



COMMUNITY

LIVING ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

2024-2025

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 Kabi Kabi 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.

This report contains the names and images of deceased persons.



Table of Contents

4 - 6	HISTORY OF COMMUNITY LIVING ASSOCIATION
7	CLA PRESIDENTS REPORT
8	ARROS
9-10	GROW TOGETHER
11	BEROS
12	COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
13-19	COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM
20-21	HOUSING
22	DEFY
23	SUPPORT COORDINATION
24	SKILLING QUEENSLANDERS FOR WORK



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.

C.L.A. Inc. continues to be committed to people with different abilities, as well as young people who have had contact with Child safety and / or Youth Justice, young people who are at risk of homelessness and early school leaving, people who have been excluded from the workforce (eg different abilities and people from different cultural backgrounds), and parents with different abilities. Collectively, we refer to these people as our 'Constituents'.

C.L.A. Inc. chooses to use the term 'different abilities', even though the officially accepted term is of people with an 'intellectual disability'. The reason that C.L.A. Inc. has chosen to use different abilities is out of respect for the people we work with who prefer the term 'different abilities' to 'intellectual disability'.

An 'intellectual disability' is one of a group of 'disabilities' that are known collectively as 'developmental disabilities'. These 'developmental disabilities' include intellectual disability, epilepsy, spina-bifida, cerebral palsy and autism. It is often the case that a person with one of these disabilities will also have a secondary disability e.g. intellectual disability and autism or epilepsy or spina-bifida or cerebral palsy.

The services that CLA now manage are:

- ARROS
- BEROS
- Community Living Program
- Community Connections
- Employment and Pre Employment programs - Skilling Queenslanders for Work and DEFY
- Grow Together - Therapies team
- Plan Management
- Support Coordination
- Village Housing

OUR PURPOSE

Community Living Association (Inc.) aims to:

- assist Constituents to determine and achieve what is important to them;
- assist Constituents (as individuals and in community) 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 Constituents to improve the social and economic conditions of their lives, for example: income, transport, sporting, recreational, artistic, community involvement etc.;
- assist Constituents to develop a safe and secure daily life in the community.
- assist Constituents to develop their family, friend, partner, neighbours and community relationships and connections.

- assist Constituents to achieve a state of good, healthy psychological and physical wellbeing;
- assist Constituents to achieve a sense of personal potency and value, personal meaning and direction, and to speak up about things that are important to them, become aware of their strengths and use them to let others know about the things they find difficult and unfair;
- assist Constituents to use their time meaningfully and achieve a sense of meaningful use of time for example; employment, studying, volunteering, community service etc;
- collaborate with other organisations to achieve the Association's objectives;
- document and record the Association's work and endeavours, including meeting minutes and information about groups to inform others, and workshops and research on issues which affect the lives of Constituents;
- identify and initiate creative responses to the needs and issues of Constituents, and identify the best ways to support Constituents;
- 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 (social welfare);
- undertake 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 programme 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 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;
- support young people and their families where those young people are at risk of homelessness, or early school leaving or other social disadvantages that could lead to poverty, sickness or other misfortune;
- support young people in the care of child safety and engage with the Department of Child Safety and other supports to enable their transition from care;
- support parents (with different abilities) be the parents that they wish to be; and
- support people who are excluded from the workforce, develop skills and confidence to engage in paid and / or voluntary work.

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

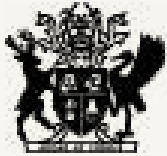
OUR FUNDING PARTNERS



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs



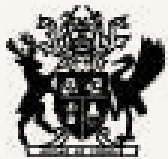
Australian Government
Department of Social Services



QUEENSLAND
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND PUBLIC WORKS



DEPARTMENT OF
FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND
CHILD SAFETY OF
QUEENSLAND



QUEENSLAND
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE,
EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING



Queensland
Government
Department of Education and Training



Queensland
Government

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations for supporting CLA Projects:

- Aspley Special School
- Brisbane Broncos foundation
- Brisbane City Council Community Grants
- Community Housing Futures Fund
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- Grill'd
- Hammond and Neale
- Infoxchange – Data catalyst Network-
- Inger Rice Foundation
- Kedron Wavell Community Grant
- Keeping Women Safe from Violence - Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Lady Bowen Trust
- Lord Mayor's Better Suburbs Grant
- Lord Mayor's Community Fund
- Lords Mayors Charitable Trust
- Mary MacKillop College
- Micah Projects
- My Coffee Counts
- Noonga Reconciliation Group
- Nundah Rotary
- Paul Ramsay Foundation
- QDN – JobMatch All Abilities
- Queensland Academy of Creative Industries
- Religious of Qld Social Justice Grants
- Street Smart
- Thread Together

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

2024 / 2025 has been a big year of change – not all of it good – but CLA is resilient.

Denise Gibbons, who was our President for a long time passed away unexpectedly in June. We also lost a member of our property subcommittee Warren Hatt who passed away in July. Other longstanding members of the CLA Community who have passed away include Sue Williams, Martin Denny, Kylie Rosenthal, Roxanne Vidar (McElligott), Dave Greene. We remember and acknowledge their contributions to CLA. We also acknowledge that a number of constituents have lost family members this year and we offer our sympathies.

