

# Annual Report 2022/23



# Contents

2022/23 Overview	3
ARACY Annual Report	3
Message from the Chair	4
Message from the CEO	6
Overview of ARACY	8
Acknowledgement	9
Our Path	10
ARACY's Purpose	12
ARACY's Mission	13
Board and Staff	14
Board	14
Research Committee	15
Staff	16
Strategic Enablers and Management Team	16
ARACY HQ STAFF	17
Thriving Queensland Kids Project	17
2022/23 at a Glance	18
20th Anniversary	22
Pillar #1: Putting Knowledge to Work	27
Maximising the Middle	28
The Wellbeing of Australia's Children	28



<b>Pillar #2: Growing Capability</b>	<b>31</b>
The Common Approach becoming more common!	32
EiPulse22	34
<b>Pillar #3: Influence Decision Making</b>	<b>35</b>
Measuring what Matters	36
Focus on the Early Years	36
<b>Pillar #4: Catalysing Collective Action</b>	<b>37</b>
Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP)	39
National Early Language and Literacy Strategy (NELLS)	40
Thrive by Five	41
Development of Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children	41
<b>2022/23 Financials</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Our Supporters</b>	<b>46</b>



ARACY Annual Report

# 2022/23 Overview

# Message from the Chair



In 2022 we celebrated 20 years of this vital and remarkable organisation, and as I said at our celebration in November, this is a testament to Board and staff who over two decades have relentlessly pursued ways to achieve better outcomes for children and young people in this country.

This was clearly evident across 2022 and 2023 as the team came together prioritising the wellbeing of children and young people in such fora as the Australian Government's Early Years Summit, hosting visits by the Palix Foundation from Alberta, Canada and Sir Michael Marmot, progressing the convening of the Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children, and making the Common Approach available globally.

Over the last year, the Board has also taken the opportunity to review our Constitution. We are eternally grateful to the expert support of the team at Gilbert + Tobin in this process and look forward to working with our members and supporters in undertaking this important reform in the coming year. I acknowledge the depth of knowledge and passion our Board bring to the good governance and purpose focus of ARACY and this year we welcomed two new members –

**Dr Jenny Proimos** – Jenny is a consultant paediatrician and adolescent health physician in the Department of Adolescent Medicine at the Royal Children's Hospital. She has extensive child health and wellbeing experience; was previously the Principal Medical Advisor for children and young people in the Victorian Department of Education and Training and represented Victoria on the Standing Committee for Child and Youth Health, the main vehicle for child and adolescent health policy in the Council of Australian Governments.

**Professor Karen Thorpe** – Karen is Australian Research Council Laureate Professor and Group Leader in Child Development, Education and Care at the Queensland Brain Institute, University of Queensland. Her research is grounded in the understanding that early learning experiences shape brain development and are critical in establishing trajectories of health, social inclusion and learning across the lifespan. In 2020 she was recognised by Australian Government, Advance Global Awards for her

international contribution to education. Karen also chairs the Australian Early Years Reference Council for Evidence for Learning, Australia.

In other significant news, after over 5 years at the helm, Penny Dakin is resigning from the position of CEO with ARACY. Penny has provided excellent leadership, steering ARACY through some challenging times and building the team and our reputation and position within the sector. I have enjoyed working with Penny and acknowledge her steadfast dedication to supporting children and young people to thrive. Having left the organisation in a strong position, Penny will step down at the end of 2023 and the Board wishes her well in her future endeavours.

I have had the pleasure of serving as Board Chair since 2019, and now it is time to hand the baton over. It has been my privilege, as Chair to see the passion and commitment of the current generation of ARACY staff and the Board team. And I am proud to leave the position of Chair with the organisation in such good standing. I look forward to continuing to serve on the Board and support our future endeavours. I know the new Chair, with the Board and staff will continue to work effectively in their ongoing stewardship and focus on the work of ARACY to bring people and knowledge together, to ensure all Australian children have the conditions to support health and wellbeing and avert disease and sub-optimal mental health.

## Professor Gervase Chaney

Board Chair, ARACY





## Message from the CEO



For over 20 years ARACY – Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth – has been bringing people and knowledge together, to make change for the benefit of children and young people.

In 2022-23 we have continued in this work, seeking new partnerships and collaborations along the way. As we look back and reflect on the year that's gone, we can do so confident in the relationships we've built, the contributions we've made and the impact we've had.

The four pillars of Our Path, ARACY's three-year strategy continue to guide and shape the work we do as well as how we do it. Our values of connectedness, equity, integrity, and inclusion are more than words on a page. They are our foundation and our compass.

Our list of highlights for the year is long and diverse – our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Canberra in November 2022, the Budget announcement of the Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children (IDAC), hosting Sir Michael Marmot in Canberra on behalf of the Investment Dialogue, the continued strength and growth of the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership, the National Early

Years Summit in February 2023 and the partnership with Emerging Minds creating four *Understanding Brain Science* professional development modules – are stand outs.

It would be remiss of me though to not call out the important but (not always) urgent work that our team do all year.

Our Knowledge Translation team has continued to draw on and synthesise established and emerging evidence to inform and help shape policy development. In 2022-23 the team have crafted submissions, responses and policy statements that have informed the development of the National Early Years Strategy, the Measuring What Matters framework, vaping reform, the future of preventative health, a strong and diverse community services sector and much more. As a recent report from the Paul Ramsay Foundation noted:

‘There is a significant gap between the research and evidence of what works, and the implementation of this in policy and practice. Simply producing evidence does not automatically lead to uptake or improved outcomes, there is a gap between what we ‘know’, and what we ‘do’... organisations that generate, synthesise, and curate high-quality and robust research, data, and evaluation, with a specific objective to influence and improve the decision-making of policy-makers, practitioners, NFPs, and the public. They can act as intermediaries, connecting decision-makers to evidence, and advocate for and facilitate its application.”

ARACY has always recognized that the people who work every day supporting, strengthening and enabling children, young people, families and communities are one of our nation’s greatest assets. Our Capacity Building team has continued to work in partnership with a wide array of organisations training in the Common Approach®, developing skills in neuroscience and early childhood development as well as forging new ways of embedding First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing across our organisation.

