



YWCA CANBERRA

YWCA CANBERRA
ANNUAL REPORT

2021-22

Acknowledgement

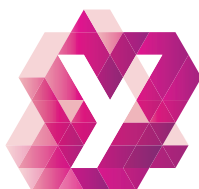
YWCA Canberra proudly recognises the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to own and control their cultures and pays our respect to these rights. YWCA Canberra acknowledges the need to respect and encourage the diversity of Indigenous cultures and to respect Indigenous worldviews, lifestyles and customary laws.

We extend our respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who for thousands of years have preserved the culture and practices of their communities on Country.

This land was never surrendered, and we acknowledge that it always was and will continue to always be Aboriginal Land.



YWCA Canberra
Annual Report
2021-22



YWCA CANBERRA



The YWCA Canberra story

YWCA Canberra is a feminist not-for-profit organisation that has provided community services and represented women's issues in Canberra since 1929.

Our mission is 'We strengthen communities by supporting girls and women through our services and advocacy' and our vision is 'Girls and women thriving'.

We provide essential, quality services for women, girls and families in the ACT and surrounding regions. We work in the areas of children's services, community development, homelessness and affordable housing, domestic and family violence, youth services, personal and professional training, women's leadership and advocacy.

Through our national Affiliate Association with YWCA Australia, we are part of the World YWCA network, which connects over 100 countries across the globe.

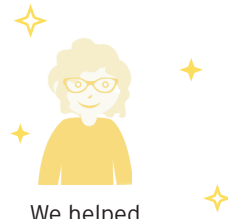
Contents

Snapshot of our impact in the ACT	6	Strategic priority four	43
President and Chief Executive Officer's report	8	Membership	44
Overview of our Strategic Plan 2018-23	10	Great Ydeas	45
Strategic priority one	11	National and global YWCA involvement	46
School age care and school holiday programs	13	Strategic priority five	47
Family day care	14	Governance and corporate structure	48
Housing services	15	2021-22 Board Directors	49
Ragusa Quarantine Support Hub	19	Independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee	49
Warm Connections	20	Organisational structure	50
Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre	22	Reconciliation Action Plan	51
Youth programs	25	Workplace gender equality	52
Tuggeranong Network Coordination	28	Environmental sustainability	52
National Women's Safety Alliance	29	Quality assurance and risk management	53
Strategic priority two	30	Financial sustainability	54
She Leads - our women's leadership pathway	31	Financial position	54
She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management	32	Acknowledgements	56
She Leads Conference	33	Partners and supporters	56
She Leads High Conference, She Leads College Conference and She Leads In-Conversations	34	Donors	57
Board traineeships	35	Volunteers	58
Education and training	36		
Strategic priority three	39		
Policy development and advocacy work	40		
Domestic Violence Support Service	41		

Snapshot of our impact in the ACT



Our **charitable property management program, Rentwell**, had **64 properties** in its portfolio, with a total of **150** tenants.



We helped **93 older women** at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness through our **Next Door program**.

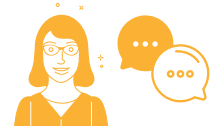
We provided quality **school age care** for



age four to 12 years at **12 locations**.



We trained **375 students** in early childhood and school education and care, leadership and management, and infection control.



The **She Leads Program** engaged over **708 women** in **professional development** activities and events.



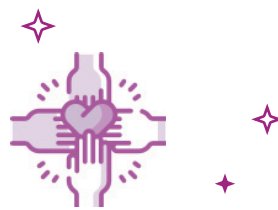
Our **Lanyon Food Hub** supported **440 members** providing food on **1990 occasions**.



We supported **68 people** over **12 weeks** at the **Ragusa Quarantine Support Hub** and an additional **17 people** were **supported in crisis accommodation** by the Ragusa multi-disciplinary team.



We had
561 young people
as members of our
YWCA Canberra Clubhouse.



Our Youth Engagement team
supported **2181 young
people.**



Our **Domestic Violence
Support Service** supported
305 women who were
impacted by domestic and
family violence.



Our **Warm Connections**
program supported
153 people
through trauma-informed
and person-centred
therapeutic **counselling
and intervention.**



Our **Mura Lanyon
Youth Community
Centre** had an
average of
570 visitors
per month.



Our **Early Childhood
team** worked with around
1200 children
across the Canberra region.



We helped **292 people**
through **crisis
accommodation, family
case management** and
outreach support.



President and Chief Executive Officer's report

Once again, this past financial year has been a time of change, adaption, and growth in the organisation. After a successful July 2021 She Leads Conference, which saw over 400 emerging and established women and non-binary leaders join us for a full day of conversations and skills building, the ACT was plunged into lockdown following a COVID-19 outbreak.

Our team adapted swiftly, and commenced working from home where possible, and implemented strict distancing and hygiene measures for those on the frontline.

Our Children's Services teams were swift to adapt their programs and continue meeting the needs of the families they work with. The resilience and adaptability of our Educators are truly commendable, and they continued to demonstrate these qualities over the ensuing months as COVID-19 cases and restrictions continued into the new year.

Lockdown presented significant challenges for vulnerable members of our community. Our Community Services team demonstrated their incredible skill, professionalism, and capacity by ensuring that our services remained operational in supporting women and their families in need of housing support, domestic and family violence support, or emergency relief from our Lanyon Food Hub.

Our Youth Engagement team developed an engaging program of activities that could be delivered digitally, and our Education and Training team continued to deliver classes and mark assessments virtually.

A key achievement for YWCA Canberra was being appointed as the lead community organisation supporting the ACT Government Ragusa Quarantine Hub where we organised a core team of staff to provide support and wraparound services to vulnerable Canberrans quarantining in the facility. This program demonstrated the incredible outcomes we can create for the most vulnerable in our community by collaborating with ACT Government and our community sector partners.

We are immensely proud of our team across all portfolios for managing the disruption of lockdown while prioritising the needs of the community we serve.

In August 2021, we also commenced operations of the National Women's Safety Alliance, a newly established body funded by the federal Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet. YWCA Canberra is proud of the significant work already undertaken by the Alliance, which has over 160 members and has provided valuable advice to Government on the Draft National Plan to End Gender-based Violence and the Respect@Work recommendations. You can read more about the Alliance and its achievements in this Annual Report.

Following the changes in COVID-19 restrictions early in the 2021/2022 financial, our work has returned to 'COVID-normal' in the second half of the financial year.

In February, Frances departed for a three-month sabbatical as part of the Social Impact Leadership Australia program she was selected for in 2021.



The rest of the Executive Management team stepped up to steward the organisation during Frances' three-month sabbatical, led by Director of Community Services, Cara Jacobs, who took on the role of Acting CEO.

During her sabbatical, Frances made valuable connections with other key non-profit leaders across the country and gained new insights into the impact of for-purpose organisations, and the value of shared leadership to support YWCA Canberra into our next phase of growth.

A key achievement was once again receiving our Quality Improvement Council Health and Community Services Standard accreditation. Independent accreditation assures our members, managers, staff, funding bodies and consumers that we are meeting high standards and seeking to improve our performance and outcomes, and we are proud to have once again achieved this.

We were again awarded the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality - our 9th year of recognition and third year as the only Canberra organisation to achieve it.

Our Children's Services portfolios continued to manage significant disruptions in the first half of the financial year as Omicron swept through the community. However, by June our services returned to high occupancy, and this is a testament to our team's resilience and professionalism.

A key focus this year has been enhancing the digital capacity of the organisation. This has included investment in a learning management system, acXelerate, which has enhanced our Education and Training Unit's function. Our first digitised course, the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education, was launched this year and has provided a fantastic experience for our learners.

In addition, we launched a brand new website for the She Leads program of events, and are in the process of redeveloping our corporate website. As part of the operations of the National Women's Safety Alliance, we are implementing a CRM to support and facilitate greater consultation nationally.

Perhaps the biggest achievement is our progress in developing our YHomes project, to bring nine units to a block of land we own in Ainslie, to support women at risk of homelessness.

The Minister for Planning called our development application in - confirming the value of this important build - and allowing us to move to the next phase. We want to express our gratitude to the many community members who wrote to the Minister asking for him to take action, to ensure this project could go ahead. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our community, in donating to this program and speaking out on our behalf. We have now commenced planning for the build phase and look forward to sharing the progress of the construction over the coming months.

We have continued to diversify our income streams and financial sustainability with every opportunity assessed through the lens of our purpose, Girls and women thriving.

As always, we would like to acknowledge our staff, board directors, partners, members, fellow community organisations, donors, volunteers and friends for their loyalty to the organisation and contribution to our vision for the Canberra community.

We are tremendously proud of the impact the organisation is having across our broad span of work, and hope you enjoy finding out more about YWCA Canberra's 2021-22 achievements in this year's Annual Report.



Carina Zeccola
President



Frances Crimmins
Chief Executive Officer



Overview of our Strategic Plan 2018–23

We are now in the fourth year of our *Strategic Plan 2018–23*. This plan is grounded in our vision of *Girls and women thriving* and affirms our mission to ‘strengthen communities by supporting girls and women through our services and advocacy’.

Our organisational values of courage, equality, respect, inclusion, reconciliation and responsibility underpin our work and reflect our commitment to the global YWCA movement. The value of courage explicitly acknowledges this connection and our proud feminist history, with our priorities aligning to World YWCA’s Envisioning 2035 goals.

The Strategic Plan reflects our many successes to date. We have a long history of delivering quality services to the Canberra community, we have a strong asset base and investments, an established advocacy profile, and an engaged and committed membership base.

This is a critical and exciting time for the YWCA movement, with significant social and political

focus on gender equality and activism at local, national and international levels.

Over the five years of the plan, we have been required to stay ‘ahead of the game’ in a sector that is going through a significant change process, with changing regulatory, compliance and quality assurance mechanisms. We have been focused on the importance of maintaining an appropriate level of infrastructure, so we can deliver high-quality services and play a leadership role in the sector.

We develop meaningful and values-based partnerships across all sectors, recognising that social change is only ever achieved through collective effort.

All of the above leads to us being able to effectively measure, evaluate and communicate the difference we make to the community.

Nearing the end of our strategic plan, we are making significant progress toward our objectives. We will continue to embody our values and work towards these priorities to ensure girls and women thrive in our community.

Strategic priority one

We support children,
young people, women
and the community
through our services



Early childhood services

At YWCA Canberra, we provide quality education and care to children in Canberra and the Murrumbateman region. We accommodate children from diverse backgrounds and ages, which is reflected in the unique location of each service and the educational teams that work within them.

We understand that the experience of childhood is a unique journey. We value education as important in the present, while also providing the foundation for all future learning and development. We aim to provide children and families with a sense of belonging through ensuring a safe, supportive, respectful and inclusive environment.

Our role is to develop and create rich, engaging play-based learning environments that reflect children's interests and allow for exploration. We ensure this by providing children with the skills and experiences needed to develop as lifelong learners and to become competent, active and informed individuals.

Our educators uphold the professional standards and values of the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics, as well as the principles and practices of the National Quality Framework.

We design our educational programs to promote children's holistic development while reflecting the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Our services are fully licensed and are assessed and rated by the ACT Government's regulatory body, the Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA).

In 2021-22, we provided early childhood education and care to over 1200 children across our six sites. This includes providing much-needed support, stability, education, and care to 58 vulnerable children through a funded placement.

We have supported the community by implementing the ACT Government's 3-year-old Initiative Program. This initiative supports vulnerable families by providing 15 hours of early



education access before moving on to formal 4-year-old preschool programs. Our Conder and Winyu services have seen a significant increase in support of vulnerable children within the local community due to involvement in this government-subsided program.

This year, our Spence Children's Cottage applied for funding for several projects. We successfully received funding from Floriade, which provided us with 800 tulip bulbs to be planted onsite. We also successfully acquired a Community Garden Grant, another opportunity to build and support the community. These projects will increase connection within the Spence Community as we will invite community members to assist in revitalising our outdoor garden space.

Our Fairley Early Childhood Service has seen significant growth and changes over the last year, with a substantial increase in occupancy. As a result, we created another learning space within the service. Throughout the year, Fairley has also received funding as part of the Start Strong Grant and Woolworths Garden Grant, enabling the service to purchase further resources and upgrade the learning environments.

Due to COVID-19, the occupancy at our Winyu Early Childhood Service dropped in 2021, with many families working from home. With the easing of COVID restrictions, we are happy to see an increase in enrolments in the second half of the reporting period, with occupancy at Winyu rising dramatically to almost 90 per cent as of June 2022. This rate continues to grow.

