



**Drummond
Street
Services**

ANNUAL REPORT
2019–2020



**WORKING WITH
NOT FOR**



Drummond Street Services Carlton and Collingwood respectfully acknowledges the Kulin Nation as Traditional Owners of the land we currently deliver programs and services on. Naarm, the land of the Kulin Nation, now known as Melbourne has always been an important meeting place for events of social, educational, sporting and is of cultural significance for First Nations people. In the City of Melbourne, we deliver services and programs on the lands of the Wurundjeri, Boonerwung, Taungurong, Djajawurrung and the Wathaurung groups, whose connection to the land and its waterways extends back tens of thousands of years to the beginning of time & when their creator spirit Bunjil formed the land and all living things. In the City of Wyndham we acknowledge the Wathaurong, Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung people, in the city of Geelong we acknowledge the Wadawurrung people and in the city of Whittlesea we acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of these lands.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders as the first people of Australia. They have never ceded sovereignty, remain strong in their connection to land, culture and in resisting colonisation. We also pay respect to the wisdom and diversity of past and present Elders and share commitment to nurturing future generations of Elders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

From the President

Introduction

This has been an extraordinarily challenging year in which Drummond Street Services (dss) faced three major events, any one of which under normal circumstances would be seen as a challenge, but to have them all happening within the same 12-month period, and to have been able to respond so well, is an awesome achievement and one that the organisation should rightly be proud of.

Accreditation

At our first Board meeting in January we were being briefed on the accreditation process, and the Board's role in reviewing policy documents and appearing before the Accreditation Team in early February. We were very aware that a large focus of the Senior Leadership Group towards the end of last year was the preparation and review of organisational documents and processes.

One of the most impressive documents to come out of this process was the Social Justice Framework which is a model for any organisation and shows how you can frame a social justice perspective in such a way that it links the systemic to the individual; guides policy and practice and shows how you can operationalise concepts like intersectionality, proportionate universalism, co-production, and more.

Let me remind you of what this means – that as an organisation, we will achieve our social justice goals by:

- » Recognising first nations peoples as the traditional custodians of the land and respond to the harms of colonisation
- » A commitment to affirmative employment opportunities
- » Using and valuing diverse ways of knowing to achieve

our goals

- » Delivering assertive, inclusive and culturally competent practice
- » Having frameworks, policies and procedures grounded in accountability and restorative justice models
- » Leveraging our organisational power, authority and influence in social change and advocacy efforts.

The Accreditation Panel saw this, and saw the quality of the governance, policies and practices of the organisation. We met all 342 indicators for the 3 different accreditations – HSS, NMHS and QIC Governance. Not only did we meet them all, but the Panel also made two commendations on:

- » Our Evaluation and Review capacity – at all stages of the project from the ideation to establishment and delivery, and
- » The strongly evident theme and translation of Diversity (how we define it **at every** level within the organisation) – for the people we support and work alongside and our workforce.

This was a tremendous achievement of which the Senior Leadership Group and staff should be very proud.

Operating in a pandemic

On the day that the Board met with the Accreditation Panel, the World Health Organisation formally named a novel corona virus that was appearing around the world – COVID-19. Three weeks later we had the first death in Australia and by the 16th March a State of Emergency was declared in Victoria.

Again, dss moved swiftly to pivot to a remote working



environment with all its massive changes to service delivery and the way staff worked. Looking at how this was achieved the Board was again struck by the hard work and sheer competence that was demonstrated by the Senior Leadership Group and staff. The Business Continuity Plan was an excellent framework to be working towards and showed both firm direction and agility, in handling this unprecedented (in our lifetimes) event.

We will feel the impact of this for a long time to come, and the leadership group and staff can be assured that the Board will back them as we learn how to come out of living in a State of Disaster, let alone a State of Emergency, to a state of awareness and readiness.

National Redress Scheme – Citizens Welfare Society & drummond street services

As many people now know, drummond street received advice from the Commonwealth Department of Social Services on June 6, 2020, that an application for redress had been received relating to foster care provision during the time period 1958-1960 by an employee/s of Citizen's Welfare Services (CWS) – an earlier incarnation of dss.

At our August Board meeting we acknowledged the extreme shock that this was for the organisation's members, particularly as an organisation being funded to provide support for people impacted by institutional abuse. We immediately agreed that the Board would:

- » Accept liability for actions undertaken by CWS
- » Sign-up as a participating institution in the redress scheme
- » Undertake and complete a revised Conflict of Interest plan
- » Nominate an organisation representative/s for the scheme and to provide any Direct Personal Response (apology) on behalf of the organisation.

We had a further special Board meeting in September to discuss the media release, remedial action being undertaken with clients and staff and training for the Board and were pleased to learn that feedback from agencies we work with, our Funders, and advocacy groups such as CLAN were supportive of us and the action we were taking.

Again, I and the Board want to acknowledge the way that the Senior Leadership Group and staff have dealt with this

challenge by modelling how to deal with the issue in as transparent a way as possible.

New Board members

Finally, I want to recognise the great additions to the Board, made in 2020:

Margherita Coppolino, who among many other accomplishments, including being a photographer, is Chair of the Disability Sub-committee at the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex Association – Oceana. She has a distinguished career as an industry accredited Trainer, Mediator, Auditor and a Company Director.

Charles Williams, an indigenous leader in the field of indigenous procurement management and employment with skills in Graduate Recruitment, Training Delivery, Labor Relations, Management, and Community Engagement.

We look forward to 2021 and the opportunity to work on the organisation's Strategic Plan, somewhat belatedly but now being able to incorporate many of the learnings from these three key challenges.

Professor Alun C Jackson MSc PhD FESC
President, Drummond Street Services



From the CEO

This financial year was probably the biggest year to date of my time at drummond street services. We recognise that it has impacted the mental health of many of the individual communities we work with more than most. From religious discrimination and the ongoing fight for Black Lives Matter to devastating bush fires to a global pandemic we fought and continue to fight for those who are vulnerable, those who are often forgotten and those who have fallen through the cracks.

The year wasn't all doom and gloom. We started July 2019 year with an application to be a quality innovation performance accredited organisation (QIP). All staff were incredible across all levels in the lead up and during the process and put in a lot of hard work to both prepare and present to accreditors, leading to an impressive result. Drummond street services were not only accredited across 3 sets of quality standards and not only met the accreditors expectations, but we well and truly exceeded them. We specifically were commended for our Diversity in our workforce but also our broader work, including our communities we work with. They also highly commended our Evaluation & Research Capability, not only internally but assisting those other smaller charities and non for profits to build capacity within their own practice, highlighting the importance of evidence-based work in serving communities justly.

At every level of the organisation including staff, our clients, communities and stakeholders who provided positive affirmation to the amazing work that we do, we are so grateful.

This was very significant for us and we would like to thank everybody for their support. We pride ourselves on providing a great service that truly reflects the needs, lives and aspirations of the people we are here to support and play our part as an important and relevant community resource for so many.