Our beneficiaries are at the heart of everything we do at ARACY. We have continued to advocate for the things that matter most to children, young people, their families and communities. We’ve joined wider sector calls for

Raising the Rate, establishing the conditions that would allow every child to Thrive by Five and Raising the Age of criminal responsibility. In addition we’ve supported First Nations led calls for a specific National Commissioner for First Nations Children and the reinstatement of vital funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific child and family support services.

ARACY’s role in championing more joined-up, collaborative and collective ways of working is embodied in our flagship initiatives the Investment Dialogue for Australia’s Children and the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership. Both initiatives centre new ways of partnering and aligning actions across diverse partners and more responsive dialogue driven activity that privileges the voices of beneficiaries and addresses the systemic barriers that firmly hold current outcomes in place.

This will be my last message as ARACY CEO. After five and half wonderful years, I will step down at the end of 2023. I am proud of the organisation ARACY has become. I’m proud of the team and culture we’ve built and the things we’ve achieved. My heartfelt thanks to our Board of Directors, particularly Professor Chaney for their support, courage and leadership. Also to the ARACY team for the extraordinary and the everyday.

As we move into a new strategy cycle and a new era of leadership and management in 2023-24, I look forward to watching the amazing things this organisation will do and the authentic, values driven way it’ll go about it.

**Penny Dakin**

Chief Executive Officer, ARACY

## Overview of ARACY

For over 20 years ARACY – Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth – has been bringing people and knowledge together, to make change for the benefit of children and young people. ARACY is unique in linking all areas of wellbeing for children, young people, and their families.

*We believe all children and young people should have the opportunity to thrive.*

We strive to achieve this by championing evidence-based policy and practice, while forging alliances between government, policy making, research, philanthropy, and service delivery with a focus on prevention, early support and engagement. We work for the creation of better systems and supportive environments, and to grow capability across the sector, improving outcomes for children and young people.





## Acknowledgement

We live and work on lands whose sovereignty was never ceded and acknowledge the deep connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to country and community throughout Australia.

We pay respect to elders, past, present and those yet to be.

ARACY supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We seek to see our children thrive.

Children are central to the Uluru Statement, and through meaningful dialogue change can be driven to build a better future. We are open to change.

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, 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.

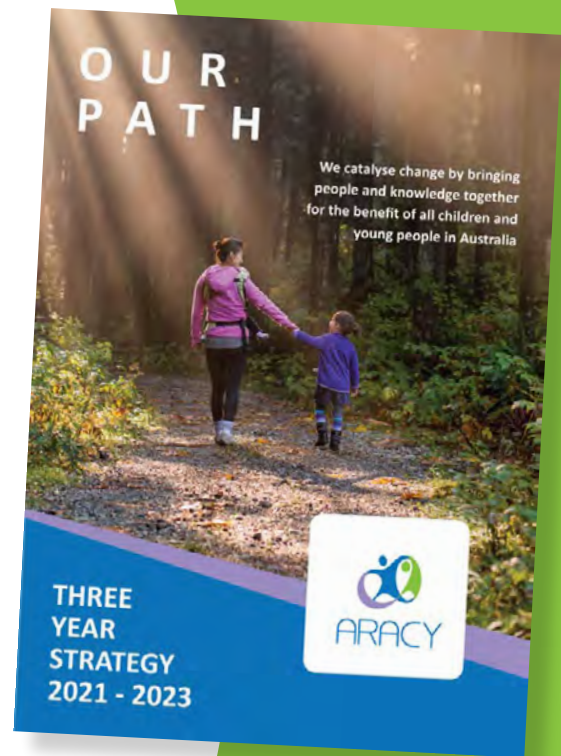
# Our Path

In 2023 ARACY continues to deliver Our Path, a three-year strategy to guide our work and crystallise our purpose. Launched in 2021 the strategy is informed by the belief that all children and young people in Australia should have every opportunity to thrive.

To thrive, children and young people need to be valued, loved and safe, they need their basic material needs met, they need to be healthy, learning, participating in family, community and decision making, and have a positive sense of their identity and culture.

Listening to children and young people is integral to what we do. The right of every child to have a say about issues that affect them is upheld in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. When we listen to the views of children and young people we make better decisions, write better policy and directly benefit young Australians.

We can create more significant change by working together. When we channel the efforts of our many and varied partners and stakeholders, we can create lasting and transformative change in systems, policies and practice, and ultimately, improvements in the daily lives and futures of children and young people.



The strategy is supported by our values and the four pillars that underpin our work:

1. Putting knowledge to work;

2. Growing capability;

3. Influencing decision making; and

4. Catalysing collective action.



# ARACY's Purpose

ARACY's purpose is to ensure all Australian children have the conditions to support health and wellbeing and avert disease and sub-optimal mental health. Health promotion and prevention requires the combination of individual, social and political action to ensure all children thrive. This approach is captured in The Nest, specifying conditions required for optimal health and wellbeing.

The Nest, Australia's wellbeing framework for children and young people is a way of thinking about the whole child in the context of their daily 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 and is regularly refreshed to incorporate feedback from practitioners, children and their families. The Nest shows for a child to thrive their needs must be met in six key, interlocking areas.

1. Being Valued, Loved, and Safe
2. Having Material Basics
3. Being Healthy (physically, mentally, emotionally)
4. Learning (within and outside the classroom)
5. Participating (in decisions, groups, community)
6. Having a Positive Sense of Identity and Culture

Wellbeing can be thought of as a child or young person having everything they need to thrive and reach their full potential. It encompasses all areas of a child's life, which are linked and interdependent.



# ARACY's Mission




## Our Aspiration

All children and young people are loved and thriving.



## Our Intent

We catalyse change by bringing people and knowledge together for the benefit of children and young people in Australia.



## Our Values

**Connectedness:** We build genuine partnerships and acknowledge that true collaboration involves giving something up for the greater good.

**Equity:** We are committed to helping build a society that understands and respects fairness and equity, and values children not only as future adult contributors but for their own place and voice in society.

**Inclusion:** We value the breadth and depth of all people and ideas regardless of ethnicity, religion, age, political affiliation, gender, sexuality or other characteristics.

**Integrity:** We are non-partisan. We advocate for and with children and young people. We present the evidence even when it challenges common understanding. We manage the resources available to us honestly and responsibly.