Our Conder Early Childhood Service Centre Director has been influential in seeing a curriculum review and change at Conder. As a result, they were nominated for the HESTA

Early Childhood Education & Care Awards 2022. Our Conder Director continues providing an educational program that can better respond to children's emerging interests.

After receiving the ACT Government's Nature Play Grant of \$6600, our Campbell Cottage Early Childhood Service plans potential upgrades to the Nursery and Toddler yards. The centre has recently seen an upgrade to the Preschool yard that received positive feedback from families and children.

Our Currawong Early Childhood Service has been developing a new curriculum plan that continues to build on the children's needs and interests. The service has also supported several educators to achieve higher qualifications to ensure that children receive the best possible outcomes from their time in care.

We acknowledge the ongoing sector-wide challenge of recruiting suitably qualified early learning educators. This has been made increasingly more difficult with ongoing COVID challenges and a decline in the number of eligible applicants applying for employment in the sector. We continue to advocate to the Federal Government to reform wages in the sector.

"Most of all, my child is happy and enjoys going to day care. She gets exposure to lots of fun and educational things and the centre is non-judgemental and welcoming to all. It's great to have a variety of staff - genders, cultures, etc."

- Parent testimonial



School age care and school holiday programs

We provide a mix of before school, after school and school holiday care for school-age children. Our primary goal is to provide high-quality education and care to all children through inclusive, holistic, and stimulating educational programs, practices, and pedagogies.

We have strength and rigour in developing and implementing programs based on children's sense of identity, connectedness with the world, self-confidence, and well-being. We recognise that an inclusive and holistic educational program allows our educators to foster children's education and care. YWCA Canberra maintains a proactive and passionate approach to this process.

This year, our school age care programs engaged 1941 children, age four to twelve, at 12 locations across the ACT and four school holiday programs.

Over the last year, our school age care team has focused on strengthening our play-based programs. These aim to nurture and extend children's sense of identity while encouraging and supporting the enhancement of their sense of agency, hypothesising, problem-solving skills and relationship building.

Our team has continued to build upon embedding aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures into our services and supporting children to extend their understanding of the cultures of First Nations people. During National Reconciliation Week, unique experiences have been incorporated into each of our services to support children to learn the meaning and importance of this community event. YWCA Canberra maintains a community partnership with a local Aboriginal storyteller who attends our services regularly to support children to further learn about aspects of Aboriginal cultures. This has included learning how to throw a boomerang, learning Aboriginal words, bush tucker knowledge, and Aboriginal art.

To promote healthy lifestyles, we maintain a community partnership with children's sporting group, Active Attitudes, and hip-hop dance studio, Project Beats, who implement regular physically active experiences into our educational programs for children to participate in.

Our services strive to educate children on sustainability and the conservation of the natural environment. This is ingrained within our everyday practices and service routines.



Children are consistently encouraged and supported to conserve common resources such as water and electricity. They are motivated to use creative and practical methods to recycle and upcycle items. Our educational program strengthens this by celebrating and implementing community events that support the local and broader community, such as World Ocean's Day, Schools Tree Day, and Keep Australia Beautiful Week.

Throughout our school holiday programs, children have the opportunity to engage in our local community with visits to the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the cinema, and local parks. We continue to expose children to diverse experiences to foster and enhance their development and time spent in our care.

YWCA Canberra is committed to consistently reflecting on and improving our practices. As such, we survey all families twice per year. This provides us with feedback that we use for our quality improvement process to enhance our environments and practices.

Six of our services participated in regulated compliance audits with Children's Education and Care Assurance during the reporting period.

Family day care

Our family day care program provides flexible, professional and supervised care for children from birth to 12 years of age in the private homes of qualified and professional family day care educators.

The nature of the family day care service, along with the practices at educators' homes, caters for a diverse cultural community, and the educators employed at the service reflect this. Working collaboratively with families, the educators work to support children to connect with and retain their cultural identity and home language. Families often build strong connections with educators, with all siblings often attending the same educator's home for education and care.

We have nine registered educators who cared for 84 children in 2021-22. All of our educators are qualified in Certificate III of Education and Care. They are also required to have a current Working with Vulnerable People Card and a current First Aid Certificate.

In 2022, our weekly playgroup commenced following the 2021 lockdown. This playgroup allows children and educators to come together to socialise, network and learn from each other.

Our educators are continuously extending and enhancing their existing skill sets and knowledge through participating in fortnightly at-home professional development and training based on the National Quality Standards and National Quality Framework.



Housing services

We have provided housing support to women and the broader Canberra community for nearly 80 years, commencing with the opening of Leave House on Mort St by Lady Gowrie in 1942.

Today we provide supported accommodation services on behalf of the ACT Government and we are a registered community housing provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.

Domestic and family violence remain a leading cause of homelessness for women and children in Canberra. We provide specialist support to women and children in the Canberra region who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to find secure, safe and affordable long-term housing. We also ensure to address any underlying causes of homelessness.

We help families access housing, information, resources and social supports to build capacity, prevent homelessness and empower families to maintain their tenancy. This includes family case management to help families deal with past or present trauma impacting their ability to maintain a tenancy.

Rentwell

Rentwell is YWCA Canberra's property management service that provides affordable rental properties to people on moderate incomes who find it difficult to secure and maintain tenancies in the mainstream market. It is the ACT's first charitable property management service.

YWCA Canberra provides a full-service property management service to owners who rent their properties at 75 per cent or lower of market rent and sources and matches eligible tenants. Property owners receive a tax exemption from the ACT Government, and YWCA Canberra provides a charitable tax-deductible receipt for the difference between market rent and affordable rent.

At the end of the 2021-22 financial year, YWCA Canberra had secured and tenanted 64 properties in the Rentwell program, with a total of 150 tenants.



Next Door

Our Next Door program empowers women age 50 and over and Aboriginal women age 45 and over to secure and maintain affordable, appropriate and safe homes where they can age in place.

Through Next Door, we provide holistic support tailored to the woman's individual situation. This could include:

- finding them a safe, secure and affordable home in the private market or social housing
- providing essential household goods
- helping them maintain their existing tenancy
- helping them engage with health, legal and financial services
- supporting them with employment and training opportunities
- helping them engage with their community.

In the 2021-22 reporting period, we helped 93 women through the Next Door program.

The majority of these women were aged 50 to 80 years old, with some from non-English speaking backgrounds. Over half were on the aged pension or other allowance and were experiencing housing insecurity because of extremely unaffordable rental prices in Canberra.

This year we have had over 75 per cent of our clients enter long term secure housing. In addition, we ran a range of social and cultural activities that allowed our clients to come together to support one another and establish a sense of community and belonging.

Case study

*Gloria was referred to the Next Door program by Onelink. At the time, she had been living in her car behind a shopping centre for four months. She had applied for Housing ACT assistance and was in the process of an initial assessment.

Prior to this, Gloria lived with her ex-husband and, due to domestic violence, was forced to move out to live with her daughter and grandchildren, where she slept on the couch. When her daughter had a new baby, the circumstances in the house became very fraught and Gloria decided to move out. She couch surfed through various friends for a while but found this very disruptive. She decided that to maintain her friendships, it would be easier for her to move into her car. Gloria experiences extreme social

anxiety, which meant emergency shared accommodation was not a suitable option for her. This was when she started living behind the shopping centre, utilising public toilet facilities during this duration.

Gloria also had physical health issues, such as lung disease and a cancer diagnosis, where she was awaiting a treatment commencement date. At this time, Gloria maintained a job for 20 hours a week in a clothing store stock room. Although she was living in her car, Gloria never missed a shift.

Next Door worked intensely with Gloria to assess her application at a high-priority level, which involved close and prolonged collaboration with Housing ACT. After five months of negotiation, Gloria was prioritised, and after another two months, she was provided with housing.

**Not the client's real name.*

Transitional and affordable housing

We support women with children and single women who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or escaping domestic and family violence, with safe and affordable transitional housing.

We advocate for long-term safe, secure and affordable housing solutions and collaborate with other local services to help our service users stabilise their lives, reach their individual goals and move forward as a family group to live their best lives.

This year we provided crisis accommodation, family case management and outreach support to 292 people. Of this, we supported 196 young people 18 years and under and 58 families.

We provided safe and affordable accommodation for six families in long-term housing while helping three women to enter private and affordable rentals, allowing them to redirect from social housing.

26 per cent of our clients identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

To recognise First Nations children in our program, we celebrated National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day with all our service users for the second year. We incorporated published resources, colouring pages, crafts,

and stories that promote cultural awareness and acknowledge these children as emerging First Nations Elders.

Our Housing Support Unit continued to work with other agencies and businesses to empower women and families to thrive within our services. We strengthened our working relationship with My Coaching My Future, a woman-led mentorship program. Through this program, we were able to help two clients enter the workforce, which will provide them with a sustainable income that will assist them in maintaining secure housing.

Throughout the reporting period, we have continued to build on our housing advocacy for transgender clients, using our position and reputation to advocate for safer, more inclusive trans-friendly emergency and transitional housing services.



During the Christmas holiday, we received generous donations from the Canberra community, which allowed us to deliver curated food hampers and movie vouchers to all our families.

"I cannot recommend highly enough to you the YWCA Canberra; this not for profit organisation which is assisting my daughter and I with a combination of professionalism and compassion so outstanding that it begins to restore a little faith to my daughter and I that we may survive our current ordeal to break a domestic abuse cycle which includes, sexual, physical, emotional and financial abuse suffered by women in my family for generations and to aim to one day be truly free and independent".

- Housing support services client

Supportive Tenancy Services

The Supportive Tenancy Service (STS) provides support, advocacy and referral for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or living in unsatisfactory housing. It is a consortium of YWCA Canberra, Woden Community Services and Capital Region Community Services.

The service uses a strengths-based approach in a trauma-informed and person-centred framework to bring about positive outcomes for its clients.

STS is funded under the National Affordable Housing Agreement and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which are jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments.

Case study

*Sara is a mother who has had ongoing mental health issues since she was 14. Soon after giving birth to her child at age 17, her relationship at the time became violent and broke down. However, Sara persevered, finishing a business diploma and gaining employment in the public service.

In early 2020, Sara started experiencing bullying by her manager; then, her fiancé started abusing her financially and controlling who she could see and when. Combined with her pre-existing mental health issues, this resulted in Sara attempting suicide. When she was discharged from the hospital, she left her fiancé and moved home with her parents. There was not much room for Sara and her child in their two-bedroom townhouse.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and Sara's parents started working from home, they asked her to move out. YWCA Canberra found Sara and her daughter a vacancy in one of our transitional housing properties. Still, her experiences had left Sara in a fragile state that made it hard to engage and connect with services and support.

In the depths of her illness, Sara began doubting her ability to parent her ten-year-old child, and Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) became involved. Our family case manager worked closely with Sara and CYPS to support her in her mental health recovery and regain her confidence in parenting again. Our case manager also supported Sara's child through this process, who has been incredibly resilient and supportive of her mother.

Unfortunately, the side effects of Sara's medication to treat her mental health issues sometimes left her unable to drive, impacting her daughter's school attendance and CYPS became involved again. Our case manager liaised with OneLink to organise funding for transport to and from school when Sara could not drive. CYPS was happy with this creative solution and closed the matter.

We continue to help Sara maintain her home and access NDIS to help with medical costs and house cleaning. Sara's case manager has also worked closely with her to help regain her self-confidence and capacity to function in her daily world. Sara is now working towards re-entering the workforce part-time.

**Not the client's real name.*

Case study

*Jane is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mother of two. She had recently ended a long-term relationship with an abusive partner, who had moved out. She was on a joint lease with her ex-partner, which was about to end, and Jane could not afford to stay in the property independently.

She struggled with finding an affordable home in Canberra but was eventually able to find one. However, it was unavailable until a week after Jane's current lease ended.

When Jane first contacted STS, she had only had two days before her current lease ended. She was desperate for a place for her and her children to live during the gap between leases.

STS liaised with Jane's current real estate agent to try to arrange a one-week extension to the lease. Although the agent was very

supportive and understanding of Jane's situation, they advised that the next tenants had already agreed to move from Sydney in a few days.

STS proposed a novel solution: that Jane could share with the new tenants for one week. The real estate agent and new tenants were happy with this idea and organised an agreement. The real estate agent also agreed to reduce the rent for the week to support Jane.

