

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024



every child **thriving**
aracy





About ARACY

ARACY's purpose is clear: to champion all Australian children and young people to thrive. As their needs grow and change, so too must the support systems surrounding them. We back good practices and best policies to prevent disease and provide the best conditions for their holistic health.

Our team stands at the frontline of this mission, bringing together the latest evidence, practitioners and policymakers to develop child-centered strategies that make a real difference.

Acknowledgment of country

ARACY acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their enduring connection to the lands, waters, and skies. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In solidarity, ARACY supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the need for truth-telling about the history and impact of colonisation. We treasure the rich and diverse cultures and customs of First Nations people - valued knowledge holders, leaders and partners in creating the conditions for all our children to thrive.

"Set an imagination agenda for our classrooms, remove the limited thinking around our disadvantage, stop looking at us as a problem to fix, set us free to be the solution and give us the stage to light up the world" - Imagination Declaration (2019)

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Our work at a glance

July 2023

- Supported Thrive by Five's Disability Symposium and mentoring program ensuring the voices of people with disability and neurodiverse profiles are represented

August 2023

- Launched the Thriving Kids Brain Builders a partnership that will bridge the gap between research and practical application
- Report – The experience of trauma by Queensland children developed for Queensland Mental Health Commission

September 2023

- ARACY webinar – An introduction to The Common Approach
- ARACY webinar – The Australian child maltreatment study
- Report - Poverty and Inequality; Community attitudes towards poverty and inequality 2023: Snapshot report
- ARACY CEO and TQKP Convenor participated in the United Nations General Assembly Science Summit 2023 in New York

October 2023

- ARACY webinar – Handle with Care: Supporting foster parents caring for infants

November 2023

- Report in collaboration with UNICEF Australia 'Healthy children, healthy futures' released
- ARACY webinar – Healthy; A deeper look at young people's mental health
- Future Healthy Countdown 2030 launched
- Report - Early Childhood Development Better Systems Roadmap

December 2023

- ARACY Webinar – ARACY Lifecourse Longitudinal Studies Collaborative
- First Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children Roundtable held in Canberra
- Signing of the IDAC working together agreement
- Report - Everything ADHD-related is a challenge: Supporting Families of Children with ADHD (commissioned by A Village for Every Child, Canberra)

January 2024

- Launched ARACY Insider, a new and abridged fortnightly newsletter to compliment the regular and more fulsome ARACY News

February 2024

- Participated in Schools as Community Hubs consultation
- Provided submission to Productivity Commission a path to universal ECEC
- Provided submission to the Queensland Government's draft Putting Queensland Kids First plan

March 2024

- ARACY webinar – The Monitoring Illicit Substance Use Consortium
- ARACY webinar - Framing for Change: Communicating to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Report – Thriving bubs, thriving families, thriving communities: Understanding the levers of change in collaboration with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP)

April 2024

- Report - Inequality in Australia 2024: Who is affected and how? A poverty and inequality collaborative report

May 2024

- ARACY webinar – Families in Focus: Embedding the voices of children with disability and their families in research
- Provided a submission to the Draft National Guidelines for including mental health and wellbeing in early childhood health checks.
- New ARACY logo and brand launched

June 2024

- ARACY webinar – The Early Years Strategy 2024 -2035 in collaboration with the Australian Department of Social Services
- Provided a submission to the Joint Select Committee on social media and Australian society
- Presentation and poster display at the Australian Institute of Family Studies conference
- Presented at The Building Wellbeing into Policy and Action in Australia forum.

Year in review

A message from our Chair Sharmal Dass



The last 12 months have been a time of meaningful change and evolution at ARACY. In late 2023, Penny Dakin ended her tenure as CEO and Professor Gervase Chaney stepped down as Chair after 5 years at the helm. I thank my fellow Board members for entrusting me with the role of Chairperson, and I am thankful to have Dr Jenny Proimos as my highly capable Deputy Chairperson. I will also take this opportunity to thank Gervase for staying on an additional year to ensure continuity as we navigated this period of change; and Roslyn Dundas who dedicated herself completely to the role of Acting CEO.

The Board has taken this opportunity to pause and reflect on the quickly evolving environment, to refine and focus our energy to ensure we are doing what is required to ensure all Australian children have the conditions to support health and wellbeing. To fulfil our aspiration, an Australia where 'all children and young people are loved and thriving,' we must rise to the challenge of catalysing change in the many systems that affect children, their families, and communities.

We are delighted to welcome Prue Warrilow as CEO to lead the organisation through this transformative stage as we strive to ensure we build the capability and capacity required to fulfil our role at the highest standards.

It is this approach that has placed ARACY in a crucial role in two extremely important initiatives: Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP) and Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children (IDAC). TQKP and IDAC give us the opportunity to collaborate with partners across all sectors, and across the community to understand the shifts in systems required to deliver better outcomes for our children.

These initiatives deal in complex adaptive systems and require a unique type of leadership, with the ability to connect, convene and create effective coalitions of change. I am thrilled that Simon Factor also joined us earlier this year as Executive Convenor of IDAC, alongside the inimitable Michael Hogan, Executive Convenor of TQKP.

