

ANNUAL
REPORT

2024

NEW FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

BRISBANE
YOUTH
SERVICE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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While some of the photos in this report are of young people supported by BYS, many are actors and staff depicting real scenarios we experience day to day.

HIGHLIGHTS

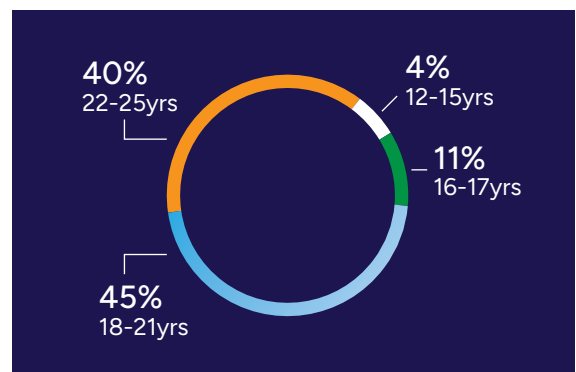
5 Highlights from our RAP



8 2023-24 Data Snapshot

34% ↑
increase in occasions of support over the past 3 years

14 Who we support



I CAN DO THINGS THAT I COULDN'T DO BEFORE. I HAVE **COURAGE** TO DO THEM. I'M NO LONGER LIVING IN FEAR.

— Young Person

17 Young people's intersecting needs and positive outcomes



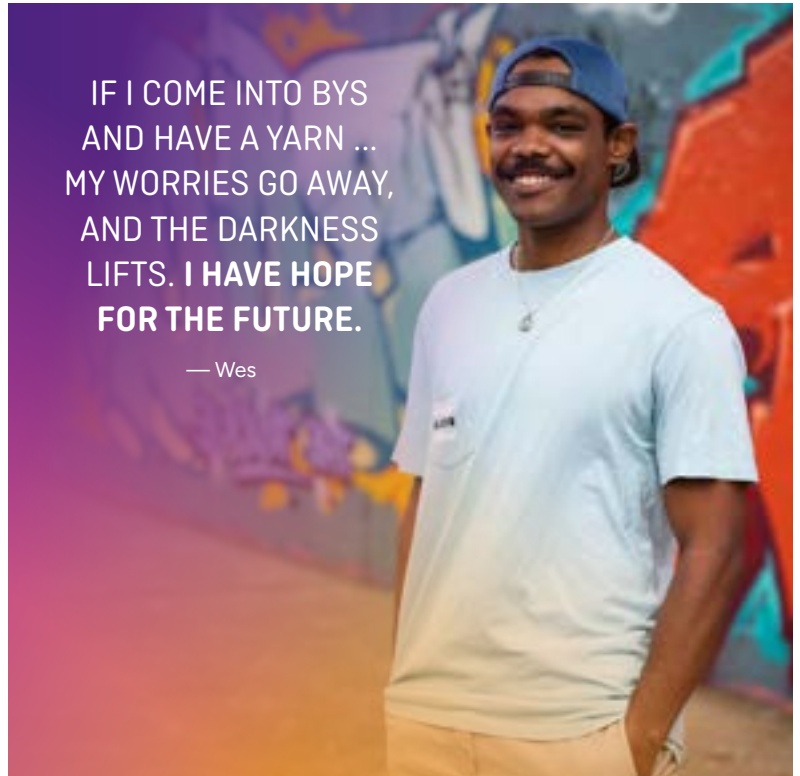
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39 Early Intervention

Increasing the **availability of early intervention programs** is essential to prevent young people from becoming homeless, reducing the demand on the adult system, and promoting long-term stability and wellbeing.

37 Wes' Story



From the cover: Confidence and hope restored; Wes shares his inspiring story on page 37.

48 Leah's Story



I AM STILL RECEIVING BYS SERVICES, AND I KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO END I'LL HAVE THE **SKILLS TO TACKLE LIFE'S HURDLES** THANKS TO THEM.

— Leah

66 Fundraising



PURPOSE

To enable vulnerable young people and families to navigate life challenges and thrive in the community.

OUR STORY

For more than 45 years, Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) has supported homeless and vulnerable young people aged 12 to 25, and their children, throughout Brisbane and surrounding areas.

BYS provides a diverse range of free and confidential services, including crisis and transitional housing, emergency relief, physical and mental health care, alcohol and drug interventions, domestic and family violence supports, and specialised programs for young women and families.

Young people seek help from BYS in times of great need and at critical moments for

early intervention and positive change. Using a client-centred, strengths-based approach, we empower them to identify goals and holistically address complex challenges they may face. Even with brief support from BYS, most young people can overcome difficulties and move out of crisis to thrive in the community.

Through ongoing research and evaluation, BYS deepens understanding to develop innovative programs that enhance outcomes for young people and their children. These efforts also play a crucial role in advocating for their unique needs and raising awareness of the challenges faced by vulnerable young people in our community.

Today, we have over 140 dedicated staff working across eight locations in the Brisbane area.

Vision

New futures for young people

Commitment

To promote a just society for young people

Values

Respect, Optimism, Accountability, Resilience

Strategic Goals 22-25

Service growth priorities:

- Housing & Homelessness
- Primary & Mental Health
- Domestic & Family Violence

Strategic Priorities

Workforce

- BYS is an employer of choice and builds a capable, engaged, and effective workforce.

Innovation & Research

- BYS is a leader in evidence-informed practice and collaborative research that drives innovation.

Youth Engagement

- Young people inform and help shape BYS services.

Digital & Technology

- BYS applies digital and technological solutions to enhance service delivery and increase operational efficiency.

Property

- BYS secures long-term, suitable sites for all operations.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

This year, the Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) RAP Committee put our second Innovate RAP into action to promote organisational integrity, equity, and equality through meaningful, tangible goals. The committee meets monthly to ensure we stay committed to these goals and continue to grow our knowledge of the cultures and histories of First Peoples.

A third of young people we support identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and BYS continues to strive to ensure that we offer culturally safe support based on respect and understanding.

In 2023, BYS confirmed our support of the Voice to Parliament. We remained impartial in our communications with young people, providing information to help them learn more about the referendum to make their own informed decisions. Additionally, we worked with young people in Brisbane to register to vote and have their voices heard.


The BYS RAP Committee is chaired by Di Mahoney (Service Delivery Director) with representatives from each area of the organisation. This year we welcomed People and Culture Director, Mel Bradford, to the RAP Committee to enhance our staff training and induction activities, and bolster First Nation's recruitment, employment sustainment and progression throughout our organisation.

We continue to advertise BYS positions with the Aboriginal Employment Strategy and have engaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Jobs and Koori Mail for recruiting, as well as through our internal and external networks.



Pictured: Young people, their children, BYS staff and community celebrated, connected, and reflected on the importance of Reconciliation at our 2024 Reconciliation Week Celebration.

Some of the highlights for 2023-24 included:

-  Two sessions of face-to-face Cultural Training for staff, including a Welcome to Country and training workshop about local history, movements and culture of the Turrbal People by Baringa Barambah Meeanjinu from Turrbal Dippil and an insightful overview of Torres Strait Islander history and culture by Uncle Henry Nona through Blackcard.
-  Participated in the 2023 NAIDOC Week Family Fun Day at Musgrave Park, the first Musgrave Park NAIDOC event since the pandemic. Our stall welcomed a stream of visitors who enjoyed interactive activities including spray-on tattoos, friendship band weaving, and fun giveaways.
-  BYS supported Indigenous Literacy Day by purchasing children's books and hosting a morning tea. Staff were encouraged to donate to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and shown a short film celebrating stories, cultures, and languages.
-  Reconciliation Action Week Celebration event on Wed 29th May 2024 at New Farm Park with Welcome to Country by Turrbal Elder and Songwoman Maroochy Barambah, sensory activities, a weaving workshop, spray-on tattoos, and lunch.
-  BYS also supported Days of Significance including Indigenous Business Month, Sorry Day, and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, and we used these occasions to educate staff and young people about the history and importance of reconciliation.



OUR PATRON

Steve Renouf became the Patron of Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) in 2016 to help shine a light on the complex challenges faced by young people and young families in Brisbane.

A proud Gunggari and Gubbi Gubbi man, Steve is also a legendary figure in Australian Rugby League, holding the record for most tries with the Brisbane Broncos and having represented both his state and country.

Beyond his athletic achievements, Steve is a dedicated community member, inspiring young people through his involvement in initiatives that promote healthy lifestyle choices and positive life paths. As an Ambassador for Deadly Choices and an active supporter of Brisbane Youth Service, Steve's commitment to empowering young people and helping them overcome adversity is a testament to his dedication to making a meaningful impact in the community.

STEVE RENOUF



Pictured: Patron Steve Renouf with Hand Heart Pocket General Manager Amy Maynard, and BYS Research Quality and Innovation Senior Manager Rebecca Duell at the BYS Youth Homelessness Matters Day 2024 event.



Pictured: Judging the 2023 Daggy Jumper Day Fashion Parade with Minter Ellison's Rob Reed and the Honorable Meaghan Scanlan MP.

AS BYS PATRON, I'M COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE IN BRISBANE WHO DESERVE A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE. SEEING THE CHALLENGES THESE YOUNG PEOPLE FACE FIRSTHAND **DRIVES MY PASSION** FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

— Steve Renouf



OUR BOARD

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) is governed by a dedicated board of professionals who volunteer their time to provide strategic direction and oversight, ensuring that BYS continues to deliver high-quality services to young people.

This year, we farewelled Jake Arden and Christopher Emzin, and we thank them for their invaluable contributions and service to BYS. We also welcomed new board members Catherine Scott and Loretta Lynch, who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to support our mission and guide BYS into the future.



MARK WHEATLEY
President



ANNA SPENCER
Vice President



SHELLEY SORRENSON
Secretary



ANNETTE ABRAHAMS
Treasurer



MICHELLE WADE
Board Member



JAKE ARDEN
Board Member



DR ADMIRE MATSIKA
Board Member



CHRISTOPHER EMZIN
Board Member



TIM O'BRIEN
Board Member



CATHERINE SCOTT
Board Member



LORETTA LYNCH
Board Member

THE SUPPORT I'VE RECEIVED HAS HELPED ME REALISE THAT I'M STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT. LIFE NOW IS **COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.**

— Young Person

2023-24 SNAPSHOT

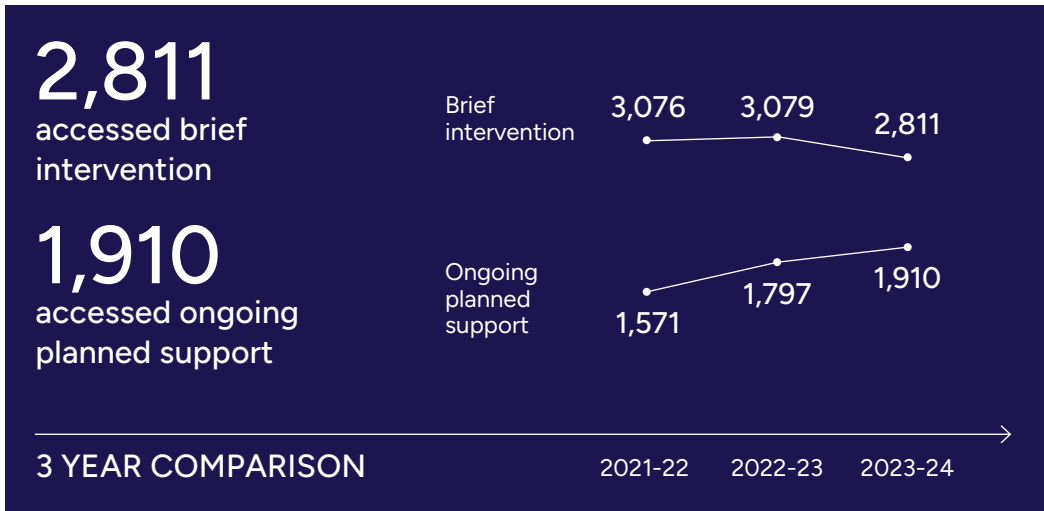
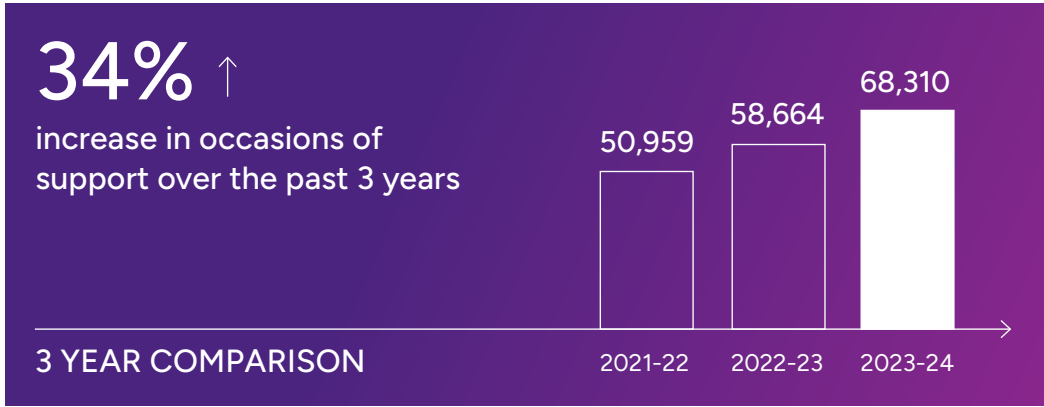
IN TOTAL

BYS provided 68,310 occasions of support.