STS arranged for Jane to pay off rental arrears by entering an affordable payment plan with the real estate agent. The team also organised a referral to Care Inc for additional financial support for Jane. Once she settled into her new home with her children, Jane returned to her role in the workforce and can now pay her rent and support her family.

**Not the client's real name.*

YHomes

Older women remain the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness, and domestic and family violence remains one of the key drivers of women's homelessness. In response, our YHomes project will build nine independent and quality supported housing dwellings for women in a convenient location in Ainslie. Once completed, these will provide safe and affordable homes to women at risk of homelessness.

In late 2020 we submitted our Development Application, which was approved by the ACT Planning Authority in April 2021.

Unfortunately, our Development Application was later challenged by a small group of residents at the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the Tribunal) and became subject to appeal. In September 2021, the Tribunal upheld the appeal and overturned the approval of the Development Application for YHomes on the basis of minor architectural adjustments.

In February 2022, we lodged a new Development Application that considered the Tribunal's findings. In late June 2022, this Development Application was called in by the Minister for Planning and Land Management. This permits the YHomes project to proceed to the building phase without the risk of further third-party appeals.

We are now confident that our new development application has incorporated the views of the

Tribunal and the community, and that the significant support from local residents for this important and purpose-driven development will continue into the next phase of this process.

Over the last two and a half years, YWCA Canberra has been overwhelmed with the immense amount of support toward this project from the Canberra community, including from Ainslie residents who shared with us their response to the Ministerial call-in. We are extremely grateful for this ongoing support.

We look forward to continuing to move forward and work with our supporters as this importance project becomes a reality.



"As an Ainslie resident, I am delighted to know that the YWCA's housing project designed to meet an urgent and growing need is to proceed at last. Its residents will have affordable and safe accommodation which is close to transport, medical facilities and shops. Co-residence will provide the benefit of mutual support and efficiency in service delivery,"

- Ms Meridith Edwards, local resident

"[My family and I]...are very pleased to see it now proceeding, providing a vital housing service for a particularly needy group. The planning approval process has ensured that all local views have had a very good hearing and the right decision has now been made."

- Tony Adam, Ainslie resident

Ragusa Quarantine Support Hub

In September 2021, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, ACT Health implemented a Managed Quarantine Program to prevent transmission of COVID-19. The quarantine facility was designed to support COVID-19-positive members of the community who were unable to isolate or quarantine at a place of residence but did not require hospitalisation. The intention was to provide these community members with appropriate accommodation and services to assist them in isolating themselves safely. The model included an NGO-led hub providing person-centred case coordination, information, and support. YWCA Canberra was nominated to be the NGO lead for the Support Hub.

The Quarantine Management facility in O'Connor was named Ragusa. To ensure optimal support was provided to the people staying at Ragusa, many of whom were vulnerable and had complex needs, it was decided that Ragusa would operate under an integrated support model. Led by ACT Health, we worked with them and the Community Services Directorate to ensure health, wellbeing, material aid and other needs were addressed holistically.

The NGO Quarantine Support Hub commenced on site at Ragusa on 20 September 2021. YWCA Canberra led a multidisciplinary team of 15 staff with skills in mental health, housing and homelessness, domestic and family violence, case management, disability, youth work, peer worker, and drug and alcohol support. We provided the manager and team leader while seconding four staff to work as onsite case managers.

Through a community sector collaborative approach, staff were seconded from Anglicare, CatholicCare and Mental Health Foundation. We engaged CAHMA and Directions Health Service to provide specialist peer workers and alcohol and

other drugs support onsite seven days per week.

Through the NGO Support Hub, we provided the following support to guests at Ragusa:

- wellbeing and mental health support
- entertainment options activities for children and adults
- coordinating with existing and additional support services
- a friendly chat
- referrals to drug, alcohol, and other medical support
- referrals and support for financial counselling
- coordinating food and other goods
- domestic violence specialist support
- peer support for drug, alcohol, and other issues
- disability support/referrals and assistance in applying for NDIS

- referral to clinical support
- support for housing exit pathways.

The model of care that was jointly coordinated by the Clinical Reach Team, NGO Support Hub and Community Services Directorate, Food and Material Aid provisions was a significant highlight and success of the project.

We are extremely privileged to have participated in a world-first innovative bespoke integrated model of care for Quarantine Management. COVID-19 has further highlighted the inequality

that exists in our ACT community. The collaboration and multidisciplinary approach allowed many vulnerable people with complex support needs to have the ability to quarantine or isolate themselves safely while receiving person-centred wrap-around support. Alongside this, we were able to provide a continuity of care in the community upon discharge.

We look forward to continuing the inter and intra government/community sector collaboration as a method to achieve good outcomes for people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability in Canberra.

"The biggest highlight was seeing how scared, tired and afraid some people were when they entered into Ragusa then after a couple of days of eating, sleeping and having a safe place to stay the look on their faces changed. They became less hard, they were smiling and thankful for all we had done."

- YWCA Canberra Ragusa staff testimonial

Case study

"George was a homeless young person who had previously been linked with services; however, he was still actively drug and alcohol-dependent. During his brief stay, the NGO Support Hub was able to link him with a bed at a rehabilitation centre and support him with food and a mobile phone, amongst various other requests. A day or two into his stay, George was visibly more comfortable and remarked that he "felt so safe at Ragusa". The day before George departed, he called the support hub and reported feeling very anxious. The NGO Support Hub was able to provide emotional support, and George remarked that thanks to the Support Hub, he felt like he could kick his habit and start a new life.

**Not the client's real name.*

Warm Connections

Warm Connections is a counselling service providing individual therapeutic support for families with children and young people from birth to 15 years old. This service offers long-term support to parents/caregivers, children and young people and aims to strengthen family relationships and improve wellbeing. When required, Warm Connections collaborates with other services within YWCA Canberra, such as our Housing Support Unit and Domestic Violence Support Service team.

Although Warm Connections has traditionally been delivered through face-to-face sessions, we successfully adapted to COVID-19 restrictions through online and telephone service delivery. This allowed our counsellors to continue offering sessions to existing clients, and to engage with people impacted by COVID-19. These options proved so popular that, as restrictions eased, we continued to offer them to our clients.

In 2021-22 Warm Connections supported 153 people through trauma-informed and strengths-based therapeutic counselling and intervention.

Of those:

- two-thirds of our clients were from single-parent families
- the majority identified as women
- there was a significant increase in the geographical diversity of clients
- there was a high volume of clients presenting with issues of family and domestic violence.

"I feel so heard and understood.
Now I feel I have a direction to go in."

- Warm Connections service user

Case study

*May was referred to Warm Connections by a Tuggeranong Child and Family caseworker. Our service has an outreach in Tuggeranong Child and Family's offices, allowing May to meet with her Warm Connections counsellor in familiar and trusted surroundings. This inevitably assisted in her recovery.

May arrived with her baby under a year old and had been consuming illicit drugs but stopped taking them when she found out she was pregnant. She had high anxiety and wanted to improve this. May's counsellor soon became aware that May had a traumatic past with her alcoholic father. She identified that May also had a propensity toward addiction.

May became aware during therapy that her current partner was abusive to her. He consumed methamphetamines daily and frightened her whenever he came down from the drug. However, May did not want to leave him as she thought he was vulnerable and would improve over time. Through therapy, May explored this relationship and became aware that her partner was physically, mentally, verbally and financially abusive. May was paying the rent and bills and providing food for everyone, including her partner's children, that often stayed over.

During sessions, May mentioned she was often hungry as she would go without food to feed their child. May was then introduced to YWCA Canberra's Food Hub in Lanyon, and

she became a regular attendee.

May was a devoted mother who always paid attention to her child during the sessions. She was both attached and engaged with her child. During sessions May became aware of the impact of her partner's behaviour on her child. May initially felt confused; however, as the domestic violence escalated, she realised she needed to protect her child.

May was referred to YWCA Canberra's Domestic Violence Support Service and Housing Support service. May had been waiting on the government housing list for over five years, and although she was a priority, she did not meet the top criteria. This prevented her from leaving her abusive relationship as she had nowhere else to go.

With May's permission, her counsellor advocated for her directly. Housing and domestic violence support were critical to keeping this mum and her daughter safe. Our Domestic Violence Support Service team were able to further help May understand she was in an abusive and dangerous situation, and the Housing Support Unit were able to help her move into a modest unit.

May has mentioned that her confidence has grown due to the holistic support she received from YWCA Canberra. May and her daughter now live in a unit suited to their needs. May says her anxiety has reduced, and her mental health has improved.

**Not the client's real name.*



Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre

Located in Lanyon in the south of Tuggeranong and funded by ACT Government, YWCA Canberra's Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre (MLYCC) plays an important role in providing opportunities for the community to engage in social, cultural, recreational and educational activities. MLYCC aims to attract and deliver a range of services to meet the needs of people living in the Tuggeranong region.

During the reporting period, YWCA Canberra was fortunate to receive funding from the Snow Foundation to secure a fit-for-purpose 12-seater bus for MLYCC. The Snow Foundation Community Bus provides access to safe, secure, and free to low-cost transport for local community groups and organisations. It has provided a means of transport for many community members in the Tuggeranong region who experience significant barriers to accessing transport.

The bus has been utilised by:

- various local community groups
- a local Aboriginal organisation
- MLYCC's Youth Engagement team
- local schools
- seniors groups.

It has been used for:

- cultural trips
- community access
- transport to medical support
- school holiday activities
- staff networking
- excursions.

This year there was a swell of free activities taking place at MLYCC including:

- Tax HELP support
- Saver Plus financial program facilitation
- Care Financial services
- Aboriginal Women's Group meetings
- community garden working bees
- ACT Health pop-up vaccination clinics
- a STEM playgroup
- National Reconciliation Week events.

On average, MLYCC had 570 visitors per month.

MLYCC has a range of spaces that are used by individuals, groups, organisations and commercial businesses to deliver activities and events. MLYCC has become a popular space for the Tuggeranong community, with the hall hired out for 70 per cent of weekends since the last lockdown was lifted.

Tax HELP remains a staple at the centre as a free tax program that helps people earning under \$60,000 to lodge their tax returns online.

In 2021-22 MLYCC formed a partnership with Direction Health to operate a free Teen Clinic. The clinic operates at MLYCC weekly and is open to young people aged 12 to 25. It allows young people to talk to qualified nurses about medical and non-medical issues in a safe, supportive and discreet environment.



On June 2022, MLYCC hosted a National Reconciliation Week event for the local community. As part of our youth activities, First Nations woman Grace Currey led a mural art workshop in the youth hub, which created a centrepiece in the space.

MLYCC hosted several local Early Childhood groups to celebrate National Reconciliation Week. Wiradjuri elder Larry Brandy told stories to 35 preschoolers by involving the children in dance. They learned how Aboriginal people hunted and found food. After the session, the preschoolers participated in arts and crafts activities. They created an Aboriginal flag through hand painting.

The Youth Engagement team hosted weaving and Aboriginal plant use workshops for young people. Wiradjuri woman Jessika Spence facilitated the weaving workshop, allowing the young people to create bracelets and baskets through different coiling techniques. Jessika spoke about how the skill was taught to her by her grandmother and discussed the uses of weaving.

Wiradjuri man Adam Shipp led the Aboriginal plant workshop and explained how native plants help with specific ailments such as sleeping, back pain and skin conditions. Adam shared with the group a variety of local and regional Aboriginal plants and ingredients and their uses.

Lanyon Food Hub

The Lanyon Food Hub, situated in MLYCC, provides emergency relief, regular food relief support, and material aid. It provides a wide variety of fresh and non-perishable food through funding from the Department of Social Services, our relationships with Oz Harvest, Baker's Delight Lanyon, and Food Bank NSW & ACT and the support of the ACT Government, which funds the refrigerated transport of food from Foodbank NSW.



In 2021-22, the Lanyon Food Hub supported 440 members, providing food on 1990 occasions (including 142 Christmas hampers). Of our members:

- 16 per cent are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- 27 per cent are people with a disability
- 11 per cent are culturally and/or linguistically diverse.

With the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting employment and income, the Food Hub once again saw an overwhelming increase in new members seeking emergency relief support. This reporting period found a significant increase in members who accessed the service compared to the last. Further, the reporting period saw a rise in both Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

During lockdown periods, many service users found accessing the Food Hub difficult as they were reluctant to use public transport. As a result, the team pivoted to delivering pre-packaged hampers of fresh food, non-perishables, and frozen items. Within this period, MLYCC provided support for existing members who had to quarantine as they were COVID positive or close contacts. The team also received referrals through ACT Health's Contact Tracing team, connecting people who required food support with our service.

