

Althea PROJECTS



ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

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Chairperson's Report

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land we are on, the Wulgurukaba and Bindal people. I pay my respects to past and present elders.

This acknowledgement has particular significance for Althea Projects as I am presenting this report on the day that we launch our Reconciliation Action Plan. Many people in Althea Projects have worked very hard to bring the RAP to fruition and in the process have taught us all a lot about the nature of collaborative, productive relationships with our community. I commend the RAP working group for both the quality of the final product and the nature of the process they engaged in to create this plan. The organisation is stronger for your contribution to this and I think we can all be proud of that. Of course that is not to say work has finished and I think we are all aware from the management group through the entire organisation that we must (and I think we do) commit to a continual cycle of conscious critical reflection on our process, actions and decisions in the light of the principles in this plan, accepting our responsibilities individually and collectively for ensuring the Reconciliation Action Plan is not just words on paper, but a dynamic, living guide to our ongoing every day work.

The fact that Althea Projects is able to present this plan to you – our stakeholders and community – demonstrates the amazing developments that have occurred over the last 12 months. From a fledgling organisation grappling with the many issues and considerations of amalgamating essentially separate entities, I think 2016 has seen us fully accept our integrated identity and move beyond past structures to thinking and being a consolidated whole. I can see this in our language, our relationships, and our accountability to each other, and it is these accomplishments that underpin the integrity of the organisation. This doesn't happen by accident and there are of course many people to acknowledge and thank for their contribution to the wonderful achievements of 2016.

Given my position as chair of the management group, I want to first acknowledge the women who have worked with me as part of the management group and remind you all of the figurative and literal dedication they demonstrate month in, month out to be part of Althea Projects. Anne, Maryanne, Liana, Jo, Rang, Noemi, and Ruth have all contributed diverse but equally vital skills and abilities to this group and have maintained a real commitment to ensuring the success of Althea Projects.

On behalf of the organisation and personally, I want to express my appreciation for their collaboration, hard work and support in the last 12 months. In particular

I want to acknowledge Rangimarie Day and Liana Schnierer who have been members of the management group for a number of years and worked collaboratively to guide the organisation through the slightly more turbulent early years of our existence. Both women have brought great wisdom and creativity to the management group and it is with sadness that I acknowledge their decision to step down from their positions. Similarly I want to acknowledge the work and contribution of Noemi Mintern who has also decided that she will not continue with the management group in 2017. To say Noemi was enthusiastic in her commitment to Althea Projects is an understatement and her capacity to guide us in profile raising activities gives new meaning to the phrase – “you never know till you ask”. She has contributed to helping the management group understand the significant position Althea Projects has in this community and the preparedness of the community to work with us and for us. That knowledge is and will continue to be, a sustaining force for us all.

On behalf of all members of the management group I must of course acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all our staff in Wee Care Residential, Shared Family Care and the Corporate Team. I suspect many of you may be thinking “ho-hum – one of the expected inclusions in this sort of report, so no news there”. However during 2016, our staff have been audited, scrutinised, checked and double checked through a series of compliance and licensing processes. The outcome of these seemingly endless checks is that not only are our staff doing awe-inspiring work, from a consistent foundation of respect and commitment to children and families in this community; but also our processes, policies, procedures, and frameworks have been consistently found by external scrutineers to be reliable and veracious in support of this work. This can only happen because our staff group sincerely believe in the value of the work we do and the importance of the way we do it. So again – many thanks to the staff from all of the management group.

Last year I noted the leadership that was provided by Mandy Thompson and the many ways she guided us along the unification path – this leadership has been evident throughout this year as well. It is in fact difficult to find the superlatives to continue to describe the contribution Mandy makes to this organisation; the enthusiastic willingness she exhibits in the face of her seemingly never-ending responsibilities; the ongoing determination she displays to ensure the long term viability and sustainability of Althea Projects; the courage she

draws on to maintain a commitment to our values and mission in the face of conflicting and often powerful demands. While it seems completely inadequate I can only acknowledge sincerely that none of us could do what we do here without her.

So thank you again to all of these people and to the many others who support Althea Projects. I look forward to 2017 as a year of opportunity – I am glad to be able to share those possibilities with you all.

Debra Miles, Chairperson

Althea Projects Inc.



CEO's Report

The 2015-2016 year was as fast paced as the previous 41 years have been at Althea Projects. The year saw increases in demand, significant changes to quality systems and an investment in developing actions that demonstrate the organisation's values. Service delivery continued along similar lines to previous years with Shared Family Care, Wee Care Residential, Emergency Relief and First Steps continuing quality work with families and children in need.