Finally, in addition to my deep gratitude to the team at ARACY, I would like to personally thank our collaborators and partners – be they in community, philanthropy, government, or business. It is the strength of our relationships and our unerring commitment the shared goal that helps us all keep focused on the work at hand, we thank you for your continued partnership and we look forward to strengthening our relationships to ensure we work together in realising the promise of these initiatives and the potential of ARACY.

"To fulfil our aspiration, an Australia where 'all children and young people are loved and thriving,' we must rise to the challenge of catalysing change in the many systems that affect children, their families, and communities."



Year in review

A message from our CEO Prue Warrilow



At its heart ARACY is about all children and young people thriving. Children and young people thrive when they are healthy; participating; feel valued, loved and safe; are learning; have material basics; and have a strong sense of identity and culture. What more could we ask for but for every child and young person to have a childhood full of rich experiences that allows each child and young person to thrive.

We know that so many children and young people do not have this experience.

ARACY is a systems intermediary. We navigate wicked complex problems that create uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity related to children and young people. The Paul Ramsay Foundation very eloquently talks about intermediaries as organisations that “aim to achieve social change within complex systems to break cycles of disadvantage by supporting an ecosystem of actors who also share this goal and often a common focus on a particular ‘offramp’ from disadvantage.”

In the 2023/2024 financial year the ARACY teams at HQ, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP), and the Investment Dialogue for Australia’s Children (IDAC) continued to deliver on the ARACY commitment to children and young people.

Here are a few of the 2024 highlights.

- **As part of the Putting Queensland First package, ARACY and delivery partners were recipients of funding to expand the Sustained Health Home Visiting program commencing support from pregnancy, helping children experiencing vulnerability reach their potential, from four sites to statewide over the next three years**
- **Quietly influencing key public policy with behind the scenes input to various Commissions and public enquiries, and some not so quietly with a vaping Roundtable leading to significant legislative changes in November 2023**
- **Our Gurwinda Project is the first to use Indigenous Knowledge Systems research approaches with children and young people, partnering with First Nations organisation Riteways through Dr John Davis, undertaking a research project with middle years children using First Nations research methods. This project is the first time the methodologies of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems Lab at Deakin University have been approved for use with children and young people**
- **Reaching over 9,000 people through our newsletter, a mighty reach for a small organisation**

“It is a great privilege to be the CEO of ARACY, an organisation, who since its inception over 20 years ago, has championed children and young people. Since joining ARACY I continue to reflect on how special it is to be a steward of this amazing organisation, being accountable to ARACY, and the duty I have to work towards all children and young people thriving.”

I am standing on strong shoulders of past CEOs who I want to thank, long and short term, permanent and interim - Professor Fiona Stanley, Professor Brian Head, Dr Lance Emerson, Dr Dianne Jackson, Steven Bartos, Penny Dakin and Roslyn Dundas. All helped lay the foundations that I walk on today.

I want to thank the ARACY board – Shamal Dass, Anne Cregan, Hawa Mohammad, Dr Jenny Proimos, Dr Norman Swan, Karen Thorpe, Stephen Zubrick, Gervase Chaney; a dedicated and diverse group of people grounded in good governance and absolutely focused on what is possible for children and young people.

Lastly, and by no means least, I do not work alone. I am surrounded by a team of amazing, dedicated people at ARACY HQ, TQKP and IDAC. Thank you all for stepping up and walking along side children and young people; for taking on the challenges of systems change; and working to ensure all Australian children and young people thrive.









Overview of ARACY

ARACY’s Purpose and Vision for Australian Children

ARACY’s purpose is to ensure that all Australian children have the conditions they need to thrive, supporting their health, wellbeing, and the prevention of disease and sub-optimal mental health. Promoting health and wellbeing involves a combination of individual, social, and political action to create an environment where all children can flourish. This holistic approach is embodied in The Nest, Australia’s wellbeing framework for children and young people.

The Nest provides a comprehensive way of thinking about the whole child in the context of their everyday lives. Originally informed by the voices of over 4,000 children, young people, and experts, The Nest was developed by ARACY in partnership with 150 organisations between 2010 and 2012. It is regularly updated to reflect insights from practitioners, children, and their families, ensuring its ongoing relevance. The Nest shows that for children to thrive, their needs must be met across six key, interlocking domains:

-  **Being Valued, Loved, and Safe**
-  **Having Material Basics**
-  **Being Healthy (physically, mentally, and emotionally)**
-  **Learning (both inside and outside the classroom)**
-  **Participating (in decisions, groups, and the community)**
-  **Having a Positive Sense of Identity and Culture**

Wellbeing can be understood as a child or young person having everything they need to thrive and reach their full potential. It encompasses every aspect of a child’s life, recognising that these areas are linked and interdependent.

Our Aspiration

All children and young people are valued, loved, and thriving.

Our Intent

We drive change by bringing together people and knowledge to improve the lives of children and young people in Australia.

Our Values

Connectedness:

ARACY is a connecting organisation. We build genuine partnerships and recognise that true collaboration involves giving something up for the greater good. We work for systems change and collective impact.

Equity:

ARACY believes every child and young person is entitled to a good life and the opportunity to thrive. We are committed to building a society that understands and respects fairness and equity, values children for both their present contributions and future potential, and targets support to the least advantaged.

Inclusion:

ARACY is an inclusive organisation, valuing the breadth and depth of all people and ideas, regardless of ethnicity, religion, age, political affiliation, gender, sexuality, or other characteristics. We work towards greater social inclusion.