Leading up to Christmas, MLYCC staff worked tirelessly to make deliveries across the ACT to ensure that the Canberra community could enjoy the holidays despite challenging circumstances or limited financial capacities. The Food Hub also remained open until late afternoon on Christmas Eve.

The short-term support provided by our Food Hub continues to meet some of the basic needs of many diverse individuals and families in the Tuggeranong region. Members are grateful for our service and how it has assisted them throughout extremely challenging periods.

"Thank you so much for helping me out with a food hamper and vouchers last thing on a Friday. I don't know what I would do without you all."

- A single mother with COVID who required groceries for herself and her daughter



Coombs Community Centre and Cottage

In May 2022, YWCA Canberra was selected to manage the Coombs Community Centre and Cottage hiring after an expression of interest process was conducted by the ACT Government.

The Coombs Community Centre provides a large open hall available to a diverse range of community groups and individuals at an affordable community rate. This includes

parents' groups, yoga classes, corporate functions, training sessions, celebratory events and general meetings. With the ability to host up to 150 people, the space includes modern amenities and features technology for audio-visual presentations, a kitchenette, and bathrooms.

Located a short distance from the centre is the Coombs Cottage which has three smaller rooms suitable for private therapy sessions, interviews, meetings and a shared co-working space. With the ability to host up to 12 people inside, the space includes a kitchen, lounge area, outdoor area, BBQ and whiteboard.

As the population of the Molonglo Valley community continues to grow, we are excited to have the opportunity to host two affordable spaces that allow the community to gather, connect and celebrate.

Youth programs

Our youth programs support young people aged ten to 25 years who live, work or play in the Tuggeranong region. Working with young people from as young as ten years old has allowed us to build stronger relationships with local primary schools and deliver psychosocial programs, supports and casework.

Our Youth Engagement team at the MLYCC and the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse work collaboratively to deliver innovative and engaging activities to help reduce the risk of young people disengaging from education and employment. These activities build resilience, social and personal awareness, problem-solving and complex reasoning skills, communication and interpersonal skills. In our programs, young people can explore their interests and be their authentic selves.



The Tuggeranong Youth Engagement program is funded by the ACT Government, and the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse receives philanthropic support through partnerships and donations.

In the 2021-22 reporting period, we supported 2181 young people through our youth engagement programs.

In addition, we supported 25 young people in accessing the Teen Clinic since the partnership commenced.

Through the Youth Engagement team, we provide drop-in services for young people five days a week across the two sites. We support young people using a strength-based model to develop collaborative, individualised support plans. This includes our service for sexuality and gender diverse young aged ten to 25, the A-Z Sexuality and Gender Diverse social support group. During this reporting period, A-Z worked with young people and their families to provide information and referrals to additional support where required. On average, we had 35 young people attend each A-Z drop-in session.

The Youth Engagement team have supported young people by providing:

- individualised casework to access housing
- support to obtain Centrelink payments
- assistance to secure and maintain employment
- connection to further education
- navigation of the legal system
- access to youth-focused health services
- support in pursuing and finalising various creative projects.

Over the year, our Youth Engagement team worked with groups at local schools and has been instrumental in supporting a select group of young people in partnership with Calwell High School. The team provided tailored activities at MLYCC to increase engagement and support the students' successful transition back to school.

The team also supported or facilitated a range of local community events, with 480 young people engaging through our events in total.

YWCA Canberra Clubhouse

YWCA Canberra's Clubhouse is a free, out-of-school learning space that provides young people aged 10 to 18 in the Tuggeranong region with access to the latest technology, as well as mentoring and support to grow their skills in science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and music (STEAMM).

The YWCA Canberra Clubhouse is part of the Clubhouse Network, a global community of 100 Clubhouses in 20 countries.

The program exists to deliver better socio-economic outcomes for the Tuggeranong community and better STEAMM employment outcomes for young women and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse backgrounds. With the essential support from our cross-sector partners, volunteers, the Tuggeranong community, and our dedicated staff, our members have access to cutting-edge technology, industry mentors and a supportive environment that fosters their creativity and independent learning almost every week of the year.

We had 561 young people as Clubhouse members this year.

Of those members, 6 per cent identify as transgender or non-binary, 34 per cent are girls, and 11 per cent are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people.

During the reporting period, Clubhouse welcomed 114 new members and created opportunities to explore technology across two creative and innovative spaces.

During the 2021 COVID lockdown, Clubhouse expanded members' skills in photography by delivering a virtual photography program for Clubhouse members and students from a local disability specialist school.

Clubhouse also participated in Facebook's Engineer for the Week project, which involved members exploring the world of engineering, discovering game design principles, and learning



block-based programming. An engineering team was formed, and participants were able to develop their own game to address a topic that mattered to them.

Clubhouse members were able to engage virtually during lockdown, as well as participating in face-to-face sessions across our main Clubhouse location at Richardson Primary and our Mobile Clubhouse at the Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre.

Members have completed numerous self-directed projects, such as creating pronoun badges to sell at markets and schools, sewing a cosplay costume, designing digital art to print onto clothing and producing their own music.

During the reporting period, Clubhouse successfully received the international Clubhouse Network Tech Refresh grant. This enabled us to significantly expand the program's textile portfolio, which will support young people to start their own creative industry businesses.

*"*James is loving Clubhouse SO much, it has given him a sense of belonging that he hasn't ever felt in his life. Social situations are sometimes very tricky for him, so thank you for providing a safe and welcoming space for him, it makes us so happy to see him so happy."*

- The mother of a member with ASD and ADD.

**Not the member's real name.*



LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and funding, we could not deliver our usual LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom, which allows young people to experience a formal style event with a sit-down dinner, dance floor and activities. Instead, we consulted with 27 young LGBTQIA+ young people across Canberra, A Gender Agenda and the Bit Bent group at Capital Region Community Services ACT. We decided to provide an alternative outdoor event with new activities and opportunities.

As a result, we hosted our first ever LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom in the Park, a festival-style event with youth-led market stalls, live youth bands, a free clothes swap, face painting and an array of arts and craft activities. We included other local LGBTQIA+ and youth services in Canberra to advertise their services and support the participants on the day, including Meridian, A Gender Agenda and the Northside Community Services Youth Engagement Team.

The event was a huge success, with 180 young people in attendance.

They Leads

After identifying the need for leadership events tailored to young people in the LGBTQIA+ community, YWCA Canberra's LGBTQIA+ youth engagement experts designed and launched the inaugural 2022 They Leads Conference.

They Leads Conference is a free, one-day leadership event tailored toward LGBTQIA+, gender/sexuality diverse young people and their allies aged 12 to 25 years living in Canberra and the surrounding regions. The event's approach to leadership understands the way people's unique identities shape their experiences. Through this lens, the Conference provides young people with the confidence to embrace their identities while exploring social and emotional development, peer relationships and pressures, self-esteem, critical thinking, and how to identify key social issues.

80 young people across the ACT and the surrounding regions attended the 2022 They Leads Conference.

"Through They Leads, I learned that leadership is about community, and making sure everyone has a voice."

- 2022 They Leads attendee

"I learned that leadership is a work in progress. You are constantly learning and growing and being a leader is about being supportive and taking people along for the ride."

- 2022 They Leads attendee

"This conference provided an incredible forum to discuss and analyse LGBTQIA+ existence and reflect on my existence."

- 2022 They Leads attendee

Attendees were exposed to diverse local leaders and different leadership pathways, inspiring them to engage with their own leadership journeys. It featured:

- uplifting keynotes from local prominent LGBTQIA+ young leaders
- engaging panel conversations that invited students to join the discussion
- entertainment from local LGBTQIA+ artists
- an intersectional approach to unpacking how LGBTQIA+ young people can break through leadership barriers.

The event was a huge success, with participants providing very positive feedback surrounding the event.

They Leads was possible due to funding from the ACT Government's Capital of Equality Grants. Due to the event's success, planning is underway to ensure we can offer the event annually and we are seeking corporate partnerships to ensure the financial future of They Leads.



Y-Aspire

Y-Aspire is a free eight-week young women's leadership program for girls and non-binary students in years 7 and 8. Through a series of two-hour workshops that combine knowledge-based and interactive activities, the participants identify and build on their existing skills.

They explore topics such as identity, body confidence, respectful relationships, self-care, creativity, resilience and leadership to achieve their potential at school and beyond.

In 2021-22, we delivered Y-Aspire training to 25 girls and non-binary people, despite lockdowns and teacher shortages.

Tuggeranong Network Coordination

Tuggeranong Network Coordination identifies areas of unmet need and gaps in service delivery that impact vulnerable children, young people and families living across the ACT and regionally. The program also fosters a collaborative approach across four Canberra organisations to address these gaps.

During the 2021-22 reporting period, Network Coordination established 30 new connections across Canberra.

A Network Coordination Governance Group was also formed to better support and direct the program.

The Network Coordinator provided targeted assistance to families with young children within the region. This included:

- the development of a new Activity Plan
- participating in the Service Improvement Project
- administering the Child, Youth and Family Services Program survey
- supporting the Child, Youth and Family Services Program practice leaders' group
- participating in a range of community opportunities and events.

During the reporting period, we upgraded our Mura Lanyon Community Garden with the support and generosity of local volunteers. Over five working bees, the garden space was transformed and will now produce fresh vegetables that will be provided to our Food Hub. The new garden space now includes ten raised garden beds, including a wheelchair accessible garden bed. The outdoor space also includes a new pizza oven and a shade cloth. This revitalised space will now be utilised by our Youth Engagement Team and will also be available to the greater community for events and activities.



National Women's Safety Alliance

YWCA Canberra was awarded the contract for the establishment of the National Women's Safety Alliance in 2021, with a mission to bring together a diversity of voices, expertise and experiences to inform and guide national policy on women's safety.

Since commencing operations in August 2021, the Alliance has swiftly become a key voice for specialist organisations and victim-survivors

of domestic, family and sexual violence against women. The work of the Alliance connects governments at all levels with the women's sector, policy experts, practitioners, and victim-survivors with a shared vision to end violence against women. Since the election, we have been working closely with the Australian Government to provide up-to-date and expert advice across a range of legislative reforms and policy agendas. The Alliance's membership comprises over 160 organisations and individuals from across Australia.

The Alliance's policy and advocacy priorities and positions are informed by the Policy and Advocacy Advisory Committee. In addition, two working groups have been established to further inform and progress policy advice centered on the key issues of domestic, family and sexual violence, and sexual harassment.

The past 12 months have been focused on establishing the Alliance's core functions and setting up the structures of the advisory committee and working groups. The Alliance has been involved from the outset in providing advice and feedback to the draft National Plan to End Violence Against Women and their Children and lobbying government to ensure it is adequately resourced. The Alliance has also worked with members to provide advice to government on measures such as the Escaping Violence Payment and paid domestic violence leave. Further the Alliance also participated in the *Respect@Work* Roundtable to plan and discuss the approach to implementing the remaining recommendations from the landmark *Respect@Work* report. With the support of our experts on our Sexual Harassment Working Group, we have provided submissions and advice on the draft legislation to the Attorney General's Department, *Respect@Work* taskforce.

In March 2022, the Alliance undertook pre-election advocacy to both major parties, seeking a cross-party commitment to ending gender-based violence, outlining 20 recommendations in our policy brief, *In One Generation*. This was supported by a call out to business, government, and other leaders in the community to take a public pledge of commitment.

As the Alliance continues to grow in membership, our operational team will continue to drive engagement with members around key legislative and policy measures to address violence against women, with a view to ensuring the expertise and experiences of the sector, and victim-survivors is represented to Government.

Strategic priority two

We build capacity
and connect girls and
women through our
training, leadership
programs and
networking events





She Leads women's leadership pathway program

She Leads is our flagship leadership program for women and non-binary people. The program equips the next generation of women and non-binary leaders, from all sectors and industries, with the skills and confidence they need to reach their leadership potential.

The program includes:

- She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management
- She Leads Conference
- She Leads College Conference (for years 11 and 12)
- She Leads High Conference (for years nine and ten)
- She Leads In-Conversation series
- She Leads Workshops.





She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management

YWCA Canberra recognises that there is no one way of leading. People from diverse backgrounds lead differently, and this helps organisations grow and consider a broad spectrum of ideas, experiences, and opinions. However, too often diverse voices are left out of the conversation and their leadership potential ignored in the workplace.

