 2020