Integrity:

ARACY is an independent, non-partisan organisation. We advocate solely for the interests of children and young people, presenting evidence even when it challenges common perceptions, and managing resources with honesty and responsibility.

Respect:

ARACY respectfully engages with and advocates for all children, young people, and their families. We listen to children and young people, involve them in solutions, and act on what they say. We respect and prioritise the knowledge, practices, and cultures of First Nations peoples, amplifying their voices and solutions to enhance the wellbeing and health of their children.

Our Impact

69,986

new website users



57

newsletters

9107

subscribers



9

webinars

1887

registrations

13,300

recording views



14,342

followers

160,377

Social media reach



9

reports & submissions

2851

page views



The Common Approach trained

711

people in

108

organisations over

6

states and territories.



20

Partners from government and philanthropic signed the IDAC working together agreement



ARACY Board and Staff

(As at 30 June 2024)



Shamal Dass
Chair



Anne Cregan
Director



Hawa Mohammad
Director



Dr Jenny Proimos
Director



Dr Norman Swan
Director



Karen Thorpe
Director



Stephen Zubrick
Director



Gervase Chaney
Director

ARACY Research Committee

Professor Sharon Bessell
Distinguished Professor Lyn Kemp

Professor Gerry Redmond
Dr David Roy
Professor Helen Skouteris

Staff

Amara Bains
Barbara Barker
Laura Barnes
Niamh Brazil
Penny Dakin
Harriet Daly
Nicole Deen
Liz Depers
Roslyn Dundas
Rebecca Goodhue
Diana Harris
Shebani Jeyakumar
Bernie Morris
Kristy Noble
Lauren Renshaw
Kirrin Sampson
Thivya Supramaniam
Annmarie Thomas
Melissa Toms
Adam Valvasori
Caitlin Winter

Systems and Evaluation Officer
Research Manager
Common Approach Facilitator
Administrative Officer (to August 2023)
CEO (to January 2024)
Executive Assistant/Office Manager
Lead, Capacity Building
Policy and Engagement Officer
Acting CEO (from February 2024)
Lead, Capacity Building (to February 2024)
Lead, Operations
Administrative Officer (to December 2023)
Lead, Knowledge Translation
Policy and Projects Officer
Research and Policy Officer
Senior Officer, Business Development
Project and Policy Officer
Program Officer
Communications Officer
Lead, Advocacy
Project and Policy Officer (to December 2023)



Thrivng Queensland
Kids Partnership
connect • catalyse • learn

Management Board

Lucille Chalmers
Andrew Chesterman
Simone Jackson

Dr Katrina Lines
Hawa Mohammed
Sara Parrott
Geoff Woolcock

Staff

Eleni Bourboulas
Naomi Brown
Rowena Cann
Michelle Cole
Vicki Crombie
Kamila Davidson
Anita Egginton
Helen Fogarty
Michael Hogan
Chelsea Pirodon
Jacinta Perry
Roger Meany
Sophie Morson
Giselle Olive
Angela Timbs

Executive/Administration Officer
Senior Partnership Officer, TQK Framing Initiative
Senior Partnership Officer, Place
Senior Partnership Officer, Learning & Development
Project Officer
Partnership Officer, Evaluation & Innovation
Project Officer
Online Engagement Officer
Convenor
Executive/Administrative Officer (to December 2023)
Partnership Officer Thriving Queensland Country Collaborative
Lead, Engagement & Operations
Senior Partnership Officer, Integration & Investment
Partnerships and Project Officer
PO Engagement & Communication



The Investment Dialogue Executive Group

The Treasurer, the Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP
The Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP
Professor Kristy Muir, CEO of the Paul Ramsay Foundation
Matthew Cox, CEO of the Bryan Foundation
April Lawrie, Chair of the Investment Dialogue First Nations Leadership Council
Catherine Liddle, Chair of the Investment Dialogue Community Leadership Council

Staff

Julie Goodwin
Stephanie Heggen
Kimberley McDonald
Tyler Miscannon
Christina Rosato
Stevie Wright
Daniel Munter
Joshuah Yeend

Senior Project Management Officer (to September 2023)
Lead, Projects
Strategic Convenor (to February 2024)
Lead, Investments & Philanthropic Engagement
Strategic Convenor (acting from March 2024)
Policy and Projects Officer
Lead, Engagement
Project Officer (to January 2024)

Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership



In 2023-24, the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP) marked significant progress in its second year of Phase 2, driving systemic reform and community impact for Queensland’s children:

Leading Cross-Sector Reforms: TQKP’s Leadership Table has driven major reforms across Early Childhood Development, Investment Reform, Place-Based Initiatives, and the Thriving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Initiative, establishing a solid foundation for long-term change.

Government Influence: Queensland’s “Putting Queensland Kids First Plan” incorporates priorities set by TQKP, aligning policy with our Early Childhood Development Better Systems Roadmap.

Advancing Place-Based Work: Through the Thriving Places, Thriving Kids Network, we’ve co-developed essential frameworks, such as the Queensland Place Reform Rivermap, to advance place-based, child-focused approaches.