# Board and Staff

## Board



*Above: Hawa Mohammad, Dr Norman Swan, Penny Dakin, Emeritus Professor Steve Zubrick, Professor Gervase Chaney, Dr Jenny Proimos, Professor Karen Thorpe, Adj Ass Professor Shamal Dass, at the ARACY 20th anniversary celebrations, November 2022. Not pictured Anne Cregan.*

Professor Gervase Chaney — Chair

Professor Ngiare Brown (resigned 11 November 2022)

Ms Anne Cregan

Adjunct Associate Professor Shamal Dass – Chair, Audit and Risk Committee

Ms Hawa Mohammad

Professor Kristy Muir (resigned 24 September 2022)

Dr Jenny Proimos (appointed 11 November 2022)

Dr Norman Swan

Professor Karen Thorpe (appointed 11 November 2022)

Emeritus Professor Stephen Zubrick – Chair, Research Committee

## Research Committee

Professor Sharon Bessell

Distinguished Professor Lyn Kemp

Professor Gerry Redmond

Dr David Roy

Professor Helen Skouteris

## TQKP Management Board

Lucille Chalmers

Penny Dakin - Chair

Kirsty Dixon

Natalie Lewis

Hawa Mohammad

Sara Parrott

Dr Grant Webb

Dr Geoff Woolcock



### Strategic Enablers and Management Team

*Above: Standing – Liz Depers, Annmarie Thomas, Sarah Biggerstaff, Harriet Daly, Kylie Caso, Michael Hogan, Barbara Barker, Dr Kristy Noble, Lauren Renshaw. Sitting – Roslyn Dundas, Diana Harris, Penny Dakin, Dr Rebecca Goodhue.*

Penny Dakin — Chief Executive Officer

Roslyn Dundas — Lead, Advocacy and Engagement, Company Secretary

Dr Rebecca Goodhue — Lead, Capacity Building

Diana Harris — Lead, Operations (from March 2023) Lead, Knowledge Translation (until Feb 2023)

Bernie Morris — Lead, Knowledge Translation (from March 2023)

## ARACY HQ STAFF

Amara Bains — Insights, Learning and Futures

Barbara Barker — Research Manager

Laura Barnes — Common Approach Facilitator (from August 2022)

Sarah Biggerstaff — Digital Communications Officer (until January 2023)

Niamh Brazil — Administrative Officer (from March 2023)

Harriet Daly — Executive Assistant to the CEO (from July 2022)

Liz Depers — Policy and Engagement Officer (from July 2022)

Samhruta Narayanan — Project Officer (January to June 2023)

Dr Kristy Noble — Policy and Projects Officer

Lauren Renshaw — Research and Policy Officer

Meg Richens — Project Advisor (from May 2023)

Kirrin Sampson — Project Officer (from January 2023)

Annmarie Thomas — Program Officer

Caitlin Winter — Policy and Projects Officer (from March 2023)

## Thriving Queensland Kids Project

Michael Hogan — Convenor

Roger Meany — Lead, Engagement and Operations (from January 2023)

Louise Baldwin — Lead, Strategy and Learning (July 2022 to June 2023)

Leda Barnett — Partnership Officer, Engagement (September 2022 to March 2023)

Naomi Brown — Senior Partnership Officer, Framing Initiative (from March 2023)

Rowena Cann — Senior Partnership Officer, Places (from November 2022)

Kylie Caso — Principal Partnerships Officer (until Jan 2023)

Kamila Davidson — Partnership Officer, Evaluation & Innovation (from January 2023)

Sophie Morson — Senior Partnership Officer, Integration and Investment (from March 2023)

Giselle Olive — Principal Partnerships Officer

Jacinta Perry — Partnership Officer, Thriving Queensland Country Collaborative (from April 2023)

Chelsea Pirodon — Executive Officer (from August 2022)

Angela Timbs — Partnerships Officer, Engagement and Communications

Kelly Williams — Partnership and Project Officer (until March 2023)

# 2022/23 at a Glance

July 2022

August 2022

Palix Foundation Visit



The ARACY team working with Stronger Smarter Institute, Sept 2022



Barbara Barker presenting at AISNSW Wellbeing Conference, Sept 2022

September 2022

Webinar: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Raising awareness to make the invisible, visible. (191 registrations 87 attendees)

Submission to Senate Select Committee Inquiry into Work and Care

AISNSW Wellbeing Conference  
"Family Engagement for Learning – how can schools achieve it?" Barbara Barker presenting

McAFNA Conference "A national strategy to ensure all kids have the best start in life: insights and directions"  
Diana Harris presenting

KIDS AND CARE - Working towards a new vision for out-of-home care in the Australian service context. Presenting the Common Approach and the NEST  
Dr Rebecca Goodhue presenting

## October 2022

Webinar: Thrive by Five – a campaign being heard (92 registrations 61 attendees)

Submission to the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Cheaper Child Care) Bill 2022

CAPEA Conference "Have you heard the brain story?" Roslyn Dundas poster



"Have you heard the brain story?" CAPEA Conference, October 2022



The Canberra Times Tuesday October 25, 2022

## November 2022

Submission: National Health Literacy Framework consultation

Submission: Draft model of care (MoC) for the ACT paediatric liaison and navigation service (PLaNS)

House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services - ParentsNext

ECEC TB5 Consultation event Adelaide

ECEC TB5 Consultation event Wollongong

Celebrating 20 Years of ARACY

## December 2022

ECEC TB5 Consultation event Launceston

ECEC TB5 Consultation event Melbourne

## January 2023

Submission: Federal Budget

## February 2023

Submission: Family Law amendment bill 2023

ECEC TB5 Consultation online

Federal Govt Early Years Summit



Penny Dakin addresses the Early Years Summit, February 2023



The Canberra Times Wednesday February 15, 2023



Dr Rebecca Goodhue presenting at CAHM23 Conference, March 2023

## May 2023

Webinar: Kinnections wellbeing platform (45 registrations 18 attendees)

*Webinar: Could it be their ears?* Otitis media, hearing loss and its language and literacy implications for young children (88 registrations 42 attendees)

Submission of feedback on the National Early Years Strategy

Submission on Measuring What Matters

Submission to Productivity Commission Inquiry: Early Childhood Education and Care

RACP draft Health Care of Children in Care and Protection Services – Australia position statement – Consultation feedback

Submission to South Australian Royal Commission Into Early Childhood Education and Care

Roundtable: Measuring What Matters

Roundtable: Vaping

## April 2023

Webinar: Wellbeing Data - what can we learn from NT and TAS (157 registrations 83 attendees)

Submission of feedback on the National Vision for Early Childhood Education and Care

## June 2023

Submission to Draft National Care and Support Economy Strategy 2023

Submission to Youth Justice and Child Wellbeing Reform across Australia

## March 2023

Webinar: LGBTQ+ Youth Health (138 registrations 72 attendees)

Submission to the Inquiry into the issue of increasing disruption in Australian school classrooms

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference "Providing a More Consistent, Positive and Empowering Experience Through 'The Common Approach'" Dr Rebecca Goodhue presenting

NELLS Forum

Sir Michael Marmot visit and Investment Dialogue dinner



Sir Michael Marmot speaks with Mark Butler Minister for Health and others, March 2023

# 20th Anniversary

Twenty years ago, our first annual report noted “the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth was established in 2002 to harness the expertise and resources of individuals and organisations in developing innovative solutions to the range of complex problems affecting the health, development and wellbeing of increasing numbers of young Australians.”

