



Althea
PROJECTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022

Althea Projects acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we walk, work and live, the Bindal and Juru peoples of the Burdekin, the Gudjal peoples of Charters Towers, the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples of the Townsville region and the Yirandhali peoples of Hughenden, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



CEO REPORT

Another fast paced, at times turbulent, but none the less positive and exciting year for Althea Projects. I am incredibly proud of our achievements over the past 12 months.

As we have done since the start of the pandemic, we again worked through the challenges this presented. In particular, the second half of the year was difficult with so many of us needing to isolate and recover from COVID19.

In these times that remain challenging for our community, we have continued to extend what we do and how we do it, so our service offerings remain current, flexible and adaptable and have the greatest impact.

HIGHLIGHTS THIS YEAR INCLUDE:

- Across all services we have supported 3,865 people and delivered 32,755 hours of service delivery
- Name change for Townsville Drop In Centre to Althea's Community Hub (ACH)
- Successful renegotiation of a new five (5) year agreement for Wee Care service
- Successful renegotiation of a new four (4) year agreement for our ACH Mobile and Outreach homelessness service
- Increasing our foster and kinship carers by 20%
- Official opening of our new Fleming Street office in October
- Ongoing flexibility and adaptability to provide continuity of all our services throughout lockdown periods and all the significant challenges that COVID19 presented

- Morehead Meals continuing to evolve into a sustainable social enterprise. Our distribution of low cost healthy and nutritious meals continues to grow significantly, so we can better support the needs of people who are vulnerable in our community
- Implementing our new Infrastructure Sub-Committee, strengthening our operational and strategic engagement with the Board to review our property needs now and into the future
- Another year of generous support from a number of businesses in our community that we are humbled by. See our thank you page for our supporters
- Highly successful IGA Golf Day and Myer Charity Event, with all money raised going to support Wee Care deliver services outside of funding limitations

- Administering approximately \$5,000 as part of our Reconciliation Grants to 5 recipients, and creating a plan to increase our reach in the coming year.

With our solution-focused, strengths-based approach, the coming 12 months provides great optimism and opportunities that we will embrace.

You will read more details throughout this document.

I extend my gratitude to all our Program Managers, staff and volunteers, who are at the grassroots working tirelessly with our service users, so they receive only the highest quality care and support services. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Board for their invaluable support and leadership. Together we ensure we fulfil our vision and mission to support and strengthen individuals, families, children and young people so they experience wellbeing and reach their full potential.

PAULA LA ROSA
CEO



CHAIRS MESSAGE

As we near the end of yet another successful and fulfilling year I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Paula La Rosa on her support, enthusiasm, and leadership of Althea Projects and the achievements this year. Obviously, none of this would be possible without the dedication and commitment of the Leadership Team, staff, supporters, carers, volunteers, and the Board. Our work in the community is highly regarded which is evidenced by the continued support of our funders, partners, and the community as a whole.

The Board and Sub-Committee members are committed to working with Paula and her team to

champion the Althea Projects Mission Statement and Values and achieving our shared goals. The work done this year will continue to support and strengthen the community we live in and help us explore areas where we can provide increased support where it's needed.

Thank you everyone for your support and I look forward to Althea Projects continuing to provide a high level of support to the people in our community.

ALAN NEWMAN
President

THANK YOU

Our achievements are only possible due to the ongoing support by our funding bodies and Supporters. I would like to take the opportunity to thank our government funding partners:

- Queensland Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Queensland Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
- Queensland Department of Health
- Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Townsville City Council

I want to make special mention to key supporters who have provided very important and significant financial support to us during 2021 / 2022

- Armi's IGA Supermarket and the associated annual "Armi's IGA Charity Golf Day"
- BM Webb

- Bunnings
- Grill'd Townsville
- GIVIT
- Jam and Bridgewater
- Little Bee Marketing
- MYER Townsville and the MYER Community Foundation
- Pickerings Auto Group
- Rotary Clubs across Townsville
- Rotary Australia World Community Service

Plus, a number of incredible individuals who raised money and donated to us. You are our Althea Angels who keep our local families strong, connected and protected. Every dollar donated goes back into our services and makes a significant difference to the well-being of individuals, children and families in our community.