Empowering Indigenous Communities: The QATSCIPP-led “Thriving Bubs, Thriving Families, Thriving Communities” report and Knowledge Circles collected insights from First Nations communities, setting the stage for a First Nations children’s strategy.

Resilience in Disasters: Our “Thriving Kids in Disasters Stage 1 Report” is catalysing action for systems change in supporting children through crises.

Embedding Trauma-Informed Care: A childhood trauma background paper has informed Queensland’s new whole-of-government Trauma Strategy.

Promoting Neuroscience-Based Training: TQKP’s professional development resources reached thousands, fostering growing understanding of brain development in collaboration with leading universities and agencies.

Workforce Resilience: The “Enabling Workforces and Organisations for Thriving Kids” initiative identified gaps and engaged over 80 government representatives to strengthen resilience in the child-serving workforce.

Strategic Public Messaging: Our Strategic Framing Champions Group has implemented evidence-based communication practices, resulting in impactful resources like the State Library’s First 5 Forever core story materials.

Adopting the National Wellbeing Framework: TQKP helped embed Australia’s Child and Youth Wellbeing Outcomes Framework into key government initiatives, aligning Queensland’s policies with national standards.

Expanding Partnerships: With 12 new partnerships across government, academia, and the community sector, TQKP is bolstering collaboration for greater collective impact.

Each of these initiatives brings us closer to a future where every child in Queensland can thrive.



521 Brain Development module completions
1,517 Podcast streams
850 Resilience animation views
302 Brain Building animation views



80+ Representatives from 10 government agencies engaged in the Thriving Kids workforce initiative



4 Roadmaps and Frameworks:
Early Child Development Better Systems; Place Reform Rivermap
Place Data Framework
Qld Place Networked Development Model



12 New partnerships, including Brisbane South PHN & Queensland Brain Institute



10 Knowledge Circles with First Nations leaders for a future Thriving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Strategy



Key TQKP recommendations integrated into Queensland’s Putting Queensland Kids First Plan

Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children



Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children (IDAC)

The Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children (IDAC) is a landmark, 10-year collaboration between the Australian Government and philanthropic partners committed to advancing the wellbeing of children, young people, and families across Australia. As one of the most significant initiatives in Australia's history to tackle entrenched disadvantage, IDAC aims to work with communities to drive meaningful, intergenerational change.

In 2023, IDAC was announced as part of the Federal Budget, marking a major step forward in Australia's approach to addressing disadvantage. The Government identified IDAC as a historic opportunity to reframe how we address the challenges faced by communities. IDAC's vision is ambitious and clear: to reduce intergenerational disadvantage and improve lives by connecting resources, expertise, and voices from across Australia.

ARACY's Role as Strategic Convener

To ensure effective and inclusive coordination ARACY was appointed as IDAC's Strategic Convener in July 2023. Since then, ARACY has been working closely with government, philanthropic, and community partners to align efforts and foster collaboration. In December 2023, ARACY hosted the first National Investment Dialogue Roundtable at Parliament House, an event that brought together leaders from philanthropy and government to affirm IDAC's 10-year vision.

During the roundtable, key stakeholders signed the 'Working Together Agreement,' a foundational document that outlines IDAC's shared vision, commitments, and priorities. This agreement also formalised plans for the establishment of a Community Leadership Council and a First Nations Leadership Council—structures that ensure diverse perspectives are represented in IDAC's work.

Investing in Change

IDAC's first roundtable also saw philanthropic partners announce approximately \$65 million in initial investments aligned with IDAC's mission. This significant financial commitment reflects our shared dedication to achieving long-term, sustainable change.

Embedding Community Voices through Leadership Councils

A core value of IDAC is to embed community voices in all aspects of our work. In early 2024, we initiated an expression of interest process for community representatives to join the Community Leadership Council and First Nations Leadership Council. By mid-year, we had welcomed 26 members from diverse backgrounds and regions, bringing invaluable lived and professional experiences to IDAC's initiatives.

The establishment of these Leadership Councils is a crucial step in grounding IDAC's work in community perspectives, with council members sharing stories, insights, and

ideas from their personal and professional journeys. These councils embody our commitment to listening to and learning from communities across Australia.

Data and Place-Based Approaches

In 2024, IDAC also established Place and Data Working Groups to deepen our understanding of existing initiatives and identify strategic opportunities. These working groups focus on enhancing place-based, community-led work and improving data use to drive informed, impactful interventions that address intergenerational disadvantage.

Looking to the Future

2024 marks an important establishment phase for IDAC. As we continue to work with government, philanthropic partners (including, but not limited to, the Paul Ramsay Foundation, Minderoo Foundation, Ian Potter Foundation and the Bryan Foundation), and community councils, we are developing a clear, tangible work program that will guide our actions over the next decade. With strong foundations in place, we look forward to presenting this work program for endorsement at our November roundtable, setting IDAC on a path toward lasting change for children, young people, and families across Australia.

Our work is only beginning, and with our dedicated partners and community representatives, we are confident in our shared potential to create a brighter, more equitable future.



The Common Approach



**practitioners
trained**



**new
partnerships**



The Common Approach course by ARACY equips participants to use The Nest, Australia’s first evidence-based child wellbeing framework, in their work with children, young people, and families. The course includes a 3-hour online self-paced module and a 90-minute virtual interactive workshop with ARACY staff. Workshops can also be tailored to be delivered face to face and content customised to suit the audience. Participants receive a set of accessible, colourful resources, with additional materials available for purchase.