The year 2020 started with Australia's worst ever bush fires on record, with much of the country blanketed in toxic levels of smoke with many losing their homes, getting ill or stranded for many weeks. Politically we battled to oppose the governments proposed religious discrimination bills, which would have grave impacts on organisations such as ours, along with many communities we work with if they came to fruition. We stood up with others internationally to prove that black lives matter as we witnessed a worldwide pandemic that still is unresolved as I write. On top of this we learned the incredibly upsetting news that our organisation may have caused harm many decades ago.

Nobody predicted the world mayhem that would come with the Covid-19-Pandemic, but we did everything in our power to ensure the safety of our staff and clients and communities, with as minimal disruption to our services as possible.

We had a smooth transition plan for COVID-19, involving a staged transition to social distancing our workforce and the way we delivered support services to clients. We identified and informed staff and clients of the transition each step and before too long online. By March 20th we ceased all face-to-face sessions, and all staff were equipped to work from home providing online counselling sessions and Zoom meetings became the norm.

We provided many resources for clients with updates and information on how to access our services and with easy-to-read information about Covid-19 and how to best keep safe. We ensured our messaging was accessible and delivered in multiple formats.

We recognised that the pandemic impacted vulnerable communities more than others and the saying "We are all in this together" could not be further from the truth. With hard lockdowns of some of our most vulnerable sections of our communities and with many people already on casual work



losing their jobs due to the pandemic, feeding people, and providing goods was essential for the health and wellbeing to many. We very quickly established a Drummond street's services FOODS program to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged people to access food and essential care items, which we are still running. Since our FOODS program commenced in May, primarily funded by drummond street services, we have sourced and delivered pre-cooked frozen meals, non-perishable food hampers, Coles/Woolworths vouchers and other essential items/care packs to over a thousand people across Northern/Western Melbourne.

We have partnered with organisations including The Kindness Pandemic, Womble-tech, Moving Feast, FareShare, OzHarvest, Halal Food Bank, Melbourne Period Project to source products, which our dedicated FOODS program staff, pack and deliver from our Carlton office and have received such heart-warming feedback from recipients.

It was with sadness, shock and distress, that we learned that our organisation, operating historically under the name; Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria (CWS) had likely caused harm and abuse.

This was devastating and confronting for the organisation, but obviously incomparable to the harm and distress experienced by survivors and their families.

Having our own long history operating in a sector and part of a welfare system, which through the Royal Commission of Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse has showed the far reaching and shocking accounts of abuse, criminal behaviour, cover-ups and utter dereliction of a duty to care. We have seen and heard first-hand the lifelong impacts of trauma.

We have had the privilege of working alongside so many courageous survivors, their families and loved ones. We have supported survivor's advocacy, amplified their voices, listened, and learned from them and most importantly – believed them.

If I were to pick a word to sum up this year it would be Resilient. The communities we have worked with have proven that in the face of loss, isolation, forced separation from family and friends, plus more, that they can pick up the pieces during a time of crisis and lift those who struggle to along the way. That is the true meaning of resilience. I would like to thank the Board for their ongoing support in what was truly a challenging year.


Karen Field
CEO, Drummond Street Services

Family Violence Response

The family violence response at drummond street services is a collaborative practice approach that encompasses all program areas across the organisation. We recognise that experiences of family violence and intimate partner violence may be present for all individuals and families who come to our service, and in response we have developed collaborative consultation pathways of support for both families and practitioners. Where family violence is identified, a comprehensive family violence assessment is undertaken, and ongoing consultation continues with a Specialist Practitioner throughout the entirety of the work with the family. Our family violence response is embedded within our whole of family approach, working with all people who engage in the support service, including children and young people. The family violence response works collaboratively across programs, drawing together a team of practitioners to support all members of a family, acknowledging and working to support complex and dynamic needs.

Our Specialist Practitioners provide secondary consultation, development and training to broader sectors as a way of enhancing and sharing the exploration of our practice. drummond street has funding for three specialist family violence programs: Futures Free from Violence (FFFV), Living Free from Violence (LFFV) and Family Violence Support Service for Young People (FVYP). Within these programs there are Specialist Family Violence Practitioners and a Family Violence Parenting Practitioner that provide support to individuals and families.

Futures Free From Violence (FFFV) is funded by Family Safety Victoria and DHHS, this program offers one-to-one therapeutic and group support to women, trans and gender diverse people

who have used force and/or violence in family and intimate partner relationships. The practice approach recognises that many of these people are also victim/ survivors of family violence. In the COVID environment of 2020 support has been provided through individual case management and counselling with the intention of the group program to recommence in 2021. In the previous financial year, 38 families received support. Using the ds practice approach, FFFV provides whole of family support to clients and seeks to increase supports around those accessing the service through relationships with communities, courts, service providers, police and statutory agencies.

Living Free from Violence (LFFV) is funded by the Department of Justice and Community Safety, this program is based in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, providing programs and one-to-one therapeutic and group support to women, trans and gender diverse people who have used force and/or violence in family and intimate partner relationships. One group program was run prior to COVID lockdowns, with ongoing support during COVID only available through telehealth options. Having both the community program and the DPFC program has meant women, trans and gender diverse people are able to receive support post release in a program that is familiar. This has supported engagement in the community with practitioners who have practice knowledge in both systems.

Family Violence Support Service for Young People (FVYP) is funded by the Department of Social Services, the Family Violence Service for Young People and offers a specialist response for young people and their families when there have been experiences of harm and family violence within the home, including where young people have enacted harm. We use a whole of family approach for all people coming into the service. Our wrap around response creates opportunities for the young person and family to engage in therapeutic support that meets their diverse and dynamic needs, achieves their goals and improves their wellbeing

both individually and as a family. The Family Violence Service for Young People also offers;

- » Comprehensive risk and needs assessment, ensuring all voices are heard and age-appropriate interventions and referrals are formed
- » Individual therapeutic and support work
- » A space for young people and their families to explore their experiences of harm and violence

Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS) WESTERN AND NORTHERN

Working with our communities, families and individuals, the FMHSS, Family and Relationship Support (FARS) & Family FFL teams in Western and Northern branches in 2020 demonstrated adaptability, resilience, and creativity.

Although the year presented a myriad of obstacles to service delivery, staff were formidable in their efforts to remain connected with the communities we support. This was particularly evident with the group work that staff undertook. Over the course of 2019/2020, the Northern team delivered 732 groups and seminars and the Western team delivered 325 community engagement sessions. We adapted our ways of working and navigated the challenges of online group facilitation with trepidation and excitement. Clinicians found innovative ways of reaching out to our vulnerable communities providing invaluable support, education, laughter, interactive and fun activities and most importantly a means for connection.

We had not anticipated the large attendance numbers and retention of participants in our group programs. Online groups and seminars have been greatly appreciated by clients whose ability to attend groups and seminars in person had previously been hindered due to caring responsibilities and accessibility issues. Significant outcomes were also achieved in our parenting programs.





One participant remarked:

"Zoom was good for me as I was able to participate. If the group wasn't online, I may not have been able to attend as I have 3 children".

A participant of the Lego building group commented:

"I have enjoyed spending time with my son, doing something that he loves and building my confidence to enjoy it with him."

One participant commented:

"Before the program I was always angry, now I am more relaxed and have more self-control".