Following Denise's death, I (Alan Duffy, Vice President) was endorsed by the Management Committee to become president.

I would like to thank the Management Committee and Sub Committee members, staff and volunteers for everything they have done this year, particularly Carmel Towler who retired after 36 years of working for CLA. We welcome Scott Dale who has started as the Finance Manager.

CLA has had a financial loss of about \$330,000 this financial year. This is due to increasing challenges in providing supports to people using their NDIS funding. We have seen many constituents have less funding available to pay for support delivered by CLA. Sadly the CLP team had to restructure and we said goodbye to 4 workers – Sabrina, Nav, Lilli and Karem.

Highlights

- 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.
- Progress on the 5 – 9 Nundah St Redevelopment project is slow and steady. We are happy to see the Queensland government announce funding (QCHIP) to build more social housing for Queenslanders.
- ARROS Therapies team have been renamed by the parents accessing the service and are now call Grow Together with a brand new logo.
- Nundah All Stars!
- CLA has been able to house 7 people across 5 units thanks to an increase in funding from the Queensland Department of Housing
- We have continued to participate in advocacy campaigns to make life better for people with disabilities and for vulnerable young people.
- We bought a new property in Moreton Bay, so now young people being supported by BEROS in that area can stay at a house that works much better.
- Defy – offered 38 employment contracts and supported 33 young people with complex support needs through the group. Outcomes include young people returning to school, entering employment, increased social connections and experiences of success.

Alan Duffy
CLA President

What is it like working with ARROS? **“Good vibes and good company. Always there when you need something. Positivity. Respectful. Friendly staff.”** – Ryan

It has been an exceptionally busy and impactful year full of change for ARROS and the young people we work alongside. Renee moved across to be Team Leader of the Grow Together team and Shaun stepped into the ARROS Team Leader role. Thank you to Shaun and Renee for guiding us through this past year. A heartfelt thank you to all the staff whose dedication has made our work possible - Chloe, Hannah, Lilli and Niamh. Additional thanks must go to Anita the social work student who joined us for semester 2 of 2024, wishing you all the best on your journey. We are also deeply grateful to the young people who welcomed us on their journey, it has been a privilege to walk alongside you all.

Young People's Achievements

This year lots of ARROS young people kicked big life goals!

- Multiple young people showcased incredible self-advocacy skills across multiple systems such as housing, health, Child Safety, NDIS, Centrelink and legal.
- 5 young people were supported to move into independent stable housing
- 1 young person successfully got their driver's licence and multiple others continue to work towards this goal.
- 10 young people gained and/or maintained employment and 7 young people engaged in volunteering, study or traineeships.
- 4 healthy babies were born, congratulations to their parents!!

Worker Achievements

ARROS staff continue to be shining stars this year! Shaun co-facilitated Trauma Informed Practice training through the Australian Association Social Workers and received fantastic feedback! Niamh and Hannah presented at an organisation wide practice sharing, discussing the development and use of the ARROS Theory of Change. Participants worked through different case studies and provided some great ideas and insights. Both sessions were big a successes! Chloe attended the Aspley Special School Expo, and Hannah, Niamh and Chloe attended the PCYC Zillmere Transition 2 Adulthood month expo. At both events workers enjoyed connecting with our local community, young people and their families. It was great to see what fantastic work local services are doing in the youth space!

Events & Celebrations

It has been a very creative year for ARROS young people, who have come together across multiple events that showcased their talents and art skills! To celebrate NAIDOC week young people came together to create artwork and have a yarn with their peers. This artwork was then displayed at the annual Elders Lunch. An ARROS young person also attended the Elders Lunch to connect with local Elders by listening to and sharing stories alongside sharing a meal. Transition 2 Adulthood (T2A) month kick started with ARROS young people coming together to create artwork about their journey to adulthood. They spoke about things they've learnt, accomplished and are excited about for the future. Following the success of the T2A art event, ARROS joined forces with the DEFY Program to create a mural on the back wall of the shed. The mural showcases a long line with twists and turns and no defined start or end. This is to reflect that the journey to adulthood is not linear and does not have a clear beginning or end. Young people across CLA teams came together to contribute to the mural and share their experiences transitioning to adulthood. Each circle tells a story about each young person's journey – what their journey has looked like, their accomplishments, how they see themselves and future hopes and goals. The mural is an evolving art piece and still has blank spaces for young people to add their story. Next time you're walking through the Nundah station car park have a look!

ARROS workers and young people celebrated the end of 2024 together with the help of the Lord Mayors Charitable Trust grant. We came together for some board games, festive crafts, outdoor activities and a young person helped cook a BBQ lunch. We were grateful to again receive Christmas hampers from the Brisbane Basket Brigade and the Bardon Catholic Church. A big thank you to these organisations for their ongoing support.



"Big fish in a little pond" – Corey



"Meetingplace" – Kira



Goals to "go on a cruise, travel, earn money and work with animals" – Sophie





GROW TOGETHER

The Parenting and Counselling Team has had a makeover!

The team and the Parenting to Thrive group decided on 'Grow Together' as our new name. It reflects that we all experience growth throughout our journeys in our lives and within family and that this growth and learning often happens alongside others, be it our friends, families, children, supporters and workers.

We think our new logo is pretty special too; it reflects our connection with ARROS, draws on CLA colours and celebrates connection with linking people in the design.