The She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management is at the cutting-edge of women's leadership development. It builds upon a traditional Diploma of Leadership and Management (BSB50420) by acknowledging and addressing the perspectives, challenges and opportunities for women and non-binary people in leadership. It includes additions specifically for diverse leaders, considering intersectional issues and a range of leadership styles.

Through the course, students have the opportunity to gain the best-practice skills, theoretical knowledge, and networks to accelerate their leadership journey, in a safe and supportive environment.

This year, 32 students graduated with a She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management. There are 39 students currently working towards completing the qualification.

This year we sponsored four of our staff members to undertake the Diploma.

All students have access to the wrap-around services that YWCA Canberra offers. One of our students has utilised this by accessing support through our Domestic Violence Support Service.

This year we delivered four two-hour workshops on negotiation and self-advocacy skills to 120 women from the Commonwealth Attorney Generals Department. We have also started to deliver one hour long online mini-courses on *How to Lead Difficult Conversations* as part of the Diploma information sessions.

She Leads Conference

The She Leads Conference brings emerging and established women leaders and non-binary people, together with some of Australia's most inspiring, diverse and accomplished women leaders.

Although we had to cancel the She Leads Conference in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were excited to bring the event back in July 2021. As our seventh She Leads Conference, the event was held at Kambri Cultural Centre and had 400 attendees. The theme was *Power: Have it. Own it. Challenge it*, which explored and encouraged a rethink of traditional power structures. By delving into the ways power impacts individuals, the opportunities to empower women and how unequal power creates challenges for gender equality, attendees were equipped with skills to create meaningful change in their everyday lives, workplaces, and communities.

The Conference was emceed by journalist and comedian Chris Ryan. Dr Mehreen Faruqi, Nina Funnell and Amy Thunig delivered virtual keynotes and Cath Grassick delivered a keynote in-person.

"I have moments of doubt with the constant hate, but I am also lucky to have people in my life who provide me with grounding and love that we need to sustain ourselves. We can't do this alone."

- Speaker Dr Mehreen Faruqi at the She Leads Conference

90 per cent of attendees surveyed rated the She Leads Conference as either excellent or good.

Panel sessions included:

- *Breaking up the boys' club: finding individual power within male-dominated spaces* with Karen Middleton (facilitator), Jo Farrell, Marissa McDowell, Olivia Thornto and Zakia Patel
- *Standing in the way of control: letting go of problems and things out of your control to create healthier outcomes* with Nipuni Wijewickrema (facilitator), Celeste Trione aka Mae Q Sqwheel, Nicole Short, Sally Gibson and Dixie Crawford
- *Tipping the scale: redressing power imbalances* with Misha Schubert (facilitator), Caroline McDonald, Christina Ryan and Joanne Fenton.

"If you want someone because they bring diversity, you need to remember that that person belongs to a body and a community."

- Speaker Amy Thunig at the She Leads Conference

We delivered three seminar sessions:

- *Navigating difficult conversations* presented by Nadia Pessarossi
- *How to communicate effectively for productive outcomes* presented by Llewella Jago
- *Leading inclusively and authentically with self-reflection and purpose* presented by Frances Crimmins.

For the first time, in 2021, attendees were given the opportunity to purchase a ticket that included an additional speed networking and mentoring style session. This activity was delivered over lunch and facilitated by Caroline McDonald, Holly Komorowski, Leanne Castley MLA, Paula Goodwin, and Frances Crimmins.





She Leads High Conference, She Leads College Conference and She Leads In-Conversations

Our She Leads High and College Conferences are one-day leadership events specifically targeted at young women and non-binary people in years nine and ten and years 11 and 12, respectively. The Conferences provide a unique out-of-school opportunity for students to explore and solidify their leadership identity and reflect on their experiences, strengths, values, and goals. The events feature young, dynamic presenters and interactive workshops that provide the students with the confidence and practical skills to kickstart their leadership journeys.

Our She Leads In-Conversation events are quarterly evening events that allow Canberrans the opportunity to hear from women and non-binary people, who are leaders from different backgrounds and industries. They are held in a conversational format, followed by a live Q&A session and networking with drinks and canapes. The series provides a platform for a range of diverse women leaders to share their often-unconventional experiences and pathways to leadership and explores topics such as gender equality, leadership, feminism, and social change.

Sadly, due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, we had to make the difficult decision to postpone our She Leads In-Conversation planned for September 2021 as well as both our She Leads High and College Conferences scheduled for April 2022. We had also scheduled Sandra Pankhurst as the featured speaker for

our final She Leads In-Conversation in 2021; however, Sandra sadly passed away in July 2021.

We were excited to once again commence our She Leads In-Conversation series in May 2022, where over 70 attendees joined inspiring Wiradyuri women, Dr Anita Heiss and Sarah Burr. Anita is an award-winning author, advocate for Indigenous literacy and has worked in remote communities as a role model, encouraging young First Nations Australians to write their own stories. She has also performed her work and lectured on Aboriginal literature across the globe. Sarah is a former Vice President of YWCA Canberra and has interviewed a number of bestselling Aboriginal authors and writers, including Tara June Winch, Veronica Gorrie and Celeste Liddle.

Held just prior to National Reconciliation Week, this was a significant She Leads In-Conversation event. Anita and Sarah discussed empowerment through education and importantly, why the stories of First Nations Australians need to be not only told but heard.

Aunty Violet Sheridan performed a Welcome to Country and in addition to Aunty Violet, two Elders were in attendance on the night. Around one out of five attendees identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

It was a memorable night with both Anita and Sarah sharing many insights and laughs, followed by a book signing by Anita.

100 per cent of attendees surveyed were very satisfied with the event and speakers.

100 per cent of attendees surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that the event inspired and motivated them to pursue their goals.

We look forward to once again hosting our She Leads High and College Conferences in September 2022. We will provide full details in our next Annual Report.



She Leads Workshops

The She Leads Workshops are short evening sessions run throughout the year. They provide women and non-binary people with the opportunity to enhance their skills, knowledge and confidence to take on leadership roles and further progress their leadership journey.

Tailored to the specific needs of women and non-binary people, the She Leads Workshops are practical, interactive and hands-on events that are run by distinguished women from diverse industries and areas of expertise.

We ran seven She Leads Workshops over the 2021-22 financial year. Four were in person, and three were virtual. These workshops included our ever-popular Board Readiness series that runs over two days and deep dives into board governance and finance, as well as Confidence in Public Speaking with media and communications expert Catherine McGrath.

New workshops introduced during the year were *How to build your brand through compelling content* with Amanda Whitley, *Let's invest: starting a share portfolio* with Angela Koch, *Overcoming self-doubt and cultivating courage in leadership* with Angie Ford and *How to reimagine your career and plan your next career move* with Barbara Livesey.

Across the year:

- 238 registered attendees across the seven workshops, and our in-person workshops consistently sold out
- 100 per cent of the respondents after our workshop *Confidence in Public Speaking* said they agreed that the workshop equipped them in building their confidence in public speaking, as well as how to structure, write and deliver a speech
- 100 per cent of the respondents after our workshop *Overcoming self-doubt and cultivating courage in leadership* agreed that they have learnt tools and insights on how to overcome self-doubt and cultivate their confidence and courage.
- 100 per cent of the respondents after our workshop *Let's invest: starting a share portfolio* said they agreed the workshop gave them a greater understanding and confidence in what shares are, its risks and how to trade.



Board traineeships

Our Board Traineeship Program began in 2002 and is an integral part of our commitment to building leadership pathways for young women and non-binary people. The program provides our members with the opportunity to actively participate on our Board, without the financial or legal responsibilities of being Directors.

The program is underpinned by our commitment to quotas, with 30 per cent of our board positions being held by young women aged 30 years or under. This ensures that we maintain a culture of diversity on our Board and foster an intergenerational dialogue that guides the work we do.

Since its inception, 76 women have participated in the program, many of whom have subsequently served on the YWCA Canberra Board as Directors.

This year, four women participated: Jacinta Ryan, Chloe Choy, Elaine Dargan and Sadhana Seriamlu.

This program is an innovative approach to addressing the lack of women on boards. We actively work to inspire other organisations to view this challenge as an opportunity to foster a diverse pool of board candidates and make a positive contribution to gender equality.

"It may be cliché to start this way, but it really has been a fantastic honour being a part of the YWCA Board Traineeship program. The organisation is made up of strong, dedicated women and it has been great connecting with and learning from them all. The program has also given me a depth of understanding as to what a well-run, established Board looks like that I would never have otherwise been able to experience at this age and stage of my career. The commitment these women have to creating a gender equal society is inspiring."

- Board Trainee



Education and training

YWCA Canberra is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO National Number 1373) through which we provide consulting, training and facilitation services for individuals, government agencies, private businesses, and community organisations.

YWCA Canberra offers nationally recognised certifications in Early Childhood Education and Care, Leadership and Management, and Cross-sector Infection Control. We also run many other non-certified courses which focus on fostering women's professional and personal development.

In 2021 our Registered Training Organisation implemented aXcelerate, a student and learner management system. This digital platform has allowed greater accessibility of resources to students, resulting in increased completion rates.

YWCA Canberra courses are offered through fee-for-service, work-based traineeships, and programs such as the ACT and Federal Government's Skilled Capital JobTrainer funded training initiative, which encourages learners to pursue qualifications in specific areas of need.

Our trainers use an individualised learning support approach, which includes one-on-one mentoring sessions and online support. As a result, we are proud to receive high rates of learner and employer satisfaction, and many of our graduated students refer us to others.

This year, over 92 per cent of our students identified as coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, and we are proud to support diversity in our society.

This year we delivered certified training in Early Childhood Education and Care, Leadership and Management, and Cross-Sector Infection Control.

- 375 students received training
- 198 of these were new students
- 110 students graduated with a nationally recognised qualification
- 58 students received a statement of attainment in first aid
- eight of these students received a statement of attainment in Cross-Sector Infection Control
- 24 student places were funded via Skilled Capital JobTrainer*
- 62 User Choice trainees were engaged under the national funding for Australian apprenticeships**
- five of these students were self-funded
- four of these students were enrolled through scholarships.

*Skilled Capital JobTrainer is jointly funded by the Australian and ACT governments

** Australian apprenticeships in the ACT are funded by the ACT and Australian Governments

Overall, our students had an 87 per cent satisfaction rate with the training provided.

"The most priceless and great thing to me is meeting my trainer. You are always so kind, patient and support for me, there no words to express how appreciated I am, your generous help and high quality of teaching skills. I value the support I've received from you throughout my studies, so **THANK YOU**"

- ETU graduate feedback

Childhood education and care

We are passionate about providing quality professional development to people who are entering or currently working in the early childhood or school age education and care sector.

Our students gain a nationally recognised qualification through face-to-face group training, mentoring sessions, workplace training and practical placements.

This year, Early Childhood Education and Care qualifications underwent an ASQA training package upgrade during the financial year. As a result, we delivered:

- Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care (CHC30113 and CHC30121)
- Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (CHC50113 and CHC50121).

In 2021 two of YWCA Canberra's staff members were announced as finalists in the ACT Training Awards.

Daisy Ulain, a trainer and assessor in early childhood education and care at YWCA Canberra, was a finalist in the ACT VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year category. Daisy relocated from Pakistan to Australia and commenced working as a Centre Director at YWCA's School Age Care program. She quickly transitioned into the RTO and has over ten years of experience as a dedicated trainer and assessor with YWCA Canberra.

Our second ACT Training Awards 2021 finalist was Jacob Alfonso. Jacob was a finalist in the ACT Trainee of the Year category and completed Certificate III and Diploma of ECEC with YWCA. Jacob is autistic, which has not held him back from achieving his lifelong passion of becoming an Early Childhood Education and Care Educator. Upon receiving his award, Jacob remarked that he was very thankful for his trainers and workplace supervisors, who actively supported him to help finish his Diploma.



This year:

- 43 students graduated with a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, with an additional 46 students working towards completion
- 20 students graduated with a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, with an additional 31 students working towards completion
- 85 per cent to 90 per cent of our graduating students gained employment in the childhood education and care industry.



Educate Inspire Excel Program (EIE)

In 2020 YWCA Canberra launched Educate, Inspire, Excel (EIE), an innovative program that trained people to work in Canberra's early childhood education and care sector. This program was funded by the ACT Government initiative and the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grant. The program concluded on 30 June 2022.

Throughout the program, 53 participants commenced traineeships and gained employment in the early childhood education and care sector. This created a pipeline of early childhood educators for an industry facing a skills shortage and is vital to Canberra's community and economy.