↑ UP FROM 58,664 LAST YEAR

16% ↑
increase in number of times young people engaged with us this year

6% ↑
increase in the number of people supported through ongoing planned support





1 in 4 identified as sexuality diverse

1 in 3 were

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander



1 in 4 had disability

ALMOST

1 in 3 of those supported were young parents



6 in 7 young people accessing support were 18-25 years old



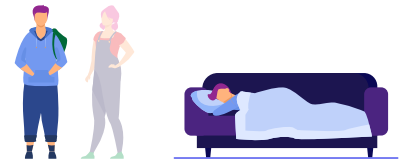
ALMOST

3 in 4 identified housing as a support priority



ALMOST

4 in 5 were living in unsafe, temporary, overcrowded, or unaffordable housing



ALMOST

1 in 2 young people were homeless when they come to BYS

3 in 4 young people had experienced past family violence

ALMOST 1 in 2 had experienced past relationship violence



58% of young people supported had a mental health diagnosis



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MARK WHEATLEY

In the past year, Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) has experienced significant growth, both in terms of the funding received for our services and for major projects that will further support our mission. This financial year, our turnover reached \$17,234,260, marking an increase of 50% over the past 12 months.

This unprecedented growth highlights several key issues. Most notably, it underscores the ongoing housing crisis affecting young people and the need for reputable organisations like ours to step up and provide critical services. It is no surprise that the State Government continues to place its trust in BYS to expand our efforts.

We are continually inspired by the dedication of the BYS team to improve the lives of young people, despite the considerable challenges involved. Whether it's securing safe housing, offering crucial advice to individuals facing domestic violence, or addressing medical needs at our clinic, BYS stands out for its compassionate and effective service.

However, as a Board, we recognise that rapid growth and the delivery of human-focused services come with their own set of challenges, particularly for our staff. While many organisations would take time to regroup in response to such growth, BYS cannot reduce our services. We must acknowledge the demanding nature of our work and ensure the wellbeing of our staff during these challenging times. To support this, BYS has increased resources in People and Culture, Learning and Development, and staff wellbeing.

We are extremely grateful to the State Government for acquiring a new home for BYS. After over three years of planning, we identified a suitable property on Brunswick Street. Thanks to the support of the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning, and Public Works, the offer was accepted swiftly. This new property will allow us to consolidate our team and continue to grow professionally. For the first time, the

majority of BYS will be working together under one roof at the new Youth Support Centre. Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone involved in making this initiative a reality.

With increased funding, there is also a commensurate level of increased risk. I want to extend my gratitude to the Board and the BYS Executive Management Team (EMT) for their unwavering commitment to strong governance amidst this significant funding increase. I am extremely proud of how my Board colleagues and the EMT have navigated and mitigated risks associated with new opportunities such as the Nest project—a refurbished 19-bed motel in Hamilton providing temporary supported accommodation. Despite being new to us, we recognised the necessity of tendering for this project. The way in which the Board and the EMT comprehensively worked through the risks that accompanied a project such as this, and in such a short space of time, was outstanding.

As always in my annual report, we bid farewell to valued board members who departed this year. Jake Arden, whose expertise in accounting and finance bolstered our financial governance. Chris Emzin, who departed late last year, provided valuable insights on First Nations issues during his two years with us. Shelley Sorrenson, who has served over 12 years as a board member, including significant contributions from an earlier organisation whose assets BYS acquired, leaves behind a legacy of exceptional dedication. We owe Shelley a profound debt of gratitude for her remarkable service.

On a personal note, this will be my final year as President and board member. After five years on the Board, including the last three as President, stepping down is bittersweet. I am honoured to have served in this capacity and saddened to leave. Throughout my tenure, I have consistently been humbled by the professionalism and impact of the BYS team. The community owes a great deal to these silent achievers who continue to do such challenging but impactful work. Thank you to everyone for making my time on the BYS Board such a wonderful key part of my life which I will remember with fondness.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in BYS. Together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of young people and our community.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The 2023-24 financial year has been a period of significant financial growth and operational expansion for Brisbane Youth Service (BYS), as we navigated continued pressures from the housing and cost-of-living crises.

BYS recorded a 50% increase in total revenue, bringing total income to \$17,234,260—a substantial rise from \$11,471,826 in 2022-23. This increase was largely driven by additional grant revenue, which increased to \$15,773,526, up from \$10,419,172 in the prior year, as well as higher donations and other revenue sources.

This influx of funding has been instrumental in enabling BYS to broaden its support for young people facing complex challenges such as homelessness, mental health issues, and domestic and family violence. The increased grant revenue was mainly sourced from additional funding provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning, and Public Works, allowing us to expand critical support services to young people and young families.

In addition to grant funding, BYS received \$1,128,225 in other revenue, a reflection of ongoing support from the community, philanthropists, and corporate partners. Other income, which includes interest and investment returns, also saw a boost, growing to \$332,509 from \$151,359 last year. The organisation's long-term financial strategy, including our decision to invest in a share portfolio back in 2020, continues to pay off contributing positively to BYS's financial health, despite economic uncertainty.

While revenue grew substantially, our expenses also rose in line with the increased demand for services. Total expenses for the year amounted to \$16,161,273, up from \$11,365,651 in the prior year, primarily regarding employee benefits and support services for young people.

Employee benefit expenses of \$10,531,960 increased 30% from last year. This rise reflects our commitment to building a skilled and dedicated workforce capable of delivering services to a growing number of young people. BYS provided 68,310 occasions of support throughout the year, a 16% increase from 2023, and a 34% increase over the past three years. The rising demand required additional staffing and resources to ensure high-quality service delivery.

ANNETTE ABRAHAMS



Support service expenses saw the most significant increase, rising by 115% to \$3,010,992, driven by the additional brokerage funding received to directly support young people. This funding was critical in responding to the unprecedented demand for services, as more young people faced housing insecurity and financial distress.

Property expenses increased to \$563,044 (2022-23: \$337,360), reflecting higher operational and maintenance costs as BYS expanded its physical presence to better serve the community.

Cash and cash equivalents more than doubled to \$6,496,004, compared to \$2,917,884 in the prior year, thanks to increased grant receipts and improved operational management. Another key contributor to the increased cash held was the disposal of our Winstanley Street, Carina property, with the proceeds earmarked to help fund the fit-out of the new BYS Youth Support Centre at 518 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley. This robust liquidity provides BYS with the financial flexibility to continue investing in vital services and operational improvements, ensuring that we can adapt to the evolving needs of the young people we serve.

Total net assets grew significantly to \$8,553,637, a 28% increase from the previous year's \$6,668,792. This increase was driven by both the \$1,072,987 operating surplus and an additional \$811,858 in comprehensive income. Our strategic ongoing financial management efforts have ensured that BYS remains financially resilient.

Looking ahead, BYS is well-positioned to continue growing services, particularly with the planned investment in the new Youth Support Centre. While we remain mindful of the challenges posed by economic conditions and the rising demand for services, our strong financial position allows us to meet these challenges head-on. We will continue to focus on securing sustainable funding, managing our expenses effectively, and ensuring that every dollar we receive is used to maximise our impact in the community.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our management team for their careful stewardship of the organisation's finances. Their leadership, combined with the tireless dedication of all BYS staff, has enabled us to continue delivering high-quality services to Brisbane's most vulnerable young people and young families. These achievements would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our team, and I thank each and every one of you for your efforts.



CEO'S REPORT

PAM BARKER

It has been a remarkable year for Brisbane Youth Service (BYS), marked by significant achievements and impactful advocacy.

Our ability to swiftly adapt and respond to the needs of young people in Brisbane has led to substantial growth and transformation within our organisation. Through our dedicated efforts, we have secured funding for new services, expanded existing programs, and announced the establishment of a new support location. These accomplishments have enabled us to change the lives of thousands of young people in Brisbane, providing them with the support and resources they need to thrive.

In December, we received the exciting news that our persistent advocacy had resulted in securing funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning, and Public Works for an integrated Youth Support Centre at 518 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley. This significant achievement is the culmination of a decade-long campaign and represents a major milestone for BYS. We are currently in the process of fitting out this new location, with a planned launch in November 2024. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Jordan McCarthy (Corporate Services Director) and Mark Wheatley (Board Chair) for their unwavering commitment and collaborative effort in making this dream a reality.



Pictured: Grace Grace MP and the Honorable Meaghan Scanlan MP announcing a permanent home for BYS and purpose-built centre for at-risk young people and young families at 518 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley.

Our advocacy and tendering efforts also led to the successful establishment of an emergency short-stay accommodation program, The Nest, in January 2024. This program provides housing for 19 young people in temporary supported accommodation. Within three months of the grant announcement, the motel was refreshed and operational, offering an alternative to rough sleeping for many young people in Brisbane. The Nest provides a safe space where young people can receive intensive support to secure permanent housing, making a profound difference in their lives.

This year, we saw a significant expansion of The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works' Immediate Housing Relief for Families funding to now include individuals and couples. In response to this important development, BYS increased our services to manage and oversee the broader reach of this program. By doing so, we can extend vital support to not only families, but also young singles and couples facing homelessness, ensuring they remain safe and have access to the resources they need during these challenging times. Expanding our services to meet this growing demand has been complex, requiring us to quickly build capable teams and manage motel accommodation, which remains in short supply.

We also obtained funding for a mobile nighttime assertive outreach program aimed at understanding the needs of young people rough sleeping across Brisbane. This program serves as a bridge between our daytime support programs and those who find themselves on the streets unexpectedly. BYS is working closely with Brisbane Zero and will lead the BZ YOUTH Coordination Group, aiming to reduce the number of young people sleeping rough through collaborative partnerships and rapid rehousing initiatives.

This year, we secured premises to run our Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships Programs, thanks to the generous support of the Shepherd Family Trust. These programs are



critical in providing young people and families with the resources and support needed to build safe and healthy relationships, furthering our mission to empower and support young people in Brisbane.

Through the support of Brisbane City Council, BYS was fortunate to receive a second property rent-free as part of our Falconer House program. Now home to four young people, this property operates under the Advantaged Thinking model, which focuses on empowering young people by building on their strengths and capabilities.



Pictured: Pam Barker joined Kate Colvin, CEO of Homelessness Australia, and Shorna Moore, Head of Policy Advocacy & Government Relations, Melbourne City Mission, on a panel discussing 'A New Model for Youth Housing in Australia' at the 9th Affordable Housing Development & Investment Summit.

Our advocacy efforts have been bolstered by the release of several key publications that address critical issues facing young people. Through analysis of seven years of intake data, we produced reports on young people's experiences of Family and Intimate Partner Violence, and Mental Health. These reports, based on intake data from over 3,000 young people, have been crucial in shaping our advocacy and ensuring that our services are aligned with the evolving needs of young people in Brisbane.

BYS philanthropic partnerships and fundraising efforts saw significant growth this year. We were successful in securing a goa Billboards Community Partnerships grant, which amplified our highest fundraising campaign on record, Not for Rent.

This campaign helped to raise awareness and generate much-needed funds to support our programs and services, allowing us to continue making a positive impact in the lives of young people.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our Board, especially the Board Chair, Mark Wheatley, who has been a tremendous support to me in my role as CEO over the past two years. Mark's guidance and wisdom have been invaluable as I settled into the CEO role, and I have learned a great deal from him. As Mark finishes his term as Board Chair this year, I want to thank him for his dedication and contributions to BYS and vulnerable young people in our community.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved this year and the positive impact we have been able to make on the lives of so many young people. Our talented and passionate team is at the heart of our success, and without their hard work and dedication, BYS would not be able to accomplish the work we do. Together, we have created a supportive and empowering environment for young people in Brisbane, and I am excited to see what we can achieve in the coming years.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to Brisbane Youth Service. We look forward to another year responding to and championing for the needs of the young people we serve.



Pictured: Father Wally Dethlefs, with Pam at the 2023 BYS AGM, is a founding member of BYS. He has dedicated his life to advocating for young people, emphasising that true social justice is about working with individuals, not just for them.

WHO WE SUPPORT

OVERVIEW

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) supports young people aged between 12 and 25 years, their children, and their family members in the K.I.N.D. and Safe and Connected Futures programs.

1,910

young people accessed ongoing planned support

↑ An increase of 6% from last year.

2,811

young people accessed brief intervention from BYS

↓ A decrease of 9% this year following a sustained trend of yearly increases since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic until 2022-23.

68,310

occasions of support were provided in 2023-24

↑ An increase of 16% from last year.

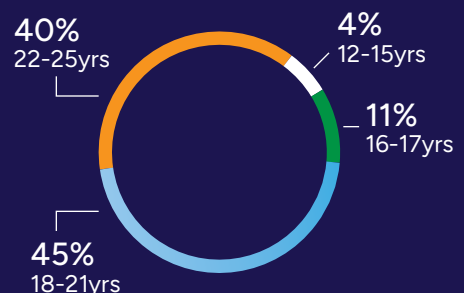
15%

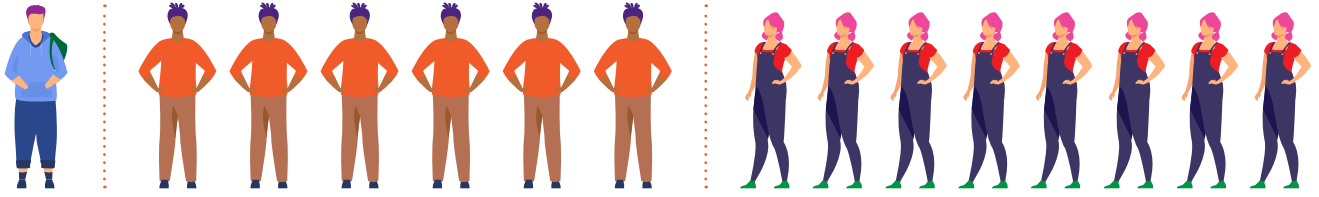
of young people were between the ages of **12-17** when accessing support

< 20 21 22 >

was the average age of young people accessing support

This is the second year we've seen a substantial increase from previous average age of 18 or 19.