Professor Fiona Stanley labelled the organisation the most broadly based collaborative venture ever attempted in Australia, to address a social issue of major national significance.

In 2002 there was a realisation across Australia, and in many parts of the world, that to have a successful society we needed healthy children, reaching their potential. And in Australia, too many children were not reaching their potential. Professor Stanley, in celebrating 20 years of ARACY spoke of the insight that

“...wicked problems require whole of government responses, and putting children and families at the middle of [our activities] is going to make a big difference.”

In recognising twenty years of service and dedication, the team at ARACY acknowledges those thought leaders and policy champions who have continued to centre children, young people and their families in all facets of life and community. The work of ARACY has enabled us to better understand what is needed for every child to thrive, with the development of Australia’s wellbeing framework for children and young people, the Nest. The delivery of partnerships, collaborations and new approaches to working with children and young people has seen communities shift, and children and young people recognised and supported.

A small celebration was held at the National Museum of Australia in late 2022, allowing ARACY to thank supporters, collaborators and friends for their partnership and to renew our hope the future.





*Above: ARACY Board member Hawa Mohammad, former CEO Professor Brian Head, former Board Chair Elaine Henry, Board Chair Professor Gerv Chaney and CEO Penny Dakin, cut the cake.*

*Left, and Next Page: Partners and friends gather at the National Museum of Australia to celebrate 20 years of ARACY.*





*Partners and friends gather at the National Museum of Australia to celebrate 20 years of ARACY.*



**"Professor Fiona Stanley  
labelled [ARACY] the  
most broadly based  
collaborative venture  
ever attempted in  
Australia, to address a  
social issue of major  
national significance."**



A photograph of three children running through a field of tall grass, chasing and playing with numerous large, translucent bubbles. The child in the center is a young boy with light hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, running towards the camera with a joyful expression. To his right, a girl with dark curly hair, wearing a light blue patterned shirt and dark pants, is also running and reaching out towards the bubbles. On the left, another child is partially visible, also running. The background is a soft-focus field of green grass. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue-green gradient, which serves as a background for the text.

Underpinning Our Work - Pillar #1

# Putting Knowledge to Work

# Putting Knowledge to Work

## Maximising the Middle

'Maximising the Middle' is a unique initiative based in Campbelltown and Penrith NSW aiming 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 in valuing youth voice and youth leadership, using SSI's and ARACY's highly regarded trainings — the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program™ and the Common Approach®. 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.

This year has seen major milestones achieved for the Maximising the Middle Initiative, including the development of a Theory of Change with TACSI, recruitment and engagement with participating schools including 4 public schools in Campbelltown, and design of a research program with Western Sydney University examining stakeholder (including young people) perspectives on the middle years' cohort wellbeing, place and community in Campbelltown and Penrith, NSW.



## The Wellbeing of Australia's Children

Produced with UNICEF Australia "The Wellbeing of Australia's Children", combines our expertise to provide a high-level analysis of the most recent indicators of child wellbeing coupled with a discussion of emerging issues including the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of climate change on wellbeing. This Index aims to describe how Australian children are faring across all aspects of wellbeing and how this is changing, and ultimately aims to set policy priorities and guide action to ensure Australia is an equitable place to grow up and improve outcomes for all Australian children.

Refreshed and updated with new data in March 2023, the Children's Index allows us to see a fuller picture of life for children in Australia. The examination of core data sets, along with expert commentary and analysis, helps us to understand where our efforts are best placed to ensure every child enjoys a good life, one where they can thrive and grow to their full potential. The holistic framework of the Nest exposes the interdependencies and connections, the intended and unintended impacts that can either amplify or stymie our work.

In the coming year we will continue to refine our understanding of the data, releasing a series of occasional papers taking a deep dive on each domain of the Nest.

“The overarching goal  
[of Maximising the  
Middle] is to build an  
alliance of school and  
community leaders  
who will be supported  
to design community  
and youth-led  
projects and actions.”





A photograph of three children running through a field of tall grass, chasing bubbles. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The child in the center is a boy with light hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. To his right is a girl with dark curly hair, wearing a light-colored patterned shirt. To his left is another child, partially visible, wearing a light-colored shirt. Numerous large, clear bubbles are floating in the air around them.

Underpinning Our Work - Pillar #2

# Growing Capability

# Growing Capability

## The Common Approach becoming more common!

The Common Approach® is best practice for having wellbeing conversations with children, young people and their families.

ARACY has been delivering training in the Common Approach for eight years and we're thrilled that our new blended learning course is now running in every jurisdiction in Australia. Launched in September 2022, the blended learning course consists of around three hours of interactive eLearning modules followed by a 90-minute virtual workshop and includes a suite of hard copy resources. The blended learning course is accredited professional development for educators in some jurisdictions and will be accredited for certain health professionals in the coming years. It is also becoming more common outside of Australia with 1000 practitioners in the city of Helsinki receiving training.

In 2022-23:

- 1273 people commenced their Common Approach elearning, with
- 1047 completing their elearning course.

In 2022-2023 we continued our partnership in South Western Sydney with the Investment Approach for Social Impact Strategy, working towards training 2000 practitioners in the Common Approach. These practitioners come from diverse backgrounds and sectors, working in government and non-government education, health and community service organisations. All work with children and young people aged 0-24, and their parents and carers, across South Western Sydney.

“...our new blended learning course is now running in every jurisdiction in Australia.”