The over-riding external factor that has impacted on the organisation during the past twelve months has been the economic downturn Townsville has found itself in. High levels of unemployment, increasing under-employment and increased community stressors has seen a significant increase in the numbers of families, children and young people living in poverty and unable to participate in their own lives in ways that are meaningful and dignified.

Towards the end of the financial year the Department of Social Services provided an additional \$20,000 as a way of getting further support to people who have been affected by the economic downturn. This was in addition to the existing funding received by the Emergency Relief partners of FEAT, Sera's, the Women's Centre and the Upper Ross Collective.

As a small organisation, we continue to see value in partnering with a range of other services, businesses and government departments in order to deliver a service that remains professional, relevant and

connected to the Townsville region. NGO partnerships this year have included our continued relationships with FEAT, Sera's, the Women's Centre, Churches of Christ Care, LWB and TAIHS.

It has also been a pleasure to actively pursue partnerships with like-minded businesses and individual supporters over the 2015/2016 year. Special mention must go to Guzman Y Gomez, Grill'd and the IGA supermarket chain in particular for their financial support of Althea Projects. This year also saw Althea venture into the micro-funding space and we now have a number of regular smaller donations that are pledged monthly through Give Now. Every dollar of the money raised goes towards the direct care of children in our programs. In particular this support allows Wee Care Residential to open Sunday and Monday nights as required to support emergency and respite referrals.

I am in a privileged position to be supported in my work by some of the most capable and passionate women who form the leadership group. The program areas do not deliver without strong guidance and I thank Lynne and Sharon for the leadership and skills they bring to their respective programs. I also thank the other members of the leadership group – Teresa, Carolyn and Jan – who keep the quality, finance and executive functions of the organisation humming. Four of the six members of this group are employed part-time.

In addition to the leadership group, I am guided and supported by the Management Committee and I thank them for their contributions and expertise in supporting the implementation of the Mission, Values and Strategic Plan.

November 2015 saw preparations commencing in earnest for the first whole of organisation external audit under the Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF). This requirement of the Queensland Government saw Wee Care quality assured for the first time. Preparations took a full six months to complete and included writing of new practice manuals for both Shared Family Care and Wee Care; all policies either reviewed or written; multiple full days of training and review within each service area; and, more than a few grey hairs added. It is estimated that total hours spent preparing for this audit were 1789 hours.

The 2015/2016 year also saw the organisation further develop visible and measurable actions that demonstrate the organisation's values. A Staff Charter was developed to which all staff have agreed and signed up to. The most significant piece of work undertaken this year has been the development of the inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). After receiving endorsement from

Reconciliation Australia, this plan will be launched at today's AGM.

The RAP provides a public and specific plan for the next two years outlining how Althea Projects will be active and vocal walking along side Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our journey towards a reconciled Australia. The working group has worked diligently and tirelessly to develop actions that will see our organisation stand proudly in celebrating the cultures of the First Nations Peoples of Australia. We have so much to learn from the Traditional Owners of our lands and we thank Elders, Community Leaders, Althea Projects staff and Reconciliation Australia for their guidance as we commence this journey.

I would like to thank each and every staff member, volunteer and supporter (past and present) of Althea for your commitment to the organisation and for working towards giving Townsville families, children and young people the best chance at living full lives within our community - lives that are free of poverty, discrimination and disadvantage.

Mandy Thompson, CEO
Althea Projects Inc.



Shared Family Care Report

Shared Family Care has had another exciting year as the largest funded organisation in the Townsville regional area for the provision of foster carer support services. The year has flown past here at Shared Family Care with so many events happening along the way. Shared Family Care moved into the new premises at Level 1, 296 Ross River Road in August 2015 and has enjoyed a more centralised location with easier access for our clients and with more visibility and exposure to the general public. Staff too have enjoyed the change with more modern offices and being a part of a community hub of like organisations.

A number of new staff have come on board during the year and they have now settled into the role offering quality support and guidance for our foster carers and the children in their care. We have a great group of Family Case Workers and Senior Practitioners who are dedicated to providing the best possible support for our clients, and professional practice in line with our organisation's mission and values.

Shared Family Care undertook its Licensing Audit in January 2016 and the Human Services Quality Framework Audit in June 2016. The outcome from these audits was extremely good with nil non-conformances recorded for the program. This is an excellent achievement for our program which is so highly regulated and this excellent result is indicative of the commitment and dedication demonstrated by the staff at Shared Family Care.