While another stated:

"Being involved with Drummond street services during covid meant that my kids and I did not feel isolated. We felt cared for and not forgotten. Zoom sessions and phone calls enabled me to

still have access to support to guide me through looking after mine and my kids' mental health during lockdown as well as having food parcels delivered when finances were low. My family and I will always be grateful and appreciative of the support we received during covid from Drummond Street services"

The programs delivered were diverse and included parenting focused education, support for new parents, programs for CALD communities and programs for family connectedness. During the COVID lockdown period, many programs were delivered to address the social isolation experienced by community with a strong focus on mental health and wellness. We received positive feedback from participants about the value of the programs offered. The outstanding work of staff in 2020, is a testament to their drive, passion, and commitment to the people we serve. Here is some more feedback from individuals and families:

"We're beyond grateful for the skills we learnt that helped us deal with a lot of our issues and build a new, stronger foundation."

"We signed up to be challenged and do things differently and really respect the way you go about your work in gently challenging without imposing judgement or eliciting shame."

"You are making a difference to our family functioning, connection, communication and our overall well-being - so thank you. You are doing good out there in the world!

"Since we had already developed a relationship with our therapist, we were more than comfortable switching over to video calls. We were able to work around our children and were even able to have sessions from different locations. It ended

up being very convenient and we still felt just as supported. We're confident that we can now navigate through our relationship on our own with everything that we've learnt"

Geelong team worked with local funding bodies and community in a difficult year. Thanks to City of Greater Geelong we received a Connected Communities grant in 2020 to do play days with a local teacher and author Andy McNeilly. Due to Covid restrictions, we swiftly pivoted to deliver 6 online webinars for parents on the subject; Connecting with Your Kids. Other webinars were delivered for; Give Where You Live on Return to the workforce, Surf Coast shire on Emotional Wellbeing and many on school support. Working with local communities, schools, services and families, we responded to local needs around youth mental health, suicide support, schooling anxiety, coping with Covid and networked online with over 50 agencies. We had a great group of parents attend Parenting Teens who worry online and despite some tech hitches, conversations were deep and fruitful.

Sadly, following some local suicides of young people and the impacts of Covid on many youth/family relationships, we collaborated with other agencies to respond and we partnered with headspace delivering family inclusive practice. Geelong team were excited to have two queerspace staff join the team and start to work with the LGBTIQA+ community through individual work, The Village, community engagement and developing training for local orgs. The Redress program also reached out to the community to support people impacted intergenerationally by institutional abuse.

Our Staff's own personal and professional ability to PIVOT, PARENT, PERSEVERE and BE PRESENT alongside and with the communities we live and work in, is astounding.

queerspace is a LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing support service developed by LGBTIQ+ communities for LGBTIQ+ communities. queerspace seeks to provide queer, trans and gender diverse people access to inclusive specialist and queer specific health and wellbeing services and aims to provide inclusion and safety in response to the diversity of our communities.

queerspace provides client focused mental health, wellbeing, relationship and family counselling for LGBTIQ+ children, young people, adults, families and carers. queerspace runs groups, activities and programs designed by, for and with queer communities.

In addition, queerspace is a Specialist Family Violence Service providing both case management and counselling to people who have been impacted by violence or have used violence in family and intimate relationships. queerspace seeks to increase the capability of mainstream and queer specific services through the provision of training, capacity building and prevention activities based on the increasing evidence base of LGBTIQ+ Family and Intimate Partner Violence.

queerspace is now offering counselling support to the LGBTIQ+ community and their families in Geelong. Our team is also having conversations with community organisations in Geelong to offer training with the aim of building the sectors capacity to support the LGBTIQ+ community and their families.

Futures Free From Violence (FFFV)

This program is funded through DHHS innovations funding and offers one-to-one therapeutic and group support to 41 women, trans and gender diverse people who have used force and/or violence in family and intimate partner

relationships. In the COVID environment of 2020 support has been provided through individual case management and counselling with the intention of a group program to be run in 2021. Using the drummond street's practice approach, FFFV provides whole of family support to clients and seeks to increase supports around those accessing the service through relationships with communities, courts, service providers, police and statutory agencies.

Living Free from Violence (LFFV)

The Department of Justice funds a program based in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre [DPFC a maximum-security women's prison located at Deer Park, Victoria]. LFFV offers similar support to that offered in FFFV, that is group programs and one-to-one therapeutic and group support to women, trans and gender diverse people who have used force and/or violence in family and intimate partner relationships. One group program was run prior to COVID lockdowns, with ongoing support during COVID only available through telehealth options to 19 women, trans and gender diverse people.

Having both the community program and the DPFC program has meant women, trans and gender diverse people are able to receive support post release in a program that is familiar. This has supported engagement.

iHeal

Family Safety Victoria [FSV] funded drummond street services to develop training and organisational readiness guides for the iHeal program, which will enable us to disseminate this innovative service model into other services. iHeal is a program that trains and employs people with lived experience as Recovery Support Workers



to provide casework and peer support to survivors of family violence and to work alongside therapeutic case coordinators. This project has an advisory group, including representatives from FSV, RMIT Berry street and Mallee Domestic Violence Services, supporting the development and piloting new resources.

Mentoring Project

The Mentoring Project continues into its second year, funded by the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network [NWMPHN], organises 1-on-1 and group mentoring for individuals and families. The program connects individuals and families of all ages, with LGBTIQ+ community mentors and groups for peer-support. Group programs we have run, are: Queer Time [anyone LGBTIQ+], Gay/Bi Men's Group, QTPOC Eat Up, A Place at the Table [unpacking sexuality for parents], and two trans, gender diverse, and nonbinary spaces called Talking Points and Assemble. To date, we have worked with and supported over 200 clients and run over 50 group activities in the past year alone.

The New Parents, New Possibilities research and LGBTIQ+ Transitions to Parenthood

The New Parents, New Possibilities action research project, developed by CFRE and funded by Respect Victoria, highlighted family violence prevention for LGBTIQ+ parented families in the transition to parenthood period. Eight training sessions were offered to professionals, three to new and prospective LGBTIQ+ parents, and a New Parents Group was run for 12 families with the City of Melbourne.

The Village

The Village is a 7-week program that caters to parents and carers of trans, gender diverse, non-binary and gender questioning young people. It is a safe space where parents can bring their questions. The program was delivered online this year which enabled parents from across Australia to attend and catered to 26 families. Given the interest from the community the program is now run four times a year.



Training and consultancy

Due to Covid all training was transferred to online platforms, this not only enabled us to continue to deliver training but facilitated extending the reach of the training as many participants with restricted access barriers of time and distance were now able to access the training. Queerspace training for the year consisted of focussing on local government capacity building to identify, respond and support the needs of LGBTIQ+ populations and supporting the families of LGBTIQ+ young people to understand and support their needs.

Enhanced Pathways Project

The Enhanced Pathways project hosts student placements. A major aim of the project is to support organisations to create pathways for students to become skilled in working in the family violence sector. This is exciting for queerspace as our family violence work is provided within our whole of family practice approach. The project is funded from Family Safety Victoria, and feedback from last year is that drummond street services was a star in this program, especially during a year when everything seemed to be flipped on its head. ShantiWorks provided both Foundational Family Violence Training and Supervision training and queerspace were pleased to have eight students join us.

