



# COMMUNITY

LIVING ASSOCIATION

# Annual Report

## 2023-2024

# Acknowledgement of Country

Community Living Association acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work: the Turrbal and Juggera people, the Jinibara people and the Gubbi Gubbi people. We pay respect to all our ancestors, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and non-Indigenous, past and present, for shaping who we are and guiding us into the future. We welcome you to the community we share. We acknowledge this country as a 3-flag nation.

CLA acknowledges the ongoing efforts of First Nations for recognition in context of the 2023 Referendum for the Voice result.



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# History of Traditional Owners

## The Turrbal People

The Turrbal People are the traditional custodians of the land where now is called North Brisbane. Petrie & Petrie (1904) stated that “the Turrbal or Brisbane tribe owned the country as far north as North Pine, south to the Logan, and inland to Moggill Creek”. European only appeared in Moreton Bay from early 1820s, when British Government decided to choose Moreton Bay to place offenders (Steel, 1984; Whalley, 1987).

The People and their ways of life were described in detail in Tom Petrie’s *Reminiscences of Early Queensland* (1904). People consumed a variety of foods, including fish, barra and gi-wer (goannas), snakes, binkins (tortoises), panko and chiber (flying squirrels), du-wir (quail), wargun (scrub turkey), marutchi (black swan), ngau-u (ducks), murri (kangaroos) and others. Abundant foods were supplied from the freshwater creeks, water holes, and ponds; the coastal swamps, the two main rivers - the Brisbane and the South Pine; and the coastline. Games, such as murun-murun and murri (spear kangaroos) were played particularly by young people (Petrie & Petrie, 1904).

The most important ceremonies in the people's life were celebrated at the bora rings (Petrie & Petrie, 1904; Colliver & Woolston, 1978). Bora rings are initiation sites where corroborees occurred and where Indigenous males are welcomed into manhood through traditional ceremonious rituals such as circumcision, scarification, the learning of sacred songs, stories, dance and traditional law (Steel, 1984). The bora rings existed in various places such as Nudgee and Keperra. Ceremonies were reportedly held in 1860 in Nudgee Bora Ring (Steel, 1984). The two bora-rings in Kepperra appeared on photos in 1946 and 1951, however, they were destroyed by developments of golf course and housing (Steel, 1984). These rings were the evidence of the Aboriginal connection to this land.

In the late 1890s, the government actively displaced Aboriginal people who were living in Brisbane. Many people were removed to reserves and mission stations (Aird, 2001). To remain and survive in their traditional lands, people had to prove their labour value for European industries and become part of European society (Aird, 2001).

In 1998, the Turrbal People lodged the Native Title application over the Meanjin area starting at the North Pine River and extending down to the Logan River and inland as far as Moggil. It marked an incredible historic moment for being the first native title claim over an Australian city and testified the continued association that people maintained with the land (Aird, 2001). Even though the claim was dismissed in 2015 and the Federal Court held that native title does not exist in Brisbane (Stride & Helu, 2015), in 2017, the representatives of the Turrbal People together with the representatives of the Yugerra People appealed the decision and the negative determination (Carseldine, 2017).

Note: While the early records of the Turrbal People and culture by settlers survived, it is recognised that they are very limited (Colliver & Woolston, 1978). Tom Petrie’s *Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, written in 1904, is the reference of the majority of this document. However, it is important to acknowledge the First Nation People who shared their knowledge with Petrie and passed it to the future generations (Aird, 2001).

# History of Traditional Owners

## The Gubbi Gubbi People

“My people have lived in the Noosa area and its surrounding hinterland for endless generations. They were, and still are, a gentle, refined people who respect their environment in a way that transcends the physical, and blends with the spiritual. They are, in fact, one with the land they live in.” - Nurdon Serico, Gubbi Gubbi Elder, 2000 (Cited in Adams, 2000).

Gubbi Gubbi people had inhabited in the Noosa area prior to the European settlement. Gubbi Gubbi people moved inland when the fishing was difficult due to weather. Therefore, people have lived at distances inland from the coast and on the coast. The people consumed various type of seafoods, salt-water and fresh-water species from rivers and lakes, and land creatures. It was highlighted that a variety of plants and native plants, such as black wattle, were important to the people's foods, medicines and equipment manufacture.

Gubbi Gubbi people celebrated Bunya festivals with their neighbour – the Jinibara people and mullet feasts close to the coast. There were many bora rings in the area surrounding the Glasshouse mountains and the nearby coast. Some were destroyed but some have remained. Together with shell middens, axe grinding grooves and stone fragments, and scar trees, they are evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the area.

European settlement and the process of colonisation had harmful impacts on the life of Gubbi Gubbi people. Diseases, massacres and numerous of the government interventions, including assimilation and displacement policies disrupted the hunting, cultural, ceremonial, ecological and spiritual traditions of the people. Due to agriculture, large scale draining of low-lying coastal areas was undertaken and the valuable timber in the area was removed. Gubbi Gubbi people were removed to settlements while people from other places were brought into the area to work on sugar plantations. These interventions made it difficult for people to hold onto the traditions and familial ties.

However, it is believed that the future of Gubbi Gubbi people can be viewed optimistically, through the values, the commitment and the sense of responsibility to their traditions that were passed on from older generations to the young people (Adam, 2000). The Gubbi Gubbi people have been recognised in the Federal Court of Australia as being the only Registered Claimants and are now legally recognised as the Traditional Owners to the Noosa Area.

Note: The majority of the information above were retrieved from the report “Indigenous Cultural Heritage Study of Noosa Shire” by Noosa Council, reviewed by Dr. Eve Fesl - Associate Professor and Elder of the Gubbi Gubbi people.

# History of Traditional Owners

## The Jinibara People

The Jinibara People consist of four sub-groups or clans: the Dungidau (Kilcoy, Villeneuve and Mt Archer area), the Nalbo (the Blackall Range and the Glasshouse Mountains area), the Dala (Woodford and the Blackall Range), and the Garumngar (the rolling country between the Brisbane River and Mt Crosby and the southern edge of Brisbane Forest Park). “Jinibara” means “people of the Lawyer Vine”, referring to the mountain area and the rain forest where the plant grows. The Jinibara People are called “mountain people” by tribal groups in Southeast Queensland and “Jarbu” (the inlanders) by coastal groups of Sunshine Coast.

In the past, many bunya festivals were held in Jinibara traditional country to celebrate the harvest of bonyi (Gubbi Gubbi word for the bunya pine). The neighbors and other Aboriginal groups were invited to the gatherings for important inter-group matters such as marriage arrangement, business trading and dispute resolutions. Such festival was disrupted due to the introduction of the non-indigenous settlement that displaced the First Nations people.

Under the Protection Act, people were forced to move and march to missions - Barambah (later Cherbourg), Deebing Creek and Stradbroke. Families were divided and children were removed from parents. During this “survival period” (according to the Jinibara People), people tried to keep their connection to traditional country and traditional knowledge, inside and outside the missions. Some Jinibara families lived in the edge of their traditional country such as Linville, Moore, Gympie, Cooroy, Nambour and Harlin and maintain connection with elders. This connection allowed the knowledge of traditional culture and belief, rights and responsibilities, law and customs to be passed on to younger generations.

