



Althea
PROJECTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



Althea Projects would like to acknowledge Michelle Tyhuis for its Reconciliation Action Plan artwork.

WWW.ALTHEAPROJECTS.COM.AU

CEO REPORT

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work, walk and live, the Wulgurukaba and Bindal people. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

I am incredibly proud of our achievements over the past 12 months and the ongoing determination, creativity and care demonstrated by management and staff as they support people in our community throughout these challenging times. We acknowledge and thank our funding bodies, partners and all supporters. Through our trusting partnerships we are able to achieve positive outcomes with people throughout our local communities.



Board and Managers for Strategic Planning



Tracey & Managers, and Board Strategic Planning

OUR HIGHLIGHTS THIS YEAR INCLUDE:

- Across all services we have supported 3,551 people and delivered 34,303 hours of service delivery
- Developing and implementing collectively with our Leadership Team and Management Committee, a new 5-year Strategic Plan, with three key priority areas: Growth & Sustainability; Practice & Capability and Leadership & Governance – see more below. I am confident this plan provides us with the direction needed to achieve our goals
- Refreshing our organisation's values, and reviewing how these are tied into our workplace culture and everyday approach with our trusted peers, sector partners and other workers in our community
- Launching our new Reconciliation Action Plan in September, embracing our commitment to advancing reconciliation
- Administering over \$10,000 as part of our Reconciliation Grants to 166 recipients
- Working with Child Safety, Act for Kids and Queensland Health to deliver First Steps to a young mother and baby, which successfully resulted in mum and bub safely returning home together
- Starting our realignment of branding and program names, which saw Shared Family Care rebranded to Althea Projects Foster and Kinship Program (AFKP). Stay tuned for more exciting developments in the coming year
- Renewal of a new three (3) year funding agreement for AFKP
- Morehead Meals continues to evolve into a sustainable social enterprise at TDIC. Our distribution of low cost healthy and nutritious

meals is growing, so we can better support the needs of people who are vulnerable in our community

- Continuing to deliver our new Mobile and Outreach Homelessness Service, which we expect will result in ongoing sustainable funding
- AFKP and our Corporate Team relocating to bigger new premises at 1/5-11 Fleming Street, Aitkenvale
- Implementing our new Finance and Audit Sub-Committee, strengthening our operational and strategic engagement across our Management Committee and staff
- 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
- Implementing our continuity plans across all services in late June that again adequately

ensured all programs continued to deliver our services during the Townsville lock-down period.

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

Finally, I would like to thank all our managers, staff and volunteers for their tremendous efforts, as well as all our government agencies, stakeholders and supporters who help us to make a difference in the lives of people in our community. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the leadership of all members of our Management Committee. I thank you for your guidance and support.

Paula La Rosa
CEO



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is my first year as chair and I am proud to be associated with the organisation, the values we work by and difference we make.

I would firstly like to acknowledge the effort and commitment of Paula La Rosa, the management team, staff, supporters, carers, and volunteers of this great organisation. The reputation of the organisation and the value to the community is truly something to be proud of. The time and effort invested in working with funders, partners and the community is paying dividends as evidenced by the outcomes we are achieving and the ongoing positive relationships we have in place.

This year as well as retaining invaluable knowledge and experience on the Management

Committee we have welcomed a number of new people who bring added enthusiasm and new insights into the decision-making process. I would like to acknowledge the time and effort invested by everyone on the committee.

To the funders, partners, stakeholders and government agencies, we would not be able to function without your commitment and support and we look forward to working together to ensure the best outcomes for the community we live in and the people we support.

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, Homelessness 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 2020 / 2021

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

- BM Webb
- Bunnings
- Carey Group
- 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

MISSION STATEMENT & VALUES

ALTHEA PROJECTS MISSION

To support and strengthen individuals, families, children, and young people so they experience social, emotional, physical and mental wellbeing and reach their full potential.

Our Values	We demonstrate our values by:
Human Dignity & Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting the human dignity of all people in our community • Treating everyone with tolerance, patience and goodwill • Being non-judgemental and authentic in our engagement
Fairness & Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is welcomed and valued for their diversity, beliefs and experiences • Sharing information, insights and experiences
Cultural Mindfulness & Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting cultural awareness & benefits of diversity • Collaborating with cultural groups, elders & families • Embedding cultural principles into our practice frameworks • Respecting the importance of culture & place • Embracing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, places, lore, language, and history past, present and future
Accountability & Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifying & improving the way we work • Being open and honest in all actions and interactions • Communicating openly and effectively • Being accountable for our actions & inactions
Innovation & Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering evidenced informed best practice • Being flexible, creative and willing to consider new concepts and opportunities
Partnerships & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading by example • Supporting & listening to each other • Teamwork & appreciating a diversity of ideas • Supporting one another to be successful

STRATEGIC PLAN ORGANISATIONAL PRIORTIES

1

Organisational Priority 1 GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY

Growing our organisation allows us to reach more people in need, make a difference one person at a time, one community at a time.