Queerspace Annual Breakfast

As our 2018 queerspace Breakfast in the park on Christmas morning was such a success, we started a tradition holding another one in 2019. It really highlighted the need for people to come together the morning of Christmas day to be around other LGBTIQ+ people and our allies. Again, it was an absolute feat, where we fed and entertained almost 300 people in the Edinburgh gardens. As well as an array of delicious breakfast foods, we also had live music, dancing, face-painting and games for the young and young at heart.

We know the holiday period can be hard for many, that is why providing a queer village to help break down isolation is so important during this time.

As per last year we are grateful for all the volunteers, to everyone who donated, to the cooks and coffee makers and to those who brought their children and fur babies. We received such great feedback and look forward to many more events like this.



Pasifika

This 2-year project engaged Pasifika families in the Local Government Area [LGA] of Wyndham in prevention and early intervention activities, which linked them with Drummond Street's family support programs and promoted gender equality and respectful relationships. We worked with early years staff at Wyndham Council educating them via quality professional development [by facilitators at Charis Mentoring] to better engage expecting and young parents from this community. We ran Pasifika Family Fun Nights with cultural songs, games and health promotion/respectful relationship themes and provided a range of accessible tip sheets. We worked with families with babies and toddlers in our popular Pasifika playgroup and music program. During Covid we provided material aid, food deliveries and ongoing support especially during lockdown. Working alongside Pasifika community leaders and parents who were keen to support others was a privilege and Drummond Street will continue to build these sustainable links with the Pasifika community.

MOVE IT 4 KIDS

A high energy program which was funded by AUSSPORT. It is well-documented that physical activity improves social and emotional health by supporting healthy brain development in infants under 1 year and that Australian children need regular vigorous exercise to stay healthy. The MOVE IT 4 KIDS program supports young children to feel enthusiastic about exercise [yes, even when screen time seems so exciting]. This show was developed by the well-established partnerships at Hullabaloo Music, drummond street services and Playgroup Victoria. Comedy meets music, meets movement while encouraging good habits, in the most accessible way possible. A key message was that families don't need expensive equipment to stay active. Joining sporting clubs and formalised games is fun but families can exercise together and build their physical literacy in the local park with a simple ball. Children of all ages are inspired, while developing fine and gross motor skills, language skills and social skills during the activities within the show.

In the session children "Find their 60", meaning the one hour a day they need to stay healthy – plus adults "Find their 30" with ideas for integrating exercise into everyday life. This show reached over 1000 people and the tip sheets and activity book are still requested, we are seeking funding to continue rolling out the show and its accompanying music tracks and story book promoting a happy and healthy lifestyle no matter how young, old you are or your shape or ability.



Creativity and Flexibility

At Stepfamilies Australia we often share with families how instrumental the qualities of creativity and flexibility are in establishing and maintaining success in stepfamilies. And in 2019/20 creativity and flexibility became our guiding light in continuing to offer supportive solutions and consistent connection with this community.

In both our counselling rooms and group workshops (that quickly adapted to online delivery) we witnessed extremely high levels of distress for our clients in response to the COVID19 pandemic. Throughout the past 12 months stepfamilies have continued to be supported in many specially designed ways – through our Stepfamilies Australia website, face to face and online couple workshops, our clinical team of practitioners offering specialised Intake and counselling support – to ensure the highly complex needs of this family form were met during this time of uncertainty and unpredictability.

In the last six months of 2019 we delivered **4 of our ever-popular full day Stepping Up** couple workshops to **32 couples [64 participants]**. These workshops are run on a Saturday. Couples travel from all over metro Melbourne and regional Victoria to attend and often share that they organise extra babysitting or even a hotel stay to enjoy some precious couple time after the workshop. We also successfully trialled running one of these workshops on a weekday to meet the end of year need for stepfamilies. It was fully booked within days of offering this!

In 2020 our well-planned schedule for the year came to an abrupt halt due to the COVID19 pandemic. Those couples who had booked into the March workshop were offered the option of either waiting until we could provide a face-to-face group or 3 counselling sessions where our practitioners would deliver the Stepping Up content. **Three couples took up the offer of counselling sessions** and the other couples received monthly updates and offers of support from our Intake team.

Creativity and flexibility came to the fore when we came to the realisation that face-to-face groups may not be an option. We revised our course material, resourced the latest international research on the impact of COVID19 on relationships and listened to what stepfamilies were telling both our Intake team and practitioners about the heightened challenges they were experiencing. In response we developed a **new two session 1-hour couple workshop called Stepfamily Support Couch Chats delivered via ZOOM** in the evenings. We trialled the material with our current counselling clients and delivered our first online group in the first two weeks of June – just before the second lockdown in Melbourne. The group was very well attended **[8 couples/16 participants]** and delivered without a technical hitch! YAY! It was a very poetic moment to be invited back into the lounge rooms of our couples – especially when the very first stepfamily group was delivered in the loungeroom of two practitioners nearly 30 years ago when they saw a need for information and connection for this fast-growing family form.



One of the major changes to our service provision this year has been the development of our Food Outreach Operations @ds [FOODS] program, responding to food security and material needs of our clients, which we commenced in May 2020 in direct response to the global pandemic, loss of jobs, loss of income etc.

Our FOODS program has assisted our vulnerable and disadvantaged clients and members of their households receive a weekly delivery of non-perishable food hampers, pre-cooked frozen meals, Coles vouchers and other essential items/care packs.

The foods program over this time delivered to 95 houses which fed 318 mouths which totalled 2226 meals (note this program only started in MAY 2020 and these numbers are only representative till 30th June 2020) across Northern and Western Metropolitan Melbourne. drummond street services has largely borne the costs of this service but we have also partnered with various suppliers and relief organisations to help meet existing and increasing demands for food and personal care items including FareShare, Foodbank, Halal Foodbank, Moving Feast, OzHarvest, Bakers Delight, National Homeless Collective (Melbourne Period Project), WombleTech and Nourishing Neighbours.

The program has relied on a range of ds staff to help decant, pack and deliver items to clients. We also partnered with City of Whittlesea to utilise the Working for Victoria Coronavirus Program to employ a full-time community driver, Basant Hari-Loomba, supported by our casual driver, Imran Al Jabri.

Funding to assist this program was sought from a number of different fund-raising efforts. One in particular was from a group who ran trivia nights and raised money for different

organisations during Covid <https://www.facebook.com/lockdowntrivia/>

The night was well attended and raised over \$5K for the program! We were also successful in two grant applications via City of Yarra and Department's Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Task Force Priority Response.

This program provides the opportunity for people to engage in our other arms of service delivery including welfare checks and mental health support services such as health and wellbeing risk management, counselling, and parental sessions.

We have received many text messages from our clients following receipt of our food/care parcels validating the significant positive impact this has had on them and their families.

Client/Recipient feedback

"Please pass on my appreciation for the donated food. I was so happy to see it and I noticed the extra effort for Halal and to include something for our children was very kind".

