



# ANNUAL

## REPORT 2024 – 2025



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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 Wulguruwabu peoples of the Townsville region and the Yirandhali peoples of Hughenden, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



***"Together We Will Make It Right"***

RAP Artwork  
By Michelle Tyhuis  
2020





## CHAIR REPORT

*Alan Newman*

Althea Projects Inc. has experienced another year of outstanding achievement, driven by strong leadership, commitment, and dedication across the organisation. We successfully met or exceeded our financial management targets, delivered significant improvements to our facilities with further enhancements planned, and received recognition from industry and government for the innovation and impact of our programs.

Most importantly, we remained steadfast in our mission to support and strengthen individuals, families, children, and young people so they experience social, emotional, physical and mental wellbeing to reach their full potential. We believe that everyone deserves to feel safe, secure and supported so they can lead an independent and fulfilling life.

These outcomes reflect the leadership of our Chief Executive Officer, Paula La Rosa, the expertise of her management team, and the dedication and commitment of Althea Projects' staff, volunteers, and carers. On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere appreciation to all involved in advancing the organisation's mission, including our valued supporters and funding partners.



*Board Members: Mary Stevenson, Alan Newman, Evie Chellingworth, Ross Grgenti, Kathryn Chapman (on TEAMS), Rachel Weller (on TEAMS), Paula La Rosa (CEO), Julie McTaggart, Caitlin Berryman and Glenn Seri*



# CEO REPORT

*Paula La Rosa*

This reporting period marks a truly significant chapter in the life of Althea Projects Inc. As we celebrated our **50th anniversary**, we not only honoured our rich history of service to the Townsville community but also embraced a bold and forward-looking vision for the future.

The second half of 2024 was filled with moments of reflection, celebration, and renewal. Our **50th Anniversary Gala** was a heartfelt tribute to the people, partnerships, and stories that have shaped Althea Projects over five decades. It was also a powerful reminder of the enduring values that continue to guide our work: human dignity and respect, diversity and equity, cultural mindfulness, accountability and transparency and success through collaboration.

Coinciding with this milestone year, we proudly launched our **Strategic Plan 2024–2028**, a roadmap that sets out our priorities and aspirations for the next four years. Developed through consultation and collaboration from our Board and Leadership Team, this plan reaffirms our commitment to culturally safe, trauma-informed, and community-driven services. It also introduces a refreshed Vision Statement and organisational values that reflect who we are today and who we strive to be tomorrow.

This dual moment, celebrating our past while investing in our future, has energised our team and strengthened our resolve. As we move forward, we do so with clarity, purpose, and a deep sense of responsibility to the communities, individuals, families and children we serve and support.



# SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS



- **Launch of our third Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP),** embedding reconciliation and cultural safety across our services.
- **Securing 12 months of 7-day/week funding for Wee Care** (from December 2024), a testament to our advocacy and responsiveness to community needs.
- **Completion of major accessibility upgrades at Althea Community Hub,** enhancing inclusion for all service users.
- **Successful HSQF recertification** for both AFKP and Wee Care, reflecting our dedication to quality and compliance.
- **Recognition of Wee Care by PeakCare** as an exemplary model of care, with documented service design now supporting sector-wide best practice.
- **Refreshed website launch,** improving digital accessibility and communication.

## New Website



[altheaprojects.org.au](http://altheaprojects.org.au)

## LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, a significant focus for the coming year will be the review and enhancement of our existing child safe practices, in preparation for the **Queensland Child Safe Standards** coming into effect from 1 October 2025. This work is not just about compliance; it is about embedding child safety into the very DNA of our organisation, across all levels and programs.

We are committed to ensuring that every child who engages with Althea Projects feels safe, is safe, and consistently experiences cultural safety and is being listened to, respected, and supported. These principles are fundamental to our approach and will continue to shape how we deliver services, build relationships, and uphold our responsibilities to children, families, and communities.

We also are excited to welcome the replacement of the old **40-year-old Wee Care roof**, thanks to a fundraising campaign and the generous support from local businesses and individuals. We look forward to sharing more next year.

**Thank you** to our staff, volunteers, Board members, partners, and supporters. Your contributions make our work possible, and your belief in our mission motivates and sustains us.

I also want to recognise all the **children and families** who trust and engage in our services. It is their strength, courage and resilience that inspire us to do better, listen more deeply and strive for excellence in everything we do. Collectively we look forward to another year of meaningful progress and lasting change.



## GRATITUDES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our achievements are made possible through the continued support of our funding bodies and supporters. We extend our sincere thanks to our government funding partners, including:

- Queensland Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (Child Safety and Community Services)
- Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
- Queensland Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (Community Services)
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Townsville City Council



Australian Government



Althea Projects continues to rely on the generous support from 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 wellbeing of individuals, children and families in our community.

### Gala Sponsors and Partners

**Whaites  
&co.**



# GRATITUDES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## IGA Golf Day

Thank you to Adam and Maree Westbury from IGA Mundingburra for their continued support in hosting the annual Golf Day to support our mission.