In November 2012, after fourteen years of the Native Title process, the State of Queensland and the Federal Court found that the Jinibara People are the determined native title holders for the traditional country, including the western section of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Moreton Regional Council, as well as parts of Brisbane City Council and Somerset Regional Council. The prescribed body corporate is the Jinibara People Aboriginal Corporation.

Note: The information above were retrieved from the Jinibara Traditional Inputs for the Sunshine Coast Heritage Study by Ken Murphy (Elder and Spokeperson of Jinibara People), James Lillies (Senior Strategic Planner of Sunshine Coast Regional Council) and Ben Gall (Principal Consultant of AHS), published on the website of Sunshine Coast Council.

This history of Indigenous ownership is shared with the acknowledgment that some of the materials have been derived from colonist sources and we apologise for any misrepresentations that have been included.

### References:

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- Aird, M. (2001). Brisbane Blacks / Michael Aird.
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- Murphy, K., Lillis, J., Gall, B. (2017). Jinibara Traditional Inputs For the Sunshine Coast Heritage Study. Sunshine Coat Regional Council.
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- Steele, J. (1984). Aboriginal Pathways : In Southeast Queensland and the Richmond River / J.G. Steele.
- Stride, K., Helu, L. (2015). No native title over Brisbane CBD and surrounding areas. The State of Queensland.
- Whalley, P. (1987). An Introduction to the Aboriginal Social History of Moreton Bay South East Queensland from 1799 to 1830.

# History of CLA

Community Living Program (CLP) was established in 1987 as part of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS). The program, which was attached to the Taringa Rehabilitation Centre, was to support young people with an intellectual/learning disability towards independence. In 1987 the program was moved to the Spring Hill regional unit, its first community-based setting.

People with an interest in the program (Friends of CLP) became concerned when the CRS decided to cut back CLP's resources and decided to seek funding under the new Disability Services Act (1986). Funds were granted in 1989 for a research and development project. The Friends of CLP incorporated as the Community Living Program Inc. on the 23rd of June 1989. On the 20th of January 1995, CLP changed its name to Community Living Association Inc (CLA). CLA now manages CLP and has sponsored a range of other projects. CLA also manages:

- ARROS
- Beros
- Community Living Program
- Community Connections (Reconnect)
- Community Projects (Skilling Queenslanders for Work)
- Support coordination
- Plan management
- Various research projects
- Village Housing

## OUR PURPOSE

Community Living Association (Inc.) aims to:

- contribute to the relief of poverty, sickness, and other misfortune and to the promotion of the wellbeing of individuals, groups or communities who are disadvantaged and vulnerable either socially, physically, intellectually, or emotionally (hereinafter called social welfare); in particular those people who experience a learning (intellectual) disability.
- undertake or carry out any other benevolent work or purpose.
- promote, establish carry out and support and to assist in promoting, establishing, carrying out and supporting any social welfare program designed to contribute to the alleviation of poverty, sickness or other misfortune including those undertaken by Statutory Authorities, voluntary Welfare Organisations, and other community groups.
- assist people with 'learning difficulty' to determine and achieve what is important to them.

- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ to stand up for themselves, individually and collectively in the community and to have their say in representing their interests, issues and needs to all sectors of the community and government.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ to improve the social and economic conditions of their lives, for example: income, housing, health, transport, sporting, recreational, artistic etc.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ to develop a safe and secure life in the community.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ to develop their family, friend, partner and community relationships and connections.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ achieve a state of good psychological and physical wellbeing.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ achieve a sense of personal potency and of personal meaning.
- assist people with ‘learning difficulty’ achieve a sense of meaningful use of time for example, employment, community service etc.
- collaborate with other organisations in the achievement of C.L.A.’s objectives.
- document and record C.L.A.’s work and endeavours.
- identify and initiate creative responses to the needs and issues of people with ‘learning difficulty’.
- assist community members, build better communities through the inclusion of people with learning difficulties.
- assist families in their commitment to family members with a learning difficulty.
- To support young people and their families where those young young people are at risk of homelessness, or early school leaving or other social disadvantages that could lead to poverty, sickness or misfortune.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

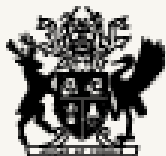
CLA Inc. will seek to carry out its’ objectives in ways that are:

- Respectful, kind and encourage one’s own control;
- Flexible, innovative and responsive, leading and giving hope;
- Diverse, fun and address the whole self;
- Written down and shared with others;
- Well-resourced and heading toward self-sufficiency;
- Co-operative and collaborative and value all opinions;
- Seek feedback and question deficiencies; and
- Challenge society and change it, acting politically.
- Stable, keeping core values and vitality



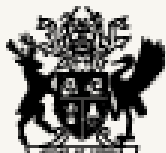


## OUR FUNDING PARTNERS



**QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY,  
SENIORS AND DISABILITY SERVICES**

**ARROS  
BEROS**



**QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT,  
SMALL BUSINESS AND TRAINING**

**SKILL  
QUEENSLANDERS  
FOR WORK**



**Australian Government**  

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**Department of Social Services**

**ILC PROJECT  
RECONNECT**



**Queensland  
Government**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
HOUSING, LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT,  
PLANNING AND  
PUBLIC WORKS**

## SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following funding bodies for grants to support CLA Projects:

- Paul Ramsay Foundation
- Lords Mayors Charitable Trust
- Community Housing Futures Fund
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- Brisbane City Council Community Grants
- Australian Drug Foundation
- NAPCAN Airport Fund
- Keeping Women Safe from Violence - Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Lord Mayor's Better Suburbs Grant
- Lord Mayor's Community Fund
- Lady Bowen Trust
- Nundah Rotary
- Qld Mental Health Week Grant
- Religious of Qld Social Justice Grants
- Inger Rice Foundation
- Village Housing

Special thanks also goes out to Grill'd, My Coffee Counts, Street Smart, Ebb and Flow Design and Thread Together for their ongoing support to Constituents, young people and families.

# CLA Presidents Report

This year has been another year of achievement and change – with some exciting opportunities coming with extended funding agreements for BEROS and ARROS, and a new service offering thanks to the Paul Ramsay Foundation.

The NDIS review and expected changes have meant ongoing uncertainty and adaptation. This will continue for our organization for some time.

I want to emphasize that CLA is committed to continuing to walk alongside constituents, their supporters and families to ensure that people get the necessary support they need to live a good life, regardless of where the support comes from.

I want to acknowledge and thank my fellow Management Committee members for their support and expertise to CLA throughout the year. This year we welcomed a new member to the Management Committee, Abhinav Jain who filled a casual vacancy on the Committee. He has brought a wealth of governance and analytic expertise.

We also thank Warren Hatt and Dave Langdon for their ongoing support through their membership on the Property Subcommittee, particularly for their industry knowledge as we traverse the challenges of applications to government to fund our new purpose-built building – more on this in the year's highlights.

As the governance and risk environment becomes more and more complicated, we welcome new CLA members Renee Curtis and Kristyna Dillon who are volunteering on the new Governance Subcommittee.

CLA also benefits from the contributions of quite a few community volunteers. The roles these vital people fill range from tutors, op shop attendants, volunteer friends and supporters. Thank you for all you do for CLA. One of the special events of the year was coming together for a celebration dinner (thank you Espresso Train!) during National Volunteer Week.

Finally, I would like to give a big shout-out to our constituents of CLA. You are the reason why we do what we do. I also deeply thank all the dedicated staff of CLA who work tirelessly to support our constituents to overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.