"It was fantastic to get the food delivered, I could see the relief on my husband's face and we have been much less worried. I cooked all day until 11 at night."

"Thank you. You are so good to give us food we hope to be work soon but now we are full and very happy. Bless you"

"Thank you to all of you at drummond street services. I think I may have enough for a couple of weeks yet. I am most thankful for your thoughts

on my wellness, for my health and hunger in times like these. I hope to hear from you in a couple of weeks. With ever lasting gratitude thankfulness."

"It's fantastic there are programs like yours that help families in hard times"

"I would like to thank you so much for the food delivery this afternoon. I like it and very satisfied. We appreciate your kindness arrangement and drummond street services provided a fantastic services and quick response."

Practitioner feedback

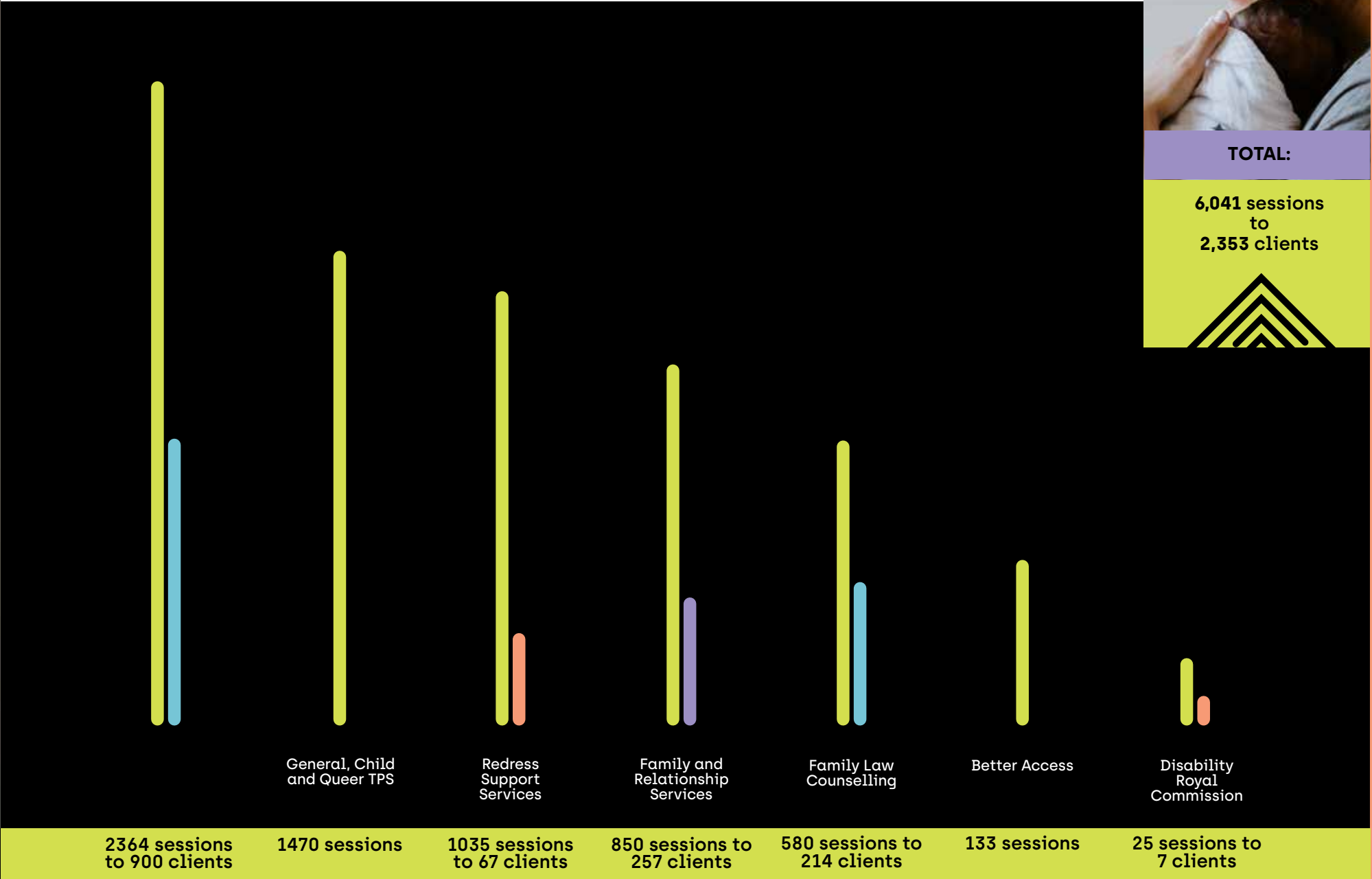
"Last week I spoke with ClientX and she wanted to convey how fabulous the food program has been for her family. She struggles to get to the shops with assisting her 4 children with home-schooling and her own mental health issues. This program was identified as an enormous assistance at a time when they have experienced the Covid-19 stressors in different ways. She was thankful for nutritious and tasty food and the response turn-around also from your program."