Under an expanding team, led by Nicole Deen, The Common Approach broadened its scope in the 2023-2024 financial year. In-person workshops were delivered to practitioners across the eastern seaboard, including in Gladstone, Goodna, and Logan QLD, as well as Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Online live workshops complemented our place-based workshops, resulting in over 711 practitioners being trained in The Common Approach this

financial year, along with the establishment of 13 organisational partnerships, ensuring operational consistency when applying The Nest.

Participants were from a range of sectors, including the community, allied health, education and the justice sectors, with representation from professionals, including on-the-ground practitioners, supervisors, managers, and policy makers.

With a deeper focus on guiding The Common Approach implementation in various contexts, the ARACY team have begun to review and redesign the training and support options offered - most of which will roll out throughout 2025. Coinciding with the redevelopment of the website to streamline bookings and the formation of several delivery partnerships.

Through cross sector collaboration and capability building, ARACY is advancing our goal of creating a common language and approach to support child wellbeing across and within Australian organisations, governments, and communities.

Maximising the Middle



Penrith ‘changemakers’ with Nicole Deen (ARACY Lead Capacity Building), at the Common Approach workshop delivered as part of the Initiative.

Maximising the Middle is a unique initiative based in Campbelltown and Penrith, NSW that aims to see middle years children and young people, aged 8-14 years, thrive. It is a collaborative project initiated by Uniting NSW.ACT, ARACY and the Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI).

Our aspiration is to grow the initiative with young people and those important to them – starting by strengthening school and community leaders’ capabilities to design and implement impactful enterprises that value youth voice. The overarching goal is to build an alliance of school and community leaders who will be supported to design community and youth-led projects and actions.

The 2023-24 financial year has been a big one for the Initiative. It has seen the engagement of local community organisations, local council staff, NSW Police, and a total of nine schools – across Penrith and Campbelltown. This has

included the delivery of SSI’s and ARACY’s highly regarded trainings — the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program™ and The Common Approach. As we progress into the second phase of this Initiative, continued work with this group of ‘changemakers’ will involve facilitating continued collaboration between the group, and support to fund and implement youth-led projects within their community.

With the support of Western Sydney University, ARACY has also commenced a research project that includes seeking the views of parents of middle-years children in the Campbelltown and Penrith local government areas (LGAs), consultations with people that work with this age-range in these LGAs, and the views of students in participating schools – regarding middle-years young people’s wellbeing, and how their community is meeting their needs. The findings of this project will weave into the next steps of the initiative, with preliminary findings having been presented at the 2024 Australian Institute of Family Studies conference.



Lauren Renshaw presenting at AIFS 2024

“Loved it! Continue the great work!”

Common Approach/MtM training participant, Campbelltown 2023

Parent Engagement

Leveraging our extensive research in family engagement in learning over the past decade, the ARACY team has had several opportunities to partner in this space over the past year.

In early 2024 ARACY was delighted to be invited to deliver a masterclass to a range of independent schools from across Queensland. The whole-day session aimed to provide school teams with a comprehensive review of contemporary research on parent and family engagement, as well as an opportunity to undertake preliminary planning for school actions. Approximately 20 school leadership teams attended the masterclass, kicking off a year-long scaffolded program ‘Mastering Parent Engagement’, which has been designed to provide intensive support on parent engagement. The program is a collaboration between Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) and the Queensland Independent Schools Parents Network (QIS). ARACY thanks ISQ and QIS for their invitation to share our knowledge and expertise with their teachers and school leaders.



Above (Left to right): Amanda Watt (QIS Parents Network), Barbara Barker (ARACY), Jacky Dawson (ISQ) (February 2024)



Above: Barbara Barker (ARACY) delivers a masterclass to a range of independent schools from across Queensland (February 2024)

ARACY has had a long running partnership with Catholic Schools Parents Association (CSPA) to support their efforts in elevating parent and family voices in relation to the wellbeing and learning of students.

Having previously partnered with CSPA to design and report on the 2022 Parent Survey on Student Wellbeing and Learning we are pleased to be working with them again on the 2024 iteration.

Shaped around The Nest, the survey results help CSPA to advise the Australian Government, the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC), and State, Territory and Diocesan Catholic Education Offices on key issues concerning parents with children and/or young people in Australian Catholic Schools. By responding to the national survey, families help CSPA to continue reporting on existing and emerging concerns in relation to the wellbeing and learning of their school-aged children.

Webinar - The Early Years Strategy 2024–2034



Registrations



Attendance



Recording views

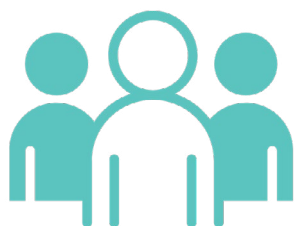
ARACY was proud to partner with the Australian Government to deliver our most popular webinar of the 2023–2024 calendar, The Early Years Strategy 2024–2034. Liz Depers, ARACY’s Policy and Engagement Officer, was joined by Jacqueline Hrast, Branch Manager of the Child and Parenting Wellbeing Branch at the Department of Social Services, and Helen McInerney, Acting Branch Manager of the Early Learning and First Nations Priorities Branch at the Department of Education. Together, they outlined key features of the newly released Early Years Strategy, highlighted next steps, and answered questions from an engaged audience of over 490 participants.