## Snippets of financial highlights 2023-24

- Over the 2023-24 financial year, CLA has again had a modest profit of \$316,628 (2023 \$225,562). The organisation continues to have a sound asset base including a separate diversified investment fund. The organisation has no bank debt and sufficient cash funds to be able to meet our immediate financial obligations as they fall due.
- On the 3rd April 2024, the Management Committee committed to spend \$612,660 to prepare for Development Approval application on the 5-9 Nundah Street Redevelopment Project with a view to applying for government funding for the project. No payments were made on this Capital Commitment before 30 June 2024. This information is also disclosed at Note (k) in the Audited Financial Statements.
- As required by legislation we submit the following Remuneration Statement for CLA for 2023-24. This is also shown at Note (j) in the Audited Financial Statements.
- For the 2023-24 financial year, CLA paid 3 senior management people a total of \$351,604 in remuneration and benefits. The Management Committee consisting of 10 people received training benefits of \$199. Total 2023-24 remuneration and benefits \$351,803.



## Snippets of highlights from 2023/24

- We continued to progress through the goals in our 2023 to 2026 strategic plan.
- Successful completion of the Human Services Quality Standards and NDIS Audits.
- We received contract renewals for BEROS and ARROS (with ARROS and BEROS Sunshine Coast being refunded for 5 years!)
- The annual Sorry Day event, and the now annual Elders Lunch, hosted by Noonga Reconciliation Group and supported by CLA in collaboration with WWild, Northside Connect, Kurbingui and Nalingu Respite Centre were beautiful celebrations of the resilience, knowledge and experience of First Nations people.

We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from and walk in solidarity with the First Peoples of this country.

- We have some momentum on the proposed redevelopment of the 5 Nundah St, Nundah site with the Management Committee and Property Subcommittee working to be ready to put in a submission to government for resources to build a purpose-built office space, retail space (including Espresso train café and NCEC), and several floors of social and affordable housing.
- Thanks to Morrie O'Connor for building and maintaining a new funding relationship with the Paul Ramsay Foundation, which has allowed CLA and NCEC as partners to provide paid work experience and personal development activities to young people who are marginalised from education and employment.
- The NDIS Review – CLA has participated in advocacy and consultations about the changes proposed by the NDIS review – this has included feeding into discussions about what Foundational Supports will look like in Queensland.

I want to reiterate from previous. We are committed to continuing to walk alongside constituents, their supporters and families to ensure that people get the necessary support they need to live a good life, regardless of where the support comes from.

- Research and Advocacy
- CLA is a partnering organisation on a research project being lead by University of Queensland into Peer Parent and Family Advocacy. CLA workers and constituents have participated in co-design of this project, and envisage that the project will improve parent and family inclusion and leadership in child protection and family well-being.
- ARROS Parents continue to advocate for their families and educate child safety and mainstream services about how to support them.
- Town from Nowhere - a coalition of community organisations and everyday Queenslanders campaigning to end homelessness in Queensland.
- Raise the Age – a campaign call for children under 14 to be diverted away from the youth justice system, for no child to be kept in a watch house, and for support services that address the root causes of children's offending behaviour to be properly funded.
- Brisbane Zero – A campaign seeking to reduce homelessness for individuals and families rough sleeping by 2025, and end rough sleeping by 2032.
- National Advocacy Collective – a group of people and organisations supporting the rights of parents with an intellectual disability.
- A right to learn: keep disabled kids in class - A campaign is made up of a coalition of community organisations and support services calling on the Queensland Government to conduct an inquiry into the use of school disciplinary absences in Queensland State Schools.

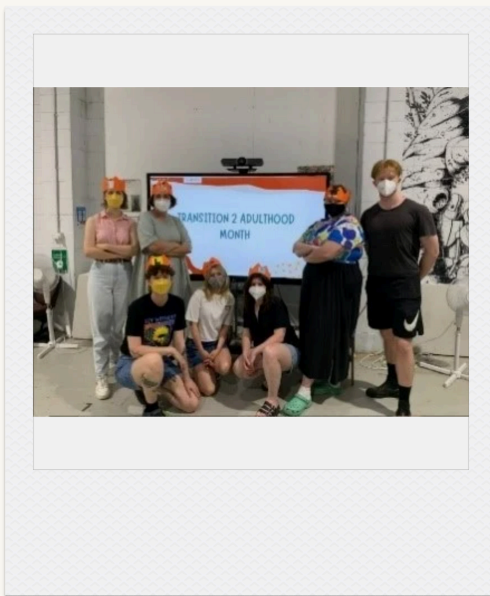
**DENISE GIBBONS**  
**CLA INC PRESIDENT 2023 - 24**

# ARROS



It has been an incredibly big year across each of the ARROS teams (Outreach + PLACE, Parenting and counselling) and for the young people, parents and constituents we work alongside. A very big thank you to all the staff and students who have made this work happen – Niamh, Gemma, Shaun, Lilli, Hannah, Chloe, Meg, Michael, Monique, Mandy, Jules, Miryeong, Jess B, Jess A and Matt. Of course, we extend our gratitude to all the constituents who have welcomed us to walk alongside them throughout the year – without their commitment to change, in what are often very difficult circumstances, this would not have been possible!

In November, ARROS celebrated Transitions 2 Adulthood Month with an interactive installation in Espresso Train and a CLA staff event to actively engage our community in considering the experiences of young people transitioning from care. We celebrated the end of 2023 together with the help of a Lord Mayors Charitable Trust Grant (LMCT), enjoying Christmas lunch and Christmas themed activities. Young people loved the frozen meals, cooked by ARROS Place, and the hampers we were able to provide through the LMCT grant received through the Brisbane Basket Brigade and the Bardon Catholic Church. A big thank you to Kerry Burke and the Bardon congregation for their ongoing support.



After many years of advocacy for ongoing funding for Transitions and Post Care Supports, we now have a contract to provide this service until 2029 (Dept Disabilities, Child Safety & Seniors). This gives us stability and continuity to enable ongoing support for young people transitioning from care and is a great development for the ARROS team!

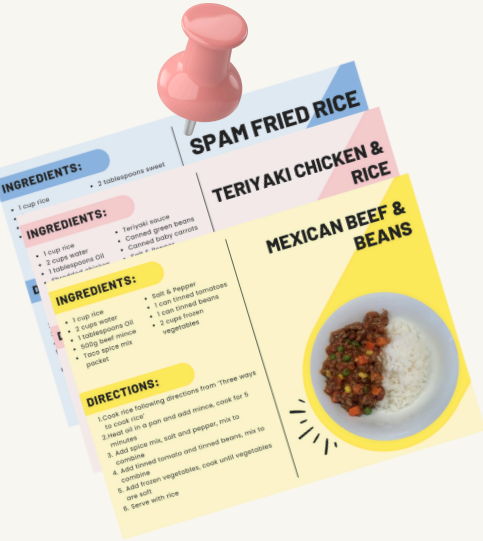


**A new logo!** Young people have been telling us for a while that they would like a new logo, and we were finally able to hold a series of workshops facilitated by the amazing Emily Devers, artist and graphic designer. ARROS young people and workers came together with Emily, working through a process focusing on about ARROS and what young people value in the work and their workers. We are loving our new logo! Thank you to all the young people and ARROS workers who took part and to Emily for designing such a collaborative, inclusive and fun process (and a great logo too)!