OUTCOMES

- Increased brand recognition and community awareness
- Our services and programs are sustainable to meet client needs
- Income received sufficiently meets demand providing opportunity for growth, development and innovation
- Our infrastructure supports the team to work effectively and efficiently
- We are competitive to maintain ongoing growth to meet community needs

2

Organisational Priority 2 PRACTICE & CAPABILITY

We commit to a workforce capability framework that enhances practice excellence through the use of evidence informed approaches to support our clients and families.

OUTCOMES

- Delivering culturally safe, high quality, evidence informed services and programs
- Increased opportunities and improved outcomes for individuals, families, children and young people
- People who are vulnerable are strengthened through our service delivery practices

- We are an employer of choice
- Our systems enable empowered, skilled and confident staff

3

Organisational Priority 3 LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Our leadership and governance framework ensures we are an ethical and accountable organisation.

OUTCOMES

- Our Constitution and governance structure ensures we provide essential services to the community.
- Our IT infrastructure enables high quality engagement and connection to the community
- Our organisational practice framework is driven by high performance indicators

TESTIMONIAL:

“For your kindness and non-judgemental humility. Once again, thank you for all you have done – the kindness you’ve shown me is second-to-none. Regards all your clients. Thank you.”

PROGRAM REPORT: FINANCE



PROGRAM REPORT: HUMAN RESOURCES



PROGRAM REPORT: ALTHEA PROJECTS & KINSHIP PROGRAM (AFKP)

This has been an exciting year for Althea Project's Foster and Kinship Program. Our program name changed from Shared Family Care, as we have been known since 1992, to Althea Projects Foster and Kinship Program (AFKP). This was part of our strategic direction, to align program names more closely with the Althea Projects brand.

Another exciting change was our relocation from Ross River Road to the new Brad Webb development at 1/5-11 Fleming Street, Aitkenvale. This move provides us with more space for growth opportunities, with almost double the workstations for Case Workers, and it also offers us comfortable meeting rooms and family room to welcome our amazing foster and kinship carers.

Increasing the number of carers continued to be our focus throughout the year. One of our main advertising campaigns was the two (2) buses driving throughout the city promoting being a foster carer; however, word of mouth is still our most popular way we receive new enquires from people wanting to find out more about becoming a foster carer. This has been a successful year with increasing our carer numbers, with more than 20 new foster carer assessments being completed. Overall, this year we ended with almost a 10% increase in our overall carer numbers.

Despite growing numbers in carers we ended the year 9% below our funded bednight numbers. One reason we identified for this is the uncertainty for families due to COVID-19. Despite Townsville not being as impacted as other parts of Australia, with changes occurring for education and employment, sometimes with



little notice, individuals and families are more cautious in the decisions they feel they can make. We appreciate the difficulties and will continue to provide the highest level of support to our valued carers.

Throughout this year the foster care sector worked closely together to collaboratively deliver Pre-Service Quality Care and Standard Training to people wishing to be foster carers. Our thanks to Churches of Christ, Life Without Barriers and Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service for your collegial support. This year our service delivered 22 training sessions to 77 people who were either part of the process to be assessed to become a carer or training focused to support existing carers.

This year our staff again benefitted from a range of training opportunities, most 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 were engaged with are: Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, Sexual Behaviour in Teens & Adolescents, Settling the Unsettled, Careful Compassion, Impacts of Childhood Trauma, Renewals Assessment Writing, Having Difficult Conversations, Hearing Children's Voices In Assessments, Assessment Writing Workshop, Building Resilience: Preventing Compassion Fatigue & Vicarious Trauma and Motivational Interviewing.

Thank you to the many wonderful organisations and people who have donated to our program over the past 12 months.

I would like to thank the staff at Child Safety who we work closely with to support families in our community. We respect and admire the work you do at the front end of the child protection system.

I want to thank the AFKP team. It has been a year with many changes and despite the challenges you have continued to remain



QLD Rail Bikes for Children SFC



Hospital Donation



Bags for SFC & Judy and Amanda from Giru Day Care

focused in offering the highest quality services in our community. I also want to recognise and thank Judy Williams (Program Manager) and Justin Pascoe (Team Leader) who both resigned this year. Judy had been with us since March 2019 and Justin since July 2014. We are grateful for all that you contributed to Althea Projects and wish you well into the future.