PAULA LA ROSA
CEO

HUMAN RESOURCE REPORT

Our current staffing compliment stands at 46 of which 15 are full time, 20 part time and 11 are casual. Our longer serving staff continue to support our organisation, with 5 staff members, all working at Wee Care who have been with the organisation for 10+ years, 2 of whom have been with the organisation for 15+ years.

I want to acknowledge and thank Lesley Thorne for her contributions over the past 4 years as our Finance and HR Manager. Lesley finished up with Althea Projects earlier this year and we wish her well in her retirement.

We all look forward to the new financial year and the challenges and opportunities that await us.

IAN BONATO
Corporate Services Manager

FINANCIAL REPORT

This has been another busy year for the Corporate Services Team. The organisation collectively has performed well in terms of actual v budgeted results, with surplus funds being rolled over into the new financial year.

Revenue generated through the organisations Fee for Service programs together with the invaluable support from Armi's IGA Golf Day, Myer and the Townsville City Council, have all contributed to much needed resources to maintain the organisations commitment to high service delivery standards across all our programs.

The organisation continues to remain in a healthy financial position.

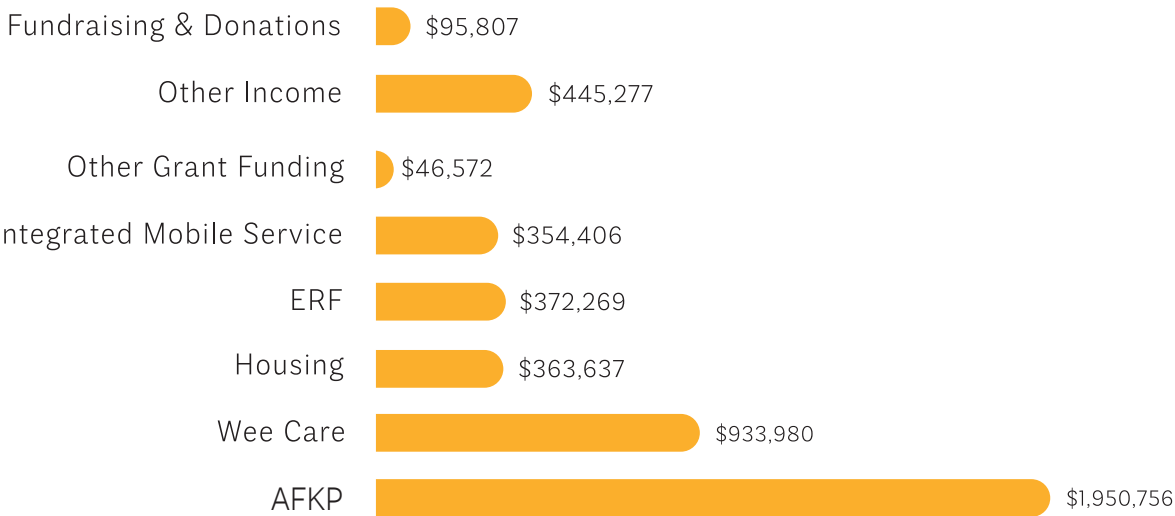
Our thanks to Tash our Treasurer for the support and guidance she has offered us throughout the year.