# ARROS PLACE

It was a big final year for ARROS PLACE (ARROS Peer-Led Advocacy and Community Engagement) with the project coming to an end after 3 successful years engaging with young people focusing on building their skills, confidence, and capacity through group engagement and individual support to address barriers to group participation.

Throughout the year, young people came together to connect with peers and develop their cooking skills by preparing and sharing a meal. Young people took turns picking recipes, so the group cooked lots of different meals and young people were able to try new things. Young people were also challenged to create low-cost recipes using items commonly found in emergency relief hampers. Workers saw lots of amazing creativity and teamwork from young people as they worked together to create meals that were later developed into a series of low-cost recipe cards!



Young people shared their desire to engage in more community spaces, so groups explored a range of places and activities in our local area. The group went to the Brisbane Museum, an escape room, bowling, bush walking, barbecued and played sports in the park. For the group's final community activity, they completed a scavenger hunt leading them back through all the places' groups had taken place!

In wrapping up the project, young people shared their participation in PLACE helped them learn new skills and experience belonging. Gemma and Niamh captured these learnings beautifully! The wrap up celebration included a trip to Australia Zoo for one final day of fun, reflection and farewell.

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With ARROS PLACE ending we said goodbye to Matt (casual worker) & Gemma, while Niamh transitioned into an outreach role with ARROS.

A very big thank you to each of these workers for the dedication, passion, and knowledge they brought to their roles working alongside young people. And of course, a massive thank you to the young people who contributed so much to the development of a successful project over the 3 years.

**Do you feel like you belong at groups? Why?**

Yes, everyone has similar backgrounds  
 Yes, everyone's weird in their own little way  
 Yes!  
 Yes, feel comfortable  
 Yes, no one is judgemental  
 Yes, fun people  
 Yes, people are nice and welcoming

**What skills have you learned in ARROS PLACE?**

"Cooking"  
 "Being around more people"  
 "How to cook different things"  
 "Patience"  
 "Confidence"  
 "Talking to people"  
 "To let go of stress"

**Which of these have you seen positive change in?**

- Skills
- Motivation
- Confidence
- Ability to speak up for yourself
- Making your own choices in life
- Social connection

# PARENTING TEAM

It has been a big year in our work alongside parents with intellectual disability. We have continued to work with individual parents to address barriers and achieve their parenting goals and have seen parents achieve incredible things for themselves and their families! From, give examples!!!, Our hats are off to parents who work so hard in often difficult circumstances, not only to build their only capacity and to advocate for their families, but for their commitment to advocating for their peers, contributing to best practice and challenging systems to do better. This commitment is celebrated in some of the work shared here.

## MUM GROUP



- The group, which brings together mums with intellectual disability, to connect, offer peer support and learn new skills, has continued to thrive throughout the year.
- This year the group focused on opportunities for learning, healthy relationships, self-care and advocacy, as well as taking every opportunity to celebrate birthdays! We were fortunate to have two grants to sustain this group and engage in projects (Inger Rice & Keeping Women Safe from Violence, QLD Dept Justice & Attorney General).
- The group undertook the Circle of Security program together and have developed a resource, 'Learn My Journey' to improve communication between parents and Child Safety Officers, and to assist parents to share their hopes for their children and their achievements as parents.
- The group also featured in the 'Think Again' created by the Community Resource Unit, which shared stories of people with disabilities, and their supporters, working creatively to break down barriers. Maggie and Lisa spoke about what mum's group meant to them, and the power of peer support.
- Thank you to CRU for inviting us to share this story!
- The group members have contributed enormously to ARROS's work in this space. Their voices are being heard, loud and clear across the sector that systems and services need to do better to support families where a parent has intellectual disability. The following work has often started with the group, but they always seek to invite other parents into this work, acknowledging that everyone has a right to share their voice and contribute to change.

## DAD GROUP

Building on the success of the well-established Mum's group, we saw an opportunity to extend this work with the establishment of a Dads Group. We have now run two terms of Dads group, kindly funded through an Inger Rice grant which saw a small group of dads come together weekly for catch ups over coffee and snacks. They spent time discussing parenting, child development, experiences with systems, creating arts and crafts for their children, and sharing wisdom with each other. Most importantly, Dads created a space where they were able to connect with one another and check in about what had been going on in their week.

Feedback from group members included that they liked having a space where they were able to talk about being fathers, their children, what was worrying them and what had been going well. Participants also shared that it was great to be in a group with other parents at different stages of their parenting journey, and that they learnt a lot from other's experiences.



# PARENTING FORUM

**Families and 'US' Forum** - In August 2023, we hosted what is now becoming an Annual Forum to explore best practice with parents with intellectual disability. We extend a very big thank you to Dr Margaret Spencer (University of Sydney) for joining us for the day, to share her work and facilitate a process for knowledge growth around our practice across the sector.

Parents were actively involved in planning and presenting the event, sharing their stories on film, participating in discussions on the day, and assisting with running the event. A big thank you to our working group Rhi, Charmaine, Maggie, Lisa, Shai and Crystal. A particular shout out goes to Crystal and Rhi, for presenting on the day. Rhi shared her personal experience, reflecting on her understanding of the UNs Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability. Together, Crystal and Rhi shared 'contact bags' that mums group created to gift to parents connected with Child Protection. It was their first taste for public speaking, and they did an incredible job!

It was inspiring to have so many partners from across the sector come together, both in person and online, to work towards creating better outcomes for families where a parent has intellectual disability. We look forward to continuing this work bringing the sector together for vibrant learning, discussion, reflection and action. A shout out to all those who attended from Child Safety, NDIS, Disability advocates and NGOs working across the disability, domestic and family violence and family support sectors.

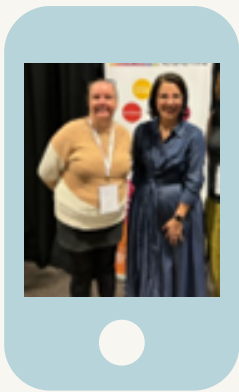


**ASID Conference** – Crystal Richardson presented “An Emerging Practice Alongside Parents with Intellectual Disability” at the ASID conference in Melbourne in November. We launched ‘Tinker’ a persona to enable parents to raise awareness about the collective experiences of parents with intellectual disability. While it was nerve-invoking, the presentation was very well received. Audience members congratulated Crystal for sharing such powerful insights around the experiences of parents and knowledge around what works. Crystal and Renee also took the opportunity to enjoy the sights of Melbourne in their down time! It was Crystal’s first time flying so it was an incredible experience!



**Child Safety Collaborative** – We have continued our collaborative with Child Safety, along with Linda McKey Family Services, to promote the challenges faced by parents connected with the child protection system. We are grateful to the Specialist Services Team, in particular Lorette Atkinson and Regina Mullins, for continuing to listen to, and actively respond and collaborate, to ensure parents’ voices are heard and understood. This support has been invaluable in progressing towards better outcomes for children, parents and families!

**National Advocacy Collective (NAC)** – As founding members of NAC, now chaired by Inclusion Australia (thank you IA!), we have been excited to see the growth in support across the country for improving practice and outcomes for families where a parent has intellectual disability. Over the past year, the Collective focused its energy into submitting a response to the Final Report published by the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. The collective has also fostered partnerships across Australia to seek funding, write publications and work together to continue pushing this important area of work.



