

Children
by Choice
Annual Report
2021

A Year in Review

From Daile Kelleher, Chief Executive Officer at Children by Choice

This past year has had a consistent theme for Children by Choice – change. We have seen internal and external changes, the world itself has changed and the work we do supporting access, education and information about all pregnancy options and reproductive choices is constantly changing. A recent team discussion about change recognised that there are a few vital characters for change to be successful. The people who remind us of our history and who stabilise decision making processes, are just as important as the people with the ideas and energy to innovate and drive change.

Our vision and mission received a refresh this year at strategic planning as did our values and we embarked upon a new 5 year strategic plan. This was the first time we had done a strategic plan where the decriminalisation of abortion wasn't our number one goal. This meant we needed to spend some time thinking about the future of Children by Choice and the focus of our work and advocacy.

Due to a short-term funding increase, the capacity of our Counselling Team grew in the 2020/21 financial year, enabling us to service more clients seeking pregnancy decision making and post-abortion counselling sessions. This financial year we have successfully supported more people than ever to access publicly funded abortion care. We are still negotiating discounts with private abortion clinics, using organisational funds and public donations to support marginalised clients who are locked out of the public health system. We continue to engage with Hospitals and Health Services across Queensland and advocate for improvements within public systems.

Our Education and Training courses were in high demand. With everyone more comfortable doing online learning we have been able to expand our audience and reach new communities. We continue delivery of our core training: pregnancy options, post abortion counselling and reproductive coercion. We also joined other organisations across Australia to hold events such as International Safe Abortion Day, as well as presenting at multiple conferences.

Children by Choice has had many exciting projects over the year, including the Australian first Abortion Doula Training, continuation of our Rural, Regional and Remote Abortion Access Program, working with women with intellectual and learning disabilities to co-design resources on reproductive rights and pregnancy options, co-designing resources in language for culturally and linguistically diverse communities and preparing for the launch of our new website including our Abortion & Contraception Services Map.

The 2020/21 financial year saw Children by Choice commit to a research agenda by employing a Senior Research Assistant. In collaboration with staff we have developed research priorities such as the evaluation of our Abortion Doula Training and using our data to publish evidence on reproductive coercion.

With an ongoing commitment to reconciliation, we have commenced a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and engaged W.I.S.E Australia to provide a 12 month series of Cultural Competency training and support sessions to all Children by Choice staff, students and volunteers. It is important that we spend time considering the intersection of reproductive rights and justice for First Nations people.

After many years of planning and consultation one of the biggest changes for Children by Choice was making the decision to move on from our little purple house in Windsor. Our staff team has almost doubled in size in the last few years and the purple house can no longer accommodate our growing team. To leave behind this building with almost 40 years of history is bittersweet. As we enter into Children by Choice's 50th year, we know there is more change to come. We will ensure our activities are always aligned with our vision and mission, and that we look to the future while keeping the history and tenacity of those who founded Children by Choice as our inspiration.

Our Pregnancy Options Counselling Service

We provide decision making counselling and information on all pregnancy options – abortion, adoption, alternative or kinship care and parenting. We also provide referrals, advocacy through public hospital pathways for termination of pregnancy, post abortion support and have a small and limited financial assistance program.

1,573

Clients

The number of people assisted by our Counselling Team in the 20/2021 financial year.

9,984

Interactions

People who contacted our service are often dealing with multiple challenges and their complex cases involved multiple interactions to resolve

How our clients are most commonly referred to us



Most Commonly Requested Information



General abortion information

"How do I get an abortion?"



Types of Abortion procedures

"What does the process involve?"



Financial

"How much will it cost?"



General information on adoption

"How does adoption work in QLD?"

Financial Assistance Program

Since the removal of abortion from the criminal code in 2018, Children by Choice has been winding down our Financial Assistance Program as we have been able to support more clients to access publicly funded abortion care.

Although, for some of our clients abortion care in the public system is not an option. This includes international students and persons on working or partner visas as they do not qualify for Medicare support.