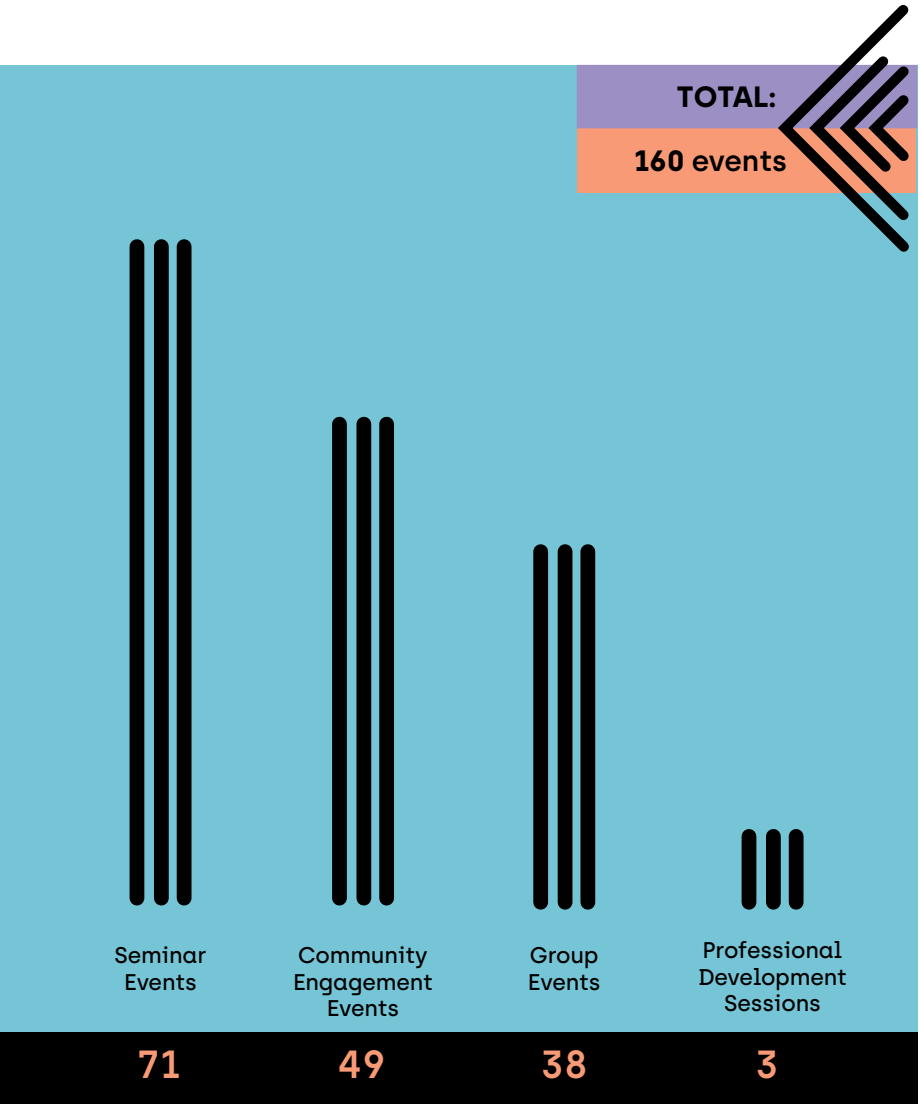
ANNUAL DATA

CLIENT INTERACTIONS

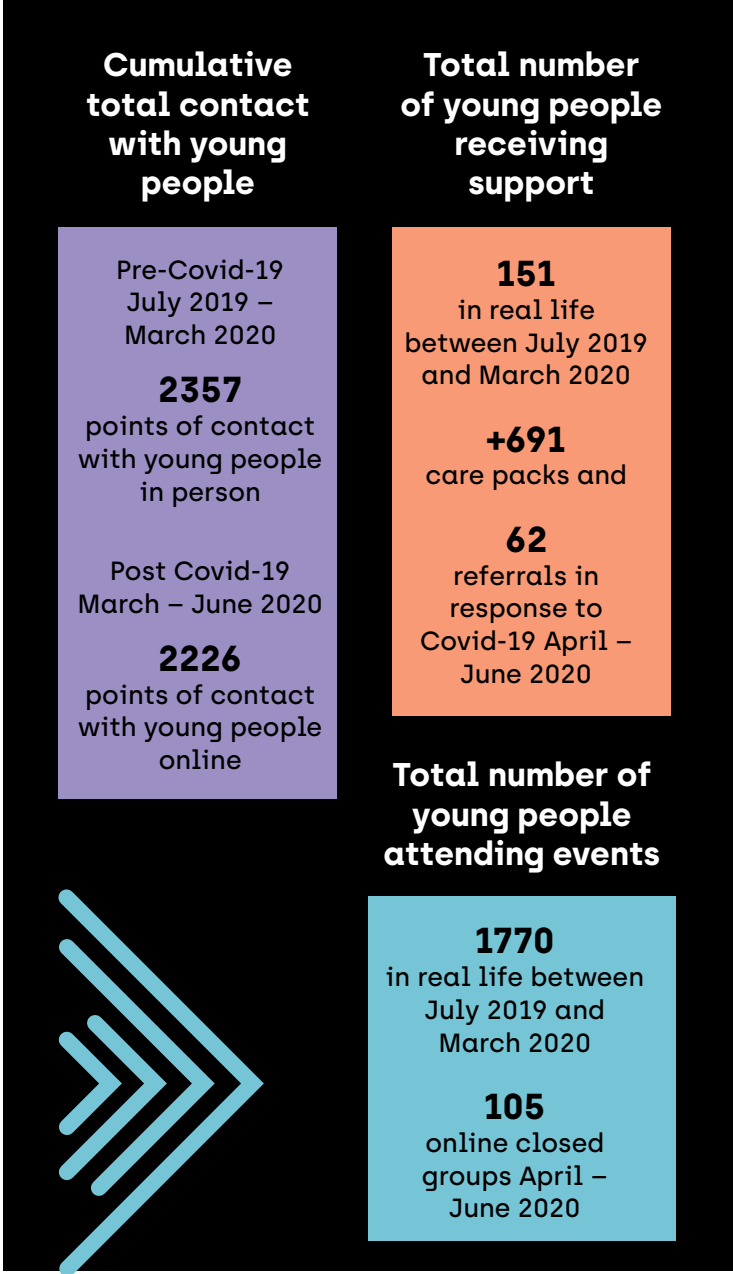


TOTAL:
6,041 sessions to
2,353 clients

COUNSELLING AND CASE WORK EVENTS



CLIENT ATTENDANCES



NUMBER OF PROGRAMS



INTERACTIONS

27 Events

Launch of OMG! I am QTPOC

Kensington Block Party

Colour the night @ White Night

Carlton Pool Party

Midsummer [in]visible stall

Underground Women's End of Year Party

Only in the Fam Camp

7 [in]visible events

Young men's Fitness and Nutrition Program

8 Melbourne International Film Festival Screenings

2 Parent Information Session

Wear it Purple with CoM Pride Committee

Invasion Day Banner Making

CONSULTATIONS

9 [IN PERSON]

Kensington & Carlton Block Parties

Young Men's programs [by YPL]

Music Studio consultation

Underground Young Women's program scoping for Kensington

Developing guidelines on practices for engaging young people

4 [ONLINE]

[in]visible

Queerspace Youth

Underground Young Women's Instagram polling

PROGRAM LOCATIONS

4 in Carlton

2 at Nth Melbourne Community Centre

1 in Kensington

1 in Melbourne CBD

EVENT LOCATIONS

Carlton Baths

North Melbourne Community Centre

The Venny, Melbourne CBD

Quality & Assurance

During the FY2019–2020 year the organisation undertook its first formal Accreditation. Accreditation provides an independent recognition that drummond street services practice, service, programs and governance meets the requirements of defined standards. Accreditation occurs on a three-year cycle.

The organisation recognised that achieving accreditation with the Victorian Human Services Standards would soon become a funding requirement and decided to extend this opportunity to include a robust whole of organisation review. This entailed achieving accreditation in both the QIC Health and Community Services Standards and the National Standards in Mental Health Services (NSMHS).

A self-assessment against all three standards was conducted to identify evidence that ds was working to the standards and achieving its strategic goals, and clients where receiving quality outcomes. Areas where we could work to obtain stronger evidence were also identified. This required participation of the Board, all business units and programs, clients and volunteers. Our assessment was submitted to the assessing body along with our continual improvement plan.

In February 2020 the assessors came to ds for three days and reviewed policies, contracts, client records, systems, interviewed staff and clients, toured offices and reviewed our evidence.

Ds proudly met every single standard and received commendations from the assessors for our approach to Diversity and Research and Evaluation.

Achieving accreditation provides quality and performance assurance to clients, funding bodies and staff, and ds is now working through our continuous quality improvement plan for a mid-term assessment in August 2021.

This accreditation and our continuous improvement activities assist the organisation to:

- » Provide independent recognition that the organisation is committed to safety and quality
- » Foster a culture of quality
- » Provide clients with confidence
- » Build a more efficient organisation using a systematic approach to quality and performance
- » Increase capability
- » Reduce risk
- » Provide a competitive advantage over organisations that are not accredited, and
- » Comply with regulatory requirements, where relevant.

YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMS

2019/2020 was been a year of stark contrasts for the Youth & Community. A year unlike any other experienced for young people and residents of inner-city public housing estates. Not in our wildest dreams did we envisage a pandemic. The contrast is evident in the first half of the year being characterised by young people leading our service delivery actions with optimism. The Mentoring team were holding amazing events and connecting mentors with mentees. We'd secured funding to create a recording studio in North Melbourne and host a large-scale event as part of Music Week. International superstar Lizzo connected with young people at RYMS and our Block Parties were gaining momentum. Then came Covid-19 and we made the difficult decision to cease face to face service delivery to help keep young people and our team safe.

The pandemic amplified and magnified pre-existing structural forms of disadvantage. While our political leaders' mantra was often "we are all in this together", was observed the disproportionate impact young people of colour, those living in public housing and/or young people identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Intersex (LGBTQI) was felt. Despite this, young people came out shining. They showed up to support each other, their families and community. They were fearless in telling us and those listening they wanted a different social and political reality.

To connect with young people, we developed new different ways of engaging them via a two-pronged strategy. Our first strategy was to commence engagement remotely. The Mentoring, City of Yarra and City of Melbourne, (in)visible and Queerspace teams all started running online groups, private Instagram chats, holding Instagram panels all within two weeks of stopping face to face services delivery.

We redeployed resources to create paid roles for young people to facilitate Instagram panels, where they

discussed how the pandemic was impacting them as they lived in share houses or on the estates. Another panel discussion was in response to intense policing of young people of colour. In this instance they facilitated a conversation about their rights when interacting with the police, about what the State of Emergency Laws meant and how to answer questions relevant to their age group, such as could their parent drive them to work?

Despite these challenges, young people continue to rise and envisage a different reality. They have organised themselves and their community around the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. We provided resources to help them participate safely and discuss ways to look after their wellbeing as viral images of George Floyd flooded their news feed and brought up the trauma around racist policing practices stemming from Australia's colonial history. We looked to strengthen our efforts by supporting internal conversations on how ds could be bolder in its public support for First Nations people and the African diaspora's calls for racial justice including sovereignty, self-determination and truth telling. This resulted in public statements on BLM, support for the Pay the Rent initiative, commitments for doing "the work" to be better allies and accomplices in the struggle for justice.

Young people also organised and deployed large volunteer bases to provide material relief for people locked in nine estate towers and volunteered tirelessly to distribute food and material resources for members of their community hardest hit by social restrictions. As a service we could not have achieved what they did. We creatively found ways to use our resources to support their efforts, such as making office spaces available. We also redeployed our resources to partner with other services to put plans in place that we hoped would prevent the "hard lock down" of other estates as so many feared. It included supporting door

knocking and phone calls for community education in multiple languages about the importance of getting tested for the coronavirus.

Our second strategy was to assertively engage young people and families known to us through phone calls and care packs. These packs responded to their unique needs, such as breaking fast during Ramadan for QTIPOC young people or bath bombs, sport equipment, quizzes, craft, cards and games to support young people to maintain social distancing during the difficult days of stage three and four restrictions. This also enabled us to identify when they needed material relief or to be linked in with the ds FOODs and brokerage program and/or referrals for support.

After we'd been living with COVID-19 for a while, we asked young people to tell us what would happen in their wildest dreams. Their responses illuminated an acute awareness of social forces and ability to articulate how these limits their ability to thrive. Collectively, the wildest dreams include:

- » Being heard
- » Spaces to be free and try new things
- » Not having expectations or negative assumptions limit their explorations or dreams
- » An acknowledgement of racism and colourism, homophobia and transphobia, and a striving to eliminate them
- » Living free of stigma because of where they live
- » Seeing themselves in those working with them
- » Growing up safe and not being affected by traumatising events

Young people told us they believe it's possible for disadvantage to be addressed structurally through political leadership, leadership within the community and youth sectors, and by those in positions of power. They want to be part of this change and actively strive for this every day. We ask you join them as accomplices in realising their wildest dreams. We will all be better off for it.



The Centre for Family Research and Evaluation (CFRE) has continued to advance Drummond Street's community-based research and evaluation, both within internal programs and across the community sector. Utilising Drummond Street's Evidence-based Management framework, the CFRE team draws on a diversity of data sources in order to contribute to program development, policy and advocacy, as well as champion the importance of evidence-based service delivery.

An important initiative during the 2019-2020 financial year has been the development of a COVID-19 evaluation and research strategy designed to help improve understanding and respond to the changing needs of clients and the communities that we support. The first two editions of the COVID-19 report series outline how Drummond Street rapidly adapted to the changing environment and gave initial insights into the quickly changing needs for our clients.

CFRE has also continued the internal evaluation of Drummond Street's programs, using data to inform program development and advocacy. This year, the in-house evaluation informed a research paper focused on the role of family relationships in providing a strong and early influence on the mental health and well-being of the developing child, as well as the well-being of adults.

The CFRE team has also been continuing its commitment to advancing specific LGBTIQ+ research and evaluation, including: analysis of the Midsumma health and wellbeing survey designed to identify emerging gaps in services and

help-seeking for LGBTIQ+ people; family violence prevention research focused on both the transition to parenthood and the impacts of COVID-19; evaluation of Drummond Street's LGBTIQ+ mentoring projects; and finalisation of an applied research project for LGBTIQ+ people using and experiencing violence.

In addition, CFRE finalised the EVA project, a partnership program designed to build the capacity of organisations providing family violence services to use evidence-based practice and measure program outcomes and supported a range of organisations around Australia to be able to use data to tell a story about the impact of their programs.



SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY

2019 seems like a distant memory in the wake of the impact of COVID-19 on our organisation. But in late 2019, our systems team were very busy preparing for some major improvements and upgrades to our technology and the way we facilitate service delivery to clients. One of these projects was opening up our services to telehealth, particularly for individuals and families with disabilities, and their carers, to make seeking support much easier for those with accessibility needs. Luckily, we had completed testing of Zoom for delivering telehealth services just when COVID-19 hit Victoria in March. Our staff were all required to work from home, and with only one week to make it happen, all services and staff were transitioned to exclusively working online, and provided equipment, accounts, support and training to do so. This was a big team effort across the organisation, and a huge feat of logistics, time and support in an uncertain and stressful time for our staff, clients and the communities we work with. We couldn't have pulled it off so successfully without everyone's understanding and commitment!

From March to June 2020, our transition to working online and delivering telehealth services resulted in:

Over 4,800 meetings and telehealth sessions, with more than 16,500 participants

And

35 webinars, with more than 320 participants

Our networking also expanded to include many more sector colleagues across the US, UK, Canada, and India, to join our

professional meetings.

Our ability to engage with clients and community has significantly increased. Although nothing can beat face-to-face services, there are many reasons why online services may be preferable ongoing, and our clients have told us some of the reasons they've appreciated telehealth services – aside from the restrictions during COVID-19 – is that they don't have to travel, they can meet outside of business hours, there is a more level social ground in groups, and they can find their own comfortable and safe space to meet.