YWCA Canberra found that before EIE, many migrant participants had difficulty finding a career after migrating to Australia. Some had never worked or studied in Australia. Our EIE program helped them identify their strengths and barriers. The team then created tailored plans based on individual circumstances to help them find work with an early childhood service as part of their traineeship. One participant secured her first job in Australia through the EIE program two months after she relocated from Myanmar.

"As a mature age woman I was very doubtful about coming back to study and the workforce. From the beginning until now I was always supported by YWCA Canberra staff. The staff that coordinate the EIE program were caring and had good communication and always responded quickly which helped me believe in myself."

- EIE participant

The program included job readiness training to ensure participants were equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding that underpin successful employment in the children's services sector. The training covered topics including:

- the role of educators and long-term career options
- job interview skills
- expectations from workplaces
- time management for work and study.

Preventing violence against women

YWCA Canberra delivers a range of training and education programs that help prevent and respond to violence against women in the community and our workplaces.

During the 2021-22 reporting period, we provided training to help prevent and respond to violence against women to 37 people, despite COVID-19 lockdowns.

This included delivering:

- bespoke training to ACT public service managers on responding to family violence
- training for 25 participants from the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate
- training for 12 participants from the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
- consultancy to the CFMEU to assist with their Safe and Respectful Workplace proposal
- consultancy to the CFMEU in developing a training session for Safe and Respectful Workplaces - A Gender Equity Workshop on gendered violence in the construction industry and how to prevent it
- support to facilitate a pilot training program for the CFMEU's session for their site workers.

We also worked to develop our *Work Respect* online learning package that addresses sexual harassment in the workplace.

Strategic priority three

We create change by engaging with diverse and at-risk groups and provide leadership through our partnerships, community engagement and advocacy informed by evidence-based policy and research





Policy development and advocacy work

Advocacy is at the heart of the work we do at YWCA Canberra. Our advocacy agenda is directly informed by our service delivery across the ACT and surrounding region. Our advocacy work continues to thrive and achieve impressive outcomes for women and girls living in Canberra.

2021 saw us conduct our second survey of Canberra women, *Our Lives Women in the ACT*. The survey received more than 1200 responses, representing a strong dataset of women and non-binary people in Canberra. The report was launched in December 2021 as part of 16 Days of Activism, exploring women's lived experiences with COVID-19 and its impact on their personal wellbeing, financial stability and safety. The survey's findings reflected current public data on the impact of COVID-19 on domestic or family violence as well as single-parent households, poverty and early access to superannuation. During the reporting period, we were able to use this data to inform our political advocacy in calling for stronger retirement support for women and better welfare measures for single parents.

YWCA Canberra's advocacy work was critical in bringing the YHomes project to a reality. We saw a substantial number of local residents and the broader Canberra community come together to

support this much-needed supported housing project. By galvanising the community who wrote on our behalf to members of the ACT Government and Letters to the Editor pages, we conveyed the need for this project and the spirit of the local community in welcoming future tenants. This campaign resulted in the ACT Government recognising the overwhelming demand for YHomes, and we look forward to proceeding with this build in the immediate future.

During the reporting period, we relaunched our advocacy publication, renaming it *Action Matters* in recognition of Muriel Matters, the first woman to speak, as a protester, in the House of Commons in defence of women's suffrage. We are acutely aware of how passionate and motivated our membership and community are by advocacy opportunities, and the relaunching of this publication supports this enthusiasm. The publication is released bi-monthly and addresses advocacy in thematic-based editions. Our first editions have looked at intersectionality, the pitfalls of girl-boss culture and the value of gender-informed budgeting. *Action Matters* also engages our readership by allowing them to ask advocacy-related questions and receive responses.

For International Women's Day 2022, we developed an in-house short film interviewing three local women about how they had advocated for change in the community. The film explored how



successful advocacy can take many forms. We featured women who had created lasting change in disability support and representation, relationships and sexuality education and workplace rights. We followed up the short film with a panel event open to community members. The event was also live streamed over our Facebook page.

YWCA Canberra's political advocacy has continued to contribute to progressive local reforms that will improve the lives of women and girls in Canberra. We have welcomed the introduction of positive consent legislation as well as the criminalisation of stealthing, after years of working with Members of the Legislative Assembly on the consultation and drafting of these measures. These reforms were key advocacy priorities for YWCA Canberra over a number of years. Our members were heavily engaged in the issue and welcomed the announcement.



Domestic Violence Support Service

YWCA Canberra's Domestic Violence Support Service provides free, confidential, non-judgmental case management support to women and children impacted by domestic and family violence in the ACT. Our domestic and family violence specialists provide outreach support to our clients. The support includes providing them with information and advice, assessing risks and planning for your safety, including providing support to exit an abusive relationship. Our service also actively supports many of our clients in finding housing solutions.

"Thank you so much for your help and support during our most difficult time. We are so grateful to you for all the assistance you have provided for us, especially as we are alone here in this country. Thank you as well to all of the staff at YWCA Canberra, you have been a massive help."

- Client testimonial

Our Domestic Violence Support Service supported 305 women, along with their families, who were impacted by domestic and family violence in the 2021-22 reporting year.

This is a significant increase in women and their families accessing this service from the last reporting year.

The service has experienced persistent, significant demand and has received referrals from various sources such as Supportlink, Onelink, Victims Support ACT, Family Violence Unit of ACT Policing, Family Violence Safety Action Pilot of ACT, Women's Health Service, Women's Legal Centre, Care Financial Inc., Relationships Australia, ACT Education, Catholic Care, Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS), Karinya House and UnitingCare Australia. The service also continues to see an increase in self-referrals.

On average, our service received 16 to 17 new referrals each month.

Since December 2021, we had to create a waitlist. With the significant increase over the past several months, our Domestic Violence Support Service has continually operated at or above capacity. During the August 2021 lockdown, our service adapted to COVID safe practices and increased incoming referrals. During this period, we continued to provide in-person support with our team working from office locations. We were able to use the training hall at our office location to meet with clients. We delivered material aid and food, including online vouchers, to our client's doorsteps. We also increased our phone and virtual support services but found that due to the nature of our work, it was imperative to provide practical, in-person support as well.

Our Domestic Violence Support Service focuses on achieving safety and wellbeing outcomes which are often achieved through providing safe housing outcomes. To manage these needs, our service required brokerage funding that would enable us to quickly and efficiently manage safety and wellbeing. In July 2021, we received a Snow Foundation grant that has since helped us to provide material brokerage for our clients.

Case study

*Daiyu is a 38-year-old woman with an 11-year-old son who arrived in Australia from China in 2020. Being on a partner visa, Daiyu kept enduring violence from her husband as she had no exit. Daiyu spoke broken English and was isolated. It was also brought to our attention that when Daiyu left for work her son, who would be left behind, experienced abuse at the hands of his stepfather.

Our service coordinated with DVCS to support Daiyu in entering emergency motel accommodation. While at emergency accommodation, through DVCS, she was offered refuge at Louisa QBN. Eventually, Daiyu applied for NSW Rent Choice Start Safely scheme and exited the refuge.

Daiyu has informed us that her mental health has improved after escaping the violence. She has also told us that her son is feeling safer and happier. Both mother and son are now safe and have thanked our Domestic Violence Support Services case manager.

*Not the client's real name.

Strategic priority four

We foster a movement of girls and women through our members and connection with the national YWCA organisations





Membership

YWCA Canberra's membership base continues to be a rich and engaged community of women and gender-diverse people, drawn together by our shared passion for gender equality.

Over the past financial year, we have continued implementing the membership engagement plan informed by our 2020 Member and Supporter Survey. The key actions have been to identify and develop new ways of engaging members with our advocacy work, including developing advocacy training that will be trialled in the second half of 2022, with the view to extend into a more ongoing training series in the coming 12 months.

In addition, we have continued to connect our members to key leadership opportunities, including the Great Ideas Small Grants Program and Board Traineeships.

Each year, we offer attendees at our She Leads Conference \$5 memberships, and this ensures we continue to provide accessible membership to a diverse range of people, continuing to grow our community in the ACT.

As of the 21-22 reporting period, we have built an online community of 15539 followers and supporters across our nine social media platforms.

Our social media following is an active and vibrant community that positively engages

with our posts that celebrate the work we do. Further, we have 2857 subscribers across our three electronic direct newsletters. Through these communication channels, our subscribers connect with our leadership events, community news, services and advocacy content every month. We are proud to watch our online community continue to grow.

Our community supporter base continues to expand and mobilise around our work and advocacy in the community. Our efforts to bring the YHomes project to fruition, and lobby for a call-in, saw residents in Ainslie and across Canberra's inner north come forward to support the project publicly. This included some of our supporters writing spontaneous letters to the editor across several local publications. Others wrote directly to the Minister for Planning asking that YHomes be called in and highlighting its important place in the community. In mobilising our networks, our second development application received 119 representations supporting the project. A number of supportive representations also came from organisations including Families ACT, Greater Canberra and Shelter ACT, among others.

Finally, our end of year celebration function in 2021 once again offered our members, supporters and friends the opportunity to connect and celebrate another wonderful year at the YWCA Canberra. We look forward to continuing the tradition of this event.



Great Ydeas

Our Great Ydeas Small Grants Program provides funds to support local women, girls and non-binary people to pursue their passions and improve our community. Priority is given to projects that empower women and non-binary people in our local community and that have the potential to grow beyond the initial funding provided.

The program was launched in 2010 in celebration of our 80th anniversary. Since then, Great Ydeas grants have helped more than 80 local women, girls and non-binary people to progress projects, including launching a conference for women of colour, creating a toolkit for victim-survivors of sexual violence, providing financial literacy workshops for young women and launching social enterprises.

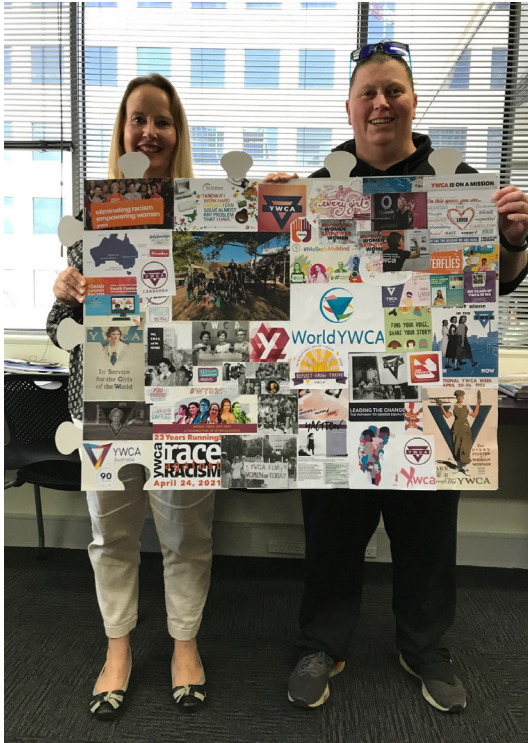
We were honoured to offer Great Ydeas grants once again in early 2022. With support from this year's Great Ydeas partners Beyond Bank, the Canberra Innovation Network, Sustineo, and The Joyful Business Club, we offered a pool of \$16000 to ten projects by Canberra women, girls and non-binary people. This included projects

in the categories of small business, community development, the arts, youth sport, STEM, culturally sensitive domestic and family violence prevention, a sex education podcast, an Auslan playgroup and First Nations knowledge sharing.

We are proud to have demonstrated the collective social impact we can make when corporate, philanthropic, and community organisations work together.

We announced the recipients of this year's grants at our annual Innovation Breakfast. The annual fundraising event also provided an opportunity for members, supporters and partners to come together to show their support for our housing initiatives and to celebrate World YWCA Day. This year all the money raised from the event went directly towards funding our YHomes housing program.

The breakfast included an address from 2021 Great Ydeas recipient Camille Schloeffel. Camille spoke about how her project, the Safe Response Toolkit, aims to reduce the stigmatisation of sexual violence and provide victim-survivors with the autonomy to access and navigate available support systems.



National and global YWCA involvement

YWCA Canberra continues to contribute to the global reach of the World YWCA movement and share the work of other YWCAs worldwide.

Our 2022 International Women's Day event started with a message of solidarity to the YWCA Ukraine and the women and children suffering in the ongoing war. We have also sent messages of solidarity to YWCA USA and shared information with our social media community following the Supreme Court's decision to set aside the constitutional protections for abortion, including details on how to contribute to YWCA USA's campaign.