IAN BONATO
Corporate Services Manager

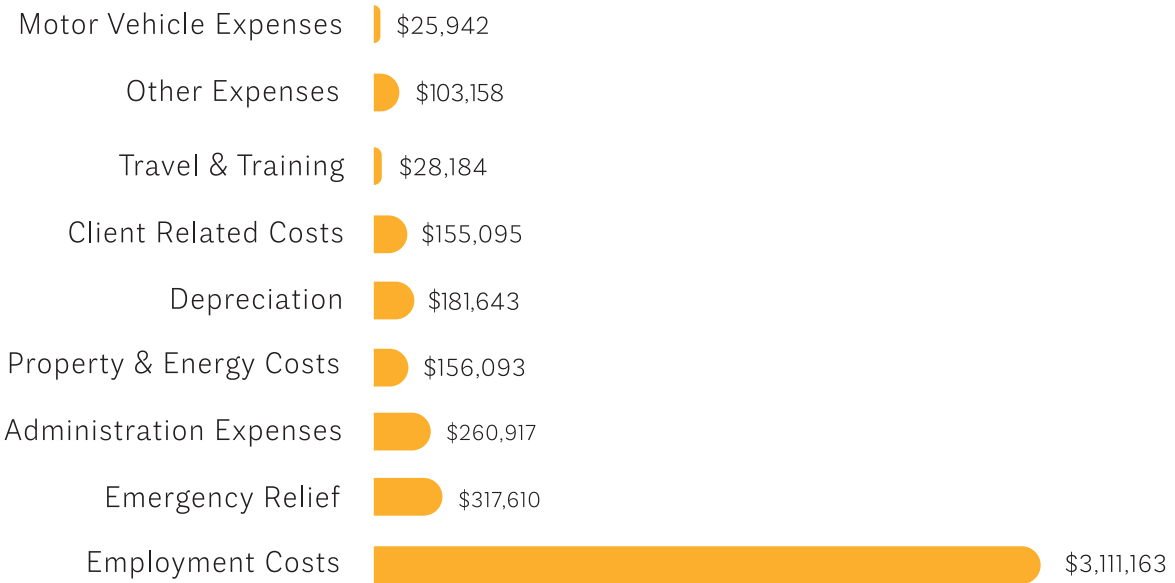


INCOME & EXPENDITURE

INCOME (2021 - 22) \$4,562,704 Total



EXPENDITURE (2021 - 22) \$4,339,806 Total



PROGRAM REPORT ALTHEA FOSTERING AND KINSHIP PROGRAM (AFKP)

As I write this report I reflect that it has been almost 12 months since I started in the Program Manager role. A key focus for me has been strategising around how to best increase primary placements and recruit more carers. Through a team effort we have once again been able to increase the carer pool by 20%.

While this increase is positive and we are on the right trajectory we are still delivering under our benchmark numbers and face ever increasing challenges affecting the sector.

The number of bed nights provided for children in need across the year was 61, 684.

The number of carers supported by AFKP as of the end June, 2022 was 120. Out of the 120 carers, 73 were general carers and 47 were kinship carers.

Throughout the year there were 278 children who received a service from AFKP; 124 males and 154 females. There were 176 children who identified as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander and of these 100 were male and 76 were female.

Of the 278 children who received a service, 116 children were new to receiving services from AFKP.

Despite the challenges organising events during a pandemic, we have organised or been on the organising committee of a number of successful events including:

- Foster and Kinship Care week dinner in Townsville (sector wide event)
- Foster and Kinship Care week morning tea in Ayr (in partnership with TAIHS)
- Foster and Kinship Care week lunch in Charters Towers
- An appreciation morning in the park for carers and children
- A Christmas party at Chipmunks



This past year the team delivered three pre-service trainings (now called Getting Ready) to individuals going through the assessment process to become a foster carer. Our Intensive Family Support worker also co-facilitated a Circle of Security training with Evolve.

AFKP Staff also attended a number of professional development opportunities including the Queensland Foster and Kinship Care Conference (finally, after being put off a few times to work around the pandemic), domestic violence training, Evolve two day trauma training, cultural awareness training and hoarding training.

I would like to sincerely thank the team for your energy, compassion and commitment to making foster and kinship care a well supported experience that gives children and young people a chance to thrive and grow. I also need to thank Yana who has worked so hard to help ensure that our carers are well supported, the needs of children and young people are met and that we have a healthy, highly functioning team that support each other through the difficult work we do. We also work hard to maintain our relationship with our Child Safety partners and look forward to further initiatives to enable us to continue to build and maintain this relationship to better ensure positive outcomes for children and young people.

I also want to acknowledge and thank our Foster and Kinship carers for continuing to work with us and for the care and dedication you provide 24/7 to the children and young people placed with you, particularly in these increasingly challenging times with pandemics and other challenges you face. It is a privilege to be part of your lives.

I look forward to leading the fostering team through the remainder of 2022 and into 2023.

LOUISE SKENNERTON
Program Manager



ALTHEAS COMMUNITY HUB

What a year it has been.

This has been a year of transformation for what was the Townsville Drop In Centre. We got a fence, a face lift and a name change and have now become Althea's Community Hub. Our thanks to Dulux for painting our building this year. We have achieved our goal to freshen up our Centre and create a respectful space for our service users.