Along with rolling out Zoom, funding from Working for Victoria allowed us to expand our systems team to include another staff member to focus on client technical support, improve our client communications regarding technology, and develop Easy English and accessible user guides to help people with all abilities to connect with us online.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The importance of external communications via our social media platforms over this financial year was more crucial than ever. We saw Victoria plunge into a State of Emergency and stay there, making it important that we responded timely to situations which we knew would have impacts on the mental health of our clients and the broader community. We found innovative ways to connect with people and let them know about our services as well as encouraging people to reach out to others when times were tough.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic when practitioners were directed to work from home, it was vital that we got the message out that whilst we were physically at home, that we were not going anywhere in terms of our service provision, that people were not going to be abandoned at a time of instability. We established an organisation wide communications committee primarily to respond to the effects of the pandemic on society. The digital communication demands around the world reached new heights in 2020 with the number of people using the internet increasing by 7 percent (298 million new users) compared to January 2019. Social media usage also boomed to 3.80 billion users in 2020. This was not surprising, and we saw evidence of this among our clients.

Many clients were not connected digitally, and we assisted them to connect supplying them with free devices and an internet connection. This helped us connect in a whole new way to our existing clients and to hundreds of people we would not have had access to prior to the pandemic. We were able to connect with people using; digital tip sheets to stay connected during lock down, videos and many live online events where families and individuals could participate, learn, and have fun.

Drummond street saw an increase in online followers by 468 and queerspace saw an increase in 360 followers.

In this time we also developed a social media presence for friends, family and loved ones of those impacted by the redress royal commission as well as a social media presence of our new service for those impacted by the disability royal commission.

All of our social media platforms proved invaluable during hard times from raising thousands of dollars to providing food for some of the most vulnerable people in need, to connecting some of the most isolated with others including loved ones, support services and community.

INTAKE

The Intake team have done an incredible job of holding space for clients during a very challenging year.

One major theme from late in the year was the level of complexity of the calls that were coming through to the team from our communities. As the number of cases involving family violence increased, Intake have put into place more collaborative processes to access the wealth of knowledge available across drummond street's programs. This has included consultation with family violence specialist practitioners, and organising care team meetings across programs.

In addition, to help address some of the more immediate concerns for clients approaching the service, Intake have been doing more brief case work around immediate needs, offering warm referral to housing specialist services, suicide prevention services, and our own FOODS program and brokerage forms, as well as safety planning.

In addition to offering placement and volunteer opportunities within Intake, we have also worked with the drum [our youth services] to add value to their student placements, offering Intake experience and supervision alongside their other placement activities.

As ds has grown and introduced new programs, we have had the opportunity to build our own skillsets in juggling ever increasing options, and considering how they might work together for families.

In the context of COVID19 responses and learnings across the organisation, as well as ongoing improvement alongside organisational growth, Intake have contributed towards updates to Holly to improve collection and organisation of client information.

As has been the case across drummond street's programs, the team have worked remarkably hard to ensure our communities were getting a supportive and responsive service, while also negotiating our own experiences of the impacts of the pandemic.



OUR FUNDERS & PARTNERS

We would like to thank our partners for their on-going support.

Our Partners

Albert van Moorst Memorial Trust	Department of Health and Human Services	Playgroup Victoria
Arts Centre Melbourne	Department of Infrastructure	Respect Victoria
Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House [BANH Inc]	Department of Justice and Community Safety	Sports Commission of Australia
Blue Knot	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Switchboard
Brimbank City Council	Department of Social Services	The University of Melbourne
Children's Court of Victoria	Family Safety Victoria	Thorne Harbour Health
City of Greater Geelong	Francis Thomas & Jeanette Warren Trust	Transgender Victoria
City of Melbourne	Helen Gyles Turner Samaritan Fund	VACCA
City of Whittlesea	Hullabaloo Music	VICSEG New Futures
City of Yarra	Joe White Bequest	Wyndham City Council
Co-health Ltd	Murdoch Children's Research Institute	Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc.
Commission for Children and Young People	North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network	
Dame Phyllis Frost Centre	On the line	
Deakin University		
Department of Education and Training		

Our funders

- » Blueshore Charitable Trust
- » City of Melbourne
- » City of Yarra
- » Engage funding from Department of Premier and Cabinet
- » FreeZa funding from Department of Premier and Cabinet
- » North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- » Pride and Equity
- » Youth Week funding from Department of Health and Human Services

FOODS partners

FareShare, Foodbank, Halal Foodbank, Moving Feast, OzHarvest, Bakers Delight, National Homeless Collective [Melbourne Period Project], WombleTech and Nourishing Neighbours.

Our donors

- » Two Birds
- » Lush
- » City of Melbourne Libraries
- » Pride and Equality network
- » Allen and Unwin
- » Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- » Carman's Kitchen
- » Collingwood Neighbourhood House
- » Harper Collins Publishers Australia
- » Helping Hoops
- » Ikea
- » Kensington Neighbourhood House
- » Lush Northland, Lush Melbourne Central and Lush Southland
- » Melbourne United
- » Nike
- » The Little Bookroom
- » The Wellington
- » Typo
- » Yarra Libraries

Community engagement and community partners

- » Australian Muslim Social Services

» Baasto

» Baker Boy

» Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House

» Capital City Local Learning and Employment Network

» Carlton Baths

» Carlton Local Area Network [CLAN]

» Carlton Primary School

» Church of All Nations [CAN]

» City of Melbourne Family Services

» City of Melbourne Libraries

» City of Melbourne Recreation and Leisure Services

» City of Melbourne Youth Network

» City of Yarra

» CoHealth

» Collarts

» Collingwood Neighbourhood House
- » Collingwood Underground Disco

» COM Community Engagement

» Department of Human Services

» Flemington Kensington Legal Centre

» Front Yard

» Good Cycles

» Helping Hoops

» High Rising Hip Hop

» Hottham Mission

» JUDAH

» The Huddle

» IMAAP

» Inner Melbourne Community Legal

» Inner West Children and Youth Network [formerly Kensington Children and Youth Committee]

» Islamic Youth

» Jesuit Social Services

» Junglepussey

» Kathleen Symes Library and Community Centre
- » Koorie Heritage Trust

» Medley House, University of Melbourne

» Melbourne Arts Centre

» Melbourne International Film Festival

» Melbourne University

» Minus 18

» Moonee Valley City Council

» Netball Victoria

» North Melbourne Area Collective [NAC]

» Our Place

» Polytechnic

» Pookie

» Probuild

» Queerspace

» Reclink

» RiS'N

» School Focused Youth Services

» SIGNAL

» St Josephs Flexible Learning Centre

» St Josephs Primary School
- » Strong brother, strong sister youth org

» Study Melbourne

» Surf Life Saving

» The Huddle

» The Push

» The Wellington

» The Venny

» Tilde Film Festival

» Ubuntu

» University High

» Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association

» Visionary Images

» Whosane

» Yarra Libraries

» Yarra Youth Services

» Ygender

» Youthlaw

» YMCA Kensington

» YSAS

» Zoe Belle Gender Collective

Our People

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Shan Berih
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Sian Thomas
Wafa Musa
Yasmin-Rose Simonsen
Zakariah Farah





We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we work and pay respects to elders past, present and future.