## Other Partners

Thank you to our other partners who have generously supported us throughout the year.





# SOM REPORT

*Lee-Anne Whalley* SERVICE OPERATIONS MANAGER

The 2024–2025 year has been a period of significant achievement and growth for Althea Projects Inc., marked by our 50th anniversary celebrations, the launch of a new Strategic Plan, and ongoing commitment to quality, cultural safety, and community impact. As Service Operations Manager, I am proud to oversee a team of dedicated Program Managers who have driven excellence across our diverse service areas.

## SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Wee Care Moving to Temporary 24/7 Funding

A major milestone during this reporting period was the successful negotiation for Wee Care to be funded as a 7-day-a-week service, commencing in December 2024. This achievement reflects our long-standing advocacy for a model that truly meets the needs of families facing crises and emergencies, recognising that emergencies do not adhere to a 5-day-a-week schedule.

For many years, Althea Projects has self-funded the 2-day-a-week gap, to ensure we delivered the most responsive service. The move to full-week funding is a significant step forward in aligning service delivery with community need.

While the current funding arrangement is confirmed only until November 2025, we remain in active and constructive dialogue with the Department of Child Safety and local State Members of Parliament to secure ongoing support. Our goal is to ensure that 7-day-a-week funding becomes a permanent feature of Wee Care, enabling us to continue providing safe, responsive, trauma-informed, culturally safe and mindful care every day of the week.

### Improving Accessibility at Althea's Community Hub

This year saw the completion of significant building improvements to the front entrance of the Althea Community Hub (ACH), marking a meaningful step forward in our commitment to accessibility and inclusion.

The upgrades have made a tangible difference for many of our service users, particularly those with mobility challenges. Enhanced disability access ensures that all members of our community can enter and navigate the space with dignity and ease.

Beyond functionality, the new entrance also feels and looks more welcoming, reflecting the warmth and openness that defines Althea Projects. These improvements are a visible expression of our values, especially human dignity and respect, diversity and equity, and cultural mindfulness, and reinforce our belief that everyone deserves to feel safe and supported from the moment they arrive.



## Wee Care Recognised as an Exemplary Model of Care

We were honoured this year to have Wee Care recognised by PeakCare as an exemplary model of care, a testament to the program's impact and innovation in supporting families during times of crisis.

Althea Projects was humbled by the support of Tom Allsop, CEO of PeakCare, who not only acknowledged the significance of Wee Care but also funded the development of a documented service design. This has enabled both PeakCare and Althea Projects to showcase and promote the program, highlighting its effectiveness in reducing the number of children entering the child protection and youth justice statutory systems.

Through early intervention and targeted support, Wee Care continues to demonstrate how responsive, culturally mindful, and trauma informed care can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families. This recognition affirms the value of our work and strengthens our resolve to advocate for sustainable, community-based solutions.



## Successful Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) Recertification

In June 2025, both the Althea Foster and Kinship Program (AFKP) and Wee Care successfully undertook Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) recertification, which is a significant achievement that reflects our unwavering commitment to quality, compliance, and continuous improvement. This outcome affirms that our programs meet rigorous standards of governance, service delivery, and client safety. It also reinforces our dedication to providing services that are not only effective, but also accountable and transparent.



*At Althea Projects, quality is not a checkbox, it is a core principle that drives everything we do. This recertification is a testament to the professionalism and diligence of our team, and to the systems we have in place to ensure our services remain responsive, safe, and impactful.*



## Thank You

I thank our Program Managers and frontline teams for their dedication and professionalism. Their commitment ensures Althea Projects delivers high-quality, culturally safe, and impactful services to our community.





## HR & FINANCE

*Tash Henderson* CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Althea Projects concluded the 2025 financial year in a strong financial position, reporting a total comprehensive income of \$368,594, an increase from \$148,553 in 2024. We received very generous contributions from sponsors and community members at the 50th Gala held in August. Additional support throughout the year came from events and organisations such as the IGA Golf Day, Pickering's Automotive Group, Aidan's Jump Rope Challenge, Southern Cross Austereo, Townsville Northern Suburbs Lions Club, StreetSmart, Rotary Club Townsville, and the Myer Community Fund. We also secured grants from Townsville City Council to host Christmas parties at Wee Care and Althea's Community Hub.

Consistent with previous years, employment costs represented our largest expenditure in 2025, rising in line with the expansion of our team to support the implementation of a 7-day per week Wee Care model from January 2025. IT-related purchases also increased compared to 2024, reflecting our ongoing commitment to robust IT security. This included cyber security training, simulated phishing exercises, upgrading staff laptops, and a major project to fully migrate our systems to the cloud in May 2025.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Corporate Services Team, Joy Thompson, Monita Gangavarapu, and Elizabeth Bann, for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Special thanks also go to our Treasurer, Evie Chellingworth, for her invaluable time, support, and ongoing commitment to Althea Projects.

### HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

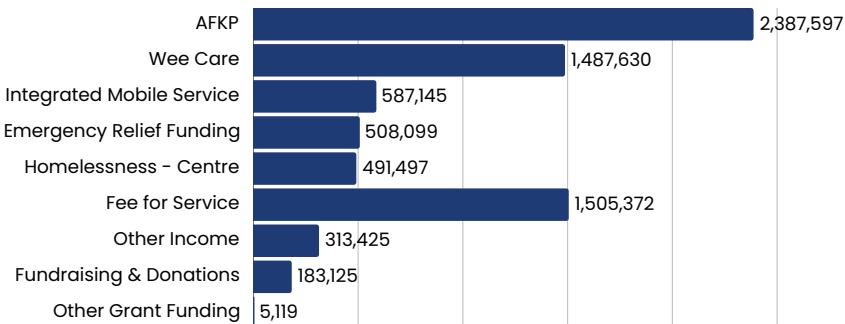
As of 30 June 2025, our staffing levels comprised 57 team members, including 19 full-time, 20 part-time, and 18 casual employees.

Throughout 2025, we maintained our strong commitment to employee wellbeing, continuing to gather valuable insights for the third consecutive year via the People at Work psychosocial survey. The feedback informed our ongoing focus on staff development, with investments in targeted training initiatives.

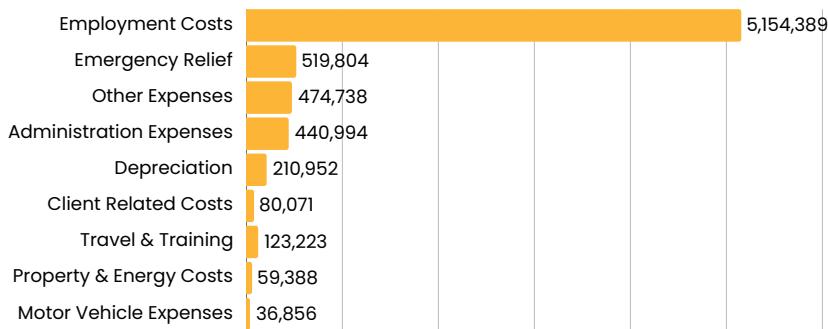
These included therapeutic crisis intervention, de-escalation techniques, and workshops in leadership communication and StratPro a program that provided tools to managers to assist with meeting strategic and operational goals.

I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for Althea Projects in 2026 and am confident that our team will embrace new opportunities with dedication and enthusiasm.

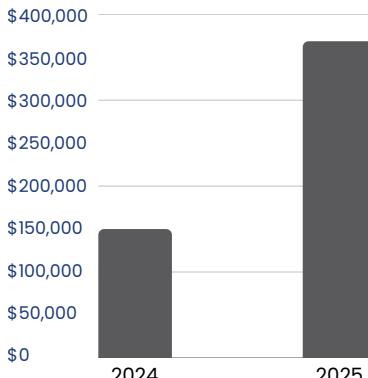
## INCOME 2024 - 2025



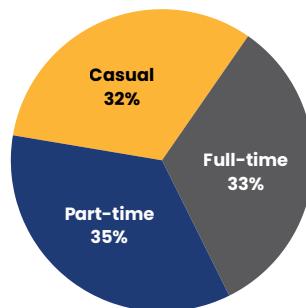
## EXPENDITURE 2024 - 2025



## TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME



## EMPLOYMENT BY CATEGORY





# VALUES, MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

## Our Values

### Human Dignity and Respect

We treat everyone with tolerance, patience and goodwill and we are authentic and non-judgemental in all our engagements.

### Diversity and Equity

Everyone is welcome and valued and their identity, beliefs and experiences are celebrated and shape the way we share information and insights.

### Cultural Mindfulness

We acknowledge, respect and embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as our First Nations peoples of the lands in which we walk, work and live. We embed these traditions and histories into our practice frameworks and all that we do, along with all other cultures.

### Accountability and Transparency

We are open and honest in our interactions, we communicate clearly and we courageously make and honour our commitments.

### Success and Collaboration

We are flexible and creative, leading by example as we support and listen to each other, value teamwork and embrace diverse ideas to strengthen financial sustainability and exceptional business performance.

## 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.

## Vision

We believe that everyone deserves to feel safe, secure and supported so they can lead an independent and fulfilling life. We achieve this through our diverse programs in child protection, family support, foster and kinship care and homelessness services.

## Capability Statement

Althea Projects is a leader in community service in Townsville, with fully-equipped and interconnected programs in child protection, fostering, homelessness and family support. Through these programs, we continually demonstrate our reputation for excellence, delivering compassionate, evidence-informed services, driven by best practice frameworks. As a preferred employer, we provide an inclusive, supportive work environment where every member of our team is empowered to make a meaningful impact. As a sustainable organisation, we are known for our commitment to innovation, environmental responsibility and a culture that values and celebrates every individual.

# STRATEGIC PILLARS 2024-2028

1

## WORKFORCE

### Goal

To secure a workforce that is of the optimal size, capability and composition to best meet the needs of our clients.