Counselling

Megumi and Michael continue to provide counselling as part-time Accredited Mental Health Social Workers within the team. This year, Megumi completed additional training and is now qualified to deliver EMDR therapy, which enhances the therapeutic options available to clients. In response to recent changes to the NDIS, and challenges with sustaining practice under Mental Health Care plans/Medicare the counselling team has actively trialled alternative referral pathways and pricing to ensure that counselling remains accessible to all marginalised clients. Our focus is on sustaining inclusive, responsive, and high-quality counselling services for those who may otherwise experience barriers to care. It has been a rocky road and we thank constituents for their support with these changes.

Parenting

Our work alongside parents with intellectual disabilities has been rolling along with lots of incredible achievements across the year, for both individual parents and families, mum's group and the work of parents with lived experience across the sector. Some of our highlights were:

Working alongside parents and their children to build connection and thrive. We witnessed so many important moments that reminded us how incredibly hard parents are working to nurture their children by learning new skills and knowledge.

Celebrating alongside parents and their families who were reunified. Visiting Child Safety Offices to share resources and knowledge including contact backpacks and the 'Learn Our Journey' book designed by parents. Thank you to the parents who supported this work. Supporting parents in their roles as co-researchers and lived experience consultants and educators

Partnering with University of QLD and others for an ARC Linkage research project 'Empowering Peer Parent Advocacy'



Partnership with Queensland Foster and Kinship Care (QFKC):

This year, Grow Together has built a strong partnership with QFKC. We are grateful to Bryan, Carissa, and Marijka for their ongoing support and excited about possibilities for the future!

Through this partnership, parents have been able to join a monthly panel for people considering becoming carers, sharing their lived experience. One month, Crystal and her carer presented together, which had a powerful impact – highlighting the value of positive parent-carer relationships and how these benefit children. "Has such an impact on the attendees and within a few of the assessments the applicants have spoken to the assessors about how

Crystal has changed their views in regard to biological parents". At the annual QFKC Conference in Twin Waters, Jess A and Crystal presented "It Takes a Village: Partnering with Parents with Intellectual Disability." Foster and Kinship Carers were keen to hear from Jess and Crystal's professional and lived experiences and their presentation resonated with all in the room. We are excited about where we can take this work as fostering connection between families and carers is key to improving outcomes for kids!



GROW TOGETHER

Mums Group: Renamed their group **‘Parenting to Thrive, together we will survive.’** During the year they worked together to learn new skills and knowledge and have again done a stellar job engaging in peer advocacy work. With each piece of work this group undertakes they not only grow their advocacy skills but firm up their strong support network and professional and peer relationships. We are ever impressed by their thoughtfulness, their wisdom and their support of one another. Some key things the group worked on were: We received a Keeping Women Safe from Violence grant from the QLD government which enabled the group to meet weekly and build a project to enhance women’s safety through their connection with child safety. The group designed a booklet ‘Learn our journey’ with the intention for Child Safety workers and other professionals to use alongside women to share their knowledge of and hopes for their children, talk about keeping themselves and their children safe and celebrating what is going well and what they need to keep working on. They presented this work at the Annual forum we held in November, with the support of child safety. The Annual Forum, ‘It takes a village’ was well attended again this year with representation from across the sector. The group worked hard to make the forum happen, contributing to organizing the event, creating the agenda, videos, and presentations on the day. Parents also sat on the panel and assisted with Q and A’s, catering and helping people on the day. The event was well received, and the parents did an extraordinary job.

Data project: We have been working with Infoxchange, after being awarded a data and evaluation project to develop our data collection and evaluation tools for this work. It has been an incredible opportunity to engage in developing our data collection and a system moving forward to assist with evaluation against the outcomes and impacts we are aiming for. It is a work in progress with the intention for it to be completed by December 2025.

PPP, QDN and CLA Peer event: Grow Together supported PPP to hold a peer event in Brisbane with QDN. The event was small but inspiring. Parents had a lot to say and are keen for another event in the future. We love connecting with our Victorian friends and always learn a lot when we are together.

QLD ASID Conference: Renee and Crystal presented at the ASID conference in November QLD at the University of QLD. It was another great opportunity to share our work. We continued our commitment to the National Advocacy Collective to work collaboratively to bring about change for families where a parent has intellectual disability. We also continued to meet with our Child Safety Collaborative to work on change within the system to ensure better access and support for parents and their children. With changes to the NDIS, and the removal of parenting from the scheme, parents have been struggling to access funding for the specialised support they need. The team has been raising these concerns alongside parents across all levels including the the Office of the Public Advocate, NDIA, NDIS providers, disability advocacy agencies, the Australian Association of Social Work, and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. We worked with The Office of the Public Advocate, Dr John Chesterman and his team, to support their advocacy to raise concerns regarding gaps in support for parents. The OPA had this report tabled in parliament this year. While there is increasing awareness of the issues families experience, we are yet to see any decisions made that improve parents' access to the support they and their families need. We are hopeful for the future! During the year we faced the enormous challenges thrown at us with the NDIS changes across both counselling and parenting. The counselling team has worked creatively to develop a new fee structure to sustain the practice (thank you Scott and finance!) and has done incredible work continuing to support people with their mental health and wellbeing. A big thank you to Michael, Meg and Monique (who has now moved on) for their commitment and hard work throughout the year. Jess A and Jess B also carried the fort of a reduced team working well beyond what peoples’ funding enabled us to and with incredible commitment to the parents and families we work alongside. The Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability awarded Renee Mills the ASID practitioner of the year, which is really a testament to the incredible work of the entire team and the parents we work alongside. Finally, a very big thank you to all our collaborators, supporters and allies; foster and kinship carers, QFKC (Bryan, Carissa) Child Safety Specialist Services, academics Dr Susan Collings, Dr Catherine Wade, Dr Marg Spencer, Dr Kathy Ellem and Dr Karen Healy, Dr John Chesterman and the team from the Office of the Public Advocate, QAI, QDN, Inclusion Australia, Kirsten Moeller-Saxone from Infoxchange, Positive Powerful Parents and of course parents and all those we work alongside to make a difference.