The program saw a number of changes to its internal processes as a result of the commitment to continual improvement, and some widespread changes within the child protection sector as a whole. Some of the bigger changes we have seen as a sector over the past year have been state wide reviews and amendments to the missing person's guidelines for children. The department's new Practice Framework is now implemented throughout the state. Staff at Shared Family Care have undertaken training in relation to this new Practice Framework to ensure all stakeholders are working collaboratively and moving toward the same goal.

Recruitment and advertising practices are also being reviewed to bring them in line with the new digital age. We have a cinema advertisement being screened daily within two local city cinemas up to 420 times a week. We have also undertaken radio advertising and are currently in the process of creating our first television advertisement to screen locally in the upcoming months for the purpose of recruiting new foster carers.

Shared Family Care continues to support over 100 foster and kinship carers. Case workers here at Shared Family Care have completed 2,490 hours of home visits with our carers over this financial year providing our carers and children in care the support they require. Shared Family Care have provided 48,132 placements (individual bed nights) for children requiring a home during the last financial year. The number of children coming into the custody of the Department of Child Safety during the financial year continues to be very significant.

Shared Family Care would like to thank our community for their support and assistance over the past financial year. We look forward to another exciting year ahead supporting our carers and working with our partners to achieve great outcomes for our children.

Sharon Thorburn, Program Manager
Shared Family Care



Wee Care Residential Report

As Wee Care has done over the last forty two years, the Residential program continues to support Townsville families while placing a high priority on providing quality emergency/respite care to children from 0-11 years of age. As I look back on this last financial year, I am extremely proud of what Althea Projects - Wee Care program team has achieved and delivered. Along with this brings enthusiasm about the future of this organisation. One of our biggest achievements which stands out for me is the HSQF Audit in June which was a first for Wee Care. The entire team of Althea Projects made a collective effort working together to meet the standards which resulted in a positive outcome for the whole organisation. Without the dedication, hard work and ongoing commitment of such a great team, we would not have been able to achieve this.

Emergency/Respite: Wee Care provided emergency/respite care to 386 children over the last twelve months and this amounted to 984 individual placements. The Residential is still unable to remain open seven days a week and one of our main objectives for the future is to secure further funding to enable 24/7 service. Wee Care does open in emergency situations and is always available to provide care for children if required at any time.

Playgroup: Forty sessions of Playgroup was provided and it continues to be well supported with up to ten families attending on any one day. Playgroup is held on Thursday mornings from 9.30 – 11.30 a.m. excluding school holidays. Staff, Families and Children all celebrated Naidoc Week and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's day.

Wee Care Staff: Staff have had an extremely busy year in preparation for the HSQF Audit while continuing to provide a safe and caring environment for the little people they care for.

I would like to thank you all personally, as without your dedication to Wee Care we would not have achieved what we have this year. The Wee Care team remains stable with very few changes in staffing over this period. We are very fortunate to have a great team of both permanent/part time and relief staff. At times, due to our 24 hour roster and staff holidays/illnesses, we can find it challenging to fill shifts. Thank you to all staff who have stepped up to cover absences on their days off. We welcomed some new casual members to our team, Kailu George, Simone Kossendey and Trish Steep.

Professional Development: All staff participated in annual mandatory training including Senior First Aid/CPR, Cultural Awareness training and Food Handling. Staff also took part in Abecedarian 3a Workshops. The learnings from this has been introduced into our weekly playgroups and reading sessions with young people in our care. Some staff completed Cert IV in Community and others also took part in HBDI Hermann Brain Dominance and HSQF Pathway training. We were also grateful for the opportunity to attend the following events: QCOSS Conference, Making the most of Supervision, RAP Vision Workshop and C & K Early Childhood Conference in Brisbane. All staff underwent Policy training over a number of weeks in preparation for the HSQF Audit. Staff continue to participate in supervision and monthly Staff meetings.

Volunteers: Thank you to Cheryl Rosenberger and Beatrice Melvin who both give up their time to support Wee Care. They both do a wonderful job and this is greatly appreciated by all at Althea Projects. Cheryl answers the telephone on Monday and Wednesday mornings and distributes ERF to the many families who require financial assistance. Beatrice continues to keep our filing in an orderly system on a Friday morning and assists with ERF.

Repairs & Maintenance: Ongoing Yard Upgrade - We hope to have this completed by the end of 2016. We have invested in a total revamp for the rear yard with new children's climbing equipment being installed, a Springer and the installation of a children's bike path including traffic lights, pedestrian crossing and a roundabout.