5% Gender diverse

40% Male

55% Female

1 in 4 identified as **LGBTIQA+**

27% identified as **sexuality diverse**

This year, we have seen a sustained increase in the proportion of young people accessing support who are older, are young parents and/or have disability.

The ongoing housing and cost-of-living crises greatly impact young people with limited financial reserves to cover increasing rents and living costs.

We saw longer engagement with young people, with less than half of young people exiting BYS support this year. This is likely influenced by limited safe, affordable, long-term accommodation options available to young people as well as a modest increase in availability of BYS transitional housing that is paired with long-term tenancy sustainment support.

31% were young parents
 ↑ An increase from 26% last year.

31% of young parents supported had at least one child who was **not in their care** because of their circumstances.

187 children were supported aged between birth and 11-years-old, along with their young parent(s).

18% were caring for a new baby


 32% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

24% have disability

12% culturally and linguistically diverse

7% of young people supported by BYS identified as **migrants** and 2% were **refugees/asylum seekers**. The most common countries of birth, outside of Australia, were New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, England, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Kenya and Eritrea.



Avg. 34 occasions of support

WHO WE SUPPORT

LOCATION DENSITY

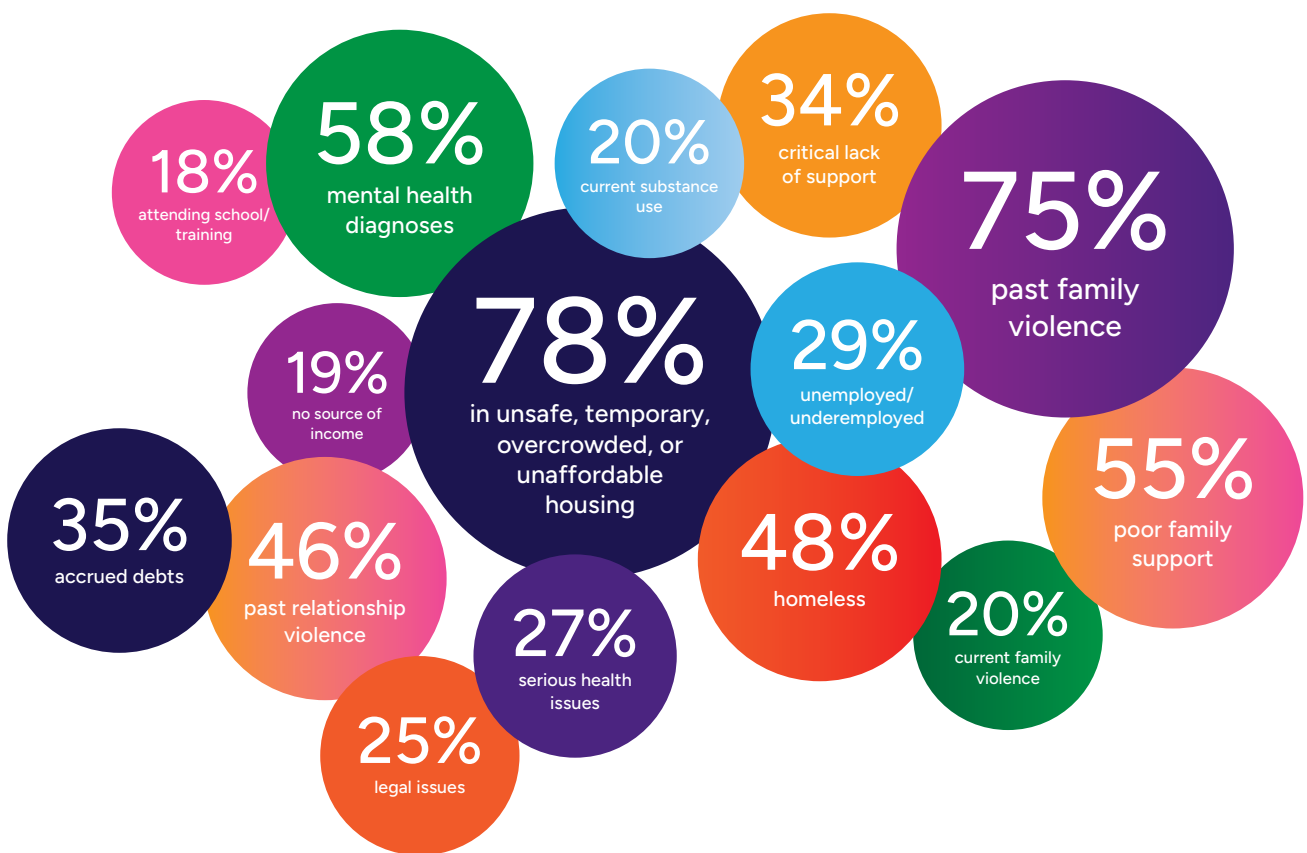


While BYS primarily serves young people within Greater Brisbane, we also provide support to individuals from outside this area who seek our assistance including:

- Far North Queensland
- Central Queensland
- North West Queensland
- Western Sydney



YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTERSECTING NEEDS AND POSITIVE OUTCOMES



Young people Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) supports come from diverse backgrounds with intersecting, wide-ranging life experiences, and face systemic barriers to addressing their basic needs.

This year, in line with previous years, the number one priority for young people was their housing situation, which was frequently unstable, unsuitable, unaffordable and/or unsafe.

With the ongoing housing and cost-of-living crises, BYS saw an increase in young people who were homeless, living in unsafe, temporary accommodation and with no income.

The number of young people disclosing family and relationship violence increased this year, highlighting the need for interventions and supports specifically designed to address young people's experiences of violence, which differ to adults. Mental health diagnoses were another concerning issue for the young people we support, with rates remaining high for the fifth year in a row.

HOMELESSNESS

In 2023-24, almost half of the young people who came to BYSS were homeless (48%).

This is about the same as last year, highlighting the ongoing impact of the housing and cost-of-living crises for young people in Brisbane. Young people are forced to couch surf, stay in motels, sleep in cars, or sleep rough when their rents increase or when private rental options are not affordable.

78% were living in unsafe, temporary, overcrowded, or unaffordable housing when first accessing BYSS for support. Overall rates of homelessness decreased by 82% after BYSS support and all forms of homelessness decreased.

Young people living in stable, suitable housing **tripled** from 24% to 79% after support.

1 IN 2
SAID THEIR HOUSING WAS A
CRISIS/SERIOUS SITUATION

ALMOST 3 IN 4
CAME TO BYSS ASKING FOR
HELP WITH HOUSING

This year, 1 in 10 young people were sleeping rough when they came to BYSS. Other forms of accommodation for young people:

- Living with family **21%**
- Living in a private rental/share house **15%**
- Living in crisis housing/boarding house **10%**
- Living in public/community housing **8%**
- Living in other accommodation **6%**
- Living in child safety or in an institution **2%**

#1
FORM OF
HOMELESSNESS REMAINS AS:
COUCH SURFING

28% of all young people supported
57% of young people who were homeless

Under 18s were **FOUR times**
more likely to be couch surfing
than sleeping rough



HOMELESSNESS OUTCOMES¹

| Before BYSS support | LIVING ARRANGEMENT | After BYSS support |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 50% | All Homelessness | 9% |
| 31% | Couch surfing | 5% |
| 6% | Crisis service | 3% |
| 2% | Boarding house | 1% |
| 10% | Sleeping rough | 1% |

HOMELESSNESS SUITABILITY¹

| Before BYSS support | HOUSING WAS | After BYSS support |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 46% | Temporary | 11% |
| 3% | Transitional | 5% |
| 21% | Unsafe | 3% |
| 6% | Overcrowded | 1% |
| <1% | Unaffordable | 1% |
| 24% | Stable & suitable | 79% |



3 IN 4
who were homeless when they
came to BYSS were able to move
into more secure forms of housing

- 39%** moved to public/community housing
- 20%** moved in with family
- 18%** moved to private rental/share housing

VIOLENCE

In 2023-24, **3 in 4** young people supported across all BYS programs had experienced family violence.

Experience of family and relationship violence are the most common causes of homelessness for young people.

However, violence does not necessarily end when young people leave the family home or an intimate relationship. Young people who are homeless are also often impacted by different ongoing forms of violence and abuse from people in their lives and the community.

1 IN 5

WERE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING FAMILY VIOLENCE

1 IN 10

WERE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (LIKELY TO BE UNDER-REPORTED)

ALMOST 1 IN 2

had previously experienced intimate partner violence

1 IN 6 had experienced sexual assault/abuse

1 IN 3 had experienced physical assault/abuse

1 IN 5 acknowledged at assessment that they themselves used violent or threatening behaviours (likely to be under-reported)

1 IN 4 told us that violence was a **crisis or serious concern** in their lives

AFTER SUPPORT¹

While violence concerns are commonly under-recognised and under-reported at the start of support, this year

MORE THAN HALF (58%)

indicated that their violence situations were **a bit or much better** after coming to BYS

The proportion of young people who were in a **crisis or serious** violence situation

DROPPED TO JUST 6%



I AM DETERMINED TO BE THE BEST FATHER I CAN BE AND TO CREATE A STABLE AND LOVING ENVIRONMENT FOR MY DAUGHTER, **BREAKING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND NEGLECT** THAT MARKED MY OWN CHILDHOOD.

— Young Person

MENTAL HEALTH

The proportion of young people who came to BYS with mental health diagnoses has **remained high** at 58% of young people.

Mental health impacts and is impacted by other challenges and needs experienced by young people. Poor mental health can be one pathway into homelessness for young people and can be linked to other intersecting experiences like early trauma or family and intimate partner violence. It can also be the result of other stressors associated with homelessness including financial instability, physical health issues, community violence and lack of support.



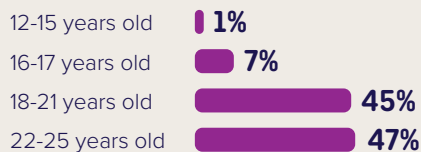
Without support, mental health issues can be a barrier to young people being able to access and maintain safe and stable housing in the future.

MORE THAN 1 IN 2
HAD A MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS
WHEN THEY CAME TO BYS

1 IN 3
IDENTIFIED SUICIDE RISKS

1 IN 5
IDENTIFIED SELF-HARMING
BEHAVIOURS

MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSES BY AGE 2023-24



1 IN 12
of those who reported suicide risks
were between 12 and 17 years old

3 IN 4
with mental health
diagnoses had **anxiety**

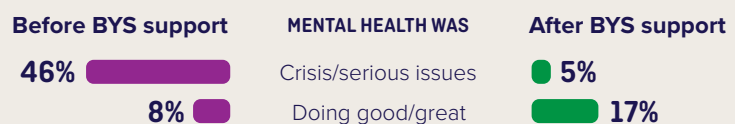
2 IN 3
with mental health
diagnoses had **depression**



1 IN 2
described their
mental health as
poor/very poor

2 IN 5
described their
mental health as a
crisis/serious situation

MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES¹



With BYS support, young people with

**GOOD OR GREAT
MENTAL HEALTH
MORE THAN
TRIPLED**

and those with
serious or crisis
mental health issues
decreased by

89% ↓

3 IN 5
SAID THEIR
MENTAL HEALTH
IMPROVED
WITH BYS
SUPPORT



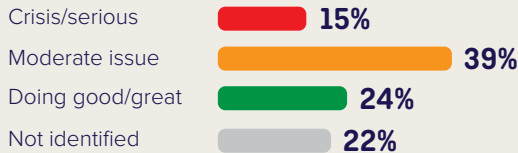
PHYSICAL HEALTH

1 IN 4

TOLD US THAT THEY HAD A SERIOUS PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUE

1 IN 7 said their physical health issues were a **crisis/serious concern** in their lives

YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THEIR PHYSICAL HEALTH WAS:



Each year physical health data collected demonstrates that many young people may not prioritise and accurately assess their own health situation at intake, as health before support is consistently highly rated. These ratings often reduce over time, as health awareness and literacy improve.

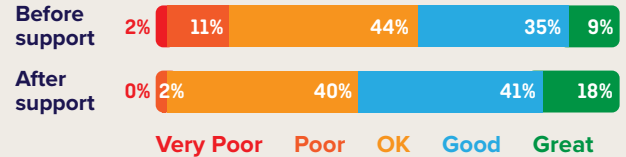
AFTER SUPPORT¹

3 IN 5

YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THAT THEIR PHYSICAL HEALTH WAS GOOD OR GREAT

34% INCREASE!

YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH RATINGS:



3 IN 4

young people said their physical health was a bit or much better after support

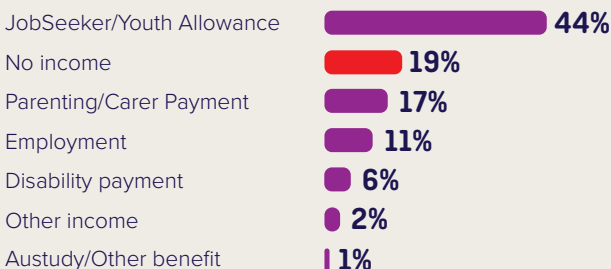


FINANCIAL WELLBEING

1 IN 5

TOLD US THAT THEY HAD NO SOURCE OF INCOME WHEN THEY CAME TO BYS FOR SUPPORT

SOURCE OF INCOME BEFORE SUPPORT:



2 IN 5 told us that their income situation was a **serious or crisis issue**

1 IN 10 had employment income but still needed support with housing or other needs

MORE THAN 1 IN 3 had debts when they came to BYS for support

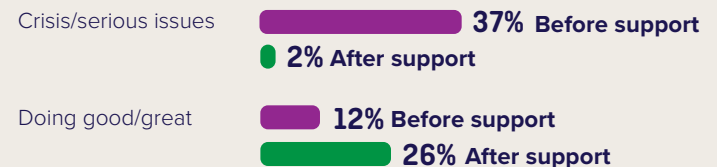
AFTER SUPPORT¹

ALMOST 1 IN 2

YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THAT THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION WAS A BIT OR MUCH BETTER



FINANCIAL SITUATION:



1 IN 5 who exited support in 2023-24 were earning **regular income** from employment

3 IN 4 young people were able to **stabilise** on income support payments

SUBSTANCE USE

1 IN 5

TOLD US THAT THEY THOUGHT
SUBSTANCE USE CURRENTLY
NEGATIVELY IMPACTED THEIR LIFE

2 IN 5 said that substance use had negatively impacted their life in the past

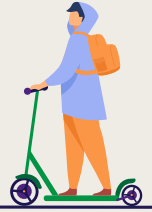
IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS,
YOUNG PEOPLE HAD:



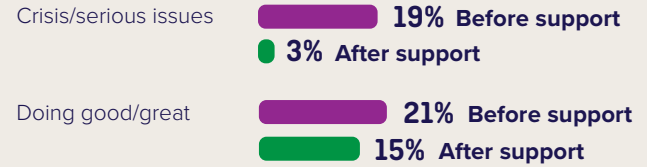
AFTER SUPPORT¹

2 IN 5

SAID THEIR SUBSTANCE USE
SITUATION WAS A BIT OR MUCH
BETTER AFTER SUPPORT



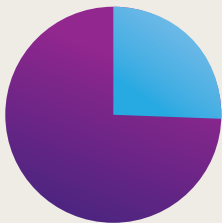
SUBSTANCE USE CONCERNS:



EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT

74%

Employment focus



26%

Education focus

MOST YOUNG PEOPLE WERE FOCUSED ON
EMPLOYMENT WHEN THEY PRESENTED
FOR SUPPORT

1 IN 4 told us education/employment was
a **crisis or serious issue** in their lives

MORE THAN
1 IN 4 were looking for work

1 IN 5 were not in the workforce due to
parenting or disability

MORE THAN
1 IN 6 were regularly attending
school or training

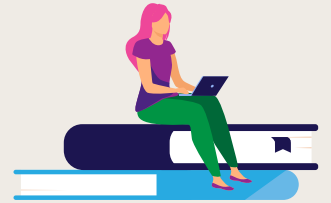
1 IN 8 were employed

1 IN 13 were enrolled in education but
disengaged due to life barriers

AFTER SUPPORT¹

1 IN 2

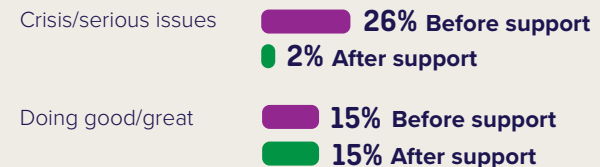
YOUNG PEOPLE SAID
THEIR EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT
SITUATION WAS A BIT OR MUCH BETTER



2 IN 5 young people disengaged from
education when presenting for
support were attending education
regularly after support

1 IN 4 young people with an employment
focus were employed after support

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES



92% ↓
DECREASE

in the proportion
of young people
in **serious/crisis**
education/employment
situations after support

LEGAL ISSUES

1 IN 4

YOUNG PEOPLE IDENTIFIED LEGAL ISSUES WHEN THEY CAME TO BYS

MORE THAN **2 IN 5** said their legal issues were a **serious/crisis concern**



YOUNG PEOPLE'S TOP 3 LEGAL ISSUES:



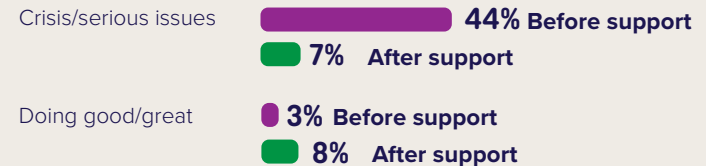
AFTER SUPPORT¹

1 IN 3

YOUNG PEOPLE SAID THAT THEIR LEGAL SITUATION WAS A BIT OR MUCH BETTER

2 IN 3 said their legal situation was about the same

LEGAL SITUATION:



84% ↓ decrease in those who had crisis/serious level legal issues

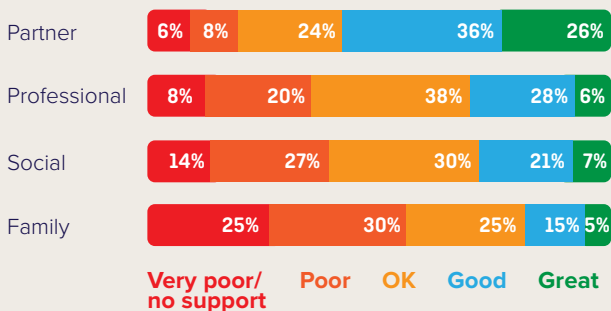
SUPPORT IN LIFE

1 IN 3

TOLD US THAT LACK OF SUPPORT WAS A CRISIS OR SERIOUS ISSUE IN THEIR LIVES



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUPPORT IN LIFE IS:



63% had no partner support

55% had very poor/poor or no family support

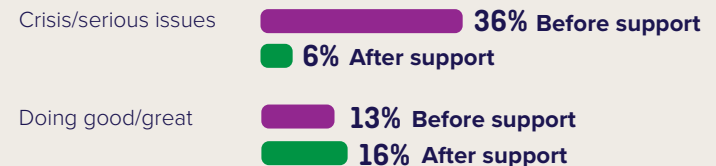
AFTER SUPPORT¹

GOOD OR GREAT FAMILY SUPPORT

DOUBLED



QUALITY OF SUPPORT NETWORK:



WHEN EXITING SUPPORT, YOUNG PEOPLE'S:

Positive social support increased by **41%** ↑

Positive professional support increased by **83%** ↑

Positive partner support decreased by **22%** ↓

(possibly due to healthy relationships education through group and individual support)

71% said their support networks were a bit or much better after support

BYs ALWAYS FELT LIKE A **SAFE PLACE**.
I KNEW I WAS GETTING HELP.

— Wes, read more on P37

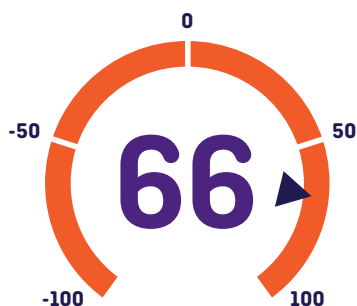
WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US

At Brisbane Youth Service (BYS), we believe that centering young people's voices in what we do is paramount.

Our Annual Client Feedback Survey is one of the ways we collect and action young people's feedback. There was strong participation from young people in this year's survey with 172 responses.

BACKGROUNDS AND IDENTITIES

We had varied representation from respondents from different backgrounds and identities:



NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS)²

Young people who completed the survey were very likely to recommend BYS to other young people with a **Net Promoter Score of 66** which is considered a great result.

² Net Promoter and NPS are registered service marks, and Net Promoter Score and Net Promoter System are service marks, of Bain & Company, Inc., Satmetrix Systems, Inc. and Fred Reichheld

OVERALL SATISFACTION

87% of young people were **happy** or **super happy** with BYS support, and that they are happy that **workers listen to them** and **they have a say in their support** at BYS.

81% of respondents thought BYS had a **"big"** or **"huge"** impact on young people's lives.



THE ANNUAL SURVEY REVEALED



BYS IS THE MOST **SUPPORTIVE** AND **CONNECTED** SERVICE I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED.

THEY HAVE PROVIDED ME AND HELPED ME WITH A ROOF OVER ME AND MY FAMILY'S HEAD AND **I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER.**

THEY'RE ALL **POSITIVE** AND **SUPPORTIVE** PEOPLE. VERY HELPFUL AND KIND TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEED OF HELP. I RECOMMEND BYS TO EVERYONE THAT IS STRUGGLING AND IN NEED OF HELP.

— Survey Respondents



When asked what had changed in their lives since coming to BYS, young people said they felt:

Safer, happier, more supported and had a better housing situation.

HOUSING SERVICES

Over the past year, the Housing Services team at Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) has supported hundreds of young people and young families, helping them find and sustain safe housing amidst an ongoing housing crisis.

Despite these challenging conditions, our team has celebrated significant achievements and worked tirelessly to ensure that the community's most vulnerable young people and young families are not only safely housed but also supported in creating sustainable and fulfilling lives.

The demand for affordable housing continues to grow, with young people particularly vulnerable to being priced out of the private rental market. In response, BYS has been a vocal advocate for increased investment and innovative strategies to create youth-appropriate housing. We believe firmly that every young person has the fundamental right to safe and secure housing, and we remain dedicated to ensuring there is a pathway home for every young person in need.

This year, BYS expanded our housing offerings by adding a total of 27 new beds for young people and families to our existing portfolio, including the new 19-bed temporary supported accommodation facility, The Nest, operated by our Intake and Early Intervention program. We added a new home with four beds to our Falconer House program, extending our application of the Advantaged Thinking model, specifically designed to support 18–24-year-olds pursuing employment and training.

Additionally, we have strengthened our collaborations with key partners such as Jacaranda Housing and Brisbane Housing Company (BHC), who contribute dedicated units for young people supported by our Sustaining Young Tenancies program. Our collaboration with the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works under the Same House Different Landlord model has proven successful in supporting sustained tenancies and long-term stability, with the addition of three new properties (four beds) this year.

In 2023-24, BYS experienced significant growth, leading to substantial internal changes including consolidation and restructuring within our team. We welcomed a new Senior Housing Services Manager, who brings over 20 years of experience in the housing and homelessness sectors, enhancing our ability to serve the community's most vulnerable individuals. Additionally, we introduced the Specialist Housing Program Manager role to improve support across our 24/7 supported accommodation and Falconer House programs.

Thanks to a 20% increase in government funding for Specialist Homeless Services, we have been able to provide essential additional resources to support young people. This includes enhanced brokerage for rent assistance, utilities, food, clothing, medication, and transport, as well as expanded training and development opportunities for our staff.

As we look to the future, BYS is committed to continuing our advocacy for more youth housing and exploring every possible avenue for alternative housing solutions. The increased funding and continued collaboration with our partners provide a strong foundation for our ongoing efforts to support the community's most vulnerable young people, ensuring they are safely housed and supported to build capacity in their lives.



HOUSING AND TENANCY SUPPORT

This year has been a dynamic period for the Housing and Tenancy Support (HATS) program at BYS, overseeing 28 transitional properties including share houses, single dwellings, and family homes.

In partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, the HATS team has effectively facilitated transitions from supported tenancies to long-term, secure housing through the Same House Different Landlord project. Two additional properties were acquired through Brisbane City Council's Community Housing Partnership Project, and we secured funding for two extra headlease properties.

Now accessing the increased state-funded Youth Housing Essentials assistance alongside of Rent Connect, we are better equipped to assist young people transitioning from government services to independent living. This program specifically aids with the costs associated with setting up a new home by covering one-off, essential goods and services up to \$5,000. This includes necessary items such as furniture, refrigerators, washing machines, and other crucial household essentials, providing a vital support to ensure a smooth and sustainable transition for young people.



In 2023, the team relocated to our new office in Greenslopes alongside the Sustaining Young Tenancies (SYT) team. Bringing these programs together in one location has enhanced collaboration and service delivery, with further improvements anticipated when we move to 518 Brunswick Street in 2024. Our varied accommodation options continue to offer crucial support, fostering stability and growth for young people and families in need.

In 2023-24, the HATS Transitional Housing Program provided accommodation to 58 young people and 23 accompanying children (56% female, 37% male, and 7% gender diverse). 38% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 20% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 85% of young people who exited HATS Transitional Housing Program in the past year successfully transitioned into supported independent accommodation, private rental, or returned home.

HOUSING MOBILE SUPPORT PROGRAM



Pictured: The HATS team for Wear It Purple Day 2023.

In addition to supporting young people residing in BYS-managed properties, the HATS team extends mobile support to young individuals and families who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness within the community. Our committed team delivers outreach, advocacy, and structured support to help overcome the intricate challenges these young people encounter in securing and maintaining suitable, safe, stable, and affordable housing.