This large-scale saturation of the Common Approach in a specific geographic location aims to impact systems to improve children and young people's wellbeing. Practitioners in South Western Sydney who work with children and young people, no matter their discipline, will have a shared understanding of holistic wellbeing according to the Nest domains, and a consistent, evidence-based practice model for wellbeing conversations with children.

ARACY is leveraging the impact of this large-scale opportunity by supporting the establishment of a Common Approach Community of Practice. This will ensure the Common Approach is sustainably and consistently implemented over time, and will build momentum towards greater impacts across the sectors and in the lives of children and young people in South Western Sydney.

Trained practitioners will be invited to join the Community of Practice as Champions or Convenors, and attend professional development facilitated by ARACY. Champions will take on the role of promoting and advocating for the Common Approach training and its use to colleagues across South Western Sydney, and role model exemplary use of the four practices. Convenors will manage the secretariat duties of the Communities of Practice, use their leadership and management networks to influence organisations to take up the remaining 500 Common Approach training places, and embed it across service delivery policies and procedures.

## EiPulse22

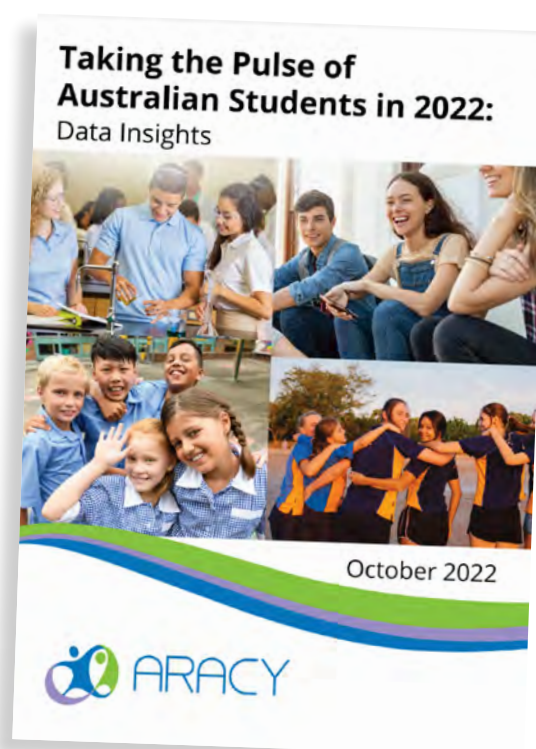
**Ei Pulse is a student wellbeing tool, developed by Educator Impact, used to track and support student wellbeing in real time. It provides a weekly check-in with students and enables them to ask for help when they need it.**

As part of developing ei Pulse, Educator Impact approached ARACY to operationalise the Nest, Australia's wellbeing framework for children and young people. Ei Pulse gathers data on the wellbeing of students based on the methodology from ARACY's Common Approach®. The Common Approach® uses the Nest framework and is best practice for having quality conversations with children, young people and their families about all aspects of wellbeing. Schools that adopt ei Pulse are also encouraged to receive Common Approach® training to help ensure students experience seamless wellbeing support from all staff.

Ei Pulse was launched in March 2020 and since then the number of students using the tool has increased from approximately 500 to more than 84,000 in August 2022, when it was being used in approximately 120 schools in all Australian jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory. By August 2022, the number of schools using the tool ranged from around 5-10 schools each in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), South Australia (SA), Tasmania, and Western Australia (WA). In the remaining jurisdictions, ei Pulse was in 18 schools in Queensland, 31 schools in Victoria, and 45 schools in NSW.

In August 2022 the second data analysis report was made available. In the 18-month collection period up to August 2022 the data presents a picture of approximately 84,000 students across Australia, who checked in over 1.6 million times, resulting in 3 million data points. Across all check-ins 0.3% resulted in a student reaching out for help, those requests coming from 2,568 individual students (3.0%). In a school of 1,000 students this translates to about 3 students reaching out for help each week.

While 70% of the time, students reported feeling positive in any given week, around six percent of students reported feeling negative. In comparison to the previous report released in November 2021, these results show an increase in positive responses to the question of 'how are you feeling today?', of 5.5 percentage points.



**"Ei Pulse was launched in March 2020 and since then the number of students using the tool has increased from approximately 500 to more than 84,000 in August 2022..."**

A photograph of three children running through a field of tall grass, chasing bubbles. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple and pink gradient. The text is positioned in the lower right area of the image.

Underpinning Our Work - Pillar #3

# Influence Decision Making

# Influence Decision Making

## Measuring what Matters

In the October 2022 Federal Budget the government moved towards 'measuring what matters' and taking steps to incorporate wellbeing in financial outcomes.

Measuring what matters can support a new approach to shape the economy bringing wellbeing to the centre of how we think about purpose, value, and development. In May 2023 ARACY hosted a roundtable with a range of organisations across the child and young person wellbeing sector as well as three young wellbeing advocates to help inform the government consultations on what and how to measure in support of a wellbeing budget. The roundtable was structured to facilitate in-depth discussion of each theme, as well as overarching considerations, over a 3-hour period. Through our consultation, we aim to bring the perspectives and needs of children and young people from 0 to 24 years into the development of this framework.

ARACY recognises that rather than a machine to maximise economic growth, the economy should be a societal instrument to promote human wellbeing. New measures can promote progress that is people centred, equitably distributed and environmentally and socially sustainable. The outcome will be a society that is more just, inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

Our submission calls for a dedicated national child and young person's wellbeing and progress framework to be implemented alongside and in addition to a national wellbeing and progress framework. This is necessary to appropriately reflect needs of children and young people which differ from adults, and to maximise the social and economic benefits of enhanced intergenerational mobility. This approach has been implemented by the OECD and internationally.

## Focus on the Early Years

ARACY was a key contributor to the federal and state government's consultations about improving early childhood education and care from March to May this year. This included providing feedback for the National Early Childhood Education and Care Vision, National Early Years Strategy, Productivity Commission Inquiry into Early Childhood Education and Care, and the South Australian Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care.