**QLD Foster and Kinship Care Conference (Gold Coast)** - Crystal Richardson presented alongside Jess A and Renee at the QFKC around the idea of Carers and parents sharing parenting responsibilities. Crystal and Jess's knowledge, in particular, was engaging and valued by both carers and professionals in the audience for their valued knowledge and insight in particular was acknowledged by carers and the room and Child Safety professionals. Jess did an incredible job networking with the executive of Child Safety! We are looking forward to furthering our collaboration with QFKC and would like to extend our thanks for their support of our work!

**Australian Institute Families Webinar** – Crystal and Renee presented alongside Dr Susan Collings and Catherine Wade regarding experiences of parents with intellectual disability to an audience of over 2000 people across Australia. While there were a few nerves beforehand, the presentation received overwhelmingly positive feedback. We have enjoyed working alongside academics to promote the evidence base to support better outcomes for parents and families! This webinar can be accessed through the AIFS website.



## COUNSELLING

The counselling team continued their work with individuals to improve wellbeing. The team has also actively supported CLA workers to develop their therapeutic practice through individual case consultation, debriefing and support. We are fortunate to have a team of skilled and creative practitioners who can tailor their support for people with intellectual disability who are experiencing mental health issues. Meg and Michael have also developed and trialed their ever-evolving wellbeing workshop, which has received great feedback from CLA staff and students. The team has actively supported CLA through facilitating their ever-evolving Wellbeing workshop, which has had positive feedback from CLA workers! A very big thank you to Megumi, Michael, and Monique (the 3Ms), for their hard work throughout the year.

## A Final Comment

It has been a massive year across the teams with an enormous amount of work undertaken with commitment, integrity, creativity and passion, by everyone who has worked in the ARROS teams. Not only did we say farewell to Matt and Gemma, we also farewelled Miryeong from the parenting team and welcomed Jess A as she stepped into this role from the outreach team. Only now is the outreach team back to full staffing capacity – so thank you everyone for all your hard work. We will finish as we started by thanking all the young people, parents, constituents and their supporters for allowing us to walk alongside them to create the change they hope for to live their lives in ways that bring them meaning.





# BEROS

## WELCOME BOOKLET



a partnership between

Across Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast regions, BEROS provided **30,571 hours** of support to **311 young people** in out of home care (equivalent to 3.5 years). We drove **197,143km** (nearly 5 laps around earth) and provided a total of **807 bed nights** (over 2 years). These higher numbers have been influenced by 2 major placement providers closing down amidst a nation-wide housing crisis. Young people have come to BEROS for a safe place in between residential placements, after periods of rough sleeping and couch surfing, or for respite from their self-placing arrangements with family or friends.

BEROS sincerely thank several members of staff who have moved on in the past year: Lana Khouri, Rachel Augustine, Christine Extross and Renee Billing. We are so grateful for their hard work and commitment while with BEROS and wish them all the best in their new endeavours.

Hiking in Gympie



BEROS were fortunate this year to have 2 amazing **student social workers** – Chloe Mabb and Chelsea Creed. Chloe and Chelsea were motivated to learn and very supportive members of the team, while with us. Beros is particularly grateful to Chloe Mabb for her incredible work in creating our **very first BEROS Welcome Booklet**. This is a comprehensive tool that workers can share with both young people and Stakeholders to better understand all aspects of our service.

We congratulate Chloe as she graduates from her Social Work degree and wish Chelsea all the best as she continues with her studies.



## Training



Beros is grateful for the opportunity to participate in Professional Development, including **Hidden Histories** with James Sandy, **Trauma & Grief Training** with Judith Murray, **Writing for Publication** with Karen Healey, and **Supervision: Unpacking Practice** with Kyabra.

We also thank **Micah Projects** who continue to partner with CLA, delivering the Street to Home arm of BEROS. They provide valuable support in keeping young people safe after hours. With the addition of some fantastic new workers this year, the BEROS team currently consists of 18 CLA employees and 15 Micah employees who we collectively call the BEROS Crew.



**BEROS Overnight team:** Murray Lanham, Bec Patterson, Lili Slade, Rhiannon Dumsa, Adam Henry, Duane Bailey, Alex Johnson, Archie Edwards, Scott Houston, Matt Tulle and Marian Simbi.

**BEROS Case Management Team:** Brigitte Lewis, Ail Wang, Audrey Fernandez, Rachel Kirsch, Jess Larkin, Archie Edwards. **Team Leader** Toni Sumner



**Good News Stories**

This year a lot of young people in BEROS managed to kick personal/life goals. This year BEROS would like to celebrate a young man who has been with BEROS for almost two years now and is about to age out of the service. Earlier this year he started and continues to manage his own business on Facebook Marketplace. The young person and his mum make beautiful trinkets by hand. Some of the items they make are bedazzled bookmarks, sun catchers, earrings and they even have kits people can buy so they can make their own items. The young person has come so far since he first started engaging with BEROS, and we are excited to see where he will go.



# Community Connections



Community Connections

CASEWORK | COUNSELLING | GROUP FACILITATION

Community Connections support young people (aged 12-18), their families and the significant people in their lives to navigate challenges that may lead to homelessness or school disengagement. Our support includes individual support, group work, projects and working in partnership with different stakeholders including schools, other services and community groups. A big thank-you to Katherine Ritchie, Kelsey McAuthur, Beck Taylor, Eli Reynolds-Cushing, Katie Huff, Mitch Verco, Cate Ryan, Elisha Jones, May Grehan and Caitlin McColl for contributing to the teams' efforts across the year.



**Listening to and involving young people in our work is key to the support we provide. This year, young people wanted others to know:**



*“CoCos helped me free of judgement and continued to check in on me after! CoCos cares not just about physical safety but also mental health and morale. The team cares about the person they're looking out for!!”*

*“Working with CoCos, the decisions made have been left up to me with support from the team regardless.”*

*“We used to have weekly meetings last year. I just wanted to say thank you for all your help and giving me someone to talk to in my lowest point. Thanks to your help I have moved out into my own place and am working. I couldn't have done it without all your help and believing in me.”*

## SPECIAL THANKS

We thank our partnering funding providers for their support to do what we do.

- The Department of Social Services (Reconnect Program)
- Kedron State High School (School Based Social Worker Project)
- Queensland Academy of Creative Industries
- Aspley Special School & the Queensland Department of Education (Student Wellbeing Officer Program)
- Lady Bowen Trust (Health Access Fund Project)
- Brisbane City Council (BMYA Youth Info Cards Project)
- Alcohol and Drug Foundation (Local Drug Action Team)
- Queensland Mental Health Commission

We also acknowledge contributions from other community organisations, local school communities and the Quiltmakers @ Peppermint Stitches.



## INTERAGENCIES & NETWORKS

IUYI – Inner Urban Youth Interagency

LLA – Local Level Alliance

NAADV – Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence

NSAAN – Northside Sexual Assault Network

SAYS – Supporting Advocacy with Youth

Nundah Headspace Consortium

Youth Affairs Network

Queensland – Community of Practice

NPCAN – Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect

Youth Affairs Network

Queensland





# Community Living Program

Another year! Everyone at CLP would like to thank all of the constituents of CLP and significant people in their lives. We have continued to work together on capacity building projects. This is about hopes, dreams and goals of constituents of CLP.