### Outcomes

We are the preferred employer in the community and social services sector

- Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community
- Our workforce is stable, skilled and engaged
- Our workforce is of sufficient size and flexibility to deliver our services in line with our practice frameworks
- Our workforce comprises advocates for our organisation and services

2

## IMPACT

### Goal

To develop and grow best practice, evidence-based services and programs that are culturally safe and that improve outcomes for individuals, families, children and young people

### Outcomes

- Client outcomes meet needs
- Our practice frameworks are living documents that are current, understood and effective
- People who are vulnerable are strengthened through our service delivery
- We are recognised as leaders in delivering essential services to the community

3

## GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY

### Goal

To foster an organisational growth mindset underpinned by financial resilience and sustainability.

### Outcomes

- Our infrastructure supports the team to work effectively and efficiently
- We actively pursue new and current opportunities to increase our impact and improve outcomes for individuals, families, children and young people
- Our financial strategy allows us to absorb shocks and continue to thrive
- Our environmental impact is reduced over the life of this plan in line with community expectations and to ensure proactive compliance with anticipated government funding eligibility criteria

4

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

### Goal

To be an ethical and accountable organisation.

### Outcomes

- Our constitution and governance structure supports the best-practice delivery of essential services to the community
- The organisation's activities are congruent with its risk appetite
- The privacy and dignity of our clients and staff is protected at all times



## ALTHEA'S COMMUNITY HUB

*David Morris* PROGRAM MANAGER

The past year has brought both achievements and challenges to Althea's Community Hub. The ongoing housing and cost-of-living crisis continues to place pressure on our sector and the communities we serve. However, the new state government's decision to maintain the 20% uplift in funding, along with targeted additional support in key areas, has provided much-needed stability and reassurance. Despite the hurdles, we are proud of the collective progress made, and are optimistic about the opportunities the coming year will bring.

### FY24-25 SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS

- 8813 Morehead Meals cooked and delivered to the community
- 153 Sponsored meals provided to those in need
- 41 catering orders fulfilled for businesses and community groups
- 10,575 breakfasts and lunches served to hub visitors
- 179 individuals' case managed
- 46 clients housed in short, medium or long-term accommodation

### SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past year, our 40-year-old Hub has received some well-deserved improvements both inside and out. A new perimeter fence was installed, providing greater safety and security for our community. We started 2025 with a fresh new look inside, thanks to new furniture bought from the proceeds of Althea's 50th Year Gala. To close out the financial year, we upgraded our front entrance, making it more accessible and welcoming for people with disabilities. Together, these changes have given the Hub a much-deserved facelift and a renewed sense of pride for everyone who walks through our doors.

The Hub hosted and participated in events throughout the year, including NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Day luncheons, Homelessness Week, RSPCA Community Day, and our Annual Christmas Luncheon. These events unite the community, reduce social isolation, and foster connections within our community.



## Emergency Relief Funding

The rising cost of living, particularly in utilities and food, has led to a noticeable increase in demand for Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) support. However, because the amount required to meet essential needs has increased, it has resulted in a decrease in the number of people we are able to assist. We are grateful for the continued support from the Queensland Government, whose commitment enables us to deliver this vital assistance.

### ERF SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS

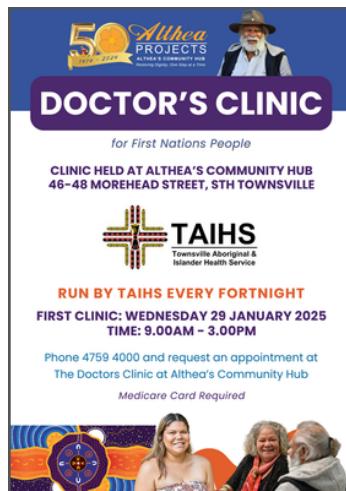
- 658 families and individuals were assisted through Emergency Relief Funding (ERF).
- \$117,814 provided in food vouchers, short-term or emergency accommodation, and transport assistance.

**Volunteers** – Without the valuable contributions of our wonderful volunteers, the Hub would not be able to continue offering the programs and services that we do. We would especially like to thank Alan and Alison, Kate and Nancy, who generously volunteer their time each week to assist around the Hub, as well as All Hours Courier, who kindly provide a driver each week to help deliver Morehead Meals to the community.

### Hub Doctor's Clinic

The Hub Doctor's Clinic, which had been closed for several years, reopened in January of this year.

Through collaboration with TAIHS, the clinic now provides access to a doctor, nurse, and liaison officer, and operates every second Wednesday. This development has significantly enhanced the range of services available.



# ACH PARTNERSHIPS

## Community Partners

The Hub operates without government funding for daily activities, relying on contributions to provide breakfast and lunch to its visitors each day. We would like to acknowledge the ongoing support from Oz Harvest, Second Bite (Coles North Ward), Brumby's Bread Parkside, Food Diversion (Hermit Park & Townsville City Woolworths Stores), Food Bank, Townsville City Council, Grill'd and Rotary Port of Townsville.

Townsville City Council also provides an annual grant to support art classes with Cassie every fortnight which are intended to foster connection and creativity amongst Hub users. This program contributes to the services offered by the Hub. Althea's Community Hub looks forward to ongoing collaboration with Townsville City Council to maintain this initiative.