Being agile in our service delivery has become second nature and with the snap lockdown of Townsville earlier this year we were able to quickly change our service delivery to remain open and meet the needs of the people who utilise the Hub.

BEFORE



AFTER



PROGRAM REVIEW

Demand on our Centre Based - Specialist Homeless Service has increased dramatically with new people who normally do not access services requiring assistance to secure accommodation. The housing crisis is very real and has priced many out of the rental market both here and in other areas, which in turn increases demand as people move from other places hoping to find suitable housing in regional areas.

We have noted an increase in families and the elderly requesting help and the team have stepped up, upskilled their knowledge in the aged care and disability sectors to accommodate these increases.

The Mobile/Outreach team worked hard to locate and engage with the rough sleepers in Townsville and to assist and support those already housed to sustain their tenancies. The team is responsive to

community needs and is out and about in the community as needed. We receive many calls each week advising us of where there are people gathering and sleeping at night and actively seek to engage with these people to offer assistance.

There were over 1600 presentations to the Hub with requests for assistance with financial and/or housing needs. Overall, the team case managed 161 individuals, of which 93 individuals were housed this financial year.

EMERGENCY RELIEF FUNDING

793 individuals and families were assisted through our Emergency Relief Program.



CENTRE BASED ACTIVITIES

Not everyone who attends the centre engages with our Specialist Homeless Service. There are many who come to the centre to use our bathrooms, laundry (free washing machines), engage with visiting services, and attend programs being run at the centre.

MOREHEAD MEALS

Morehead Meals has had a busy year with over 22,000 meals prepared. There were 18,655 meals sold and delivered to the community. 473 people donated a meal for someone in need and 590 groups ordered catering from us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Isabella for her incredible ability to create delicious meals that appeal to all taste buds. I'd also like to thank Khaela for the administration side of Morehead Meals and delivering the meals to our customers each week and Toula for assisting in the kitchen during our busy times.

In addition with Morehead Meals the kitchen has fed 3,464 people for breakfast and 5,486 people for lunch.

DONATIONS

It is a little-known fact that the Hub is not funded for the dignity services it provides, and without the generosity of the community and other organisations and groups there would be many people in our community who would miss out on things that others take for granted. The items donated range from furniture through to soaps, shampoos and toiletries, through to concrete seats for the outside of our building. Rotary Thuringowa create 'Home Starter' packs for people moving into their new properties. These include bedding, kitchen utensils and cleaning products. Local business owners come together and collect items for our clients at Christmas time to help them feel included.



LiteHaus International kindly donated 4 desktop PCs for our revamped Internet Café.

Without your generosity many would go without, and a lot of centre activities would not be able to occur. Thank you, we appreciate you all.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the year we hosted many events and invited our stakeholders, community partners and the general public along to visit our Hub and celebrate occasions with us.

We celebrated NAIDOC Week with a BBQ and delicious cake, we held our annual Xmas lunch, and this year as part of National Reconciliation Week (NRW) we held a smoking ceremony and cultural dancing by the Wulgurugaba Walkabouts. Our thanks to the Queensland Government for our NRW grant.

Census Day was marked with a BBQ and assistance to complete the census forms.

Growing each year is the Homeless Week Expo that we host in the park. This is always well attended and gives the services a chance to meet and network with each other and for our clients to engage with services that can support them when life gets difficult.

Schools have played a large part in our activities this year and a big shout out goes to the boys from the Clontarf Academy at Town High and Heatley High Schools – you are young men who should be proud of yourselves and the things you do in our community.

Thank you also to Ignatius Park, St Margret Mary's, The Cathedral School, and Willows Youth Group for your generosity, visits and assistance throughout the year.

We value all of our partnerships in the community and it is great to see the difference you make to the people at the Hub.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I always get to this part and know that I haven't covered everything that I need or want to. I have said it time and again that I am humbled by what occurs at the Hub on a daily basis and so much of this would not happen without the great team - Kirsty, Mandi, Veronica, Dan, Khaela, Isabella, Logan (now in the mines), Toulou and Rod. Thank you for the exceptional work that you all put in each day under and in exceptional circumstances. There is really no other workplace like Altheas Community Hub and without this team who front up each and everyday to assist the people of our community we would have nothing. I and the users of the Hub appreciate you.