Finally, I want to thank all our amazing carers who opened their hearts and homes to provide a loving caring home to over 350 children this year. We admire you, are grateful for you and feel inspired by you.

Paula La Rosa
CEO



TESTIMONIAL:

"Thank you to all the awesome staff at Althea Projects. So I'm sending warm wishes and special thanks too, my life is so much richer for just knowing you."

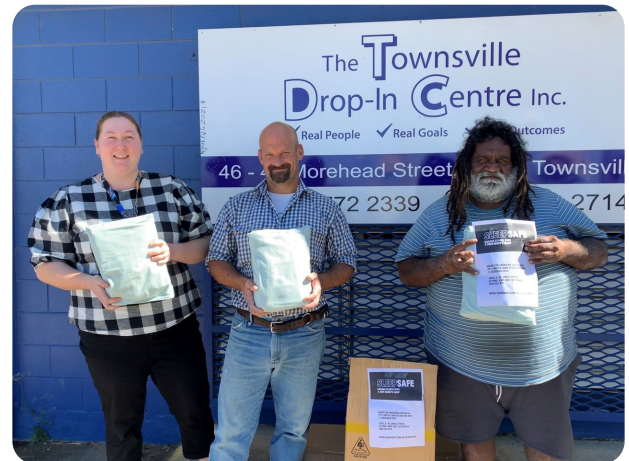
PROGRAM REPORT: TOWNSVILLE DROP IN CENTRE (TDIC)

The housing crisis reared its ugly head in Townsville this financial year and Althea Projects saw the number of people seeking assistance for homelessness and housing rise from 187 adults seeking support last financial year to 488 adults this year. There was a shift in who was seeking support and we had many families who had been unable to secure long term housing present to the Centre seeking our help. The hard work and tenacity of the team really paid off during this time and over 92 men, women and children were housed, and 58 people entered into long term accommodation. The team have forged some strong relationships with private real estates and landlords in our community, which has helped with moving clients from homelessness to housing. We pride ourselves on the relationships we have with other Specialist Homeless Services and agencies in the community.

Althea Projects Inc. transferred the funding for the Commonwealth Home Support Program to Anglicare SEQ as it didn't quite fit with the growth and sustainability plan for the future of the Centre. This transition was easy for all and completed in September 2020.

Morehead Meals started in earnest in September with the commencement of advertising via social media. It took a little while for the page to really take off and with a new menu in place for the new calendar year, it has gone from strength to strength producing approximately 10,000 low cost, healthy meals for the community, plus the meals that are served in the Centre.

The Centre continues to support the vulnerable in our community serving just under 3,836



Caption



Caption



Caption

breakfasts and 4,794 lunches to people who utilise the Centre. The bathrooms, laundry and tea/coffee station were well utilised and allow people in our community access to basic hygiene needs.

Our Emergency Relief Funding assisted 693 individuals (adults in a family) in the community. This need is growing with the cost of rents and utilities rising. We met with and assessed a lot of people who had never accessed assistance prior to them presenting at the Centre.

Having additional staff has assisted the team in actively engaging with those who are not quite ready to sign into our homelessness program, and the team got creative with spa days, sports days, DIY days, money minded budgeting programs, end of life planning sessions, drumming circles, health and wellbeing education programs and tenancy sustainment activities. The people have enjoyed these sessions and they have been well attended. We often partner with other services who enhance the activities already running at the Centre.

I would like to thank Qld Health for running cooking classes with their Healthy Ways program, the Sexual Health Team for their ongoing support and treatment of clients, and the immunisation clinics for their work with our clients to ensure they are vaccinated against the flu each season.

Perc Tucker gallery have shown their support once again by running a weekly art class at the Centre, this is well attended each week and has included a tour of the gallery.

Outside Optometry has attended the Centre each quarter to test and supply glasses to clients and we thank them for their ongoing support.

Neami International have attended the Centre weekly running classes for women to build their self esteem and help them address their emotional needs.

A MOU was signed with TAIHS to provide a weekly Health Clinic at the Centre – they have

been offering full health checks for the people who are at the Centre and they also offer health education through their Deadly Choices team.

We continue to be supported through the generosity of our community via bread donations from Coles North Ward, Second Bite and Food Relief. The Rotary Club of Thuringowa generously donated Home Starter kits, which consist of all the little extras someone needs when entering into a new lease such as sheets, pillows, doonas, cleaning products, mops, pots, pans, cutlery and tableware.