ARACY played a vital role in shaping the Early Years Strategy, with our experts contributing to the Advisory Panel and The Nest framework guiding the development of this long-term vision for Australia’s children. Co-hosting this event with the Australian Government was a significant full-circle moment, celebrating our shared achievement in creating a strong foundation for children to thrive across the country.



Young and Wise Consultation Group: Amplifying Youth Voices for a Brighter Future

The Young and Wise consultation group and subscriber base was established by ARACY in early 2024 as part of our research for the upcoming Young and Wise report. This group brings the perspectives and lived experiences of young Australians into the heart of policy discussions, empowering young people to have a say in decisions affecting their futures. This group embodies ARACY’s commitment to creating a more inclusive and responsive platform that values youth voices in shaping solutions for pressing issues such as mental health, education, social equity, and justice reform.



Ages 15 to 25



Subscribers



All states and territories represented

Purpose and Vision

Young and Wise was established on the principle that young people should have an active role in shaping the things that impact their lives. With a vision of informed, participatory leadership, ARACY created this group to bridge the gap between youth and decision-makers, ensuring that young voices are heard and valued in national dialogues.

The group serves as a collaborative forum where young Australians can contribute insights, share experiences, and engage in meaningful discussions that influence the development of effective policies and practices. It also provides an opportunity for ARACY to share knowledge and opportunities with young people.

Goals of the Young and Wise Group

The Young and Wise consultation group was designed to:

- **Empower Young Australians:** provide youth with opportunities to influence policies and share their perspectives on the issues that affect their wellbeing and futures.
- **Promote Inclusivity:** ensure a diverse representation of youth voices from various backgrounds, including Indigenous young people, culturally diverse groups, and those from remote or disadvantaged areas.
- **Drive Change:** gather and incorporate insights that inspire and inform ARACY’s initiatives, reports, and advocacy efforts, particularly around education, health, social equity, and justice reform.
- **Strengthen Partnerships:** build relationships between youth and policymakers, bridging generational perspectives to drive impactful, community-driven change.



How Young and Wise Operates

The Young and Wise group meets regularly to discuss current issues, explore innovative solutions, and provide feedback on ARACY’s projects and research. Members engage in structured workshops, roundtable discussions, and consultations with experts, enabling them to contribute thoughtfully to projects, campaigns, and policy recommendations. Through facilitated sessions, young people within the group discuss topics critical to their generation’s wellbeing, contributing their insights to ARACY’s work on child health, education, and social policy.

Impact and Contributions

Since its establishment, the Young and Wise group has contributed valuable insights to ARACY’s advocacy work, helping shape policy submissions, national surveys, and initiatives like the Young and Wise report. Their input has been instrumental in campaigns addressing child and youth mental health, equitable access to education, and justice system reforms. By incorporating youth perspectives, ARACY ensures that its recommendations are informed by real-world experiences, making them more relevant and effective in addressing the needs of young Australians.

Join the Conversation

The Young and Wise consultation group is an evolving project, growing in scope and influence as it continues to provide a platform for young people to make their voices heard. With ARACY’s commitment to advocacy for children and youth, Young and Wise will play a pivotal role in shaping policies that create a healthier, fairer, and more supportive Australia for all young people.

Through Young and Wise, ARACY reaffirms its dedication to championing the needs, rights, and aspirations of Australian youth, building a society where every young voice counts and every young person can thrive.

New Brand



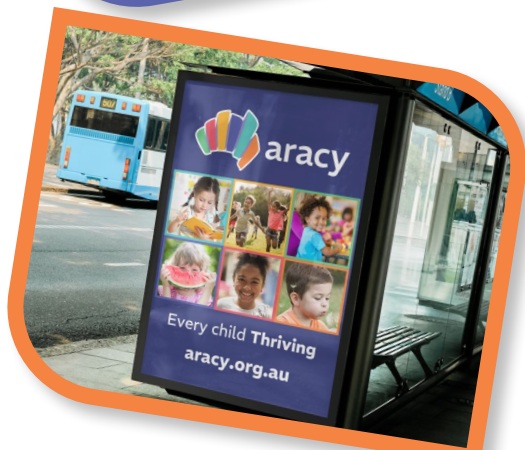
In early 2024 we engaged a brand designer and commenced the creation of the new ARACY brand and the new logo and brand was launched in May 2024.

ARACY’s new logo is more than just a picture. It’s a key, unlocking the potential for all Australian children and young people to thrive.

Shaped like Australia, the logo begins by acknowledging where we work. In doing so we pay our respects to the First Nations people of this land. We honour their strong and perpetual connection to Country.

Our logo features a continuous ribbon that unites us beyond the divisions of states, seas, or silos, symbolising the wellbeing of children. Each colour represents an interconnected domain of The Nest, the wellbeing framework developed by ARACY for all Australians. It’s at the heart of everything we do. Every twist and turn of the ribbon symbolises the tailored support our systems must provide, so all children get a fair chance to thrive.

By putting our purpose “every child thriving” right on top of our logo we’re elevating it above a strapline. ARACY’s purpose is clear: for all young Australians to succeed. This logo is a symbol of hope, a promise of a brighter future where every young Australian can reach their full potential.