Practice Manager Report: The practice manager supports the organisation with some organisational project implementation and staff practice development. This year, two key projects have been underway.

Diversity Working Group: We have been working together with staff across the teams to develop a policy and procedure to insure diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The policy has been passed by the committee which is a fabulous achievement and a culmination of what has been a collaborative process to ensure we have mechanisms in place to support diversity and inclusion at CLA. The team has also been working on an Annual Action Plan which includes celebrating Days of Significance and regular staff training. The implementation of Echobase AI at CLA has been a focus throughout the year to offer staff an opportunity to take advantage of AI in practice. Policy has been updated to reflect ethical and privacy concerns and regular AI drop ins are open for staff to learn more about this technology. We are currently evaluating the use of Echobase to determine how we move forward with AI in practice.

BEROS

Over the past year, BEROS has continued its commitment to supporting young people in out-of-home care (OOHC) by adapting our services and infrastructure to better meet their needs. This report highlights our achievements, team changes, and ongoing initiatives that have contributed to the well-being of young people across Brisbane, Moreton Bay, and the Sunshine Coast.

Relocation and Upgrades:

BEROS sold our Petrie house and purchased a new property in Dakabin. The new house boasts an improved layout, receiving positive feedback from the young people who use the space. The Brisbane BEROS house underwent significant upgrades to the kitchen and bathroom. Additionally, with support from SQW, the backyard was beautifully enhanced to create a more welcoming environment.



Service Delivery and Impact

- Over the past year, BEROS supported 245 young people.
- We provided a total of 636 bed nights.
- Our team delivered 23,155 hours of support and travelled 168,110 kilometres.

Outcomes and achievements for Young People

- BEROS has actively assisted young people in achieving various milestones:
- Accessing diagnoses and assessments for NDIS eligibility post-18.
- Completing Prep L to obtain driver's licenses.
- Returning to high school after prolonged absences.
- Starting TAFE courses and securing their first jobs.
- Applying for and obtaining Departmental housing.
- Stabilising in child safety-approved placements.
- Engaging with extended post-care supports.
- Accessing physical and mental health services.
- Receiving AOD supports to work towards sobriety or harm reduction.
- Utilising antenatal care services while maintaining custody of their babies.
- Reconnecting with family members.



Team Updates

Parental Leave and Farewells:

Rachel Kirsch and Jess Larkin are currently on 24 months of parental leave with their newborn daughters. We bid farewell to overnight worker Georgia Peel.

Current Team Structure:

Case Management Team:

Sunshine Coast: Ail Huang & Brigitte Lewis

Moreton Bay: Audrey Fernandez & Matt Tulle

Brisbane: Archie Edwards & Eli Reynolds-Cushing

Overnight Workers: Marshall Harvey, Alex Johnson, Adam Henry, Duane Bailey, Katie Lanham, Fadzai Pardazai, Beth Pearman, Marian Simbi, Titus Te'o, Rhiannon Dumsa, Murray Lanham, Lili Slade, Rebecca Patterson

Community Engagement

Young people's creativity shines through in challenging times; this year's memorable nicknames for BEROS workers included Baldylocks; Mountain Brows; Fat Shirley Temple; Bald Wreck it Ralph; Muzabong; Archiekins; The weird guy; & The Gay Painter 😊

We have shared our service model with Child Safety colleagues in Far North Queensland & the Northern Territory. We anticipate seeing how our model adapts to different geographical contexts. Furthermore, we were pleased to share insights from research into self-placement conducted alongside Dr. Jemma Venables of UQ with CLA, Child Safety Services (CSS), QCOSS, TAFE Queensland as well as other youth organizations within our regions.



Community Connections
CASEWORK | COUNSELLING | GROUP FACILITATION

Community Connections

This year saw the team undertake a renewal process to help set the direction of our future impact. As a well-established youth service in north Brisbane, we are a new team taking connections forward and we are excited to have a refreshed vision to support young people, their families and our community. The extended details of our refreshed focus will be available on our webpage soon.

Our Vision: A connected northside community where young people are safe, respected and empowered to lead their own futures and foster safe relationships.

Mitch, Beck & Lauren's annual highlights show our mission in action:

Connect: strengthening connections with education workers in our local schools has enabled there to be a positive exchange of ideas and collaboration between the Community Connections team and education staff. Lauren

Renew: Seeing a young person and their family get adequately supported by Child Safety, which meant that the young person could reengage in education, increase their social supports and work towards reunification with their family.