This program includes grants that clients do not have to repay, no interest loans (NILS), negotiated discounts from abortion providers (hardship grants), support from other organisations and donations from our community.

\$30,999

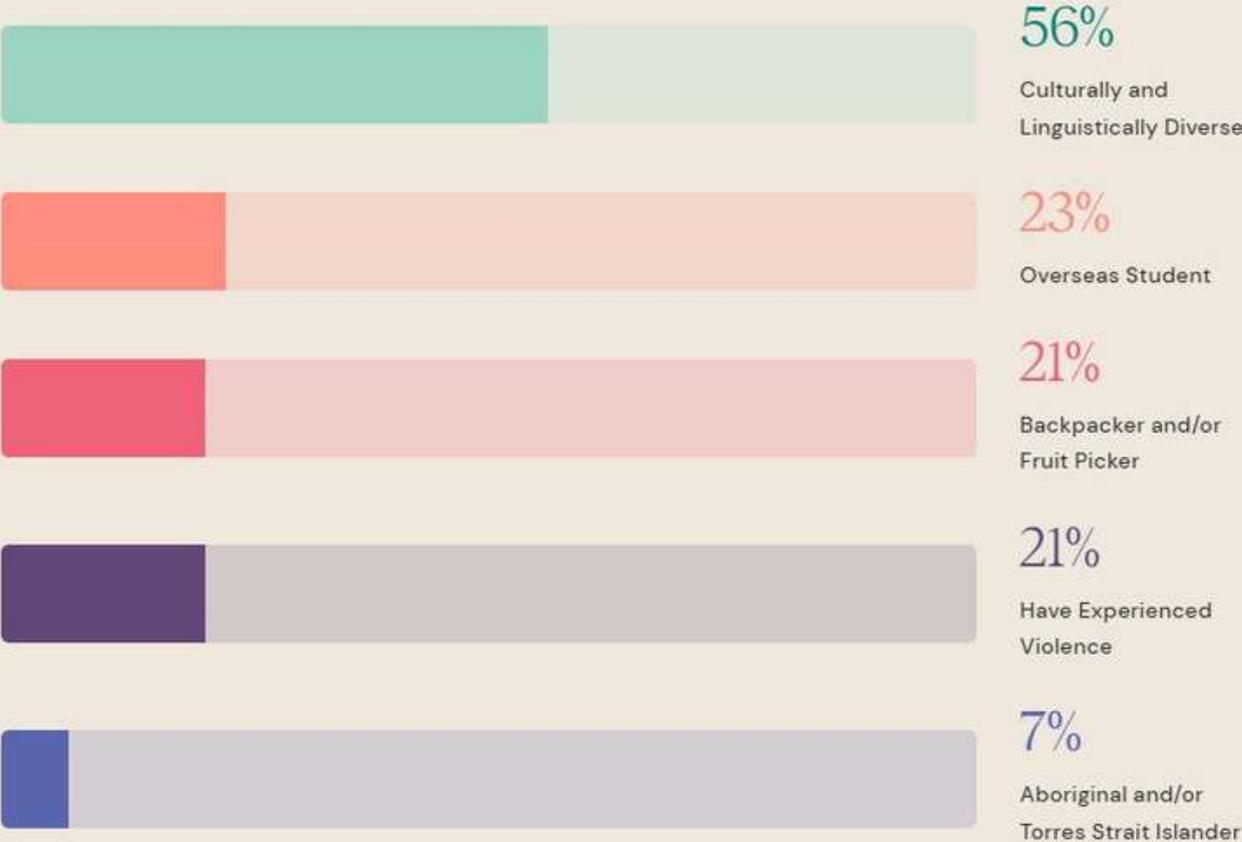
For 43 people accessing abortion care
Our Financial Assistance Program
Funded \$30,999 for 43 people
accessing abortion care

\$12,960

For 92 people accessing LARC
Our Financial Assistance Program
funded \$12,960 for 92 people accessing
long acting reversible contraception.