## Partnerships with Schools

Althea's Community Hub sincerely thanks Ignatius Park College and The Clontarf Foundation from Townsville State High School for their ongoing support.

Over the last fourteen years, Year 12 students from Ignatius Park College have attended the Hub weekly during Term 3, preparing BBQ breakfasts as part of their community service.

The boys from Town High Clontarf have also supported the Hub by visiting throughout the school term to help cook lunch and connect with the Hub users. Clontarf Foundation supports young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to stay engaged in school, complete Year 12, and gain meaningful employment after graduating.

These partnerships offer students a chance to give back and understand the impact of homelessness. Their compassion and commitment make a real difference. We are deeply grateful for the continued support and positive impact



## MOREHEAD MEALS

Late last year we farewelled our long-time Chef, Isabella, after 3.5 years of dedication to Morehead Meals. Isabella was ready to embark on a new professional challenge, and while we were sad to see her go, we were fortunate to welcome Chef Kia to Morehead Meals. Kia has taken the reins with passion and skill, helping our social enterprise continue to grow and flourish.

Thank you to Rotary Port of Townsville who generously donated \$5,000 which provided vital support towards the ongoing costs of running our multi-level social enterprise. In addition, Ergon Energy kindly contributed \$1,000, directly funding meals for individuals and families facing hardship. We were also delighted to establish a new partnership with Co-Habitat Co-working Space, becoming their preferred catering supplier for all meetings held in their facilities.

Morehead Meals remains committed to connecting our community through affordable, healthy, pre-made frozen meals. Under Chef Kia's guidance, Morehead Meals continues to thrive.

We are also steadily increasing our profile in the community through social media and networking events, ensuring more people can access the support and connection we provide.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We collaborate with various specialist homelessness support services and agencies, such as the Red Cross Homelessness Hub, Yumba Meta, Murri Watch, and Anglicare Management of Public Intoxication Program Team in the Townsville community, working collectively to address the needs of our clients.

Thank you to our community partners, stakeholders, schools, and the public for your ongoing support and donations to the Hub this year. Your involvement has enabled us to create meaningful opportunities and positive outcomes for those we serve. We truly value your time and partnership in making a difference every day.

### Thank you to our Team

Lastly, I want to thank the amazing team at the Hub - Ebony, Tiarn, Tess, Leah, Matthew, Nichola, and Kia for their constant support and dedication to the individuals who visit and use our Hub. Though the work is exhausting, it is rewarding, and I appreciate your contribution to work every day.

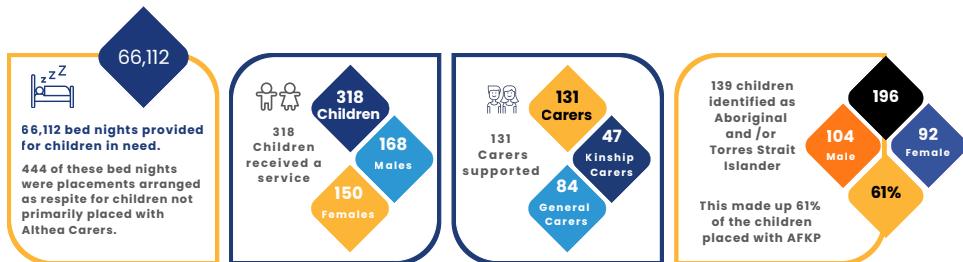


# ALTHEA FOSTER & KINSHIP PROGRAM

*Louise Skennerton* PROGRAM MANAGER

This past financial year has been another year of challenges for Althea's Fostering and Kinship Program (AFKP) and the whole out-of-home care sector across the State. Each day brings new referrals to place vulnerable children, as the demand for family-based care options continues to grow.

## AFKP Statistics



## Professional Development

In May 2025, Althea Projects proudly sponsored a Foster Carer affiliated with our organisation to attend the Queensland Fostering and Kinship Care (QFKC) Conference on the Sunshine Coast. Seven staff members also attended, making the most of this valuable professional development and networking opportunity.

The AFKP team participated in a range of training and development sessions, including:

- Foundations for Attachment
- Understanding Neurodivergent Behaviours
- Several QFKC-facilitated courses focused on key aspects of the Out of Home Care sector, such as the Statement of Commitment.

Throughout the 2024/25 year, AFKP staff:

- Delivered the Getting Ready to Start training 5 times for individuals and couples preparing to become Carers.
- Supported the facilitation of joint agency training sessions.

## Highlight

We have continued to support the roll out and delivery of **Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)** training to AFKP staff and have also delivered TCI for Families to some of our Foster and Kinship Carers. The feedback from this was extremely positive and that it gave 'real strategies' to use to help de-escalate children in heightened emotional states.