There has been individual work alongside over 70 constituents. We have also enjoyed spending time together in groups. These groups were Nundah All Stars, Shared Meal, Adventure Holiday Group, Youth Group, Cooking Group, Fitness Group, Train Enthusiasts, Scammers, Committee, Recyclers, Literacy and the Op Shop.

We continued to work in a relationship based, disability informed and trauma informed approach.

Out two teams, Salt and Pepper have a range of roles. These include; Team Leaders (2), Senior Key Workers (6); Key Workers (5); Community & Homespace Workers (2); and Casual Workers (3). CLP has provided placements to 4 social work students in 2024.



It is with ongoing thanks that we thank all CLP workers and students for your commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, openness, creativity and kindness.

There has been some change in our team. Karem and Tita have become Senior Key Workers. Lilli has become a Key Worker. We have welcomed Nav and Natty into the CLP Team. We have also said goodbye to some of the CLP staff. Some have left to work outside of CLA, other teams in CLA and as locums in CLA. We have said goodbye to Fernanda, Eli, Emilie and Amy.

Thank you to Tania Lawrie, Morrie O'Connor, Eden McNamara, Carmel Towler, Beulah Moses, Mandy Sinnamon, Sylvia Jeyakumar; all CLA Team Leaders and our colleagues in Support Co-ordination, ARROS, BEROS, Community Connections, Finance & Administration Teams, Systems and Compliance Team, NCEC and the Management Committee. We very much enjoy and appreciate your ongoing support, knowledge, wisdom, innovation, creativity, fun and compassion.





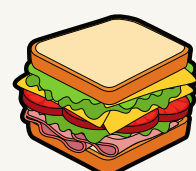
# SHARED MEAL

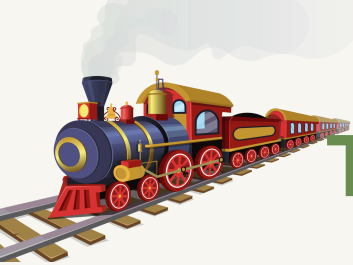


Shared Meal group continued meeting fortnightly to enjoy delicious food, fun games and great company. We said goodbye to our amazing Shared Meal worker Mitali and welcomed Zoya. We share a warm welcome to our new member who joined Shared meal this year. Espresso Train café has continued to provide meals and one of our valued Shared Meal members, Gary has shared his lovely home-cooked meals, which were enjoyed very much by the group members. We would like to express our immense gratitude and appreciation to the Espresso Train and Gary. Unfortunately, the Café is no longer able to cater for Shared meal, the group will come together to discuss what we would like to do for dinner. We are looking forward to some wonderful ideas for the new catering system.

We were very grateful to also receive a grant from the Lord Mayors Community Trust which supported the group to have a few special nights and celebrations towards the end of last year (2023), including BBQ in the local park, movie night at the theatre and bowling night which allow the group to enjoy the community participation again after the pandemic hit. The group enjoyed two movie nights at the Shed with pizza and snacks so far this year and has planned to have a few special nights later this year. We are very excited about those events.

All members continued engaging in group planning, making decisions collaboratively, celebrating birthdays and achievements, sharing responsibilities and respecting everyone. Shared Meal continues to be a safe and joyful space for our constituents and community members. Mary MacKillop students and teachers have continued joining the group this year. The group has always enjoyed and appreciated their participation and welcomed them with our all-time favorite games such as memory game and Bingo. Finally, a big shout out to our placement students Ayesha, Marian, Joyce and Ayush, for all the support you have provided to Shared Meal.





# TRAIN ENTHUSIAST GROUP

**Group Members:** Allan Castellaro, Taurean Lea, Jack Barnes, Sean McCrystal

## What we do together:

We watch trains from various train stations and parks every second Friday from 9 am to 11 am.

We try to visit stations not visited before.

Sometimes, we watch DVDs and YouTube videos about different types of trains

While trainspotting and watching train videos, we share safety tips for taking trains

We also share stories from our past experiences and knowledge about trains

We visit the Ipswich Rail Museum occasionally

### In our own words:

*“Train Group is a great way to watch trains go by” – Taurean Lea*

*“I enjoy watching trains, DVDs and the company of my friends” – Sean McCrystal*

*“I look forward to coming to ‘The Train Group’ on Fridays via a train” – Allan Castellaro*



### Our group rules include:

- No swearing, No bullying, No fighting
- Be nice to everyone
- Stay behind the yellow line at the station
- Introduce the group to the station Train Master to let them know that we will be trainspotting at their station
- When taking videos and/or photos, don't get strangers in the shot. It might make them feel uncomfortable.
- When taking videos and/or photos, don't put your flash on. It can confuse the train driver. It can be a safety hazard.



# LEARNING AND VOICE EVERYDAY (LAVE)



## Our Group Superpowers



Our group has a collection of unique individuals, each with their own superpowers. There's the Queen of the Skating Ring, always gliding through challenges with grace and determination. Then we have Mr. Fix It, the go-to for solving problems, whether a broken gadget or a challenging puzzle. And finally, there's Ms. Social Butterfly, who connects us all with warmth and charm, bringing everyone together.



Our combined superpowers make us unstoppable. We are a supportive group that thrives on creative ideas and the power of confidence and technology. Whether using PowerPoint to tell a story or working with the latest tech tools, we push past everyday challenges. Together, we step out of our comfort zones to learn new skills and grow.

At times, we all face those moments where we say, "I can't do this," but with each other's support and our creative thinking and confidence, we transform that into "I can do this!" We express ourselves through creative actions like self-portraits, group discussions, speeches and exploring healthy eating. These moments show us just how far we've come.

Our group also loves a bit of friendly competition, which motivates us to keep learning and improving. However, we should never forget the importance of feeling safe when expressing ourselves whether by online or face-to-face conversations.

When it comes to challenges like understanding problems or ensuring our security and support, we're there for one another. We brainstorm, share ideas, and solve problems as a team, using our voices and ever-growing knowledge to keep moving forward daily.

Our group superpowers—creativity, confidence, and technology—help us overcome obstacles, learn new things, and support each other. We are stronger together, and there's nothing we can't achieve when we unite our skills!

**By Garry, Jessica and Olivia.**

**T o g e t h e r**



This year we enjoyed expressing and showcasing our individual creative flair by making a range of art and crafts like self-portrait painting. We experimented with cooking some recipes and building measuring skills to make bliss balls, lemonade scones and cookies. We expanded our digital skills to design and create cards. Outings were planned and enjoyed, including watching Inside Out 2 at Cineplex Southbank. A favourite outing was an end of term celebration barbeque at Kalinga Park where we relaxed with some picnic treats and reflected on the term of learning together. We also bid farewell to one of the wonderful group facilitators, Eli, as he moved on to a new role. Thanks Eli, for all your support with LAVE this year!

--- **LAVE Fri AM**

LAVE is a group that is also valued by the placement students who get the opportunity to meet and work alongside the constituents. Here is the meaningful impact LAVE had for one of our wonderful placement students:

“The experience working with LAVE was incredibly formative for me. I’ve decided to apply for a Master of Counselling Psychology, with the goal of working within the community sector - a path that my placement with LAVE really helped clarify for me.”

– Chiara (UQ Psychology Honours Student, Semester 1 2024)

Literacy is a good group to be a part of. Literacy is doing really well because it’s helping us to learn. We enjoyed going on an outing in the city together, and also learning about creative projects. We talked a lot about our strengths and our values. Something we really like about LAVE is having students visit our program. It is really nice to have them help us with our personal project, and also to teach them about LAVE.