Throughout the year we have hosted events to engage with clients and other services, such as the mini expo in August 2020 to raise awareness of homelessness in our community and introduce clients to other services, which can assist them on their journey from homelessness to housing. This was well attended and will remain a strong feature for our calendar each year. Each year during Homelessness Week, the boys from Ignatius Park College come to the Centre to cook breakfasts for our people. This is always well received and very welcomed by staff. The students also raise money for the Centre to be spent on items for the people accessing our services. This year through their donation, we purchased and had installed a large television that we use to promote the Centre and community activities and services.

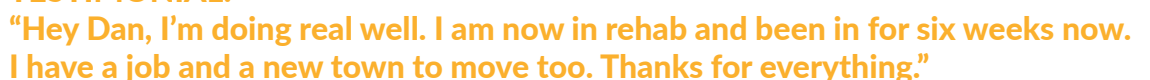
In November we hosted a Cent Sale at the Townsville Show Grounds. We were overwhelmed at the generous donations we received from the business community. We raised just over \$3,600 and sold out of tickets for the event.

In early 2021 we partnered with the Red Cross Street to Home program for a sports morning which was a great day with lots of fun, laughter and prizes.

I am always humbled by the generosity from within our community to support the work we do, and without everyone who contributes to the Centre with donations of either goods or time, we would not be able to achieve the



Peta Anderson
Program Manager



PROGRAM REPORT: WEE CARE

Once again it has been a privilege to be the Manager of Althea Projects Wee Care Program, to lead such a passionate team of people who are dedicated to caring for our young people and putting families and children first.

This year, Wee Care celebrates forty-seven years of supporting families in our local community, and it has been encouraging watching Althea Projects grow into the respected organisation we have become today.



Toula & Michelle Wee Care Reopening with Sweets

Wee Care continues to provide a caring and safe environment for children who require our services and remains dedicated to improving the lives for many families and children. As you are all aware, 2020/2021 was not the year we expected. COVID-19 continues to influence all of us, and we have had to get used to restrictions and many cancellations and it has certainly been a year of challenges for Australia and the world. I would like to thank you for your support of me as the Manager, and of all that has happened in the Centre over the last year.

Wee Care currently employs 17 staff members, including Administration, Direct Care Workers

and Family Support Workers. An organisation can only be as great as the staff that it employs so I would like to thank our staff for their incredible dedication to their work, through the good times and the tough times. As part of our budget over the past year, staff have continued to receive professional development training in various areas – although more online due to COVID. e.g. First Aid and CPR, Fire training, Children and Challenging behaviours, Recognising and Responding to Trauma.

I would like to thank all Wee Care Staff for your efforts and your continued commitment to excellence and for still achieving goals and moving forward during probably one of the most challenging years of our lives. Your passion for the job is exceptional and your hard work and dedication has played a large part in the success of Wee Care over many years. Without your valued and continued support, we would not be where we as a Centre today.



Christmas Photo

TESTIMONIAL:

"Thank you, this has made a big difference helping me get my child ready for school".

WEE CARE HAS ACHIEVED A GREAT NUMBER OF SUCCESSES INCLUDING:

- Collaboration and partnership with Child Safety in creating the Family Contacts program
- Successful outcomes for young mums and babies who participated in the First Steps Program
- Supporting Child Safety by providing short term emergency placements for children under twelve years of age while Child Safety seeks a safe and suitable family-based home placement.
- Working with other local organisations to achieve better outcomes for all our service users.
- Well attended weekly Community Playgroup sessions
- Attending community events enabling us to share information on what we provide for families
- Celebrating SNAICC National Children's Day and Child Protection week, and other important calendar events
- Supporting families with ongoing and regular respite (Family Support Plans)
- Offering financial assistance to families experiencing financial hardship.

TESTIMONIAL:

"I was so worried about how I was going to organise back to school costs this year, thank you for taking this worry away".



Christma Wee Care Rotary Painting



Carey Group



Family Fun Day 2020



DONATIONS:

I would like to thank those wonderful families in the community who continually donate children's toys, baby items and clothing throughout the year.

Again we have also been extremely fortunate with ongoing support from various service clubs, businesses and others, all too numerous to report.

Your generosity continues to put smiles back on faces of these families who otherwise were experiencing financial difficulties.

Last Christmas and at the beginning of the new school year, we were able to offer families some hope and support in the way of Christmas gifts for their children, Christmas hampers, school uniforms, shoes, bags and school supplies.

Thank you. It is because of the generosity of people like you that we can do what we do.