Belong: The introduction of Brekky Club on Friday mornings at Aspley Special School has become a hub for 50+ students at the end of each week to connect with their peers, fuel their body with something to eat, check-in with support staff, and have some fun to play a game or dance to kick off their day. Mitch



We'd like to thank Lucia Gillette, Elisha Jones, Rebecca Patterson, Amy Bennette, Kath Ritchie and Kelsey McArthur for their contributions to the team over the year. We also thank the members of local school communities, youth and community services, government partners, funders (including Nundah Rotary, Lady Bowen Trust, Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust, Bronco's, Department of Social Services, Aspley Special School, Qld Academy of Creative Industries, Brisbane Airport Corporation and the QuiltMakers) for their collaboration in our work.

We also thank Gigi Lacey from Instinct Organisational Development for her guidance of our renewal process.

What really matters is what young people and their supporters tell us. We end our 2024-2025 story with this encouragement to others considering reaching out for help, from a young person graduating from Community Connections service:



"You never know what the opportunity may hold for you"
Young person 18



Community Living Program

CLP would like to thank the constituents of CLP and the significant people in their lives. It is a privilege to work alongside each constituent on individual capacity building projects to support your hopes, dreams and goals. CLP team admire the courage, creativity, trust, determination and persistence that we witness in the individual work alongside constituents.

CLP have continued to support constituents in groups, including Nundah All Stars, Shared Meal, Fitness Group, Train Enthusiasts, Scammers, Committee, Recyclers, Learning and Voice Everyday (LAVE), and Op Shop. Cooking Group and Youth Week Group came to an end in 2024. Groups are a space where constituents come together and create outcomes to shared goals and solutions to shared problems and concerns.

CLP Team has seen a number of changes over the past 12 months. Changes in the NDIS funding environment resulted in a restructure and reduction in size of CLP Team. We were sad to say goodbye to a number of workers who left the team over the past 12-months, including Sabrina, Mandy, Rita, Karem, Lilli, Zoya and Nav. Thank you so much for the efforts you contributed to CLP constituents & significant others, CLP Team, and CLA community during the time you worked with us. We deeply value and miss you all. Thank you to all past and continuing team members for your support and commitment to constituents and colleagues during these challenging times.

CLP is now staffed by:

1 Team Leader;

1.5 Senior Key Workers

3 Key Workers

3 Community & Homespace Workers

3 Casual Workers

CLP has provided placements to 2 social work students over the past 12 months.

CLP worker caseloads have increased and workers have worked diligently to maintain relationship based, disability informed and trauma informed supports to over 70 individual and group work constituents.

Many thanks to all the people across CLA who support the work and wellbeing of CLP Team. Thank you to Tania Lawrie, Eden McNamara, Renee Mills, Carmel Towler, Scott Dale, Beulah Moses, Mandy Sinnamon, and Morrie O'Connor; to 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.

Please read on for updates on the activities of CLP constituent member groups over the past 12 months...

SHARED MEAL



Shared Meal offers a safe and inclusive space for members to come together, socialise, and develop a sense of community. All members have a say and vote on every Shared Meal decision. The program provides opportunities for members to strengthen feelings of respect and belonging while developing social skills such as communication, teamwork, informed decision-making, and group discussion.

Additionally, members build and expand meaningful relationships and connections within the community. Throughout Shared Meal, a range of activities is offered, providing members with the chance to develop skills in various areas:

- Board games
- Birthday celebrations
- Movie nights
- Planning and group decision-making
- Relationship building, social connection, and cooperation
- Kitchen and food safety



This year, Shared Meal invited the Scammers group to present “A Scam Awareness” to stay secure and prevent cybercrime.

Here is some feedback from our members:

- I like to come to the shared meal to see friends and enjoy the fun time together.
- I like to play in different roles during the shared meal, for example, cooking, serving dinner, clearing the rubbish bin, and more.
- I like meeting friends, gathering for dinner, and building connections. Shared Meal should keep going.





TRAIN ENTHUSIAST GROUP

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

Train Enthusiasts is a social group that meets every second Friday from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM. We have four members who enjoy trainspotting, rail photography, and learning about trains. This group provides a natural way to connect with one another.

During our fortnightly meetups, we engage in trainspotting, which includes taking photos and videos while interacting with station staff. We observe trains from various train stations and parks, often exploring stations that we haven't visited before. On rainy days or when the weather isn't great, we watch DVDs and YouTube videos about different types of trains.

The group enjoys spotting trains at various locations around Nundah, as they prefer not to travel too far. Recent spots have included Nundah, Northgate, Eagle Junction, and the park near CLP.

Members either decide in the morning what to do before the group starts or plan activities ahead of time for the upcoming fortnight during support meetings. This planning can vary based on attendance and the preferences of the group members during each support session.

Members take turns informing the station master about the purpose of their presence at the station. Additionally, they may occasionally be prompted to share the group rules with the staff or among themselves.

While trainspotting and viewing videos, we also share safety tips for riding trains. Additionally, we discuss our past experiences and knowledge about trains.