## AFKP EVENTS

### Events

AFKP have organised several events this year including:

- A formal dinner at the Brewery function room to acknowledge Foster and Kinship Care week
- Foster and Kinship Care week lunch in Ayr
- Foster and Kinship Care week lunch in Charters Towers
- Hosted a high tea for Carers at the Heritage Tea Rooms
- A Christmas party for our Charters Towers carers and children at the Charters Towers pool
- A Christmas party for our Burdekin Carers and children at the Ayr pool
- A Christmas party for our Townsville Carers and children at the North Shore pool
- Brunch to fundraise for Pyjama Angels Day
- Craft and afternoon tea for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

We were thankful to have representatives from the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety at many of these events and we remain committed to a solid partnership with the Department to see positive outcomes for many of the children and young people we work with across our program.

As we launch into the new financial year, we are curious and hopeful to see what comes from the Commission of Inquiry that will review and investigate systemic issues within Queensland's child safety system, and the proposed Transition to Care Services Investment which will hopefully result in positive outcomes for children, their families and carers.

*Ainslee was very supportive and helpful in assisting me through a very difficult time as a carer.*

*From a Foster Carer*

*Loved every minute of the Getting Ready to Start training that Anita and Mel delivered. I feel much more prepared to become a carer and it was great talking to carers with experience.*

*From a Carer Applicant*



## WEE CARE

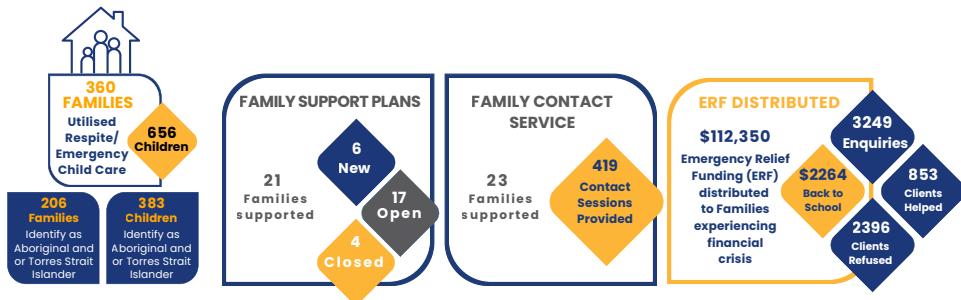
*Kristy Jensen* PROGRAM MANAGER

Throughout the 2024–2025 financial year, Wee Care maintained our strong commitment to supporting the local community. Our team delivered essential care to children in crisis through referrals from Queensland Police, Townsville University Hospital, and the Queensland Department of Child Safety, whilst also providing consistent respite support to families under our Family Support Plans.

Residential bookings are managed by our Acting Coordinator, Tina Adams, who plays a pivotal role in matching children with the most suitable support workers based on their individual needs. Beyond coordinating placements, Tina also provides valuable guidance to families seeking assistance through our Family Support Plans, helping to ensure continuity of care and stability.

In December 2024, our funding body the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety launched a pilot program to extend Wee Care services from a previously funded five-day operational model, to a fully funded seven-day-a-week model. This expansion enhances support for children within the community by providing continuous care throughout the week. Additionally, the pilot enables Wee Care to deliver tailored care daily for two children currently under the supervision of Child Safety, ensuring more consistent and responsive service delivery. We hope to be able to continue this arrangement into the future.

### Wee Care Statistics



### Emergency Relief Funding (ERF)

ERF is Federal funded financial assistance for families. As part of the total amount distributed it included \$2264.60 to assist families with back-to-school costs such as Big W vouchers, uniforms via School Locker, Lowes and the uniform shop at individual schools.

Our Emergency Relief program remained in high demand due to the rising cost of living. Government funding, primarily distributed as food vouchers, was supplemented by donated food parcels from Oz Harvest, and Northreach Baptist Church. These contributions enabled us to support more clients when food vouchers were not available.

ERF is administered by our Administration Worker, Bridie who ensures families can access timely assistance and support when facing immediate financial or personal hardship.

## OTHER SERVICES DELIVERED THROUGH WEE CARE

### Playgroup

Wee Care's community Playgroup (Play Matters) continues to remain steady and over the last 12 months we have welcomed 29 families including new families to the service.

Families from diverse backgrounds—both national and international—are coming together to bond and play with their children through our playgroup. It's been a warm and welcoming community, and we look forward to its continued growth over the next 12 months.



### Family Contacts

Wee Care has continued to facilitate Family Contacts and provide reporting to support children and families connected with Child Safety. Over the past year, this service has expanded to include outreach contact sessions in Ingham. The coordination of logistics, including rostering and associated administration, is led by our Senior Family Contact Worker, Danielle Josey, with the delivery of contacts supported by Danielle Stewart and Jessica Teitz.



## WEE CARE DONATIONS RECEIVED *Thank You!*

### Zephyr Education

We continue to be supported by Zephyr Education who provide us with school supplies such as backpacks, book packs, school shoes, socks, lunchboxes, stationery and other items.

### Services Australia Aitkenvale

The generous staff at Services Australia Aitkenvale continued their support by donating Christmas foods for hampers and toys for vulnerable families. Their annual Back to School drive also provided vouchers, backpacks, lunchboxes, stationery, and other essentials, helping families prepare for the new school year.