We also enjoy doing check ins. It’s really good to get to know other people, and to find out about how their weeks have been. If we know about each others’ weeks, we can know when to be patient.

— **LAVE Fri PM**



# FITNESS GROUP



Our Fitness Group continued to thrive throughout 2024, offering a variety of activities tailored to the preferences and abilities of its members. The group's popularity and engagement remained consistent, with a strong focus on physical and mental health.

## Activities and Locations

The Fitness Group engaged in a diverse range of activities, including:

Walking: Popular destinations included Sandgate, and Boondall Wetlands, Shorncliffe, Chermside Hills.

- Yoga/Pilates
- Stretching
- Swimming



## Highlights and new adventures

At the end of each term, we organise a BBQ to celebrate the Fitness Group achievements and efforts. These events provided opportunities for members to socialise, relax and enjoy a meal together.

The team has expressed a desire to include a healthy cooking option every six weeks, expanding the group's activities and promoting healthy eating habits.

## Group Dynamics

The group retained a strong sense of community, with many members returning from previous years and new participants joining. The Fitness Group fostered a supportive and inclusive environment, encouraging active engagement in planning, decision-making, and organizing activities.

## Benefits

Beyond physical and mental health improvements, the Fitness Group offered several additional benefits:

Capacity Building: Members actively participated in planning, decision-making, and organizing activities.

Social and Community Participation: Group members utilised public transport to travel to and from activities, fostering social connections and community involvement.

The Fitness Group continued to be a valuable resource for members in 2024, providing opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, and personal growth. We look forward to continuing to support the group's success in the coming year.



### Members Feedback

The following is some fantastic feedback, comments and a photo provided with consent from the Fitness Group members

- " I love fitness group because I like walking and going to new places. Fitness group is healthy. I can't wait to go swimming. I like hanging out with my friends. Tita is a good coach." - SHa
- " I really enjoy Fitness group I have done a few things that I would never thought I would have done, like Pilates, walking long distances, but the thing I really enjoyed about Fitness Group is the friendship of all the people who participate in Fitness Group." – CMc.
- "Fitness Group is a great way to stay fit and healthy, exercise and to get out about instead of sitting at home doing nothing. It is also a great way to walk with friend and go to places to exercise and have fun as well." – TL
- " Fitness Group is good, fun, healthy, I love it." – AL
- "My name is Monny, I like Fitness Group because I like to spend time with friends while I do exercises.





# NUNDAH ALL STARS

On Friday night, 27 September 2024, we had the Nundah All Stars musical. We have been having rehearsals and practicing our individual and group songs since the start of February. Rehearsing for the musical was very good. Sometimes it was hard, but we did it and we all came together in the end. Some good people volunteered to help us with our songs. We also had help from social work students and the workers.

For the night, we organised a raffle, supporter shirts, and we had our own BBQ. We also got new performer shirts thanks to a grant from Councillor Adam Allan.

On the night of the performance, we got our hair and makeup done. Everyone was feeling happy and everyone was getting along. When all the guests started to arrive we all started to feel nervous. We felt excited when we saw our family, friends, and workers start to arrive.

We all had different roles on the night, like applause sign, host, raffle tickets, selling t-shirts, helping with props and costumes, sound desk, and camera. We all did an individual song and helped out with other people's songs. We also sang two group songs – "Surfin' USA" and "Thriller". We had some fun costumes. We were nervous on stage, but then we were happy and proud.

**Written by Susan, Karen, Jonathan, and Emma**



# OP SHOP

In the past year, CLP op shop continued to open every Wednesday to provide a safe place for volunteers, constituents and members in the broader community to learn, to play and to connect. Selling things is just one thing we do here, more importantly, we've been meeting new people and making customers laugh, building capacity in financial literacy and building confidence in communicating with other people. We enjoyed the fun and laughter we created, the music we played and the sense of achievement every time we served a customer. We are glad to see an increasing number of community members getting to know us, some of them even volunteered to promote the op shop on their social media.

We appreciate the support we received from students, external workers and community members. And of course, we appreciate our own hard work. So, we decided to reward ourselves with mid-year morning tea and an end-of-year breakfast. How exciting! We earned about \$5,000 last year, despite the money we put aside for the group running cost, we decided to distribute \$3,000 to CLA groups that need some fund for this years' activities and individual constituents who request emergency relief. We would like to spread the love and support we received to those who in need. We will continue to see everyone on Wednesday!



**We love working at the op-shop because:**

*'I can meet people in the community.'*

*'I get a chance to get out from my unit.'*

*'I make friends and good laugh.'*



# COOKING GROUP

This year's cooking group has undergone some changes compared to last year's. We bid farewell to Fernanda and welcomed Mitali to the team. Unlike last year, where the group experimented with different dishes every fortnight, this year's focus has been on honing our cooking skills through specific recipes. The primary goal of our cooking group is to develop culinary skills and foster a sense of community while relishing and creating amazing dishes. With just four members, our group has selected four beloved dishes to prepare and enjoy together. The enthusiasm and eagerness to learn among all members have been truly inspiring. Feedback from the members regarding their experience in the cooking group:



## What do you like about coming to Cooking Group?

Learning to cook at home and gaining new culinary skills

Understanding various ingredients and their roles in cooking

Mastering recipes and getting familiar with cooking temperatures

Enjoying quality time with friends

Relishing the delicious food prepared

Good smell!!!!

## What have you learned?

- Taking turns effectively to ensure smooth cooking sessions
- Properly preparing and organizing ingredients
  - Perfecting the art of stirring and mixing ingredients
- Knowing where everything belongs, from ingredients to utensils
- Completing the cooking experience by efficiently cleaning up

## What have you cooked?

- Mouth-watering Lasagne
- Irresistible Chocolate Chip Biscuits
- Delicious Omelette
- Flavorful Tacos



# SCAMS AWARENESS GROUP

The Scams Awareness Group had a busy and interesting year! As we entered the last year of our ILC grant, group members tried a whole host of different ways to spread our message through the community. We've run community awareness stalls, Q&A sessions, seminars, newsletters.

Members have also really enjoyed creating the successful Scammers Podcast, which involved group members and CLA staff members sharing their scam expertise, getting to know each other, staying up to date on the latest scam technology. Something that we've learned through running our podcast especially, but also all our other projects is that scams are everywhere.

Almost everyone we talked to has experienced one, and Scams group was really happy to extend our empathy and unique perspective to the landscape of anti-scam education. Scams Group is excited to continue some of our work into the future—scammers won't stop, and so neither will we! Our next challenge is to present at the AGM, and possibly even interview the elusive CLA coordinator.





# Village Housing

Village Housing is an initiative of CLA that provides long-term housing to Community Living Program (CLP) constituents and other eligible community members.

Village Housing purposely includes people with and without intellectual disability in its aim to create the best life possibilities for people with an intellectual disability. Village Housing hopes to demonstrate that communities can be a place where all people are equally valued and where their gifts and contributions to others can be recognized.

## Goals of Village Housing are to:

- Increase housing options for constituents of CLA and other eligible persons in North-East Brisbane;
- Provide safe, affordable and secure accommodation close to public transport and other services

## Provide supportive accommodation through:

- A balance of people with and without an intellectual disability;
- Positive and purposeful interactions with other tenants and neighbours;
- Engagement of those who are important to constituents in their housing situation; and
- Engagement of tenants in sharing the management of Village Housing Village Housing.