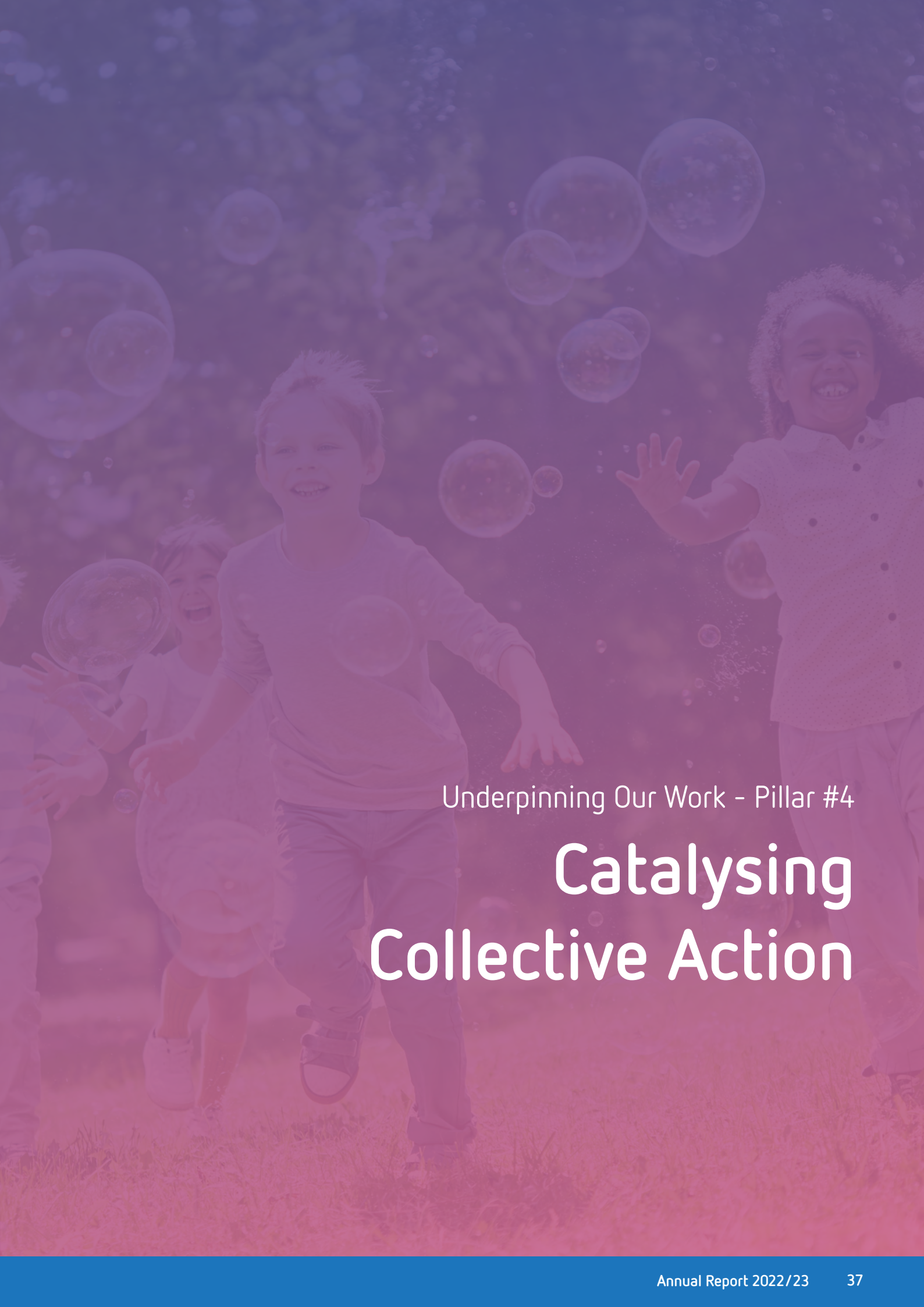
To assist in crafting the Early Years Strategy, and start the important conversations needed around helping young children to thrive, the Federal Government hosted a National Early Years Summit in February at Parliament House, co-chaired by Minister Amanda Rishworth and Minister Anne Aly.

A 14-member expert Advisory Panel has also been established to inform the development of the Strategy. ARACY CEO, Penny Dakin joins the panel, along with Professor Fiona Stanley AC FAA, founder of ARACY and patron of Telethon Kids Institute.

ARACY established a writing group with various collegial networks in the sector to advocate with a united vision about early years reform. Active participants in the writing group included Good Start Early Learning, Royal Far West, the Benevolent Society, Families Australia, Paul Ramsay Foundation and Social Ventures Australia.

Across all submissions, ARACY provided evidence and rationale for improving the access, equity and quality of early childhood education and care, early years supports, and the early childhood workforce to improve life outcomes for our youngest Australians. ARACY advocated for ECEC reform that prioritises children's wellbeing, rights and ability to thrive, with the Nest as a basis for conceptualising wellbeing.

ARACY's submission was referenced in the South Australian Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care final report. The consultation reports for the National ECEC Vision, National Early Years Strategy and Productivity Commission Inquiry into ECEC will be released in late 2023.



Underpinning Our Work – Pillar #4

# Catalysing Collective Action



# Catalysing Collective Action

## Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP)

The Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership commenced its second phase in 2022-23. TQKP is a Queensland-based intermediary and broker focused on systems change for the benefit of children, young people and families. TQKP brings together a cross-sectoral coalition of Queensland leaders, organisations, practitioners, and collaborators working together with the shared purpose of catalysing systems to change the odds for Queensland children and young people to thrive.

The development of TQKP Charter was a significant stepping stone achieved this year. The Charter describes the purpose, values and approach of the Partnership, and invites partners collaborators and networkers to commit to a shared vision of bringing the disproportionate rates of developmental vulnerability among Queensland children and young people to Australian averages by 2032.

TQKP's phase 2 objectives are to contribute to improvement in:

1. Connectivity and capabilities of leaders and change agents to steward systems and facilitate learning and adaptation
2. Connectivity and capabilities of workforces and organisations focused on child and adolescent development, especially neurocapability
3. Capabilities and capacities of caregivers and communities to contribute to healthy child and adolescent development, and
4. Systems strategies that contribute to child and adolescent development.

TQKP's work in phase 2 comprises ten key initiatives:

- Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative
- Thriving Kids Data Roadmap
- Thriving First Nations Kids Initiative
- Childhood Builders Initiative
- Thriving Kids Integrated Service Systems Collaborative
- Thriving Kids Framing Initiative
- Thriving Queensland Kids Country Collaborative
- Early Childhood Development Better Systems Roadmap
- Thriving Places, Thriving Kids Initiative
- Smarter Investment Initiative.