Who Are We Financially Supporting To Access Abortion Care

Most of these clients identified with two or more of the intersections below plus: Mental health issues, suicidality, financial distress, homelessness, physical health issues, single parenting and caring responsibilities.



Education and Training

Our Education Team provide training and information to Professionals and Tertiary Students across Australia. They also deliver relationships and sexuality education for Young People in schools and youth services.

We also undertake broader community education work online through our social media channels and website.

3,993

Professionals and Tertiary students trained

1,540

Young People educated

447,431

Visits to our website

5,000

Connected to an engaged following of over 5,000 across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

900,000

Reached over 900,000 people over social media

Research

In December 2020 Children by Choice hired a Senior Research Assistant, our only research dedicated role.

This role will design and implement a range of research projects it will also support the evaluation of key Children by Choice projects. Embedding research within our work supports evidence-based practice, and further enables us to progress a research agenda that is driven by and informs organisational, client and sector-wide needs and priorities.

Along with a range of staff and organisational support, the Senior Research Assistant has:

- Worked with the staff team and working groups, as well as with client records and local and global literature, to develop a research plan that will support the organisation's strategic vision and priorities over the next 5 years.
- Supported a range of research collaborations and activities focused on reproductive coercion and abuse, including a multi-organisational collaboration to identify the prevalence and trends of reproductive coercion and abuse in Australia.
- Designed and received ethical approval to conduct a process and impact evaluation of the Abortion and Contraception Services Map.
- Supervised a student to conduct a systematic literature review on 'supporting reproductive autonomy among pregnant people with intellectual disability living with violence and/or reproductive coercion'.
- Developed processes to support improved quality of organisational data collection.
- 3 conference abstracts accepted.
- Supported grant applications and submissions to government.

The Regional Rural and Remote Abortion Access Program

The Regional Rural and Remote Abortion Access Program (RRRAAP) is a three year project funded by the Lionel and Yvonne Spencer trust which commenced in August 2018. RRRAAP aims to improve equitable access to abortion care in regional, rural and remote Queensland by focusing on three core elements, referral, access and support.

This financial year the Regional Rural and Remote Abortion Access Program has supported and conducted the following key activities.

Abortion Doula Program

The Regional, Rural and Remote Abortion Access Program (RRRAAP) was tasked with establishing an abortion doula initiative to ensure effective support mechanisms were in place for women and pregnant people seeking abortion care in Queensland.

A doula is a non-medical support person who can provide emotional, physical and informational support through any of life's transitions. This includes support across the full spectrum of pregnancy, including abortion. A doula specialises in non-judgemental and compassionate care, and is respectful and client-centred in the way they provide support.

In 2020, Children by Choice (CbyC) delivered Australia's first abortion doula training program, in partnership with the Australian Doula College (ADC). This partnership was established between CbyC and ADC to deliver the abortion doula training as a Masterclass, initially available to Queensland students and graduates of ADC's birth and end of life doula training programs. In 2022, the Masterclass will be available to ADC (and other) trained doulas nationwide via an online self-paced course accessed via ADC's online learning platform, Canvas. The abortion doula training workshops were initially offered at no cost to participants during the pilot period, however the online training and future face to face workshops will be offered as fee-for-service to ensure CbyC can continue to deliver the training in a sustainable way after the RRRAAP has ended.

Mapping Access Pathways Project

The Mapping Access Pathways Project (MAPP) is a key project outcome of the Regional, Rural and Remote Abortion Access Program, aiming to increase access to abortion and contraception services for all Queenslanders.

Children by Choice received consistent feedback from clients, referring organisations and the wider sector that the services needed to enable access to abortion in Queensland are hard to find. Addressing barriers to abortion provision, and minimising social and practical barriers for abortion seekers, are both vital to improving equitable sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

The MAPP has established a publicly accessible interactive online map of abortion and contraception providers, pharmacies that dispense MS-2 Step and ultrasound clinics across the state. It is searchable by postcode, provider type and fee information, and is based on a similar map funded by the Department of Health in Victoria as part of the 1800 My Options service. More detailed search criteria is also available for services, including gestation, availability of a female doctor, LGBTIQ+ sensitivity and wheelchair accessibility.