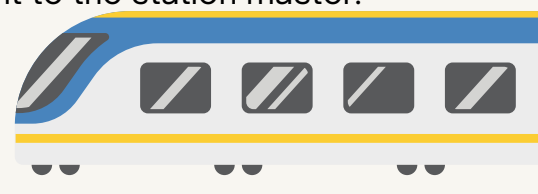
Here are some comments from our members about the group:

"We have been trainspotting together for a few years; I love watching trains." – Sean McCrystal

"I enjoy coming to this group; I love everything about trains." – Allan Castellaro

Train Group Rules:

- No swearing, bullying, or fighting.
- Be kind to everyone.
- Stay behind the yellow line at the station.
- Introduce the group to the station Train Master to inform them that we will be trainspotting.
- When taking videos or photos, avoid including strangers in the shot, as it may make them uncomfortable.
- Do not use your flash when taking videos or photos; it can confuse the train driver and pose a safety hazard.
- Please do not enter the station without a valid Go-Card or ticket. Fare evasion is against the law. Remember to tap on and off.
- If you see someone doing the wrong thing at the station, report it to the station master.



LEARNING AND VOICE EVERYDAY (LAVE)

Learning and Voice for Everyday is an inclusive learning environment. LAVE members are the ones who set and plan the curriculum, with the support of the facilitators. It's a space where it is safe to build new skills, including reading, writing, social skills, public speaking, and many more! The LAVE program also includes a showcase at the end of each year. This is an opportunity for members to plan and present a self-directed project about something they've learned or something they're passionate about.



What have we done at LAVE this year?

- Made posters about our interests and hobbies
- Planned what we want to learn together
- Worked on new skills in a safe and fun environment
- Enjoyed learning about healthy habits and exploring them as a group
- Shared and socialised together, learned about emotions and friendships
- Learned about what to do in emergencies, such as floods
- Played word games as a group



Comments from LAVE members:

"I like literacy because we work together as a group, and we play games. We also learned about what we do with burns." – Christian

"The activities are fun. I liked playing bingo with the group." – Monny

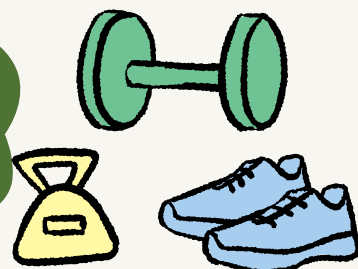
"I'm excited for the showcase." – Susan

"We get to learn new things. We play funny games." – Sean





Fitness Group



What an Unforgettable Year!

The Fitness Group absolutely thrived this year, building a supportive community where fitness is truly enjoyable. For instance, members often hit 10,000 steps in a single session and don't even feel it because they're having so much fun! This report is your direct invitation to experience the energy that is unlocking our members' potential! We offer dynamic activities that adapt to the weather and environment: immensely popular walking sessions spanning scenic spots like Nudgee Beach, Sandgate, Shorncliffe, and Boondall Wetlands, as well as urban highlights such as Roma Street Park and the City. For balance, we offer indoor Pilates, Yoga, and stretching to help you recharge, and refreshing swimming when summer hits. Beyond exercise, we boost your physical and mental health, deepen your social participation, and explore key healthy eating options.

Voices from Our Group

"I like fitness group because it is good for me. Good exercise." Aidan

"I enjoy Fitness Group because it is such a great way to be fit and healthy. I enjoy going out and about every Monday afternoon and it is exciting. 😊 I enjoy my friend's company, and it is a great way to interact and socialise too!" Taurean

"I like Fitness group because of the fun people you walk with and the places we go to, the things that we do and experience. I love getting out in fresh air Sunshine and I don't mind the rain from time to time." Craig

"Fitness group is helping me be fit and healthy." Susan

"It is good to do new things and I'm proud of myself, is good for my health". Ian

"I love Fitness Group it's fun I love walking my favourite walking Shorncliffe and Boondall it's fun walking with My Beautiful friends." Monny



Join the Adventure!

Thank you to all members for their dedication and commitment. If you've been searching for a supportive group that makes fitness enjoyable, now is the time to take the first step. We warmly welcome any new members ready to unlock their potential and join the fun. Your spot is waiting!

Nundah All Stars

Written by James, Karen, Emma, AnnMarie

On **Friday 3 October 2025** a lot of things happened. The Nundah All Stars had our annual performance night at Mary MacKillop College. We arrived up there and set up. James set up his worm juice stall (he sold four bottles of worm juice!). The students AnnMarie and Hannah helped everyone with their hair and makeup. Karen was really excited to have her nails painted and get her colourful hair extensions. Sam cooked the BBQ with help from constituent Tim. Shayne helped serve the sausage sizzle, along with volunteers from across CLA. Brendan Power kindly sponsored our sausage sizzle, and we raised money to help us have a celebration. We also sold our supporter shirts as usual.



The lights went out and the show started with Taurean doing the acknowledgement of country, followed by Paul dedicating the performance to Denise Gibbons, CLA committee President who sadly passed away this year. The theme of the show this year was “The Stars of Nundah Awards Night”. The first song was “we will rock you/we are the champions”, sung by the guys. During the performance, everybody received an award for winning their category. Karen’s award was for Best Cowgirl – the other nominees (who she beat) were Kasey Chambers and Leeann Rhymes! Karen sung *True Colours* by *Cyndi Lauper*. James spent the whole night up in the sound booth – he loves it up there because it’s away from the crowd. James made sure that everyone’s voice could be heard at the right time. We had two Cyndi Lauper songs in this year’s musical. The NAS women (and Jonathan) sang “time after time” to start the second act. After all the performers received their awards we all came together to sing our final song – “Celebration”. It was a huge celebration!