For more information about the work of TQKP visit [www.tqkp.org.au](http://www.tqkp.org.au).



## National Early Language and Literacy Strategy (NELLs)

During March 2023 ARACY joined with other members of the National Early Language and Literacy Coalition at Old Parliament House for a forum to reconnect, share ideas and approaches, and reflect on the ways that our draft National Early Language and Literacy Strategy may be incorporated into the current federal government's development of an overarching early years strategy.

The Forum, chaired by Speech Pathology Australia CEO Gail Mulcair, was an opportunity for government representatives from education, health, and social services and key stakeholders in the early years sector to hear more about early years initiatives and programs that support early language and literacy development.

We were delighted to be joined by Professor Tom Calma AO, the co-chair of coalition member The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF), who opened proceedings with a reminder to us all of the social justice aspects of being literate and being literate was the key to a functional, fulfilling life in modern Australia. At the same time he drew attention to the holistic importance of first languages for children's educational and wellbeing outcomes.

The event was made possible with the support of The Ian Potter Foundation.

*Above: Professor Tom Calma AO, co-chair of the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, opens proceedings at the NELLs event.*

**"...being literate  
[is] the key to  
a functional,  
fulfilling life  
in modern  
Australia..."**



## Thrive by Five

**Thrive by Five has been campaigning for the past 3 years to make Australia's early learning childcare system high quality and universally accessible.**

Designed to bring together researchers, families, educators, and concerned citizens in a movement for systems change in early childhood, Thrive by Five has been successful in bringing about greater recognition of the challenges hindering the early childhood sector from providing the best start for our children.

Across late 2022 and early 2023 ARACY, with Thrive by Five and other campaign partners held a series of discussions in regional centres, capital cities, and on-line - where we heard moves towards a national strategy were welcome, as long as the wellbeing of children is prioritised.

Almost 300 individuals revealed their hopes and frustrations in looking to build an Early Years Strategy that cuts through the complexity, and enables children and families to access high-quality education, health and care services. Their insights were gathered into a report shared with participants prior to the Early Years Summit in February 2023.

Our work as part of Thrive by Five campaign is supported by Minderoo.

## Development of Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children

**The Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children is a collaboration between government and philanthropy to improve the wellbeing of children, young people, and their families, by working with communities to reduce intergenerational disadvantage in Australia.**

Announced in May 2023 with a commitment by the Federal Government to tackling entrenched disadvantage, this long-term commitment is based on a shared vision for an inclusive and equitable Australia where all children, families and communities can fulfil their potential. To achieve this requires a different way of working and strong, enduring partnerships between key stakeholders, including between communities, philanthropy and governments. We recognise communities are experts in their own experience and have solutions, driven by local data and lived experience. Children and families have voices we need to hear and respect.

Over the course of the year ARACY has worked with The Bryan Foundation, The Ian Potter Foundation and the Paul Ramsay Foundation in incubating the idea of the Investment Dialogue and building relationships. In the coming year we look forward to growing these relationships and the strength and purpose of the Investment Dialogue, working as Strategic Convenor.

**“[Investment Dialogue] is based on a shared vision for an inclusive and equitable Australia where all children, families and communities can fulfil their potential.”**





ARACY Annual Report

# 2022/23 Financials

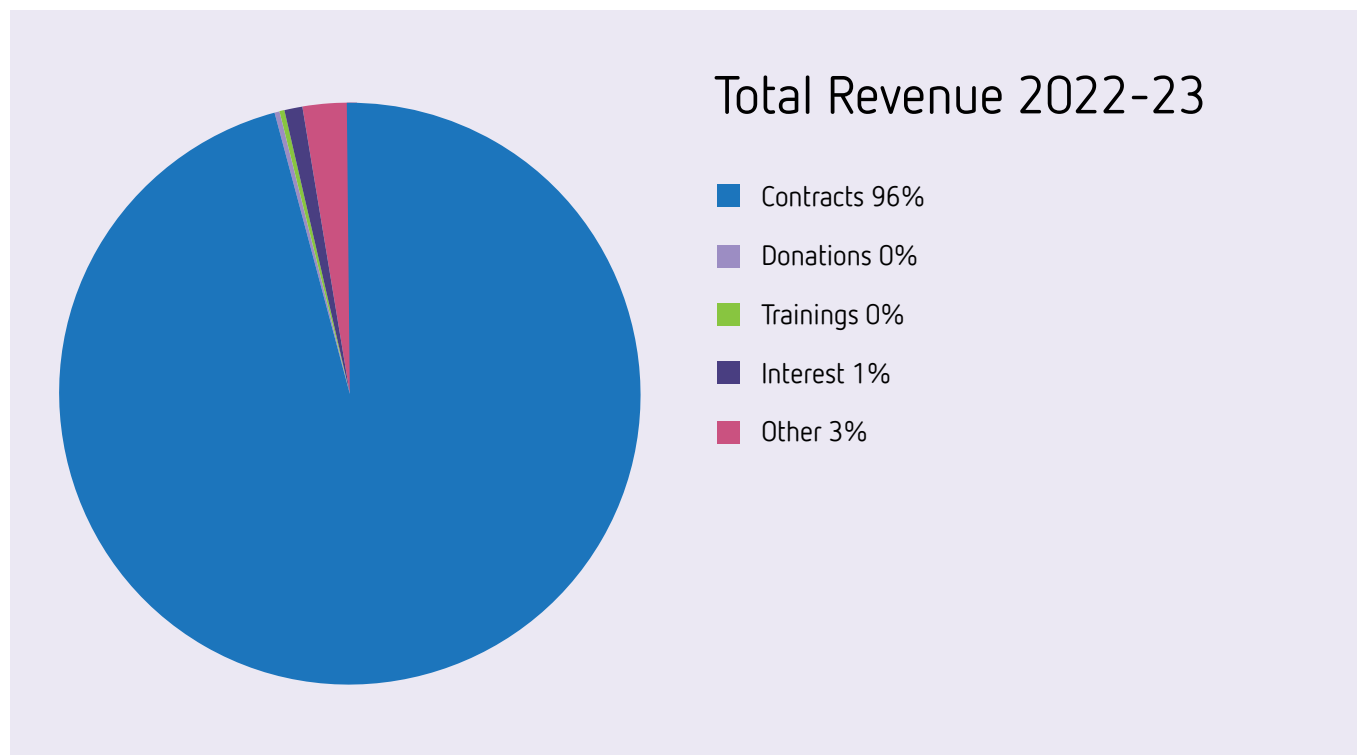
# Financials

In 2022-23 the delivery of core projects, with the guidance of strong strategy, is reflected in a positive financial outcome.