In 2023-24, the HATS team provided Mobile Support to 129 young people and 41 accompanying children (56% female, 36% male, and 8% gender diverse). 34% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 16% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

SUSTAINING YOUNG TENANCIES & TRANSITIONS

The Sustaining Young Tenancies and Transitions (SYTT) program, which includes the **Sustaining Young Tenancies (SYT)** and the **Positive Transitions Program (PTP)**, plays a vital role in addressing the needs of individuals facing housing challenges. Over the past year, SYTT has strengthened its focus on providing tailored support that enhances the overall wellbeing of residents, ensuring they have access to necessary resources and assistance. By fostering partnerships and responding to the evolving landscape of housing insecurity, the program aims to create lasting pathways for individuals to thrive within their communities.



Sustaining Young Tenancies (SYT)

Over the past year, the Sustaining Young Tenancies (SYT) program has been instrumental in supporting individuals in public housing, social housing, and private rentals. The program focuses on helping residents build essential life skills and ensuring their wellbeing as they maintain stable living conditions.

Thanks to an increase in brokerage funding in response to the ongoing cost-of-living and housing crises, our team has been able to provide increased food assistance, accommodation and capacity building activities. This funding boost has been crucial in helping residents manage the economic challenges that impact them on multiple levels.

This year, our ongoing partnership with Jacaranda Housing has been essential in providing families with safe and affordable long-term housing, particularly those transitioning from short-term motel stays. With the dedicated assistance of a Youth Housing Specialist from the SYTT program, these families have gained stability and are learning vital tenancy sustainment skills.

In our third year of managing five units within BHC's affordable Cornwall St housing complex, we welcomed three new tenants. Consistent with all SYTT-managed properties, in addition to tenancy support, these residents receive assistance to actively pursue their personal and professional goals.

Some examples of the individual supports provided are:

- Neuro-psychological assessment
- Driving lessons
- Medical assessments
- Applications for additional individual funding
- TAFE and training support
- Positive Parenting Program
- NDIS applications

In 2023-24, the SYT program supported 136 young people including 1 accompanying child (67% female, 28% male, and 5% gender diverse). 38% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 11% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



Positive Transitions Program (PTP)

The Positive Transitions Program (PTP), funded by the Brisbane City Council, continues to be a crucial 'next-step' service that guides young people from our housing programs towards opportunities in education, training, employment, volunteering, and community involvement that provide pathways out of homelessness.

This year, PTP has broadened its reach and influence through strategic collaborations and initiatives:

- A partnership with TAFE Southbank Campus to explore vocational training and education pathways.
- A four-week Employment Capacity Building workshop series with The Nest to develop essential job skills.
- Equine Therapy with Reason to Thrive, providing therapeutic and skill-building opportunities.
- New connections with over 150 service providers, expanding our network.
- Engagement with the Brisbane South Youth Interagency to foster partnerships focused on education and employment, including Indigenous Youth Mobility Pathways and collaboration with Services Australia.

- Exploration of employment opportunities with Brisbane City Council in their Construction Laboratories.
- A network meeting with Skilled 360 and The Busy Group to discuss training and employment pathways, reinforcing collaboration with TAFE Queensland.

The program was highlighted to stakeholders in June 2024, showcasing its achievements and strategic direction. Through these collective efforts, the Positive Transitions Program continues to support young people in moving from housing services to independence, with stable employment and active community engagement. The program's success underscores the dedication of our team and the strength of our partnerships across various sectors.

In 2023-24, the Positive Transitions Program supported 97 young people (63% female, 26% male, and 11% gender diverse). 23% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 16% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 2 of the young people supported through the program attended TAFE, and 16 gained and sustained employment.



Pictured: Goal setting through vision boards at the PTP Employment Capacity Building workshop series at The Nest.



KIARA'S STORY

Before I got in touch with BYS I was residing with my mother, who then at the time packed up and moved back to our hometown.

Going back home wasn't an option for me due to the drug and drinking challenges I faced while living there, so I decided to stay. I slept on my friends couches for weeks, even at my ex-partner's mother's little accommodation. I lost my job due to severe mental health problems; I had no money and a lot of debts. During my long-term relationship I had experienced domestic violence.

When first contacting BYS I met up with Michael who did all the paperwork with me and got me set up with emergency accommodation, pretty much straight away. Ella was my first support worker and Bec soon became my DV case worker.

Then I had Alice, she was the one who sat there and listened to all my problems and helped me in every way she possibly could. She was so excited when I got the news about moving into my own place and she helped me get most of everything that I needed. She was not only my support worker but also someone I felt was close enough that I could confide and trust in.

I now have Amy and Shayne, I haven't been with them for long but they have impacted my life so much already and helped me get a head start to achieve the things I want to do to move forward with my life. I started to get my life together, not only for me but for my son too. My mental and physical health have changed dramatically. I started to believe in myself not only as a woman but as a mother.



Life as of now is starting to look up for me, I finally have my own house, my son in kindy and I'm a full-time student at TAFE doing my Cert IV in Youth Work. All these ladies have inspired me to follow my heart and look for a career in doing this work, helping and supporting young individuals such as myself.

As for the future, I hope to strive and make the most of my time and knowledge to make something really great of myself and to make my kids proud.

As much as I've learnt in such little time, these workers will help and support you in every way you can imagine. Even if you feel like no one is on your side and the world is against you, they make you feel safe and cared for, like you have a voice and a purpose in this world.



SPECIALISED YOUTH HOUSING

BYS provides transitional supported accommodation for young people who are experiencing or are at high risk of homelessness. This includes Phoenix, Windsor, and Sandgate Houses, funded by The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, catering to 16–18-year-olds and staffed by a dedicated team of youth workers available 24/7. This year, we expanded the innovative Falconer House program which operates across two adjacent houses and employs the Advantaged Thinking model to highlight the strengths and potential of young people. The Falconer House program was launched with pivotal funding from Hand Heart Pocket, which played a crucial role in encouraging the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works to match and sustain funding for this important initiative moving forward.

Our programs aim to create pathways to education and employment within a safe, structured, and nurturing environment. Residents benefit from strengths-based, trauma-informed support, ensuring they have the tools needed for personal growth and success.

Each residence is dedicated to empowering young people towards greater independence by fostering essential life skills, such as cooking, cleaning, and budgeting. Residents are also encouraged to engage in activities like movie nights, outdoor adventures, and community dinners. By sharing household responsibilities, young people develop the practical skills necessary for successful independent living.

The houses are fully furnished, providing young people with their own bedrooms and access to shared spaces including the kitchen, lounge, media room, and outdoor areas. This setup fosters a home-like atmosphere that builds trust and confidence. Additionally, the houses are equipped with TVs, computers, art supplies, and recreational equipment to support a variety of interests and activities.

SANDGATE HOUSE



At Sandgate House, we empower young people to achieve greater independence by helping them set and reach personal goals. Located near the waterfront, Sandgate House offers relaxing walks along Shorncliffe Pier and engaging activities like swimming, cinema outings, and community events. Simple joys, such as ice cream trips and spontaneous jam sessions, enhance the dynamic and supportive environment for both staff and residents.

This year, young residents participated in a variety of activities, including swimming at the Redcliffe Lagoon, watching movies at the cinema, joining BYS Reconciliation Week celebrations at New Farm Park, and engaging in the co-design process of the new BYS Youth Support Centre. Each day at Sandgate House brings new experiences and opportunities, creating a dynamic and engaging environment for both staff and young people.

In 2023-24, Sandgate House accommodated 9 young people (44% female, 44% male, and 12% gender diverse). 11% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 11% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 80% of young people who exited Sandgate House in 2023- 24 successfully transitioned into supported independent accommodation, private rental, or returned home.



ADAM'S STORY

I reached out to BYS after my school's youth worker referred me. They had heard that I was sleeping rough, and they saw that I needed help.

My early years were a rollercoaster of emotions and instability. I never felt like I fit in with my family; it was like I was constantly being pushed away. One day, I'd be kicked out, and the next, I was welcomed back as if nothing had happened. It wasn't a stable or safe environment, and I started noticing that something was off with my mental health when I was just 8 or 10 years old. I struggled to connect with my peers and family, which made life feel incredibly lonely and difficult.

When I first walked into BYS, I met Michael. For the first time in my life, I felt truly heard and understood. Michael affirmed my experiences and immediately recognised that housing was my biggest obstacle to getting my life back on track. It didn't take long before I was accepted into BYS housing, which became a turning point in my life.

The night before I moved into BYS housing was one of the worst I've ever had. I got into a physical altercation, my phone wasn't working, and **I was cold, sick, and sharing a tent with someone else – I also had a broken arm, so it wasn't fun! I had no hope left.** I went into The Hub, and saw Michael there, frantically trying to tell me that he's been trying to reach me all day to tell me my referral to BYS housing was accepted. Of course, he didn't know my phone wasn't working.

Since then, my friendships have improved, my mental health is finally getting better rather than worse for the first time, and I've regained my sense of self-worth. The support I've received has helped me realise that I'm stronger than I thought. I keep moving forward

by remembering where I was, where I am now, and where I want to go. I've healed a lot, and not much can bring me down anymore. Feeling safe, both physically and emotionally, has been crucial. At BYS housing, I can be myself—something I've never experienced before.

Life now is completely different. I'm on track to finish school by the end of next year, which is something I never thought would be possible. I also work as a lifeguard one day a week. I'm most proud of the fact that I've gone from being a potential high school dropout to someone who's on track to graduate. I've also managed to maintain employment, something I couldn't do before because of my mental health struggles.

Looking to the future, I've always had a passion for music and an interest in youth work. My time at BYS housing has confirmed that I have the ability to help others in the same way I've been helped.

To anyone reading this, especially if you've been in my shoes: stay strong, no matter how hard it gets. If you let your demons take control, it's hard to come back. Life will throw you curveballs, but the pain from this is always temporary. Ride the wave and come out on top.

WINDSOR HOUSE

Windsor House remains dedicated to supporting young people on their path to independence. Residents are assisted with securing employment, attending school, learning to drive, and acquiring essential life skills. We also help them reconnect with family, access government services, and build community connections.

In June 2024, Windsor House welcomed a new manager who quickly became a valued part of the team, focusing on fostering strong, supportive relationships with residents. This approach has been crucial in creating a nurturing environment that supports the wellbeing and development of the young people at Windsor House.

In 2023-24, Windsor House accommodated 9 young people (44% female, 44% male, and 12% gender diverse). 11% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 22% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 100% of young people who exited Windsor House in 2023-24 successfully transitioned into supported independent accommodation, private rental, or returned home.

PHOENIX HOUSE

At Phoenix House, we focus on supporting young people as they work towards greater self-sufficiency. Residents set personal goals with our team, which may include gaining essential life skills, obtaining identification, and pursuing employment or education. We also encourage engagement in personal interests and community activities, such as joining local groups or exploring hobbies. In June 2024, Phoenix House welcomed a new manager with experience in managing supported accommodation models overseas, ensuring a smooth transition into the role.



Pictured: Setting up for Halloween at Phoenix House.

This year, one young person from Phoenix House successfully transitioned to the Logan Youth Foyer. This highlights not only the effectiveness of our program in supporting positive outcomes, but also the vital role different housing models play in empowering young people to reach their goals and build a successful future.

In 2023-24, Phoenix House accommodated 16 young people (56% female, 38% male, and 6% gender diverse). 25% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 13% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 36% of young people who exited Phoenix House in 2023-24 successfully transitioned into supported independent accommodation, private rental, or returned home.

FAITH'S STORY

Before I came to BYS, I couch-surfed for several months at a friend's place. It was too much; I was intruding into their space, and I felt like a burden.

It was a small place, and I was using the lounge as my bedroom. I was working casually at the time, and all the accommodation I was looking at was unaffordable. I knew I needed to move out but couldn't find anywhere; it was stressful and taking its toll. A friend of mine told me about BYS. I gave them a phone call and organised a face-to-face appointment.

I met with Brief Intervention and Intake worker Alex. Alex was amazing, helpful, thoughtful, and validating, and I felt comfortable talking about my situation. Alex kept in regular contact with me, doing check-ins and updating me on the progress. I was then referred to Falconer House and got accepted. I was so happy and relieved that I had a roof over my head, somewhere to go now, my own home.

I also connected with the BYS clinic, which has been very helpful. Dr Mitch and Nurse Karren have been supportive and genuinely care about my health. They go out of their way to make the visits a positive and welcoming experience.

At Falconer House, we use the Advantaged Model of thinking, and I participate in monthly coaching sessions with my Youth Development Coach, Craig. I have received support, resources, and guidance and feel safe. I have accomplished so much while being here.

I completed my Responsible Service of Alcohol/Responsible Service of Gaming, a Certificate 3 in Hospitality, and am now working part-time. I give back to the community and have volunteered my time to help out others. I have attended workshops that have improved my health and wellbeing and learned new skills.

Our Youth Development Coaches, Craig and Brigid, are always there for us, they are invested and believe in me, helping us achieve goals we couldn't before. Our house feels like a home! I am now applying for the Australian Defence Force, which has been my long-term dream. So much has changed in such a short period, anything is possible!