Prior to this project, there was no publicly available comprehensive list of abortion or contraception providers in Queensland.

Resources for People Supporting Abortion Seekers

In May 2021 Children by Choice collaborated with the team from I Had One Too. Together we developed a suite of video resources around how to best support someone who's having an abortion.

This video resource featured individuals with lived experience sharing their stories of being a support person. These videos will be used across our website, social media and training materials.

Kitchen Table Discussions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Consumers

In late 2020 and early 2021, we engaged Health Consumers Queensland to run a series of 5 'Kitchen Table Discussions' to hear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women about their experiences of pregnancy decision making, contraception and abortion. This consumer feedback will allow Children by Choice to consider the role we play in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reproductive health care, and how we can better support these clients.

208

Healthcare professionals trained from regional, rural or remote areas

11

Nurses and doctors sponsored to complete portable ultrasound machine training to support the provision of medication termination in regional rural or remote areas

7

Abortion doulas trained

6

Hospital and Health Service districts received training. Mackay, Wide Bay, Darling Downs, Central Queensland, Cairns and Hinterland and Townsville

6

Portable ultrasound machines were donated to regional rural or remote clinics providing abortion care

3

MToP in General Practice info sessions held across Queensland

2

Pathway Support Sessions held in Rockhampton and Emerald

The Culture and Language Inclusive Practice Studio

The Culture and Language Inclusive Practice Studio (CLIPS) is a one year project which commenced February 2021 and will conclude in February 2022.

The project is funded by WorkUP Queensland. CLIPS will utilise a three-step collaborative process to co-create culturally appropriate resources on reproductive health, abortion and reproductive coercion that are in language and relevant to the community.

Kurdish Kurmanji, Swahili, Spanish and Arabic were the languages identified by the reference group of healthcare and resettlement organisations. These languages were determined by level of need and vulnerability of clients in the community.

In collaboration with each community group appropriate resources across varying mediums will be developed. A final focus group with each of the participant groups will be held to obtain feedback before the print and launch of each of the language resources.

At the completion of this project each language group and their community members will have an opportunity to meet and receive the resources created from this project, resources will also be launched and disseminated via our website, social media and shared with resettlement organisations and healthcare providers to share with their clients.

Knowledge sharing workshops will be delivered between resettlement services, interpreters and healthcare professionals where they will hear from people with lived experience and share information about how to best support clients from migrant and refugee backgrounds around topics of abortion access and care, reproductive health and reproductive coercion.

With over half of the Australian population identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse, providing resources that are culturally appropriate and available in language is essential to reducing the systemic barriers migrant and refugee communities face when accessing services.

WWILD and Children by Choice Collaboration

Children by Choice and WWILD (working with people with intellectual and learning disabilities) began a collaboration in 2020.

The partnership funded by WorkUp Queensland aims to; understand why people with intellectual and learning disabilities are under-reported in Children by Choice counselling client data but over-represented in their reporting of reproductive coercion and sexual violence, understand how to improve pregnancy decision making support for people with intellectual and learning disabilities; support consumer needs and the needs of the domestic and family violence and sexual assault support sector in Queensland.

This collaboration is ongoing, funding has been sought to develop resources for consumers and training for professionals based on gaps identified by people with intellectual and/or learning disabilities.

International Safe Abortion Day Event

What Is Your Vision: The Future of Abortion Care In Australia a panel discussion facilitated by Gina Rushton.

28th of September is International Safe Abortion Day, the herstory of this day begins in Latin America and the Caribbean where women’s groups have been mobilising around September 28 for the last two decades to demand their governments decriminalise abortions, provide access to safe and affordable abortion services and to end stigma and discrimination towards people who choose to have abortions.

In 2020 Children by Choice with support from Family Planning NT, I Had One Too, 1800 My Options, Our Bodies Our Choices, South Australian Abortion Action Coalition, Sexual Health Quarters WA, SPHERE and Women’s Health Tasmania hosted a live and public event to discuss the future of abortion care in Australia.