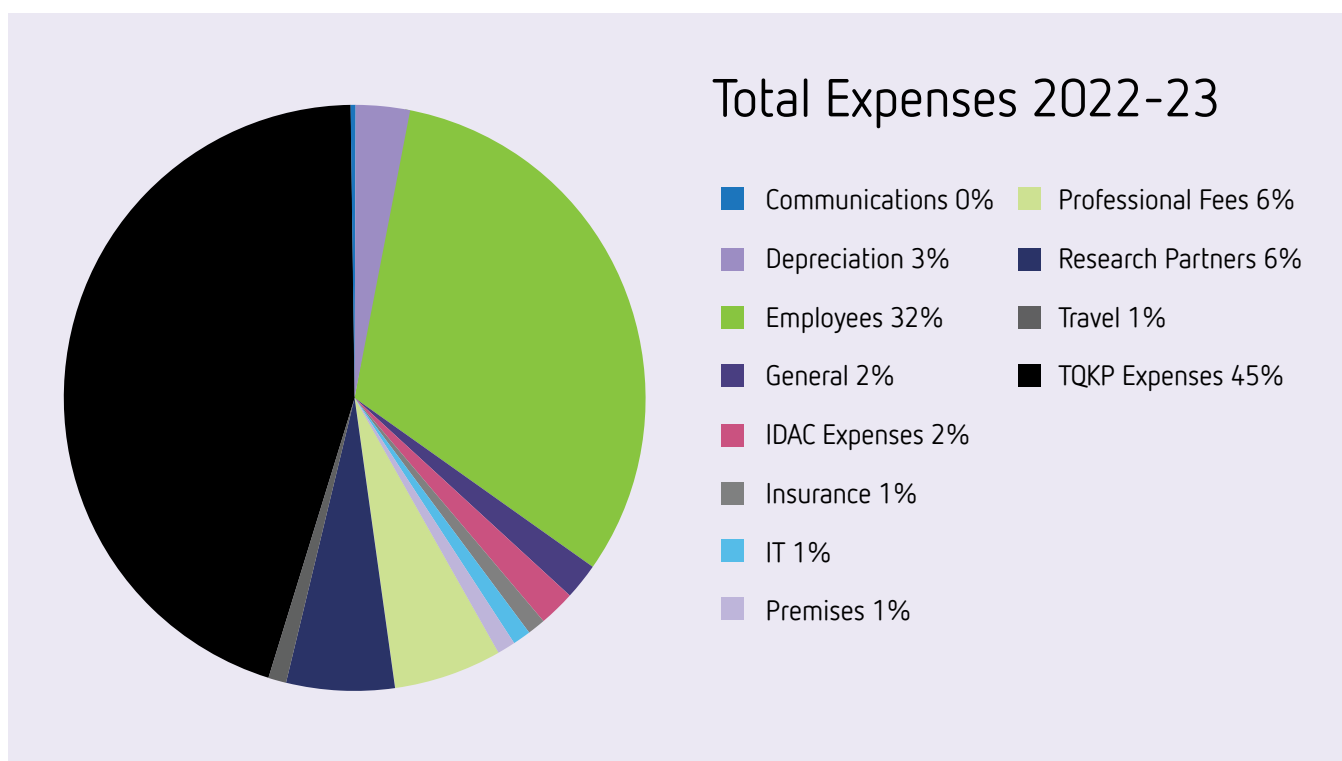
With the Thriving Queensland Kids Project now shifting to implementation phase significant resources are working towards systems change for the benefit of children, young people, and families in Queensland.

The organisation has delivered a surplus of \$384,559 for the financial year ending 30 June 2023 (30 June 2022 result deficit of \$323,083). ARACY's net assets are \$886,437 (Year ended 30 June 2022 net assets \$501,878)

Revenue		
Source	2022-23 \$	2021-22 \$
Contracts	4,894,793	2,075,903
Donations	17,500	0
Trainings	14,090	38,346
Interest	35,113	807
Other	166,299	8188
Total:	5,127,795	2,123,244



Expenses		
Source	2022-23 \$	2021-22 \$
Revenue	5,127,795	2,123,244
Communications	11,024	30,105
Depreciation	123,985	97,962
Employees	1,519,001	1,304,922
General	103,476	40,718
IDAC Expenses	74,094	-
Insurance	29,628	19,127
IT	61,071	45,912
Premises	53,130	66,656
Professional fees	277,141	464,218
Research partners	298,431	338,800
Travel	73,940	28,798
TQKP expenses	2,118,315	Not reported separately
Total:	4,743,236	2,446,372
Surplus/(Deficit)	384,559	(323,083)



# Our 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 2023. Partners who have supported the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership are noted with an \*.

Allan and Gill Gray Foundation

Bennelong Foundation

Besen Family Foundation

BHP Foundation

Catholic Schools Parents Australia

CAGES Foundation

Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service\*

Educator Impact

Emerging Minds\*

Equity Trustees

Fogarty Foundation

Gilbert + Tobin (pro bono legal advice)

Griffith University\*

Hand Heart Pocket\*

Health and Wellbeing Queensland\*

Helping Hands Network Foundation\*

Minderoo Foundation

Palix Foundation / Alberta Family Wellness Initiative\*

Paul Ramsay Foundation\*

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak\*

Queensland Family and Child Commission\*

Queensland Mental Health Commission\*

Queensland University of Technology\*

R.E. Ross Trust

Social Ventures Australia

State Library of Queensland\*

Stronger Smarter Institute

The Bryan Foundation\*

The Ian Potter Foundation\*

The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

The John Villiers Trust\*

Tim Fairfax Family Foundation

UNICEF Australia

Uniting NSW.ACT

Uniting Care Kippax, A Village for Every Child

University of Queensland, Queensland Brain Institute\*

Yiliyapinya Indigenous Corporation

Commonwealth Department of Social Services

Commonwealth Department of Health

Queensland Department of Children Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs\*

Queensland Government Department of Education\*

Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services\*

Queensland Department of Communities, Arts & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships\*

NSW Department of Communities and Justice

NT Department of Health





## ARACY Annual Report 2022/23

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