Supporters and Donations: I would like to take this opportunity to once again express our gratitude for your continued support. We appreciate your donations very much, and we are grateful you continue to choose Wee Care as one of your preferred Charities of Choice.

I would especially like to thank Mandy (Althea's CEO) for the support she provides across the organisation and her dedication to ensure that ongoing directions meet the needs of all the families we support. I conclude this report with a huge thank you to all associated with Althea - Wee Care.

Without you all, we would not have had such a successful year. I believe Althea Projects can only look forward to the future with confidence. Thank you.

Lynne Josey, Program Manager
Wee Care Residential

Emergency Relief Program

We have seen an increase in demand for financial assistance (approx. 17%). Over the last financial year, \$48,515.92 was expended in Woolworth's vouchers, chemist prescriptions and school supplies such as uniforms, shoes and school bags. ERF was issued on 1985 occasions. Althea spent \$7,720 on food boxes which are purchased from Food Relief NQ and there were 699 boxes distributed. I must thank the wonderful staff from Shared Family Care who come across on Tuesday mornings to issue ERF and Ana on Thursday mornings.

Financial Report

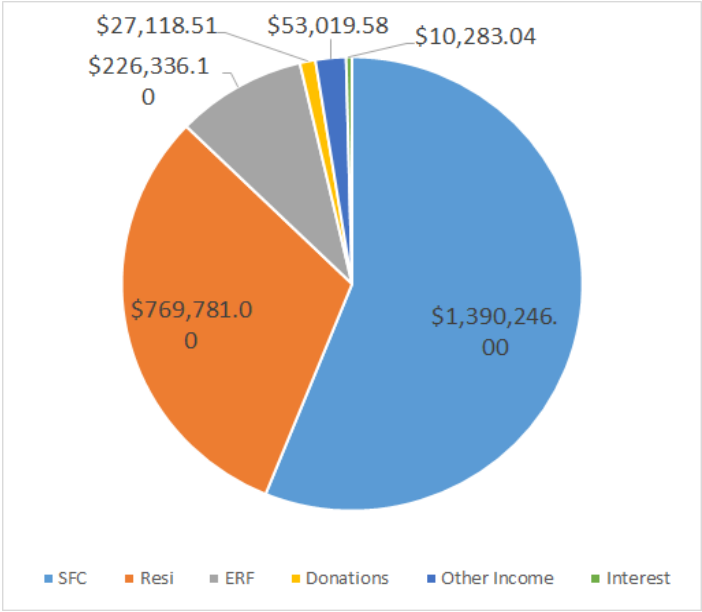
Althea's fiscal position remains strong after the 2015/2016 period. The Queensland Government continues to support our two major programs Shared Family Care and Wee Care Residential, and the Australian Government through ERF with grants and other income totalling \$2.47 million for this financial year.

Althea Projects also has seen our First Steps program receive one successful referral to Wee Care Residential. This has seen an additional \$18,703 income.

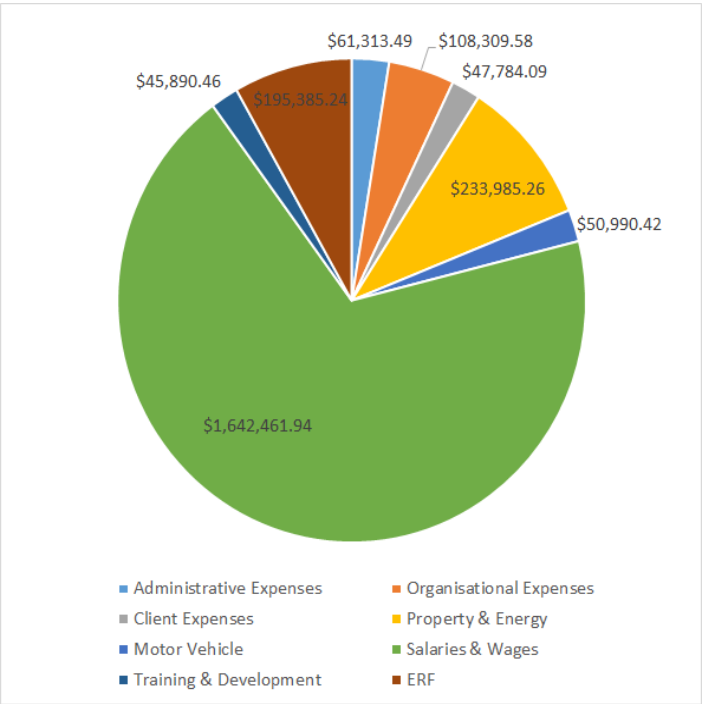
This financial year again saw Moore Stephens (recently changed to Crowe Horwath Queensland) accept the role of Althea's accountants/auditors. The team reported a much improved and streamlined process now the transition to MYOB is complete. They have also finalised this year's annual auditing as required. Thank you to Letitia, Jasjit and Tom whom have been of great assistance.