Gina Rushton an award winning reproductive rights journalists spoke to health consumers with lived experience, abortion care providers, advocates, policymakers and event participants about what the future of abortion care should and could look like in Australia.

300

Tickets sold

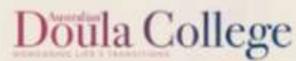
2,900

People reached
through live stream on
Facebook

Our Funders



Our Collaboration Partners



Our Committees

- Culturally Responsive Health Advisory Group
- Data Committee – University of Queensland and Griffith University
- Equality Rights Alliance
- Ending Violence Against Women Queensland
- National Alliance of Abortion and Pregnancy Options Counsellors
- Practitioner Engagement Group – ANROWS (Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety)
- WorkUP Queensland Reference Group
- Termination of Pregnancy Steering Committee – Clinical Excellence Division
- Queensland Women’s Health Services Alliance
- QCOSS Women’s Equality Network
- QCOSS CEO Network

Pro Bono Professional Support and Advice

- McCullough Robertson
- Hamish Clift
- UQ Pro Bono Law Centre

We would like to recognise all our members, individual donors and supporting organisations whom without we would not be able to carry out the work we do.

Financial Report

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



PETER GESCH
HAYWARDS CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Level 1 / 488 Lutwyche Road
LUTWYCHE QLD 4030

Dated this 12th day of November 2021

CHILDREN BY CHOICE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Revenue	2	1,195,045.72	1,174,032.21
Other Income	2	58,251.91	64,200.58
Employee benefits expense		(909,530.08)	(774,186.75)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(10,138.00)	(9,508.11)
Insurance		(10,702.50)	(9,654.55)
Motor vehicle and travel expenses		(6,608.25)	(12,798.02)
Property Expenses		(35,531.11)	(46,310.14)
Staff training and development expenses		(6,593.30)	(6,601.51)
Audit, legal and consultancy fees		(16,435.04)	(17,840.35)
Client support services expense		(158,779.90)	(86,668.85)
Other operating costs		(103,739.20)	(105,108.24)
Current year surplus before income tax		(4,759.75)	169,556.27
Income tax expense		-	-
Net current year surplus		(4,759.75)	169,556.27
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		(4,759.75)	169,556.27
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity		\$(4,759.75)	\$169,556.27

CHILDREN BY CHOICE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3	926,530.97	1,062,559.38
Debtors & Prepayments		29,905.48	16,761.80
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Current Assets		956,436.45	1,079,321.18
Fixed Assets			
	4	414,916.50	425,054.50
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Fixed Assets		414,916.50	425,054.50
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL ASSETS		\$1,371,352.95	\$1,504,375.68
		<hr/>	<hr/>
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Creditors & Accruals		81,181.76	61,447.78
Employee Provisions		63,775.29	55,574.15
Contract Liability		211,975.97	373,984.35
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Current Liabilities		356,933.02	491,006.28
Non Current Liabilities			
Employee Provisions		24,642.50	18,832.22
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Non Current Liabilities		24,642.50	18,832.22
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL LIABILITES		381,575.52	509,838.50
		<hr/>	<hr/>
NET ASSETS		\$989,777.43	\$994,537.18
		<hr/>	<hr/>
MEMBERS FUNDS			
Retained Surplus		989,777.43	994,537.18
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS		\$989,777.43	\$994,537.18
		<hr/>	<hr/>

CHILDREN BY CHOICE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

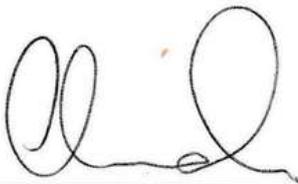
The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial Statements.

1. In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 9 are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and:
 - (i) Comply with the Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the entity; and
 - (ii) Give a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Children by Choice Association Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

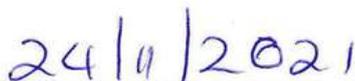
This Declaration is signed in accordance with Subs 60.15(2) of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013.



President



Treasurer



Date