Another reason to celebrate was that lots of audience members won a raffle prize on the night! We received kind donations from Moreton Bay Ability, NCEC, A & M Meats, Leanne Linard, Anika Wells, Bunnings, and Event Cinemas. Carolyn, Kelee, Alan and Jonathan did lots of work to organise the raffle prizes. We raised some good money to put towards next year’s musical.





Wednesday 20th August the Op Shop reopened and I was so excited. When CLP Op shop closed it was boring. Nothing else to do, and I just went to the park. I was depressed, then Natali said the Op Shop was opening again. I let my worker know and we were both so excited that the Op Shop was open again. I missed the customers. I am a good worker, and the customers come to the shop when I turn up. We listen to music out the front of the shop and we muck around out the front of the shop. Customer have brought in more donations. We are the most popular Op Shop in the whole world. The pink lady loves coming every Wednesday to the CLP Op Shop.



Written by Katalin (Op Shop Group Member) & AnnMarie (Social Work Student)

Village Housing

Village Housing is a long-term housing initiative by CLA, designed to support constituents of the Community Living Program (CLP) and other eligible individuals in North-East Brisbane. At its heart, Village Housing is about inclusion—bringing together people with and without intellectual disabilities to foster vibrant, supportive communities where everyone is valued and their contributions are celebrated.

Our Vision: ★

Village Housing aims to show that communities thrive when diversity is embraced, and every person is given the opportunity to live their best life.

Our Goals 🏠

- Expand housing options for CLA constituents and other eligible residents in North-East Brisbane.
- Offer safe, affordable, and secure homes located near public transport and essential services.

🏡 Supportive Living

We create a welcoming environment through:

- A balanced mix of tenants with and without intellectual disabilities.
- Meaningful interactions among residents and their neighbours.
- Involvement of family, friends, and support networks in housing decisions.
- Shared responsibility and participation in the management of Village Housing.

🏠 Our Homes

Village Housing currently has 13 dwellings comprising:

6 standard units

5 CAP units

2 houses

Recent upgrades have enhanced comfort and quality, including new flooring, fresh paint, and updated appliances.

💙 Our Commitment

We continue to provide well-maintained, high-quality housing that is affordable for people on low incomes and pensions—ensuring everyone has a place to call home.

VH CRISIS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM (CAP)

Village Housing operates a Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) with support from the Queensland Housing Department, providing short-term housing solutions for individuals in urgent need. Through this initiative, Village Housing manages five privately rented properties dedicated to crisis accommodation.

In addition to these funded properties, Village Housing also offers rental subsidies to assist several individuals facing crisis housing situations, helping them access safe and stable accommodation in the private rental market.

Independent Youth Housing Group Ltd

Independent Youth Housing Group (IYHG) is a long-standing, not-for-profit housing co-operative supported by Community Living Association. For 35 years, IYHG has been entirely run and maintained by its 14 dedicated members, with a shared responsibility and participation in the management of IYHG Board and a shared commitment to providing stable, quality housing for low-income earners.

Our Properties

IYHG currently manages 11 properties across Clayfield, Nundah, Northgate, Woolloowin, and Zillmere, providing secure accommodation for 12 residents. Earlier this year, one property in Nundah was sold, with proceeds placed in a Term Deposit to fund the purchase of another meaningful property in the near future.

Our Goals

Expand housing options for IYHG members and other eligible residents in North-East Brisbane.

Offer safe, affordable, and secure homes located near public transport and essential services.

Ongoing Improvements

Throughout the year, IYHG has continued to invest in the upkeep and enhancement of its housing stock, ensuring our homes remain safe, comfortable, affordable and welcoming.

Our Commitment

We are pleased to share that we have successfully finalised the repayment of a property loan, marking an important milestone in our financial sustainability and long-term asset management.

With the sale of a property last year, we are now in a position to explore expanding our housing portfolio and acquire a new unit.

Keep up the great teamwork!

Thank you for all your ongoing support.
Mandy Sinnamon



DEFY

It was a big final year for DEFY (Developing Employment for Youth) with the project coming to an end after 2 successful years (Oct 2023–Jul 2025) engaging with young people to develop their skills, confidence, and capacity for employment through group engagement, practical skill building, and individual support. There were some changes during our final year! We said goodbye to Amy and Meghan and welcomed Lilli L and Lilli R to co-facilitate the program and Jess to handle project evaluation.

The evaluation revealed some awesome achievements and Jess captured learnings, outcomes and feedback beautifully in the evaluation report! This year, cohorts 3-5 achieved 19 additional course completions, 13 participants were supported across eight hosted work experiences in open employment, \$2,021 was generated through a participant-led pop-up car wash social enterprise to fund group activities and outings, and there was strong community engagement through events including Lifeline Bookfest, Transition to Adulthood mural painting event, movie night, and fundraising (\$3,300 raised for Parents with Intellectual Disability).



Across the five cohorts, 33 young people engaged in paid work experience at DEFY with a 91% completion rate and 86% average attendance. For many, this was their first formal job, shifting both self-belief and the expectations of others. Participant outcomes include: 6 gained employment, 4 commenced traineeships, 8 returned to school, and 8 received ongoing support to seek work. These results are significant given young people with disability are twice as likely to be unemployed as peers without disability (AIHW, 2024).