FALCONER HOUSE

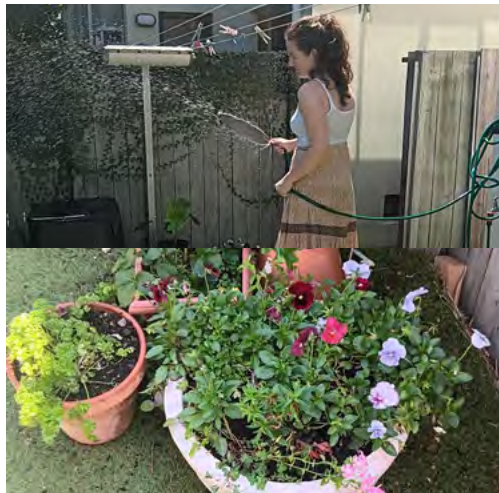
The Falconer House program embodies the Advantaged Thinking approach but operates on a smaller scale than traditional foyers. This year marked the opening of our second house in the program, effectively doubling our capacity from four to eight participants, with notable success in all target areas. This expansion was made possible through the Brisbane City Council's Community Housing Partnership Project (CHPP), which transforms vacant properties identified for future development into both short and long-term accommodation.

Participation in the program requires residents to meet specific engagement targets across various areas such as education, employment, health, and wellbeing. Notably, approximately 90% of the participants are either employed or engaged in educational activities or traineeships. Feedback from the residents has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the program's effective balance between fostering independence and ensuring housing security.

Residents have taken initiative by starting a community garden, growing vegetables and herbs, and contributing to the New Farm Community Centre by baking goods. Additionally, an Oral Hygiene workshop facilitated referrals to the Woolloongabba Oral Health Centre, reinforcing our commitment to holistic self-care and overall physical health.

We're excited about the state government's commitment to expanding the Foyer model in Queensland and look forward to continuing our work within this framework.

In 2023-24, Falconer House accommodated 9 young people (67% female, 22% male, and 11% gender diverse). 22% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 44% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



Pictured: A green-thumbed resident tends to the garden at Falconer House.

WORKING AS A YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COACH AT FALCONER HOUSE IS AN **INCREDIBLE PRIVILEGE** THAT I TRULY CHERISH. I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR PROGRAM'S ABILITY TO OFFER SAFE HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, WHILE ALSO BEING GUIDED BY THE ADVANTAGED THINKING MODEL.

— Brigid, Youth Development Coach

INTAKE AND EARLY INTERVENTION

In 2023-24, Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) restructured its Intake and Brief Intervention team to incorporate Early Intervention services, which were previously part of the Health Services portfolio.

The Intake and Early Intervention program now encompasses Intake and Brief Intervention, Assertive Outreach, The Nest, and two programs specifically focused on early intervention for young people: Safe and Connected Futures (SCF) and the Youth Support Program (YSP).

INTAKE AND BRIEF INTERVENTION

Intake and Brief Intervention, located at our Fortitude Valley Hub, is the first point of contact for young people seeking support from BYS. Funded by The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, and a Perpetual Impact Grant, the team provides assessment, brief intervention and referrals that link young people with any available housing options, suitable BYS programs and other community supports.



In 2023-24, the Intake and Brief Intervention team expanded to address the increasing demand for support during the ongoing housing crisis. The team provided more support for young people and families and addressed ongoing and high levels of complex need. Operating within a constrained housing environment with fewer referral options, BYS Hub Intake and Brief Intervention workers remained critical in providing day-to-day practical support for vulnerable young people and young families awaiting housing.



Throughout this year, the team continued to collaborate with the Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships program to implement the Queensland Government's Immediate Housing Response for Families. This initiative aims to provide swift and effective emergency housing solutions for families in need within the community. In early 2024, The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works expanded its Immediate Housing Relief funding to include individuals and couples. We welcome this response to address the pressing need, helping to provide safe emergency accommodation for vulnerable young people.

This financial year, the BYS pantry has also experienced a substantial surge in demand, highlighting the growing need for basic necessities among young people in Brisbane. This spike has been met with invaluable support from our community, particularly Umbrella Foundation Brisbane and Kiwanis Brisbane, whose ongoing donations have played a crucial role in sustaining our free-to-access pantry.

WES' STORY



In my younger years, I had my share of struggles at home and school.

I left school after grade 7, and I barely attended in grade 6. School wasn't a great experience for me, and I didn't get much support, which made learning hard. I lived at home with my mum and siblings, but one day, my mum left us for good. We were left to fend for ourselves in her social housing house. Since the house was in her name, we were told we had to leave, which made us homeless.

My partner, who was pregnant with our first child, and I initially couch-surfed. My partner, also 19, had limited family or social support and was put in jail for fare evasion while she was pregnant. Our baby was born just four months after she got out.

I was forced to sleep rough in places like Surfers Paradise, King George Square, and public parks. Sometimes, my partner and baby daughter would join me, and we would all sleep rough together for a night or two. The stress of nowhere to live and not much money eventually broke our relationship.

I get emotional when I remember the desperate measures I took for safety. I slept in council public toilets because I could lock myself in. **To survive, I covered the bathroom floor with toilet paper to avoid the filth and wrapped myself in toilet paper to keep warm.** This memory brings back a lot of pain. During the night, people would yell at me, council workers would spray water next to me, bang on the door, and run broom handles along the mesh fencing to make me leave. It was dirty, terrifying, and freezing, but at least I could lock the door and feel somewhat safe. I was homeless for about three years, sleeping in toilets, elevators, under bridges, and in dark parks.

These memories bring back a lot of shame, but it was all I could do to survive the circumstances I was faced with.

I was advised to go to Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) after being discharged from the hospital into homelessness. The first time I went to BYS, I was connected with Ollie. He arranged backpacker and hotel accommodation for me when possible. I experienced homelessness during tough times like the initial COVID outbreak and the Brisbane floods in February 2022, so accommodation options were limited, but Ollie helped as much as he could.

BYS always felt like a safe place. I knew I was getting help. Sometimes my distress would make me lose my temper with Ollie, but I knew I was always welcome back. I felt respected by Ollie and built a strong bond with him. I also worked with Awhina, who I speak highly of. I'm grateful to BYS and Ollie for all the support I've received over the years.

Ollie helped me with housing. When I went to the Department of Housing (DOH) they didn't explain the process, so I didn't know what to do. I returned to the HUB and told Ollie what had happened, and he went to DOH with me to provide support and advocate for me. Eventually, after a lot of work, I got housing.

Through BYS, I worked with Kate from LawRight to reduce my SPER debt from \$12,000 to \$7,000. The turning point for me was going to the GP clinic and meeting Dr Chris and Nurse Karren, who helped me get my mental health on track. This made me feel more positive and gave me the motivation to make life changes.

I'm working with Denise, who supports my needs around substance use, and a trainer 1-on-1. I enjoy working with Denise and the trainer. I've achieved great things like stopping substances, reducing my drinking, and improving my mental health.

Now, life looks much better. I feel more confident and positive. If I come into BYS and have a yarn with Karren and Denise, my worries go away, and the darkness lifts. I have hope for the future. I want to keep going to the gym, look for work, and maybe even do some study. I fondly remember working in hospitality in Cairns and Townsville, where I flourished, and I'd like to get back to working in that area. My passion is making music and one day I would love to work in that industry.

ASSERTIVE OUTREACH

The Intake and Early Intervention team increased our capacity to address street-based homelessness via the establishment of the Assertive Outreach program in early 2024 funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works. This has been a vital addition to our Intake and Early Intervention services, with a team of two workers providing regular outreach to locations such as Musgrave Park, Kurilpa and other local homelessness hotspots to offer support to young people sleeping rough.

Street homelessness in Brisbane can fluctuate significantly due to various local events, such as festivals and major sporting events. With the 2032 Olympics expected to impact the city's dynamics further, ongoing and proactive outreach is crucial. This ensures that young people on the streets receive consistent support and monitoring while suitable accommodation is found.

The Assertive Outreach team collaborates with other housing and health services, and Brisbane City Council, to offer support to young people sleeping rough and not accessing support services.

The Assertive Outreach team will play a key role in ending homelessness through managing the Youth Collaboration Group and the By Name List as part of the Brisbane Zero campaign.

In 2023-24, the Intake, Brief Intervention, and Assertive Outreach teams supported 1,258 young people and 14 accompanying children (54% female, 41% male, and 5% gender diverse). 34% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 11% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

THE NEST

In 2023, BYS advocated for youth specific crisis accommodation option that keeps young people safe from the risks associated with sleeping rough or staying in emergency accommodation for adults. In November 2023, we were successful in tendering for a new supported accommodation facility in a vacant motel leased by the Queensland Government.

Funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, BYS opened the 19-room accommodation, The Nest, in January 2024, providing around-the-clock support for the young residents living in semi-self-contained rooms. The Nest was officially opened with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony facilitated by Turrbal Elder Auntie Kathryn.

Young people at The Nest are given residential support from on-site Youth Workers and engage in other BYS programs and support. Residents are provided with accommodation and tenancy skills, wrap around planned support tailored to their needs, group activities, employment and job-seeking support and have access to a kitchen stocked with pantry essentials where they can join staff in communal cooking sessions. Since launching in January, we have already seen young people successfully transitioning from The Nest into longer-term housing.

In 2023-24, the Nest supported 27 young people (48% female, 37% male, and 15% gender diverse). 19% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 19% were culturally and linguistically diverse. 63% of young people who exited The Nest in the past year successfully transitioned into supported independent accommodation, private rental, or returned home.



Pictured: Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony to officially open The Nest.

EARLY INTERVENTION

In 2023-24, BYS Early Intervention programs were brought under the newly expanded Intake and Early Intervention team. Early intervention is a critical part of reducing the number of young people – especially those aged under 18 – coming into the homelessness system by proactively addressing family issues to prevent breakdown and strengthen support networks. The Early Intervention team is comprised of the **Youth Support Program** (funded by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services) and the **Safe and Connected Futures Program** (funded by Hand Heart Pocket).

Young people at risk of homelessness require a different approach than older demographics, making early intervention crucial. Increasing the availability of early intervention programs is essential to prevent young people from becoming homeless, reducing the demand on the adult system, and promoting long-term stability and wellbeing.

Safe and Connected Futures

The Safe and Connected Futures (SCF) program, funded by Hand Heart Pocket, helps young people and their chosen family members heal, strengthen relationships, and move towards positive futures.

This early intervention and prevention approach supports young people facing adolescent challenges, fosters family connections, and encourages pathways in education, employment, training, and community involvement. It aids young people as they transition to independence, whether living with family, in private rentals, or social housing.

SCF focuses on skill-building and strengthening family bonds through 12 tailored sessions that address psychoeducational development. Topics include attachment theory, child and youth development, the evolving parent-child relationship, behaviour as a reflection of needs, effective communication, and tools for managing conflict and escalating behaviours.

In 2023-24, the Safe and Connected Futures program supported 41 young people and 31 chosen family members (51% female, 46% male, and 3% gender diverse). 9% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 23% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

ABBIE'S STORY

At 15 years old, I got referred to the Safe and Connected Futures (SCF) program because of all the fights at home.

My family and I were always clashing over cultural expectations, timeframes, friends, and my relationships with my siblings. My parents and my school were really worried about a guy I was hanging out with who was controlling and bad for me. My parents' discipline was strict for my age. I felt trapped, not trusted, micromanaged, and constantly tracked.

Both my parents and I had goals for our relationship. I wanted to be trusted and have a good relationship with my parents. My mum and dad knew they needed to work on trusting me and building a better relationship. We both wanted to improve our communication and focus on my psychological and emotional wellbeing, and safety.

After our first meeting with SCF, I went missing. I didn't come home after school, and it was the first time I had ever left home. My parents were really worried about my safety and where I was. They didn't want to contact the authorities because they didn't trust them, and I had lost my phone, so the only way to communicate was through my school email.

SCF managed to contact me and work with me while I was couch surfing away from home. They talked to me about trust, effective communication, problem-solving skills, and healthy relationships. SCF also worked with my parents on understanding teenage brain development, better communication, and rebuilding trust. They used the Triple P program to encourage good behaviour through positive reinforcement and safety planning.

SCF worked closely with my parents, my school, and 54 Reasons, who were helping my younger siblings, to make sure I was safe. After three weeks of couch surfing, I came back home safely. Now, I'm slowly rebuilding my relationship with my parents and my siblings. The SCF visits are now more about monitoring and supporting our relationship through challenges. They even provided a desk and chair for me, which has helped me study at home and spend more time with my siblings.

This experience was really important for a few reasons: I was able to come home safely after three weeks of support from SCF. My communication skills with my parents have gotten better. My parents are starting to trust me and communicate better, instead of just blaming me. They understand my needs more now. I'm also getting along better with my siblings and other important people in my life. I've gotten support from my school guidance counsellor, and SCF referred me to the Safe Relationships program with BYS.



Youth Support Program

The Youth Support Program (YSP) supports young people aged 12-21 years to identify and pursue their goals, thrive in health and wellbeing, become more independent, and increase their awareness of services in the community.

Our team has strong knowledge of available support services, aiding referral to accommodation pathways, mental health support, medical services, legal services, psychosocial and safe relationship support groups, and financial support. Many young people we work with are looking to find courses, training and employment opportunities, and our team supports them with finding the right opportunities and ensuring they have everything they need to apply.

YSP also helps with advocacy and case management, for example supporting young people who are disengaged from school but want to complete their secondary education or supporting young people to navigate the systems and processes of government departments.

A challenge for the team has been referring young men over 21 to general support services after completion of the Youth Support Program. This has been identified as a gap where ongoing support is needed.



Pictured: Schools and Communities Partnership Expo.