I would like to thank Paula, our CEO for understanding the sometimes weird and erratic happenings at the Hub and having a laugh or giving support when it is needed. Thank you to the Board for your unwavering support to get things done.

Thank you to the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy for believing in and valuing the work we do.

I would like to finish by thanking you all and I am so sorry if I missed anyone, but please know that I do thank you and appreciate everything that you do to ensure that people are treated with the dignity that they deserve.

PETA ANDERSON
Program Manager



WEE CARE AGM REPORT 2022

Despite the many difficulties our world faced throughout 2021/2022 I am grateful to report that Wee Care has continued to focus and make a difference to many families in our local Community. There has been an increase in the extra hours needed to remain open on Sundays and Mondays (unfunded hours) to provide emergency Childcare. This has seen Wee Care open and provide emergency and respite care above and beyond expectations. In total, we opened our doors for an extra 734 hours, with requests coming from services such as Townsville University Hospital, Townsville Police, and Child Safety.

Wee Care currently employs 18 permanent/part time and casual staff members. We have maintained a stable work force with two staff leaving to further their careers and we employed four new casuals.

ERF STATISTICS:
(Federal funded financial assistance for families)

Over the last twelve months we have distributed \$74,480 to families who have been experiencing a financial crisis.

- ERF Enquiries - 2549
- Clients helped – 942
- Clients refused – 1607
- ERF Food Vouchers - \$66,500
- ERF Food Boxes - \$7,000
- ERF Accommodation/other supports – \$300 (School locker), \$680 (housing accommodation), \$120 (child needs)

TESTIMONY
From a client on Family Support Plan

"I really don't know how I would have coped without the ladies at Wee Care during one of the saddest and most difficult times of my life. Thank you, you are all wonderful."

WEE CARE STATISTICS

- 271 Total number of families that utilised Wee Care for Respite/Emergency child care
- 544 Total number of children that stayed at Wee Care
- 9443 Total number of hours of service Wee Care provided
- 123 Total number of families that identified as Indigenous
- 260 Total number of children who identified as being Indigenous



GOOD NEWS STORY:

We had a mother drop in and kindly donate fuel vouchers to give to pass on to other families in need because she had inherited a little bit of money and wanted to give back to Wee Care and the community. This mother was a child who used to stay at Wee Care when she was a child and then she also utilised Wee Care while her own children were growing up.

OTHER SERVICES WE DELIVER AT WEE CARE

- **ERF:** Our Emergency Relief program has continued to be in high demand. Wee Care has been very fortunate over the last 12 months to have Oz Harvest come on board with a weekly donation of groceries collected from Woolworths stores around Townsville, as well as a twice weekly bread collection from local bakery, Three Loaves Bakehouse. These food donations have increased our ability to provide extra relief to families in Townsville who are struggling through a financial crisis.

- **Playgroup:** Wee Care has seen our Playgroup continue to blossom and grow over the last 12 months, welcoming multiple new families as well as returning families. We have seen 37 families attend in that time and have found our families have heard about playgroup through various means, such as through our respite care, ERF, community groups, Facebook and other playgroups/mums' groups. Our families are made up of mums, dads, grandparents, foster parents, and people where English is their second language. It has been such a lovely diverse range of families and we hope to continue to see Playgroup expand over the next 12 months.

- **Child Safety Family Contact:** We provided 223 family contact sessions at Wee Care this financial year for 13 families. We have purchased another vehicle and are now able to provide transport for these families.

- **First Steps:** There have been no new referrals throughout the past 12 months.

- **Family Support Plans:** We offer regular respite supports usually five/six weekly. Over the reporting period we supported 24 families on family support plans.

- **Child Safety Referrals:** throughout the past 12 months our service supported 31 children over 95 nights. One of these children was supported while they were admitted at Townsville University Hospital. Due to the increase in the demand, we are exploring how we can expand our capacity to accept these referrals. Stay tuned for some exciting news in the coming year.

**HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021/2022**

As we saw the lifting of restrictions throughout the past 12 months, Wee Care was able to resume attending community events, networking opportunities and fundraisers. These included - Myer Cocktail Evening, 2021 IGA Golf Day, Children's Christmas Party, Networking Opportunities, Community Gro Upper Ross Family Day, Celebrating NAIDOC week - Deadly Day Out and attending NAIDOC Breakfast, and Celebrating SNAICC day with an art competition.