### Oz Harvest

A Big Thank You to Oz Harvest who have provided food relief to families who are struggling financially in Townsville.

### The Nappy Collective

Continued to provide support to Wee Care through donated cartons of nappies of a variety of sizes for our littlest people. These make a huge difference for our families as nappies is one of the most frequently requested items.

## Bunnings Townsville

Sonia Zabala at Bunnings Townsville kindly donated a new shade sail and accessories for the Wee Care playground. This gave much needed shade to the playground as we lost our large tree during Cyclone Kirrily. Sonia also donated \$300 in vouchers to assist in purchasing other items to maintain our outdoor areas.

## Sealink

After catering a training event, Sealink generously donated surplus food—including bread, meat, salads, and fresh fruit—to Wee Care, helping support families accessing Emergency Food Relief. This thoughtful contribution made a meaningful difference for those in need.

## Willows Christmas Food Drive

The Townsville community was incredibly generous and donated a huge amount of non-perishable items in the donation boxes at Willows Shopping Centre for the Christmas food drive. These items made many food hampers for those in need over Christmas. Thank you to the Willows for their support.

## PB & J's

Katie, the owner and baker at PB&J's continues to donate her freshly made donuts and other baked goods to Wee Care to give to our children in care and the families we support. This gesture is something that continues to brighten the days of the children and families we assist and is a reminder of how kind and supportive people in our community are.

## Townsville Tidy Bags

Thank you to the past and present owners of Townsville Tidy Bags who provide us with a monthly service free of charge. This contribution to maintaining our property is valued.





### Annual Christmas Celebration

Without fail we saw another visit from Santa during Christmas 2024. He made his way through the activities of face painting, Christmas craft, and the jumping castle, to once again deliver his cargo carried by the reindeers. This would not have been possible without the support of Townsville City Council Grants, BNI Integrity, Townsville Grammar Secondary School, Triple M 102.3, and Betty and her friends from the Bolton Clarke Residential.

The Direct Care Workers at Wee Care hosted a joyful afternoon of Christmas celebrations, featuring a fantastic barbecue and festive activities. It was a magical event that brought families together in the holiday spirit.

## FUNDRAISING EVENTS

### IGA Golf Day

The annual IGA Golf Day was held at Tropics Golf Course, and has become a regular in the fundraising calendar for Wee Care. The 2024 event raised an amazing \$32,000!

A fun day with enthusiastic and generous participants made it a memorable day for all involved. Thank you once again to Adam and Maree Westbury for their ongoing support.

### 50th Anniversary Gala

September 2024 was an exciting month with the Gala Celebrations of Althea Projects (Wee Care) turning the BIG 50. The night was a huge success, reminiscing with tunes from the 70's to the 00's. It was terrific to go down memory lane and the timeline since Wee Care opened its doors in 1974! Thank you to all who supported the event which helped raise funds for Wee Care.



### Thanks to Our Dedicated Team

I extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated team of Direct Care Workers at Wee Care, Family Contact staff, our Administration Worker, and Acting Coordinator, whose commitment and care continue to make a meaningful difference to the wellbeing of children and families in our community.



## ALTHEA HOUSE

*Kristy Jensen* PROGRAM MANAGER

Now in its second year of operation, the Althea House for children aged 0-11 provides safe and nurturing care for children under the protection of Child Safety. This service supports children within the care system during times of transition, offering stability and consistency until a suitable family-based foster care placement becomes available or reunification with their family can be achieved.

### **Goodbyes and Welcomes**

In 2025, we farewelled our eldest child at the house, who was successfully reunified back with a parent. It was a sad farewell, but joyous to see the reconnection of the family and hear of the plans they were making moving forward, as well as the excitement shown by the child as they embarked on a new journey.

In saying goodbyes, this led to a new hello, as we welcomed our first sibling group into the home. This sibling group is younger than the other children we have had previously reside at Althea House, both being under 5. We expanded our activities and created play zones to keep them active and mentally stimulated.

Our middle child moved into active reunification which saw the introduction of daily contacts and overnight stays with their parent. It has been wonderful to see confidence grow in the parent as their responsibilities and opportunities increase, as well as the strengthening of attachment and connection in this process for the child.

With change comes fresh order in the house. Our new eldest child has embraced their new role with maturity, showing nurturing qualities toward their younger siblings. It's been wonderful to witness their growth, confidence, and development as they adapt to the changing house dynamics.

### **Donations**

In June Althea House was very fortunate to be chosen by Southern Cross Junior Campus to be their Shine Recipients and were donated \$1,000. The Program Manager, Kristy Jensen and the House Coordinator, Tracey Mains attended the school's liturgy to receive this donation. It was wonderful to see the full participation and enthusiasm of the junior campus and their commitment to the day. There are plans to use the donation to purchase a junior trampoline and sandpit to expand our outside activities.



### **A New Car**

Althea House received a second car which has been essential as the children have a very jam-packed calendar around schooling, extra-curricular activities, appointments, and family contacts. The extra car has ensured that all children have opportunity to attend their required activity/event.