This year, the team participated in school exhibitions and community activities such as the School and Communities Partnership Expo in March 2024. The team also fostered relationships with community networks including the Local Level Alliance and Inner Urban Youth Interagency.

In 2023-24, the Youth Support Program supported 136 young people (57% female, 29% male, and 14% gender diverse). 30% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 15% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

THANKS TO SCF, I'M NOW **SAFELY LIVING AT HOME**. THEY HELPED ME SETTLE INTO A NEW SCHOOL WITH SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN PLACE. I HAVE POSITIVE FRIENDSHIPS, MENTORS, AND SUPPORT FOR BEHAVIOUR AND EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT.

— Young Person

HEALTH SERVICES

THE MEDICAL CLINIC

The Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) Medical Clinic offers free, youth-focused primary health care for vulnerable young people who often encounter stigma and discrimination, making healthcare access challenging.

Located at our Fortitude Valley Hub and partially funded by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Service's (DCSSDS) Youth Support Program, the clinic provides a wide range of essential services. These include support with sexual health, alcohol and other drugs, mental health, eating disorders, pregnancy, women's health, contraception, gender support, general health, and urgent/emergency care.

In 2023-24, the Medical Clinic saw increasing demand for primary and mental health services due to the limited bulk billing options available for young people in the community. In response, we implemented a new targeted Referral and Transitional Care Pathway at the Clinic. This considers the complexity of health and social needs to provide flexible and comprehensive medical support, while transitioning young people to community General Practitioners (GPs).

Our Clinic team procured various training this financial year to offer services that may otherwise be unaffordable or have long waiting periods. For example, two of our GPs are now available to provide a range of emergency and long-term contraception, including intrauterine device (IUD) insertion.

In 2023-24, we engaged in a Preventative Dental Care pilot program with Metro South Oral Health Service (MSOHS). The program offered a wide range of procedures to young people accessing BYS support, including routine dental treatment and hygiene, wisdom tooth extractions, restorative work, and denture provision, providing more immediate access compared to traditional public system timelines.

Notably, 87% of the clients who accessed the service are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, many of whom had received minimal dental care previously. The pilot will continue through December 2024, when MSOHS is expected to release their evaluation report.

In early 2024, BYS established a Clinical Governance Committee (CGC) to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality, safe, and effective healthcare services. The CGC includes two non-executive BYS Board delegates with clinical governance backgrounds who provide oversight and advice/recommendations for improvement to the Board. The CGC aims to uphold clinical standards, foster continuous improvement, and enhance patient outcomes.



In anticipation of the new and expanded BYS Medical Clinic at our future Youth Support Centre in late 2024, we are working towards achieving the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL) accreditation by the beginning of 2026. Whilst achieving accreditation requires a significant investment, it's expected to enhance our quality services and open doors to future opportunities. We acknowledge MinterEllison's pro bono work in reviewing our clinical policies and procedures, an essential step in our accreditation preparation.

In 2023-24, 236 young people accessed the medical clinic, and 1,668 consultations were provided (57% female, 33% male, and 10% gender diverse). 31% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 14% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

TATUM'S STORY

I always had anxiety growing up and childhood trauma, so I tried to sort that out with drugs but it kind of made things worse.

I worked at a supermarket for nine years. I was a hard worker and got promoted. I took on a stressful assistant manager role. My first psychosis occurred during this time. I was diagnosed with schizophrenia and put on a treatment order plan.

My psychiatrist referred me to Brisbane Youth Service (BYS), where I met Kira and later Ari, who helped me find accommodation at a backpackers. I met my girlfriend there.

There were people drinking and smoking bongs outside, people were very loose there.

My girlfriend was working for free at the backpackers to pay board, but they were messing with the hours she worked, it was very dodgy.

There was a 14-year-old girl living at the backpackers who was homeless, and we heard men talking about what they were going to do to her while her boyfriend was in the watchhouse. My girlfriend hid her that night, then the next day got kicked out for letting someone else stay in her room. I also got kicked out as they said I would sneak her in.

We were then living on the streets.

I spent my Centrelink to buy shelter etc. I was like "Wow, this is happening, I'm actually homeless now" after being at a backpackers for nearly a year.

We lived under Kurilpa Bridge and later in bushland in Carindale.

We heard from people that West End was good, so we stayed along the waterfront for a few weeks, BYS gave us tents. They were pretty small, but they were cover. We ended up living under Kurilpa Bridge for 8 months. The nights were dangerous and during the day it was people heckling us etc.

We would go to Red Cross every Tuesday and Thursday and shower. Emmanuel's in West End, was the best too. You could go in every morning and get

cereal, toast, toilets etc. People would sometimes hang out there during the day but there were a lot of drug users. It was really hard to get away from that kind of stuff.

We would stay grouped together sleeping rough because it's how we felt safe. We helped other people sleeping rough.

The Department of Housing eventually helped us move into Bowman Johnson hostel. My mental health deteriorated again, but BYS and the Brisbane North Homeless Outreach Team provided crucial support. Despite initial mistrust, the BYS clinic helped stabilise my condition with the right medication.

My girlfriend and I struggled due to her lack of income, and she was evicted from Bowman Johnson because she couldn't pay rent. I chose to sleep rough with her at Musgrave Park to keep her safe until Micah helped us secure a one-bedroom unit. This marked a turning point in our lives.

In our new home, BYS assisted with setting up our life, providing furniture, and offering alcohol and drug support. I began focusing on my health and doing fitness with Denise from BYS. The trainer helped me with breathing exercises.

He taught me to visualise a white bubble around me and it peaceful inside. I imagined bouncing bad energies off the bubble and being safe inside myself. I do that now still when I'm feeling bad.

I recently started going to TAFE studying multi-media.

Now I think more about the future, investing into my future rather than short term. Being stable and confident in myself because I have reasons to be.

I can breathe and process now, I can think.

THE DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAM



Pictured: Luke and Rachel from MP studios have partnered with BYS for many years providing holistic health support to vulnerable young people. Luke incorporates exercise and breathwork in his sessions, with a focus on whole-self health and wellbeing.

The BYS Drug and Alcohol Program, funded by the Brisbane North Primary Health Network (PHN), provides brief intervention and case management for young people experiencing challenges associated with their substance use. This year, Brisbane North PHN confirmed funding for an additional two years, underscoring the program's effectiveness.

In 2023-24, the Drug and Alcohol team supervised a Master of Public Health student placement who oversaw a project to provide easy access to Naloxone for young people working with BYS. The team are now registered as an Authorised Alternative Supplier in the Take Home Naloxone program, which means we can expand our existing harm minimisation programs to reduce preventable harms and risk of overdose.

Our commitment to continuous professional development allows us to keep our interventions responsive to changing needs. For example, because of training received this financial year, our team can now screen and assess for problematic gambling and gaming in young people.

In 2023-24, the Drug and Alcohol program supported 114 young people with 2,088 occasions of support (55% female, 37% male, and 8% gender diverse). 23% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 12% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

THE DUAL DIAGNOSIS COUNSELLING PROGRAM

The Dual Diagnosis Counselling Program, funded by Queensland Health, supports young people seeking therapeutic support for substance use and co-occurring mental health concerns. This year, we incorporated sensory approaches into our Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD) practice to boost treatment effectiveness. For instance, our recovery-focused group programs, co-facilitated using various art mediums, foster a safe, therapeutic environment that enhances social connections and interpersonal skills.



In 2023-24, the Counselling program supported 15 young people (60% female, 40% male, none were gender diverse). 7% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 7% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



Pictured: Some of the BYS Health team enjoying the sunshine during a team building day at Burleigh Heads.



THE RECOVERY AND DISCOVERY PROGRAM



Pictured: Creations from our Recovery and Discovery weekly clay group.

In partnership with Community, the Recovery and Discovery (RAD) Program at BYS provides psychosocial mental health support to young people with severe mental health challenges affecting daily functioning.

The RAD Program facilitates individual support and therapeutic group programs that enable young people to increase their community participation. These programs are delivered in-house, along with support from Visible Ink Youth Hub, and include Clay Therapy, Trauma-Informed Yoga, and Creative Arts.

In 2023-24, 91 young people accessed the RAD HUB and 2,160 consultations were provided (57% female, 23% male, and 20% gender diverse). 20% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 12% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

THE WAY BACK SUPPORT SERVICE

The Way Back Support Service (TWBSS), delivered in partnership with Community and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH), offers crucial psychosocial recovery support to young people within the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) and The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) catchments. The program follows the model initially developed by Beyond Blue and provides up to 12 weeks of intensive aftercare for young people who have experienced a suicidal crisis.

This year, TWBSS expanded its services to include young people in The Prince Charles Hospital catchment area. This meant that our Support Coordinator transitioned from part-time to full-time to accommodate the increased demand.

TWBSS has also started accepting referrals for 15-17-year-olds in The Prince Charles Hospital catchment, addressing an identified need for this age group in this region. In preparation for integrating this younger cohort into the program, BYS has been collaborating with Queensland Health, Brisbane North PHN, and Community to ensure the program meets their unique needs, as it has traditionally served individuals aged 18 and older.

In 2023-24, 66 young people accessed TWBSS and 688 consultations were provided (65% female, 32% male, and 3% gender diverse). 2% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 15% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

YOUNG WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND SAFE RELATIONSHIPS



The Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships program was committed to its important work in 2023-24, providing holistic and trauma-informed support to young people and families through a variety of services.

We saw an increase in demand for youth-focused domestic and family violence (DFV) services this year, which prompted a steady recruitment cycle to support program growth. Part of this recruitment was bolstered by the announcement of a two-year funding extension from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, as well as a grant from the Paul Ramsay Foundation for SAGE group and the K.I.N.D. program.

In 2023, we were fortunate to move into a new office and support hub, generously donated by a philanthropic family. This welcoming space has provided a wonderful environment for engaging with and supporting the young people and families we serve. We're also grateful to the Property Industry Foundation for helping us make this space even more inviting with new paint and furniture.

WE ARE MOVING INTO OUR
OWN HOME TO A BETTER
FUTURE. IF I DIDN'T HAVE THE
HELP FROM MY BYS FAMILIES
WORKER, **I WOULDN'T BE
ABLE TO DO IT ON MY OWN.**

— Young Person



YOUNG WOMEN'S PROGRAM

The dedicated team from our Young Women's program provide comprehensive support to young women who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, thanks to funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

Many of the young women we work with have experienced complex trauma such as domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and/or mental health issues, and often lack a safe or supportive person to help navigate life's challenges.



We empower young women to define their own goals for support, enabling them to take charge of their journey towards stability and wellbeing. A strengths-based approach is then utilised to support these young women and advocate for their needs within complex systems such as housing, education, health, government support, and child safety.

In 2023-24, the Young Women's team supported 129 young people and 31 accompanying children (84% female, 12% male, and 4% gender diverse). 35% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 17% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

YOUNG FAMILIES PROGRAM

Our Young Families program supports young parents who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We work to address the impacts of trauma and domestic and family violence (DFV) on young parents, while supporting the development of attached and attuned parenting for their babies and young children. This program is primarily funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

Our Young Families team now includes six trained Circle of Security facilitators. This renowned international program focuses on strengthening parent-child attachment using research-based methods. Our seventh team member is a newly accredited play therapist who helps children with complex behaviours process traumatic experiences through play.

An important part of our work is supporting families involved with, or at risk of entering, the child protection system. We help them navigate Child Safety processes to promote safety and reunification, and, when possible, prevent children from entering the system. This financial year, four families we supported successfully had their Child Safety cases closed, or their children reunified.

Our Targeted Family Services role, funded by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors, and Disability Services, aims to work with families not currently under Child Safety intervention. By using early intervention strategies, this role helps to prevent the need for Child Safety involvement. We are pleased to announce a recent five-year funding extension for this crucial program.

In 2023-24, the Young Families team supported 223 young people and 145 accompanying children (60% female, 39% male, and 1% gender diverse). 50% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 14% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



LEAH'S STORY

I joined a young women's group run by BYS that helps women learn about self-understanding and healthy relationships...

My parents were separated from the age of eight and were very violent towards each other and me and my other siblings. I had many abusive stepdads from a young age. From as young as I could remember I just always wanted to escape. This led me to a life of complete instability, no matter where I was or who I was with I never felt safe, loved or accepted. I remember having suicidal thoughts at the age of eight, and at the age of ten, I started drinking... I was suffering with major anxiety attacks and found myself calling the Kids Helpline. Sadly, despite child safety reports, school concerns and reporting incidents to the police, I never received the help I needed and deserved as a child.

As a teenager I found love in all the wrong places... I got pregnant at the age of sixteen... he was physically violent. We broke up a couple of times and officially when my daughter was six months old.

I really struggled being a single mum, I had gone back to school at the time in attempt to finish grade 12. I ended up dropping grade 12 as I wasn't able to find flexible child minding. I was struggling financially, drinking a lot more and had become manic, struggling with suicidal tendencies. I knew that I wasn't doing my best as a parent however I didn't reach out for help as I was scared that if I did child safety would take my baby. I soon learnt from working with BYS that wouldn't be the case if I made some changes.

Soon after this I entered another abusive relationship that went on for three or so years... Leaving that relationship was really tough.

I jumped in my car with my daughter and a few of our belongings and couch-surfed with family, friends and lived out of my car for a year or so. The COVID pandemic was in full swing at this time and finding housing or even available hotels was tough. I dealt with a lot of abuse from people who would let me sleep at their homes. Even though I had left this man I had found myself still visiting him in hopes that we could work it out. When visiting him however he was much more violent.