WEE CARE STATISTICS:

Total number of families that utilised Wee Care for Respite/Emergency Child Care
= 283

Total number of families that identified as Indigenous
= 170

Total number of children that stayed at Wee Care
= 580

Total number of children who identified as being indigenous
= 351

TESTIMONIAL:

"Throughout my darkest days you guys had my back and gave me confidence that I was doing okay at being a Mum. My kids and I would not have survived over the years without you all."

OTHER SERVICES WE DELIVER AT WEE CARE

CHILD SAFETY FAMILY CONTACTS

This year we implemented a new service that is funded on a fee for service arrangement by Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs for us to deliver a family focused safe space for supervised family contacts between children in care and their biological family members.

Throughout the year we have worked with 18 families and 33 children.

ERF – Federal funded financial assistance for families

Over the last twelve months we have distributed \$58,716 to families who have been experiencing a financial crisis.

- ERF Enquiries - 2551
- Clients helped - 821

FIRST STEPS

Althea Projects works in close partnership with Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, Queensland Health and other key stakeholders to provide a safe and supportive post birth service to mothers who require assistance to safely protect and parent their newborn baby. This year we reviewed our model and established a closer partnership with Act for Kids to deliver the family support component of this service.

- Mothers - 1
- Babies - 1

VOLUNTEERS

A big thank you to all who donated their time to Wee Care. Again, thank you to Mac for keeping our hedges always looking trim and tidy.

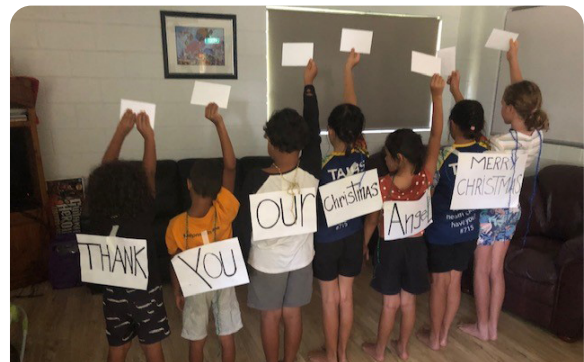
I would also like to thank Mick who kindly gives his time to do our repairs and maintenance and

all the little jobs around the place that we are unable to do ourselves.

In closing, I know Althea's CEO, Paula, with the support of our committee members, will steer us through 2021/2022 to amazing strengths and even more focus on supporting our most vulnerable and youngest people when they most need our care and support.

Thank You,

Lynne Josey
Program Manager



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Our commitment to promoting reconciliation did not waver throughout the year, despite COVID-19 restrictions. Our approach is always to engage staff and raise our cultural mindfulness through participating in activities. This year we worked around having to do less face-to-face activities and engaged more online messaging in regard to all of our key cultural significant dates, such as National Apology Day, National Closing the Gap Day, National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Action Week, Coming of the Light, NAIDOC, and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day.

This year we also attempted to link our staff in a cultural immersion activity on Country at Turtle Rock with Uncle Russell Butler; however, due to unexpected road works on the day we were unable to reach the site. We have plans to achieve this in the coming year, with staff eager to experience a different cultural learning experience.



RAP Launch

We are proud and grateful to have been able to officially launch our new Reconciliation Action Plan in September. Aunty Dorothy Savage welcomed us to Country, and Jenny Savage and Fred Lemson from Townsville Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander Health Service were our guest speakers who shared information about the Hope and Healing Camps and the role Althea Projects plays in the success of these camps.

Althea Projects is dedicated to offering Indigenous traineeships across our services. We are trying to engage with a school in our local community to explore a relevant traineeship at Wee Care and our amazing trainee Tanika continues with us this year as she closes in to complete her traineeship at AFKP.

With our new RAP came refreshed artwork from our Indigenous partner, Michelle Tyhuis. This significant artwork has been incorporated across our organisation, including on a new RAP t-shirt, designed for staff who wear proudly.

Our Reconciliation Grants remains a key organisational commitment. Across the two Reconciliation Grant rounds this year, Althea Projects distributed over \$10,000 to 166 individuals in our community. The grant funding enabled these individuals to access sporting uniforms and fees, music and dance lessons, NAIDOC events in an educational setting 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 participate and thrive in their life. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people making up more than half of the people who access our services, 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.

Lena Watego
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Advisor

STATISTICS AT A GLANCE



CLIENTS
3,551



CHILDREN
996



INDIGENOUS
2639



BEDNIGHTS
67,391



CONTACT HOURS
34,303



MEALS
16,430



STAFF
44

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