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was held online for the third year following ongoing travel restrictions as a result of COVID-19. We encouraged our members to participate by registering with the YWCA Australia's online delegation, allowing broad participation from our online community and staff.

YWCA Australia, YWCA Hunter Valley and YWCA Canberra meet formally twice a year to collaborate, share and provide updates on each organisation's current priorities and goals.

We look forward to being able to engage in person in the new year with the easing of COVID lockdowns.

Strategic priority five

We ensure sustainable, transparent and accountable practices through our innovation, strong governance, management, service delivery and partnerships





Governance and corporate structure

We operate under a strong governance model and are governed by a board of up to 12 company directors who define the strategic goals of the organisation.

Our Board of Directors operates according to a Code of Ethics and Proper Practice. A governance manual guides the work of the Directors and establishes the relationship between the Board and the Chief Executive Officer.

Our Constitution guides our work and sets out the fundamental principles under which our organisation is governed. It was last amended at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 16 May 2018.

Our Executive Management Team takes a whole-of-organisation perspective, making key decisions about strategic directions, accountability frameworks, organisational development, policy and quality assurance. The team comprises the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Executive Director of Community Services, Executive Director of Children's Services, Executive Director of Communication, Advocacy and Engagement, and Executive Director of Strategic Development.

The Chief Executive Officer, as the sole employee of the Board, is accountable for the day-to-day management of the organisation.

2021-22 Board Directors



Frances Crimmins
Chief Executive Officer



Carina Zeccola*
President



Natalie Hyde
Treasurer



Julie Lean
Board Member



Kristin Blume
Board Member



Di Bakon
Board Member



Maree Haman
Board Member



Megan Palmer*
Board Member



Talulah Gaunt*
Board Member



Joanne Farrell
Board Member



Kirsty Martin*
Board Member



Renee Mastroleombo*
Board Member

* Denotes young women (aged 30 years or under) at time of appointment.

YWCA Canberra maintains a commitment to ensuring that 30% of all leadership positions and decision-making bodies are held by young women.

Independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee

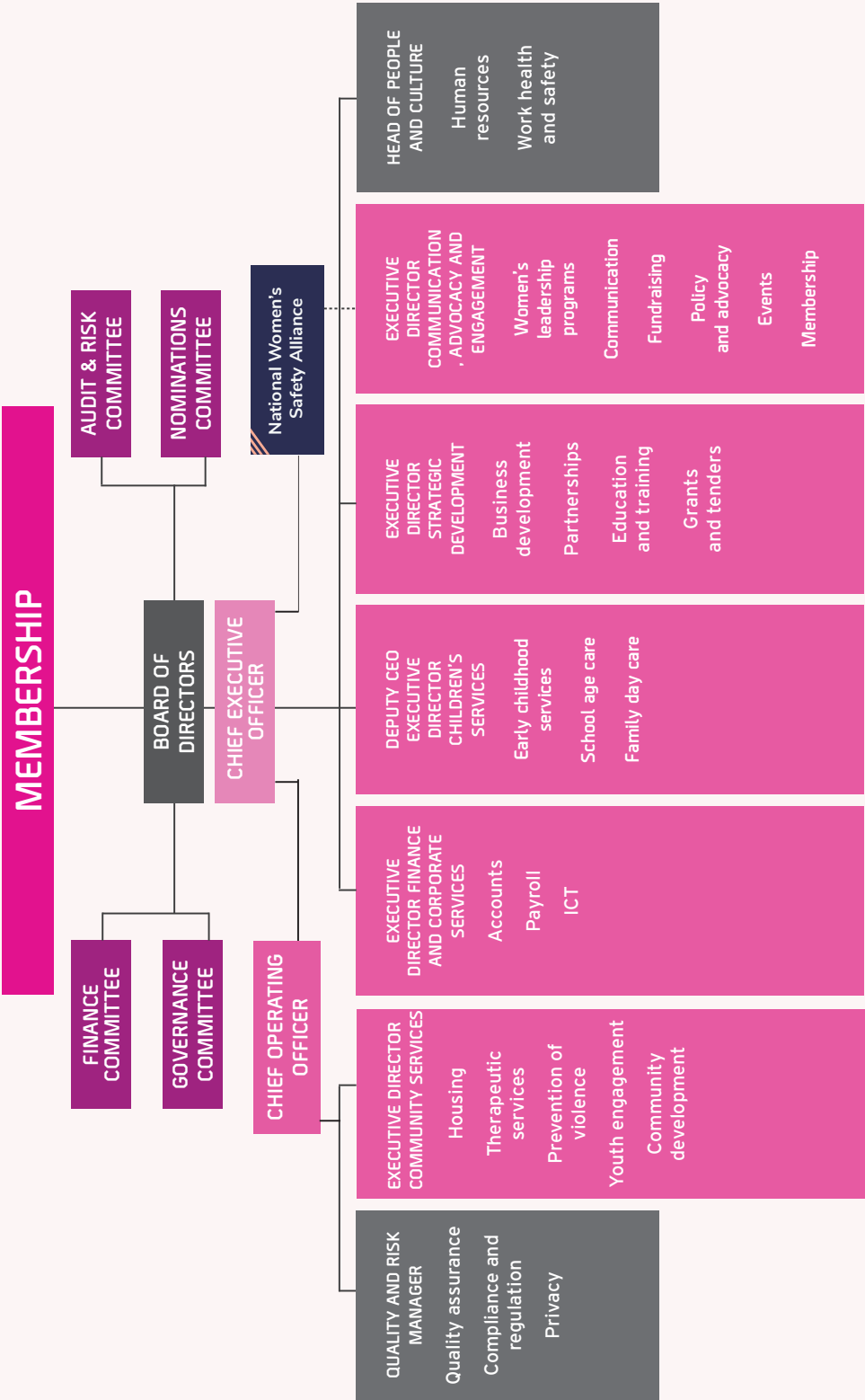


Bridget Browne
Chair



Victoria Oakden
Deputy Chair

Organisational structure





Reconciliation Action Plan

YWCA Canberra's vision for reconciliation is one where the culture, stories, languages and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is celebrated, respected and provided meaningful opportunity to contribute to the vibrancy of Canberra and our work.

We have made substantial progress against our Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-23 (RAP). Our portfolios have all made great strides to embed reconciliation throughout our work and within our networks. Where possible, we have worked with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members for a genuine and consultative approach. Our RAP Working Group meets quarterly to oversee our progress and share updates. This working group is attended by our CEO, who champions our RAP publicly.

Our She Leads program continues to highlight and platform Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who have achieved success across many professional areas. Our flagship event, the She Leads Conference, was attended by 400 people in 2021 and featured a First Nations keynote speaker alongside First Nations panellists. In addition, we hosted our She Leads In-Conversation, featuring two First Nations speakers. We ensured to offer sponsored tickets for First Nations students and women and non-binary people to attend.

Our Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre is an essential centre that provides services to the Tuggeranong region and connects the organisation with an increasing number of First

Nations people. In the last financial year, the centre's local Women's Group, previously called the Mums & Bub's Group, was expanded to include all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, regardless of parenting status. Dozens of local Aboriginal women attend the weekly group at their convenience. The group provides a safe space for the women to meet and mingle. During the year, they met with local Elders who delivered cultural mapping exercises to the women alongside other activities to improve their health and wellbeing.

The Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre team also assisted in organising Canberra's 2021 NAIDOC Week event, hosting activities for the community at the Woden Library alongside other community service providers.

With such a strong level of engagement with the public and vulnerable cohorts, we are conscious of the need to ensure our operations remain culturally appropriate and sensitive. All our community services staff have undertaken cultural responsiveness training in the reporting period to help staff better respond to intergenerational trauma and systemic disadvantage.

Despite the difficult circumstances of COVID-19, our children's services operations have found creative and exciting ways to engage children in themes of reconciliation and First Nations culture. They have celebrated significant cultural events with local Elders and First Nations groups, including NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day. The staff at our Early Learning and School Age Care services have introduced Aboriginal music, map making, storytelling and traditional food to the children. Feedback from our families remains overwhelmingly positive. Some parents from migrant backgrounds have told our staff that the only exposure they have had to reconciliation is through our services and their children's education. This is a testament to our educators' valuable, authentic, and creative work in progressing reconciliation in the Canberra and surrounding community.

Workplace gender equality

The organisation maintained its commitment to gender equity by retaining accreditations and citations for our work in recognising and modelling workplace gender equity.

YWCA Canberra once again received the prestigious citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equity (EOCGE) from the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA). We have held this citation consistently since 2014. For another year, YWCA Canberra is the only organisation based in the ACT to attain citation in 2014 and then maintain compliance over the last eight years. This reflects the commitment to the practical application of gender equity and fairness in our culture and employee conditions.

COVID lockdowns and limitations challenged the organisation's capacity to implement new strategies to promote equity; however, our track record for consideration of balancing work and personal responsibilities for our staff assisted us during this difficult period.

Of note, the YWCA Canberra offers above award salary payments, generous paid parental and domestic violence leave provisions, and creative, flexible working arrangements in our Enterprise Agreement which contributed to maintaining our citation for the review period (2021 - 2023). Areas of focus for the following annual review will include analysing our workforce metrics and developing recruitment attraction strategies to further enhance our employee diversity within traditional gender professions.

Our proud tradition of assisting birthing parents back into the workforce after parental leave was recognised through our reaccreditation as a breastfeeding-friendly workplace by the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Our employees can balance their family and child's needs with a satisfying return to their profession and a welcoming workplace.

Our CEO, Frances Crimmins, continues her hard work in advocacy for workplace gender equity as an Equity Ambassador and a Flexible Work Ambassador. Both roles see Frances actively promoting pay equity, flexible work options, sharing and profiling equity and work.

Environmental sustainability

We continue to commit to environmental sustainability across our organisation. Our central office practices recycling and organic waste collection, and we continue to be an ACT Smart Accredited Workplace.

We have further reduced our paper usage, increased our general recycling program, and continued our soft plastics recycling and organic waste practices.

Our Children's Services and Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre continue their exceptional environmental sustainability practices. Our sites:

- re-purpose furniture
- use recycled items and loose parts for craft activities
- participate in Earth Hour
- use natural items from the environment for craft instead of purchasing resources
- use refillable drink bottles
- post information about waste programs and use of electricity and water usage
- have vegetable gardens
- use kitchen waste (food scraps) to give to parents who have chickens, or we have a company that picks up our food waste for composting or a worm farm.

These practices of waste reduction, recycling, re-usage, up-cycling and a sharing economy help in the communities' zero waste practices.

Quality assurance

YWCA Canberra was proud once again to achieve our Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Service Standards, having made some significant achievements in our QIC Quality Improvement Plan. Our full in person assessment was conducted in May 2022 and the organisation achieved ratings of meeting all standards. We were able to reach this outcome during a year of COVID lockdowns and restrictions on our workforce, demonstrating the resilience and adaptability of our quality processes and systems.

Of note, the Aurion payroll, recruitment, work health and safety and performance management modules were configured and implemented during the financial year, resulting in streamlined and contemporary processes, reducing timelines for responses and outcomes. At the same time, employees' experiences improved, and real-time data is now available for employee entitlements and benefits.

In addition to the QIC standards, YWCA Canberra continues to be accredited against the following external client-related service standards for our key business portfolios:

- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Aged Care
- National Regulatory System for Community Housing
- Registered Training Organisations Standards
- Suitable entity under the Children and Young People Act 2008.

Risk

During another year of COVID in the community, the organisation continued to test our business continuity and staffing risk assessments and responses.

Our diligent Work Health and Safety Committee, made up of Health and Safety Representatives from across the organisation, continued to monitor workplace incidents, near misses and hazards. The committee assisted with communication and consultation across teams for the organisation's incident reporting and COVID risk response to the Government's mandates and vaccination programs.

The Audit and Risk Committee comprises members of the Board and is chaired by an external and independent member. The Audit and Risk Committee received reports on internal and external audits conducted, discussed the challenges for upcoming community projects and services (with associated risks) and provided advice and support for the organisation's response to COVID during the financial year.

Financial sustainability

As with the broader economy and most organisations, the financial year 2021-22 continued to be a challenging year. However, YWCA Canberra's strong financial performance and governance, healthy balance sheet and prudent strategic decisions have allowed us to meet these challenges and continue to deliver the organisation's core objectives and mission.