Village Housing has 11 dwellings, comprising 6 units, 3 CAP units and 2 houses. Over the past year we have undergone some minor alterations and upgrades, including new flooring, internal painting and appliances.

Village Housing continues to offer good quality, well maintained and affordable housing to people on low incomes and pensions.

## VH CRISIS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM (CAP)

Village Housing utilises three properties in private rental, with Queensland Housing Department funding, for crisis accommodation for eligible persons. Village Housing has successfully continued funding for 4 CAP properties. Three are currently tenanted and one which is currently being sourced for suitable, eligible constituents in the 2024/2025 financial year.

Village Housing also subsidises a number of people with crisis housing needs in private rental.

CLA was successful in securing a grant from the Gambling Benefit Fund of \$34,700 to upgrade a bathroom, kitchen, appliances and minor internal painting at one of our BEROs properties.



# Independent Youth Housing Group Ltd

IYHG is a constituted body which receives ongoing support from Community Living Association. The co-operative has been operating for 34 years and is not for profit and completely run and maintained by its 14 members.

The main goal of IYHG is to provide quality, stable housing for low-income earners. IYHG presently has 11 properties in Clayfield, Nundah, Northgate, Woolloowin and Zillmere areas and houses 12 people.

IYHG sold one of their properties in Nundah earlier this year. The funds are currently secured in a Term Deposit and will be used to purchase another purposeful property in the near future.

IYHG has continued throughout the year to improve and maintain its' properties. This year IYHG were successful in securing a grant from Gambling Benefit Fund of \$34,500 to upgrade a kitchen, bathroom, internal painting and new flooring.



# Support Coordination

2024 has been another eventful year for the Support Coordination team at CLA. We continue our role to work with participants, their families and other supporters in their lives to understand and implement NDIS plans, deal with the challenges and changes within the NDIS and other systems and to achieve goals big and small. The CLA Support Coordination team currently has 5 full-time and 1 part-time support coordinators providing both Coordination of Supports and Specialist Support Coordination. We provide support coordination to approximately 100 participants living within the Brisbane and Sunshine Coast areas.

## What do CLA support coordinators do?

- Support participants and their supporters to understand and implement their NDIS plans
- Support participants to communicate their goals and support needs to the NDIA and providers
- Provide assistance and information to participants to identify, connect and link with informal, mainstream and funded supports
- Assist participants to understand best fit providers according to their needs and goals and support to find, manage and monitor these supports once in place
- Respond at points of crisis by providing information and support appropriate to individual
- Make referrals for assessments as per participant or NDIS plan requirements
- Prepare participants for reassessments of their NDIS plans by collecting reports from other service providers, evaluating current supports and developing new goals
- Work proactively with NDIA Planners and Local Area Coordinators to address the complexity of the challenges participants face daily

The team has reflected on the year gone by and would like to share some of the many highlights which we have been lucky enough to be part of:

### Safety and security

The participants we support have varied living arrangements utilizing NDIS funding and supports including Independent Living Options (ILO) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA). Some have accessed Short Term Accommodation (STA) through their NDIS plans. In our roles we have also supported participants to move into community housing or public housing options.

One person exited the private rental market after years of increasing rent and constantly having to move after short tenancies. This participant was able to secure a public housing unit in an area they wanted to live at a rental cost that is far more affordable than private rentals. They now utilize their NDIS supports to focus on other goals such as enjoying hobbies and looking for employment and don't have to constantly worry about housing security and potential homelessness.

### Building relationships

Our team works with participants to build and strengthen relationships in their lives including family, friends, other informal supports and local communities.

We have supported participants in many ways regarding the relationships in their lives including:

- Working with parents with a disability to build capacity and the supports to have their children returned to their care or to remain in their custody.
- Working with participants to re-engage with family members and start to build a more positive relationship.
- Exploring Circles of Support and Microboards with participants and their supporters.

## Building resources

Our roles often involve supporting participants regarding assessment and applications for assistive technology or seeking funding, resources or services that aren't otherwise available to the participant.

- We've supported parents and children with disabilities to use their NDIS plans to purchase sensory items and communication aids to help to regulate emotions and communicate with others at home, school and in the community.
- A young man was able to have air conditioning installed in his home through the assistance of a local philanthropic group

## Building knowledge

We work with participants by providing information which is accessible and assisting them to understand the NDIS and other systems. We support people to build their capacity and make informed decisions about the issues that impact their lives and to face new challenges.

- One participant we support showed the commitment and determination to re-engage at school this year by attending a new school, learning a new transport route and meeting all new teachers and students.

## Being, doing and becoming

Our work also involves walking alongside people to find a valued role, to participate in activities they enjoy and grow and develop potential.

- One participant had the opportunity to participate in OT student training. He was part of a conversation and practice interview forum for OT students
- Another person sold a painting that was exhibited at Rangebow festival and is now gearing up for Xmas card creation and sales

We recognize that there are changes and challenges that are continuing within the NDIS and other systems that impact the lives of the participants we work with. Recently we have seen the recommendations of the NDIS Review and upcoming changes to the NDIS legislation. We are committed to continue to learn and improve within this ever-changing landscape to build our knowledge and skills on how to provide the best support we can while reflecting on our practice to ensure we continue to operate within the ethics and values of CLA.

The NDIS Support Coordination team would like to acknowledge and say a huge thank you to:

All the constituents and family members/supporters who have shared their journeys and stories with us.

Current NDIS Support Coordinators – Mischelle Surawski (based on the Sunshine Coast), Heidi Cheng, Luis Sanchez, Teresa Stringer, Bobby Thapa and Megan Salisbury. Previous Support Coordinator – Gurleen Virk.

CLA Inc, in particular Tania, Eden, Morrie, the Management Committee, Carmel, Sally, Sylvia, Beulah, Mandy, Nibu, Andrew and Will. The teams we work alongside including CLP, ARROS, Community Connections, BEROS and NCEC.



# Skilling Queenslanders for Work



CLA's Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) program provides funded training in horticulture and hospitality to assist individuals facing barriers to employment. Through two projects, The Re-Gen Project and The Good Food Project, the program supports refugees, people with intellectual disabilities, and other disadvantaged jobseekers. Graduates not only earn qualifications but also build and enhance essential skills such as confidence, work routines, and teamwork, preparing them for the workforce.

The Re-Gen Project continues to benefit the community and environment through its work projects. Participants have planted and nurtured hundreds of native plants in partnership with the Bulimba Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee (B4C). Other achievements include the construction of a beautiful timber deck at BEROS house in Wavell Heights, painting walls inside Windsor Uniting Church and new signage for the NCEC office.

The Good Food Project has successfully adapted to meet evolving needs. The training venue relocated from Brisbane's Southside to the Wavell Heights Community Hall, improving accessibility for participants. Additionally, the qualification shifted from a Certificate II in Cookery to a Certificate II in Hospitality, better aligning with current job market trends and enhancing the employability of graduates.

We thank all participants, project staff, and our valued program partners, including NCEC, Hendra Pony Club, B4C, and the registered training organizations that deliver tailored education to our students.



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This report was compiled by placement students of CLA. We would like to extend our gratitude for CLA's continuous support, guidance and contributions to future generations of social workers.

Want more information? Contact us.

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