ARACY says Yes

On Friday 4 August, ARACY publicly declared our support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament being enshrined in the Australian constitution. For the following months and right up until the referendum we used our platform to advocate for change and shared resources designed to inform and support a dialogue for change.

As an organisation that values the importance of evidenced based decision making our position on this important issue was also grounded in strong evidence.

- **Global evidence on the effects of colonisation and displacement identifies intergenerational effects on First Nations people’s health, education and social wellbeing.**
- **Responsive relationships are the foundation of healthy brain development and healthy lives. However, continuing trauma (including being marginalised or not heard) limits optimal child development and social participation.**
- **Positive developmental outcomes for all Australia’s children and families has benefits for all Australians**

While the outcome of the Voice referendum may not have delivered the result many hoped for, at ARACY, our answer remains a firm and unwavering Yes. Yes to listening, yes to learning, and yes to continuing our work alongside Australia’s First Nations communities to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

The journey towards a more equitable future doesn’t end here. We will continue advocating for policies that ensure every child, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, has the opportunity to thrive. We remain committed to advancing the wellbeing of First Nations children through collaboration, respectful partnerships, and practical actions grounded in evidence.



ARACY’S 2023 STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

ARACY supports the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament being enshrined in the Australian constitution.

We seek to see our children thrive. Children are central to the Uluru Statement, and through the Voice to Parliament change can be driven to build a better future.

Responsive relationships, built through dialogue and positive interactions, are crucial to developing healthy brains and healthy lives. We acknowledge a history of displacement can have intergenerational effects, contributing to adverse experiences for children and families. Supporting and modelling respectful dialogue in the community, through the Voice to Parliament, will promote connection and engagement to deliver improved outcomes for children and families. What fosters positive developmental outcomes for children and their families, will foster positive outcomes for us all.

2023-24 Financial Year Highlights: Strategic Progress and Key Partnerships







In 2023-24, ARACY made significant strides across key initiatives, supporting the launch of the National Early Years Strategy, contributing to the Productivity Commission’s early childhood review, and establishing the Investment Dialogue for Australia’s Children.

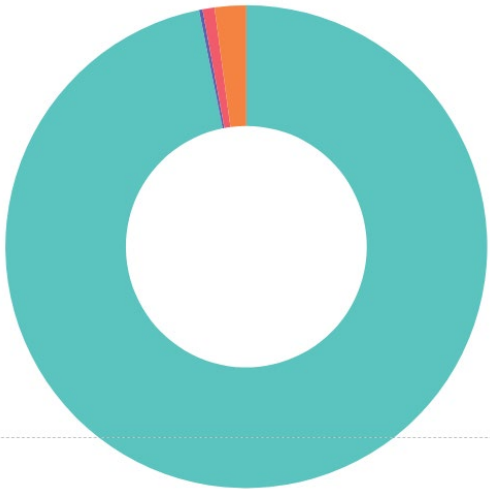
We began refreshing The Nest framework with a focus on middle years children (8-14), embedding Indigenous Knowledge Systems under the guidance of Dr. John Davis and through our Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership, we co-hosted the Queensland Brain Builders Summit.

ARACY prioritised collaboration, partnering on campaigns like Act for Children, Thrive By Five, Raise the Age, and supporting poverty research with ACOSS and UNSW. Our Maximising the Middle project continued in Western Sydney, fostering support for children in the middle years.