Carolyn Adams, Finance & HR Manager
Althea Projects Inc.

Income 2015/2016



Expenses 2015/2016



Partnerships and Supporters

Aboriginal Women's Shelter - Flora House
 Adspeak Marketing
 APEX
 Australian Government - Dept of Social Services
 Backpacks 4 Aussie Kids Inc
 B-Fitt
 Billabong Sanctuary
 Brothers League's Club
 Café Bambini Fairfield Waters
 Café 1939, Townsville Airport
 Captains Lounge Café, Townsville Airport
 Centacare Townsville
 Centrelink (Townsville Cyclones Social Club)
 Child and Mental Health Services
 Churches of Christ Pathways Fostering Service
 Click Clack Knitting Group
 Coast 2 Country Housing Company
 CWA Country Women's Association
 Danielle Josey
 Drug Arm Australasia
 Drop-In Centre
 Families of Townsville
 Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville
 Food Relief NQ
 Food Rescue
 Fortel Communication Pty Ltd
 Foster Care Queensland
 Grill'd Restaurant, Townsville
 GYG Restaurants, Townsville
 HiQu Dental
 IGA Magnetic Island and Bushland Beach
 Life Without Barriers
 Leos Club
 Lions Club City of Townsville
 Lotsa Printing Pty Ltd
 Maria House - Women's Shelter - Ozcare
 Mayors Christmas Tree Appeal
 Moore Stephens Queensland Limited
 Nth Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service
 Pyjama Foundation
 QCWA Tsv Branch
 Qld Dept of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
 Qld Youth Services
 Red Cross
 Reef HQ
 Relationships Australia
 Richard Kelly Automotive
 Ridley Animal Nutrition
 Rotary Club of Townsville Sunrise Inc
 Seaview Hotel
 Second Bite
 Second to None Nutrition
 Sera's Women's Shelter
 Sk8way
 Southside Milk Supplies
 Intersport Warehouse
 Strand Café, Townsville Airport
 Sun City Trees
 TATSICHS Recognised Entity
 TAIHS Foster & Kinship Services
 TM & VM Thomson Builders
 The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
 The Townsville Hospital
 Townsville Tidy Bags
 Undees for Kids
 VARIETY—The Children's Charity
 Zambrero Stores:
 Cannon Park
 Willows Shopping Centre
 Castletown
 Thuringowa
 Domain Central
 Flinders Street
 Stockland Centre

Management Committee

Chair	Debra Miles
Secretary	Noemi Mintern
Treasurer	Maryanne Hamilton
Vice Chair	Liana Schnierer
Member	Rangimarie Day
Member	Jo-Anne Bentley-Davey
Member	Anne Campbell
Member	Ruth Stainbrook

Staff

Corporate Team

CEO	Mandy Thompson
Program Manager	Lynne Josey
Program Manager	Sharon Thorburn
Quality Manager Finance & HR Manager	Teresa Smith
Executive Assistant & Fund Raising Coordinator	Carolyn Adams
	Jan Leese

Shared Family Care Team

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	
Family Case Worker	Lena Watego
Senior Practitioner	Jenny Spiers
Senior Practitioner	Dallas Grant
Family Case Worker	Justin Pascoe
Family Case Worker	Vicki Crees
Family Case Worker	Christopher Sweet
Family Case Worker	Joel Semmens
Administration	Ana Togo

Wee Care Residential Team

Direct Care Worker	Kylie Norris
Direct Care Worker	Barbara Lippett
Direct Care Worker	Rhonda Hood
Direct Care Worker	Saku Mooka
Direct Care Worker	Suzy Clayden
Direct Care Worker	Margaret Forrest
Direct Care Worker	Ann-Marie Dawson
Direct Care Worker	Simone Kossendey
Direct Care Worker	Kailu George
Direct Care Worker	Trish Steep
Direct Care Worker & Administration	Llian Flynn
Volunteer	Beatrice Melvin
Volunteer	Cherly Rosenberger
Volunteer	David Ede