DONATIONS:

We continually receive donations and support from many throughout the year and we are so thankful for your ongoing support. Through the generosity of our supporters, Christmas was again a very special time here at Wee Care. In December we held a large Christmas party and Santa arrived in a mini moke with presents for all the children. Families were supported with food hampers and gifts. January saw the beginning of the new school year and we assisted numerous families with school supplies, uniforms, and bags. Your ongoing kindness continues to make a difference to many Families experiencing a tough time.

Some of our supporters are: Myer, Oz Harvest, Three Loaves at Hermit Park, Soroptimist International, Services Australia, Bunnings Fairfield, Carmichael Ford & Mercedes Benz, GIVIT, Zepher Foundation, Alana and Madison Foundation, and Quota.

VOLUNTEERS:

Thank you to Mick, our handy man, who is always available to fix and repair any small jobs we need doing. Mick was awarded the "Macca Award" at the 2022 IGA Golf Day this year. He was very grateful to receive this award and will be taking a well-deserved vacation with the prize awarded to him. Congratulations Mick, from all of us at Wee Care.

STAFF:

This year our staff benefited from a range of training opportunities, many of which were offered online. Upskilling of our staff is something Althea Projects is committed to, and this is something we support staff to access as much as practical to meet their planned development needs. A few training topics staff engaged in were - Hope and Healing, CPR & First Aid, Fire Training, Impact of Trauma on Brain Development, Working with Children with Complex Needs, Medication Management, Working with Children after Complex Trauma, Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Young People and Drugs, Recognising and Responding to Trauma and Attachment Disorders, and Abecedarian training.

I would like to thank all our staff for their ongoing dedication to providing a COVID safe environment and for their incredible dedication and loyalty to their work, through the busy times and the tough times. A centre can only be as great as the staff that it employs, and you all contribute to making our work place so much brighter. A special thanks to Bridie in Admin who continually does a wonderful job. I know how unselfishly you work together to get the best outcomes for our families every time, and I want to thank you sincerely. I'm flattered and honoured to be able to work with you all in such a fantastic team. Lets keep building together for the future.

LYNNE JOSEY
Program Manager



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Althea Projects Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is our compass and guides us to achieve our commitment to promoting reconciliation across our organisation, through the services we deliver and across our community. Our approach is always to engage staff and raise our cultural mindfulness through genuine and authentic participation in activities.

This year all of our services engaged in key culturally significant events, such as National Reconciliation Week (NRW), NAIDOC and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day. You will see in the program reports that we led some events, including a Smoking Ceremony at Althea’s Community Hub as part of NRW, as well as at Fleming Street as part of the official opening.

Although we are yet to link our staff in a cultural immersion activity on Country at Turtle Rock, we remain committed to do this in the coming year.

Our Reconciliation Grants are something we continue to be proud to offer our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. This year has seen grants sourced for sporting uniforms and fees, education fees, and supported many students to remain engaged in education through the purchase of laptops and other education materials.

Reconciliation is at the heart of our programs and as an organisation one of our key values is to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with opportunities to promote positive changes and self-growth in their community. Due to the very large population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in and around the Townsville area, we have found this is the majority of people who access our services. As such, Althea Projects strives to find ways to maintain genuine and authentic partnerships and engagement opportunities to implement culturally safe approaches in all that we do.

PAULA LA ROSA
CEO

LEE ELVIN
Aboriginal & Torres Strait
Islander Cultural Advisor

TESTIMONY

*“Hey Paula it’s Jordan, I’m loving TecNQ. One thing I can assure you about Tec is that my grades are insanely better!! I’m about to start work experience for my automotive trade and I’m super excited. If it wasn’t for Althea projects I don’t think I’d ever been able to make my dream a reality. I’m sooo grateful for your guys help! This is not only helping with my present education but will also affect my future outstandingly. I have already learnt so many new skills and subjects - one more thanks because I feel like it’s needed you guys are amazing,
love Jordan.”*



OUR IMPACT



CLIENTS
3,865



CHILDREN
875



BEDNIGHTS
61,684



INDIGENOUS
1566



MEALS
30,950



CONTACT HOURS
32,755



STAFF
49



Althea
PROJECTS