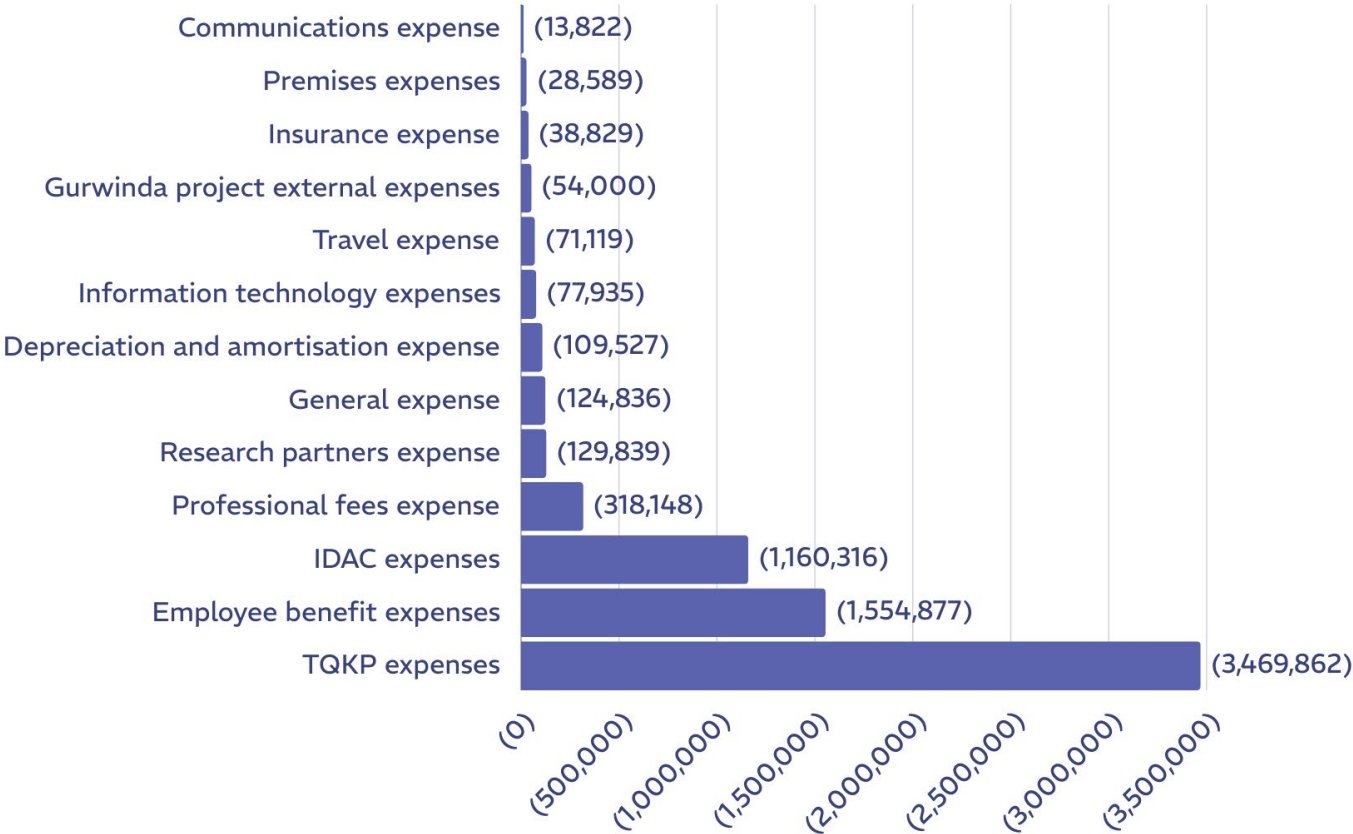
The organisation has delivered a surplus of \$289,581 for the financial year ending 30 June 2024 (30 June 2023 result surplus of \$384,559). ARACY’s net assets are \$1,176,018 (Year ended 30 June 2023 net assets \$886,437).

Revenue

	Source	2024	2023
	Income from contracts	7,207,165	4,908,883
	Donations	17,500	17,500
	Interest	59,618	35,113
	Other	156,997	166,299
	Total revenue	7,441,280	5,127,795



Expenses



Source	2024	2023
Revenue and other income	7,441,280	5,127,795
Communications expense	(13,822)	(11,024)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(109,527)	(123,985)
Employee benefit expenses	(1,554,877)	(1,519,001)
General expense	(124,836)	(103,476)
Gurwinda project external expenses	(54,000)	
IDAC expenses	(1,160,316)	(74,094)
Insurance expense	(38,829)	(29,628)
Information technology expenses	(77,935)	(61,071)
Premises expenses	(28,589)	(53,130)
Professional fees expense	(318,148)	(277,141)
Research partners expense	(129,839)	(298,431)
Travel expense	(71,119)	(73,940)
TQKP expenses	(3,469,862)	(2,118,315)
Total comprehensive income for the year	289,581	384,559

Supporters

ARACY gratefully acknowledges the support of our partners and supporters in allowing us to continue our work on behalf of children and young people in Australia to 30 June 2024.

- Allan and Gill Gray Foundation
- Bennelong Foundation
- Besen Family Foundation^
- BHP Foundation^
- CAGES Foundation^
- Catholic Schools Parents Australia
- Children’s Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service *
- City of Greater Bendigo
- Commonwealth Department of Health
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
- Dusseldorp Forum^
- Educator Impact
- Emerging Minds*
- Eureka Benevolent Foundation^
- Equity Trustees
- Fogarty Foundation^
- Gilbert + Tobin (pro bono legal advice)
- Gold Coast Hospital Foundation^
- Griffith University*
- Hand Heart Pocket**^
- Hands up Mallee
- Health and Wellbeing Queensland*
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust^
- Helping Hands Network Foundation*
- Human Rights Commission Office of the National Children's Commissioner
- Minderoo Foundation^
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- NT Department of Health
- Palix Foundation / Alberta Family Wellness Initiative*
- Paul Ramsay Foundation**^
- Perpetual Trustees^

- Philanthropy Australia^
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak*
- Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services*
- Queensland Department of Children Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs*
- Queensland Department of Communities, Arts & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships*
- Queensland Family and Child Commission*
- Queensland Government Department of Education*
- Queensland Mental Health Commission*
- Queensland University of Technology*
- R.E. Ross Trust
- RM Ansett Trust^
- Smart Justice for Young People Coalition (Victoria)
- Social Ventures Australia
- Stan Perron Charitable Foundation^
- State Library of Queensland*
- Stronger Smarter Institute
- Sydney Children’s Hospital Foundation^
- The Berg Family Foundation^
- The Bryan Foundation**^
- The Ian Potter Foundation**^
- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- The John Villiers Trust**^
- The Phillips Foundation^
- Tim Fairfax Family Foundation^
- UNICEF Australia
- Uniting Care Kippax, A Village for Every Child
- Uniting NSW.ACT
- University of Queensland, Queensland Brain Institute*
- University of Western Australia
- VicHealth
- *Partners who have supported the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership*
- ^Investment Dialogue founding philanthropic partners*

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