In wrapping up the project, young people shared shifts in self-belief, feeling seen and valued. Participants shared: “Before DEFY I felt I wasn’t going anywhere but now, I feel like I could do it”; “DEFY helped with confidence”; and “DEFY made me realise I could do more than I thought I could.” One reflected that DEFY helped them “find who I am... and grow into something more [than] just another black person doing nothing [and] ruining themselves.”

The wrap up celebration included a trip to Movie world for one final day of fun, reflection and farewell.

DEFY was a project run in partnership between Community Living Association (CLA) and Nundah Workers Co-op (NCEC Ltd). We’d like to acknowledge the hard work many have put into this project across CLA and NCEC. A very big thank you to all staff involved in this project for their dedication, passion, and knowledge they brought to their roles working alongside young people: Amy Hitchings, Dan Allport, Dilsah De Rham, Jess Anderson, Lilli Lebovits, Lilli Robinson, Meghan Venter, Morrie O’Connor, Renee Mills, Richard Warner, Tania Lawrie and Varun Chhillar.

And of course, a massive thank you to the incredible young people who were employed by DEFY and worked extremely hard. You contributed so much to the development of this project and the local community.

DEFY was funded by the Paul Ramsey Foundation grant and we thank them for their support.



Support Coordination

2025 has been another busy but productive year for the Support Coordination Team. Thank you to all our constituents and supporters for allowing us to walk alongside you on the NDIS journey.

It has not been a smooth ride as the NDIS landscape changes all the time, which means we need to constantly keep ourselves informed with the latest, then communicate new information with constituents and their supporters so that they can make an informed decision.

Our team consist of 5 full time and 1 part time Support Coordinators. We provide Level 2 Support Coordination and Level 3 Specialist Support Coordination to 110 constituents living in the Greater Brisbane and Sunshine Coast regions.

We value relationship-based practice, social justice and reflective practice. Here are some examples of our wins for the year.

Safety and Security

- Successful outcomes for constituents through the Administrative Review Tribunal process where a constituent received Specialist Disability Accommodation funding.
- A constituent now has stable housing and stable supports which has led to a reduction in medication to manage behaviors and a better quality of life.

Building Relationships

- A constituent has been able to move back closer to their family home which has meant that they can still maintain a high level of independence whilst also having regular contact with family and their other informal support.

Building Resources

- A constituent formed a circle of support and exited the Office of Public Guardian and Public Trustee because of the formation of the Circle of Support.
- Instead of having a Public Guardian as the formal decision maker, the family member has been re-appointed as the constituent's Guardian, resulting in CLA being able to resume providing Support Coordination to the constituent.

Building Knowledge

- Working with providers to build their knowledge and capacity on the unique communication style of a constituent to assist providers to engage better and ensure constituent's support needs are met.

Being, doing and becoming

- A constituent had the goal of having social outings in the city and other places at night. She is having a great time going to gigs, restaurants and seeing city landmarks.
- A young person has the goal of starting his own lawnmowing business and he recently got his driver's license, making him a step closer to this.

The Support Coordination Team would like to acknowledge and say a big thank you to:

- The Management Committee
- Tania and Eden for your guidance
- Finance and admin team – Scott, Nibu, Sally, Sylvia, Jess P, Mandy and Beulah
- IT team – Andrew and Will
- 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 and build capacity for jobseekers facing multiple barriers to employment. Through our two projects—the Re-Gen Project and the Good Food Project—we continue to build capacity and create opportunities for diverse community members. This includes refugees and migrants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and other disadvantaged jobseekers.

In the 2025 project year, we were proud to support more than 45 participants in gaining relevant qualifications, developing essential work skills, and working towards their employment goals.

The Re-Gen Project continues to benefit the community and environment through our involvement with multiple partners. Participants have planted and nurtured hundreds of native plants in partnership with the Bulimba Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee(B4C); we completed an 8 metre-long retaining wall and leveling work in the yard at BEROS house, continued assistance with refurbishing the interior of Windsor Uniting Church and ongoing gardening support at Beelarong Community Farm.



The Good Food Project has successfully adapted to meet the evolving interests and needs of our participants. This year, we welcomed a group of coffee enthusiastic participants and tailored the training with greater focus on hospitality and barista skills. Participants built their coffee-making skills in the classroom and had plenty of opportunities to refine them through work experience placements—including hands-on training with expert baristas at our partner businesses.

(insert all project photos with captions – see next page)

Both SQW projects remain deeply rooted in our communities. We extend heartfelt thanks to all project staff and participants for their passion, craftsmanship, and commitment. Your contributions bring these projects to life.

We are also incredibly grateful for the support of our valued program partners, including NCEC, Hendra Pony Club, B4C, the Coffee Commune and the training organizations that deliver tailored education to our participants.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work is funded by the Queensland Government and we thank them for making these training opportunities available to local communities.



COMMUNITY
LIVING ASSOCIATION

BUILDING COMMUNITIES THAT SUPPORT, AFFIRM AND VALUE ALL PEOPLE

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.

<https://www.communityliving.org.au/>

5 Nundah St, Nundah QLD 4012

(07) 3266 5633