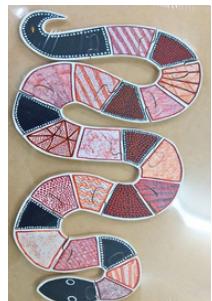
## Chill Out Room

Creating a chill out room was a highlight this year and was made possible through the generous support of the Myer Community Fund Grant, and generous contributions from our local community.

The garage space at Althea House was transformed into a versatile and safe playroom, and was designed to support and nurture creative, sensory, and imaginative play. The room includes dedicated areas for arts and crafts, quiet reading, construction activities, board games, and relaxing TV time.

This inviting space provides a stimulating and engaging environment for children, especially on days they cannot leave the house. It also serves as a welcoming, private and engaging space for stakeholder visits.

Key resources funded by the grant include a secured TV unit, couch, bean bags, sensory equipment, books, and yoga/gross motor tools. Community donations added dress-ups, games, art supplies, and construction toys. With the addition of air-conditioning, the room is now a year-round asset to the home.



## Thank You

I would like to give a big shout out and thank you to our Direct Care Staff and Althea's House Coordinator Tracey, for their ongoing dedication and commitment to delivering a trauma-informed care model, embracing the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention approach, and ensuring the smooth operation of a safe and supportive home away from home.

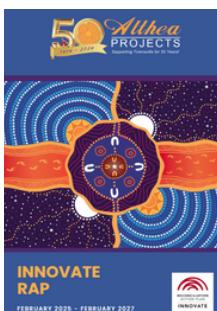


# RAP REPORT

*Paula La Rosa* CEO

At Althea Projects, reconciliation is not just a goal, it is a guiding principle that shapes how we work, connect and grow. A proud milestone for us this year was the launch of our third Reconciliation action Plan (RAP), marking an important step in our ongoing commitment to cultural safety, respectful relationships and meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our RAP provides a practical framework that strengthens how we engage with communities and how we embed reconciliation and cultural safety into our everyday work. The following highlights reflect the tangible ways we are embedding reconciliation into our programs, partnerships and everyday practice.

## RAP 2024-2026 Launch



In November 2024, Althea Projects launched its third RAP, a powerful affirmation of our long-standing dedication to reconciliation. This RAP builds on our previous work and sets a clear path forward, one that embeds reconciliation into

every aspect of our organisation, from governance and service delivery to partnerships and community engagement.

The plan outlines tangible actions and shared responsibilities, ensuring that reconciliation is visible, measurable, and meaningful. It guides us to listen deeply, act with integrity, and create spaces where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and voices are respected and celebrated.

***Our RAP is a living document, evolving with us as we continue to learn and grow. It sends a clear message: reconciliation is central to our mission, and we are committed to walking this path with purpose and respect.***

## **Supporting Community Through our Reconciliation Grants**

Our Reconciliation Grants continue to make a meaningful impact by supporting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and adults in our local community. In this financial year, we distributed close to \$10,000 across two grant rounds, assisting over 100 individuals, most of whom were children and young people to access sporting and educational opportunities. These grants help ease financial pressures for families and empower recipients to pursue personal growth, build confidence, and strengthen their connection to community. Through this initiative, we continue to promote inclusion, opportunity, and positive change.

## **Improving Access to Culturally Safe Health Services**

After several years without a dedicated medical service, we are pleased to have re-established a fortnightly health clinic at Althea's Community Hub (ACH) through our partnership with the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS).

This initiative ensures that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients can access culturally safe, community-based healthcare in a familiar and supportive environment. The return of this service reflects our commitment to reducing barriers to essential health support and strengthening wellbeing through trusted relationships and responsive care.



### Creating Safe Spaces for Healing and Recovery

In alignment with our commitment to culturally safe support services, ACH has introduced Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings specifically designed for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. These sessions provide a welcoming and respectful environment where individuals can connect, share, and support one another in their recovery journey.

### CULTURAL EVENTS

This year Althea Projects and our families and staff have participated in a range of cultural events, including:

- **National Reconciliation Week (NRW) events:**

- ACH hosting a reconciliation luncheon, local elders making traditional lunch and basket weaver and bead making activities.
- Wee Care Playgroup led by a local Aboriginal woman and employee, Gagree.
- Staff attending the Cowboys House NRW breakfast.

- **NAIDOC Week:**

- Silver sponsorship and participation in the NAIDOC breakfast
- Deadly Day Out

- **National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day:**

- Wee Care hosted a National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day Playgroup

As we reflect on the progress made this year, we remain committed to walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with humility, respect and purpose. Our RAP is part of Althea Projects DNA and is a living framework that continues to evolve. We remain proud to contribute to a future where reconciliation is visible, active and deeply embedded in all that we do.



### SNAICC Membership

This year, Althea Projects became a proud member of SNAICC - National Voice for our Children. Joining SNAICC strengthens our connection to national advocacy and policy development focused on the rights, safety, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

# OUR IMPACT

## 2024 / 2025