YWCA Canberra continued to achieve a positive financial outcome for the 2021-22 financial year with a surplus of \$2,374,949 (2020-21: \$1,806,228). The recorded surplus compared to prior year was partly contributed by the unrealised gains of \$730,000 from the independent valuation of the three affordable housing investment properties in June 2022.

Overall, this is a positive result in a year where we have been recovering from a reduction in some services areas, due to mandatory lockdowns and the waiving of gap fees for childcare.

Australian Government support was minimal for the 2021-22 year and being able to rapidly respond to new emerging community needs, such as the Ragusa Quarantine Support Hub, allowed the organisation to maintain our income levels.

Financial position

As of 30 June 2022, YWCA Canberra's net assets were \$13,134,648 (2020-21: \$11,626,698), representing an increase of \$1,507,950 (13%).

Cash and Cash Equivalents increased by \$346,865 (7%) from \$5,126,382 in 2020-21 to \$5,473,247. The increase primarily reflects growth in operating cash flow. This adequately meets our short-term financial needs.

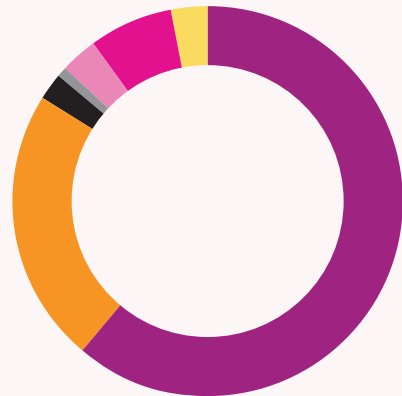
Total financial assets increased by \$394,847 (6%) to \$7,428,610 (2020-21: \$7,033,763).

The increase mainly relates to an increased allocation in listed equities and fixed securities.

YWCA Canberra continues to demonstrate financial security through a disciplined focus and commitment in our stewardship and responsibility in managing our resources and risks to ensure the organisation's long-term sustainability. As we move into 2022-23 the financial outlook for YWCA Canberra remains positive.

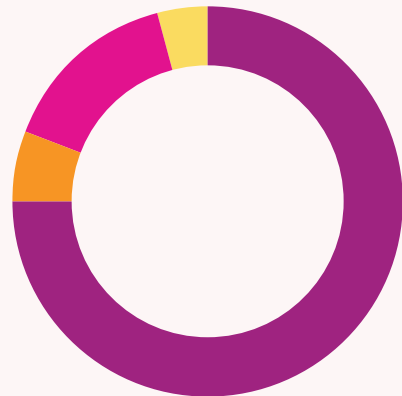
Our audited financial statements for the 2021-22 financial year are available online at www.ywca-canberra.org.au

YWCA Canberra income sources
Year ended 30 June 2022



- Children's services: 62%
- Government funding: 23%
- Other income: 2%
- Event income: 1%
- Donation income: 2%
- Investment income: 8%
- Training: 8%

YWCA Canberra expenses
Year ended 30 June 2021



- Staffing expenses: 75%
- Equipment expenses: 6%
- Admin and operational expenses: 5%
- Services and utilities expenses: 4%

Our security as at 30 June		
	2020/21	2021/22
Cash reserves	\$5.13m	\$5.47m
Property, plant and equipment	*\$3.92m	*\$4.62m
Intangible assets	-	0.07m
Investment portfolio	\$7.03m	\$7.43m

**Revaluation of property takes place every three years and was last performed in June 2022.*

Where did our income come from?		
	2020/21	2021/22
Community services	\$4.06m	\$5.61m
Children's services	\$13.71m	\$13.25m
Managed fund investment	\$0.23m	\$0.35m
Affordable housing rental income owned by YWCA Canberra	\$0.34m	\$0.22m
Training and education services	\$0.74m	\$0.82m
Other services	\$0.04m	\$0.97m
Fair value adjustment to investment property	-	\$0.73m
Government COVID-19 financial relief	\$2.66m	\$2.66m
TOTAL	\$21.78m	\$22.95m

Past two years operational and reportable results		
	2020/21	2021/22
Operational result	\$1.86M	\$2.66M
Board strategic allocation	(\$0.05M)	(\$0.28M)
Reportable bottom line	\$1.81M	\$2.38M

Acknowledgements

Partners and supporters

We work collaboratively with like-minded organisations, schools, businesses, all levels of government and leaders in the community to ensure that our collective resources make the biggest possible impact for the people we serve. We would like to thank the following organisations for contributing to our work:

ACT Community Services Directorate
ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service
A Gender Agenda
ACT Government
Australian Tax Office – Tax Help
ACT Office for Women
Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
Ainslie Football Club
Allhomes
Anglicare| NSW South, NSW West & ACT
ANU Gender Institute
Astryx
Australian Catholic University
Australian Women Against Violence Alliance
Baker's Delight Lanyon
Beryl Women Inc.
Beyond Bank
Bringa Refuge
Bunnings Tuggeranong
CAHMA
Calwell High School
Canberra Innovation Network
Canberry Properties
Capital Chemist
Capital Region Community Services
Care Inc

Canberra Rape Crisis Service
Caroline Chisholm High School
Catholic Care Canberra & Goulburn
Charles Conder Primary School
Children's Education and Care Assurance
Children's First Alliance
CIT
Communities at Work
Computer Clubhouse Network
Country to Canberra
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Social Services
Direction's Health Service
Diversity ACT
Domestic Violence Crisis Service
Doris Women's Refuge
Equality Rights Alliance
Erindale College
Families ACT
Food Bank NSW & ACT
GIVITT
Gordon Community Centre
Gordon Neighbourhood Watch
Gordon Primary School
Greater Canberra
Griffin Legal
Griffith University
Hands Across Canberra
Harmony Alliance
Havelock Housing
Headspace Tuggeranong
HerCanberra
HESTA
Home by Holly
Homelessness Australia
Kambri at ANU
Kingsford Smith School
Lake Tuggeranong College
Lanyon High School
Marymead

Mella Bella Gelato
Men's Link
Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
Mental Illness Education ACT
Meridian
M&K Meats
Molonglo Valley Community Council
Molongolo Valley Community Development Team
MTP Services
Multicultural Youth Services
Namadgi High School
Northside Community Service
NSW Reconciliation Council
OneLink
Oz Harvest
Parker Coles Curtis
Pipeline
Prinstant
Relationships and Sexuality Education Alliance
Relationships Australia
Richardson Primary School
Roundabout Canberra
Rowdy Digital
SeeChange ACT
Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT
Share the Dignity
Snow Foundation
Social Impact Leadership Australia
Sustineo
The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance
The National Rural Women's Coalition
The Stop Campaign
Toora Women Inc.
Tuggeranong Arts Centre
Tuggeranong Community Council

Warehouse Circus
 Woden Community Service
 Women's Agenda
 Women for Election Australia
 Women's Health Matters
 Women's Legal Centre ACT
 Women With Disabilities
 Australia
 Wonderschool Conder
 Woolworths at Work
 World YWCA
 Youth Coalition of the ACT

Donors

We are grateful for all the donations we received, big and small, from members and supporters throughout the year. We would like to acknowledge the following donors for their financial contributions:

Organisational donors

AMC Architecture
 Bell Family Foundation
 Build Like A Girl
 Canberra Town Planning
 Canberry Properties
 Capital Chemist
 CBRIN
 Friends of Ireland Treasurer
 Hands Across Canberra
 Homes for Homes
 Isabella Garden Retirement
 Village
 Kambri Precinct Management
 Office
 MTP Services
 Mustard's Sweet Treats
 NAB
 New Best Friend
 Parker Coles Curtis
 Prinstant

Rowdy Inc
 Snow Foundation
 Tall Foundation
 Uniting Church Woden Valley
 Vasudhara Foundation

Individual donors

Alexandra Staib
 Alexandra Tolmie
 Amanda Miller
 Amy Kingham
 Andrew Langford
 Angie Ford
 Anna John
 Annie Quadroy
 Arleen Wilcox
 Barbara Chevalier
 Barbara Livesey
 Barbara Podger
 Belinda Barnier
 Bernadette Carbin
 Betty Ferguson
 Bianca Way
 Bonnie Pearl
 Brendan Egan
 Candace Rhind
 Cara Jacobs
 Carina Zeccola
 Carley Thomas
 Caroline Le Couteur
 Cassie Mowbray
 Catherine Coles
 Chen Chen
 Chloe Davidson
 Christie Hartfiel
 Claire Harris
 Colin Douglas
 Cris Obrien
 David & Elizabeth Teather
 Deborah Burrridge
 Deborah Furnival
 Diana Bice
 Diana Exon

Dixie Crawford
 Dorothy Barclay
 Elizabeth Howell
 Elizabeth Kentwell
 Elizabeth Reid
 Emily Klukas
 Emma Davidson
 Emma French
 Fabiola Viana De Freitas
 Fiona Hooten
 Fiona Jenkins
 Frances Crimmins
 Georgina Carnell
 Gertrude Salat
 Gordana Morphet
 Greg Tannahill
 Hedda Murray
 Ingrid Bremers
 Jacquelyn Curtis
 James House
 Janelle Weissman
 Jasmine Johnson
 Jen Campbell
 Jenna Dunley
 Jenny Way
 Jess Fitzpatrick
 Jo Clay
 Jo Cochrane
 Jo Hutchinson
 Jo Wood
 Joanna Le
 Joanne Hill
 Joanne Lee
 Jude M C Burger
 Karen Downing
 Karmin Cooper
 Kathryn Savery
 Kathryn Squires
 Katie Whitehead
 Kellie Stewart
 Kelly Barry
 Ken Robbie
 Kenyon Neal

Kirsty Martin
Kristin Blume
Kristine Hewett
Kylie Burnett
Kylieann Wilson
Lachlan Blain
Leah Dwyer
Leo Kasim
Lieta Sauluma-Duggan
Linda Nelson
Lindsay Shaw
Liz Holcombe
Llewella Jago
Lorraine Tomlins
Lucy Roberts
Luise Zolio
Lyndall Adam
Marcel Cardillo
Marg Wade
Maria Humayun
Marie Bennett
Marilyn Jessop
Marion Reilly
Marisa Paterson
Mark Hollow
Marylou Rasmussen
Masumi Yamamoto
Matt Allen
May Claydon
Melita Flynn
Meredith Edwards
Michelle Reardon
Michelle Rhind
Natalie Barr
Nikki van Ruiten
Nina Haysler
Olivia Thornton
Pam Boyer
Paris Dounoukos
Pek Kee Chan
Peter Cain
Raminder Bhrara
Rebecca Vassarotti
Rebecca McFarland
Rheina Rutherford

Robert Lanfear
Ros Kewley
Ruth Parsons
Sally Gibson
Samantha Palmer
Samantha Junor
Sarah Burr
Sarah Elphick
Serena Farrelly
Serina Bird
Sharyn Smith
Talulah Gaunt
Tanya George
Theresa Roberts
Tim Dingwall
Tom Sloan
Toni Matulick
Travis Gilbert
Vicki Stanley
Wanka Willy
William Bowron

Volunteers

Abbie Turner
Alana Lundy
Annette Maunsell
Australian Catholic University
social work students
Alice Turner
Bin Barnier
Celestina Emmy Rabi
Cheryl Pollard
Chrystina Stanford
Griffith University students
Claire Harris
Danielle Dal Cortivo
Dr Hayley Boxall
Greg Aldridge
Holly Komorowski
Jane Deidricks
Jane Lombard
Jarrod Farquhar-Nicol
Jenni shoring
Jo Kamira
Jo Schumann

Joanne Chirens
John GraysonFlinders
University students
Kaylene Zakharoff
Kylie Dunstan
Kylie Flower
Lanyon Food Hub volunteers
Lex Dowie
Megan Fechner
Melanie Fisher
MLYCC working bee group
volunteers
Narelle Lloyd
Professor Meredith Edwards
Rachelle Towart
Rae Knopik
Ray Huang
Rebekah Brown
Renee Beerworth
Renee Hamilton
Sara Goldsworthy
Suzanne Schultz
Thea Dowie
Vanessa Brettel
Yvette Leslie





YWCA CANBERRA

Level 2, 71 Northbourne Ave, Canberra ACT 2601

Ph 02 6185 2000

E canberra@ywca-canberra.org.au

www.ywca-canberra.org.au



facebook.com/YWCACanberra



[@YWCACanberra](https://twitter.com/YWCACanberra)



[@YWCACanberra](https://www.instagram.com/YWCACanberra)



au.linkedin.com/company/ywca-of-canberra



youtube.com/YWCACANBERRA