I always tried to be as quiet as possible in hopes that my daughter wouldn't hear what was going on. I now realise that my baby daughter was also staying quiet so she would be invisible. Of all the horrible things he did, the one that stayed with me the most was when he punched me in the car as I was driving and my daughter in the back seat yelled "Don't hurt my mummy!". She wasn't even three at this time and she wasn't much of a talker back then so hearing this from her was gut wrenching. I never wanted my daughter to experience the nightmare I went through growing up and I knew I needed to change.

After a family member sent me to hospital due to a mental breakdown, I talked to a social worker there and was able to get into transitional housing... I broke down and told them everything. They referred me on to Brisbane Youth Service... I joined a young women's group run by BYS that helps women learn about self-understanding and healthy relationships... There were many other eye-opening things that I learnt...

I was referred to Young Families support worker, my guardian angel, Renee... Our sessions would vary from many topics, mental health, self-reflection, self-care... I had many breakdowns and setbacks in this time, however Renee was always there to get me back on my feet. I never felt judged by her...

I was then successful in getting a housing commission home. Soon after, Renee was then promoted, I was then referred onto Young Families worker Laura. As I was navigating a new five-month-old relationship, Laura was able to help me trust my instincts and pick up on red flags. I was then able to leave the relationship before it ever got physically violent. Laura has been taking weekly sessions with my daughter doing play therapy and my daughter has significantly improved in her behavioural outbursts. Laura has been able to help me reflect and find strategies to best navigate through some of my daughter's problematic behaviours and challenges. We have started Circle of Security, which is a parenting program that helps parents understand children's connection to them and attachment needs. Everything I have learnt has been eye-opening and so helpful.

Now that my daughter has received extra support, it has made it possible to focus on work and study goals. I am now studying a Certificate IV in Mental Health, and I work part-time as an Age and Disability Support Worker. I am still receiving BYS services, and I know when it's time to end I'll have the skills to tackle life's hurdles thanks to them.



IMMEDIATE HOUSING RESPONSE

The expansion of the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works Immediate Housing Response funding provides two streams of support: one for individuals and couples and another for families. This funding has helped BYS to meet the elevated levels of demand for emergency accommodation by offering motel stays for those facing homelessness and supporting new tenancy setups for young people and families. The program began with just one worker but has grown to include six workers and a manager, enabling us to respond more quickly and effectively to the urgent needs resulting from the ongoing housing crisis.

Our team also assists young people and families to secure new social housing and private rental opportunities, as well as offering support for tenancies at risk. We take pride in working closely with young families experiencing homelessness to establish new social housing tenancies, thanks to our strong partnerships with the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

In 2023-24, the Immediate Housing Response for Families team supported 205 young people and 110 accompanying children (67% female, 31% male, and 2% gender diverse). 51% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 11% were culturally and linguistically diverse.

YOUNG DADS



In line with the Safe and Together model of practice, our team includes a young dad's worker who is dedicated to supporting young dads or young men in a fathering role who have varying levels of contact with, or custody of, their children. The focus is on father-inclusive practice that places dads in the parenting picture and holds them accountable for their parenting responsibilities and choices while supporting them to build their parenting identity.

The young dads worker assists dads to secure stable housing, strengthen their relationships and parenting skills, and improve their own health and wellbeing - including recovery from trauma. Advocacy and support are also provided to navigate complex systems and engage in employment or further study.



PAXTON'S STORY



I'm a 21-year-old single dad, and my journey with the Young Dads & Young Families program began in mid-April 2024.

My story starts in New South Wales, where my childhood was marred by family violence and neglect. We moved to Brisbane, leaving our abusive father behind, but the violence continued from my grandparents. In my early teens, I left home and ended up sleeping rough on the streets of Logan before moving into Brisbane city, where I met my now ex-partner.

One of my major goals has always been to be the parent I never had. I want and need to be the opposite of what my father was. My daughter deserves that. Co-parenting with my ex-partner comes with its own challenges and frustrations, but I am committed to being a positive, loving, and caring parent to my beautiful 2-year-old daughter.

I'm working on my personal issues, like poor mental health, self-loathing, and constantly second-guessing whether I'm doing a good job as a father.

Some days, I feel disheveled, uninterested, and stuck in a dark realm of hurt. Other days, I'm upbeat, laughing, and joking. Despite my ups and downs, I keep turning up and working on myself, for myself, and even more so for my daughter.

Through the Young Dads & Young Families program, I'm now linked with the medical clinic at Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) and will start psychology sessions soon. I've also recently found employment as a grounds-person. My next major goal is to find housing for me and my daughter.

I AM DETERMINED TO BE THE **BEST FATHER I CAN BE** AND TO CREATE A STABLE AND LOVING ENVIRONMENT FOR MY DAUGHTER, BREAKING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND NEGLECT THAT MARKED MY OWN CHILDHOOD. THIS JOURNEY ISN'T EASY, BUT I'M **COMMITTED** TO MAKING A BETTER LIFE FOR US BOTH.

— Paxton

YOUNG PARENTS' GROUP

Our Young Parents' Group, funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works, meets weekly during the school term, offering sessions on parenting skills, nutrition, self-care, communication, play therapy, child development, and reducing social isolation. This financial year there was huge demand from young families wanting to be involved, and we were able to support 19 young parents/families and 24 children.

A families worker leads the Young Parents' group, supported by a childcare worker and a volunteer cook, facilitating child-friendly activities in a welcoming environment. Young parents benefit from connecting with other parents with similar experiences in a relaxed and non-judgemental environment. This year, we enjoyed numerous park picnics and outings to places such as Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary, Chipmunks Play Centre, and Mini Bounce.



SAFE RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM

The Safe Relationships Program includes our **Youth Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Advocates**, the **K.I.N.D. program**, and **SAGE Group**. These programs work collaboratively to support the high numbers of young people seeking help with experiences of family and/or intimate partner violence.

Youth Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Advocates

In 2023-24 we self-funded two more specialist Youth DFV Advocates, totalling three positions dedicated to supporting young people and families responding to DFV in family of origin as well as intimate partner relationships, including safety planning, risk assessment, and referral pathways.

Supporting young people experiencing DFV involves navigating multiple intersecting factors and navigating the Integrated Service Response to promote their safety. Many may not realise they are in DFV relationships so may not actively seek help for DFV issues. Their housing situation might be tied to someone perpetrating violence against them, and/or they may have normalised these experiences from childhood.

Establishing trust between young people and youth workers can often take a long time due to the abuse, violation, and trauma many young people have experienced in other relationships with adults. Given these challenges, we use opportunistic and relational approaches in our youth services to help identify DFV issues, responding with a trauma-informed and youth-friendly wraparound approach.

In 2023-24, the DFV Advocates supported 246 young people and 9 accompanying children (79% female, 16% male, and 5% gender diverse). 35% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 8% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



ESSIE'S STORY

Living in temporary motels is hard, and it feels like our lives are on hold, just waiting for the next move.

Growing up, I didn't have the support most kids rely on. My family environment was abusive, and when things became unmanageable, I was placed into the care of child safety. I hoped this change would lead to a better life, but at just 15 years old, I ended up in a relationship with someone much older – 35 years older, in fact. At the time, I thought he was in his 20s. His control over me began almost immediately, isolating me from others and making me feel trapped. We had a baby together, and that's when I finally learned his real age – 49. By then, the relationship had become extremely violent. I was stuck, scared, and didn't know how to get out.

Eventually, I managed to leave, hoping for a fresh start. But unfortunately, the next relationship also turned violent. The cycle of abuse continued, and before long, I was in a situation where I felt my life was at risk.

I managed to get away with my kids. I was exhausted and had nowhere safe to turn. That's when I found Brisbane Youth Service. They helped me find temporary shelter and gave me the support I so desperately needed. My daughter is doing play therapy with Laura which has been amazing, and I've been working with a DFV worker learning about safety and boundaries.

For the first time in years, I feel like I am in a place where people genuinely care about my safety and the wellbeing of my children. I can't thank them enough for all they've done

Now, at just 20 years old, I'm looking after my children, including my younger brother, who's only 11. I took on legal guardianship of him to make sure he didn't have to go through what I did. But it's tough – he's already been to 12 different schools because we have to keep moving around. My kids haven't had a chance to make friends or feel settled either. Living in temporary motels is hard, and it feels like our lives are on hold, just waiting for the next move.

What we need more than anything is a permanent home – a place where my children can feel safe, make friends, and start building a future. I want them to know what stability feels like and to grow up without the fear I've had to live with.



SAGE Group

This year we changed the name of our Women's Group to SAGE Group to reflect the group's inclusion of non-binary people alongside young women. One in four young people seeking support from BYS identify as LGBTQIAP+. BYS's seven-year data analysis on young people, gender, and family and intimate partner violence revealed that at intake, gender diverse young people were more likely to report current and past family violence compared to those who identified as exclusively female or male.

SAGE Group uses a trauma-informed group setting to educate on respectful healthy relationships. The team also supports young women and non-binary people to recognise their victimisation and experiences of DFV, reduce their social isolation, and develop ideas and aspirations for their future relationships.

Feedback from participants has indicated that this recovery work has enabled healing and built a foundation for healthier future relationships characterised by trust, boundaries and a stronger understanding of self-worth.



In 2023-24, the K.I.N.D. Program and Safe Relationships groups supported 174 young people, 28 accompanying children and 11 parents as part of the K.I.N.D. program (64% female, 29% male, and 7% gender diverse). 22% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 13% were culturally and linguistically diverse.



AS SOON AS YOU SEE A RED
FLAG—IF HE RAISES HIS
FIST, VOICE, OR CHEATS, OR
GASLIGHTS YOU—**TRY TO
FIND A WAY OUT.** DON'T LET
HIS THREATS STOP YOU FROM
GETTING OUT OF THAT.

— Essie, read more on P53



JANE'S STORY

K.I.N.D.

The K.I.N.D. program is a youth-specific, one-on-one intervention for young people using violence towards parents, siblings, and/or partners. It is a trauma-informed program, understanding that many of the voluntary participants have been victims of violence themselves. The K.I.N.D. program stands for Kinship, Improved Relationships, No Violence, and Developing Skills.

The K.I.N.D. program is funded by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, which announced a two-year funding extension for 2023-24, and by the Paul Ramsay Foundation, which provided a two-year grant. This year we worked with 11 graduates of the program. Graduates are supported to learn about emotional regulation and skill development that aims to reduce the use of violence.



The program has been in pilot at BYS, the Department of Youth Justice and the Child and Youth Mental Health Service while evaluation data was collected. This year marked the completion of data collection, and we now look forward to contributing to the evidence base for effective interventions for young people using violence.

My parents co-parented when I was young. But when they discovered drugs, things went downhill. Dad was incarcerated for four years... Me and mum moved again and further away from where he knew we were. My mum got back on the drugs after finding a new partner. Sometimes the fights were physical, and sometimes they were just verbal. During the fights I would always make sure my sister was safe. At 14-15 years old I was protecting these children from their parents; I should have been protected as well, but felt like it was up to me.

I became pregnant in year 11. Having my son Marcus brought light into my life.

Just before my 18th birthday my mum's partner and I got into a massive fight. I got home early from block exams. I could tell he'd been using and he started an argument with me about finances and asked me for more money. I was already helping with rent, electricity, and groceries. He told me to get out of his house.

I was able to stay with a friend from high school...My partner ended up on and off the streets.

My partner's friend knew of BYS. I went from couch surfing with friends, to being connected to the Immediate Housing Relief for Families and I got a housing support person and a families support worker.

There was a long period of time where we were hotel hopping and I was so scared. I was in one hotel and realised I had stayed here before with my mum, when I was little. We had an opportunity to then enter transitional housing. It gave us a rental history – we were told we could stay for 9 months. I was so happy to have a place I could call home, like nothing could happen to me in my own home. There were so many emotions. It gave me relief that I wouldn't lose my child.

[Through the K.I.N.D. Program] I've learned how to calm my triggers down. I would hit or kick a wall because I didn't know how to release that anger. Marcus grabbed dry wall and put his hand in there and it made me upset that I could possibly endanger my son.

I don't want this for my son. I've had to learn how to communicate—it was never shown to me. I want it to stop with me and my siblings, not to bring it into the new families we will try to create.

QUALITY, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

The Quality, Research, and Innovation (QRI) team is made up of the Quality, Research and Innovation Senior Manager, the Quality and Practice Development Manager, Research and Evaluation Coordinator, and the Head of Youth Engagement.

This year we added a Quality Officer to the team to support the continuous quality improvement projects happening across BYS, with plans to grow the QRI team further over the next 12 months.

We continued to work collaboratively with universities. The Institute of Social Science Research at the University of Queensland worked with BYS on the evaluation of the Safe and Connected Futures program, including completing the analysis of a large set of qualitative data on the lessons learned from implementing this new program.

We also continued our participation in the evaluation of the K.I.N.D. program, working closely with Griffith University to ensure that young people were able to participate safely in evaluation interviews and that quality assessment data was collected. We were a Griffith University Criminology and Criminal Justice Industry Partner, which provided opportunities for students to collaborate on data analysis.

We love to share our expertise, including research and evaluation findings, with external audiences. Our Research and Evaluation Coordinator presented at the Australian Evaluation Society Annual Conference on the application of social work principles and values to evaluation practice.

The QRI team is the custodian of a large dataset comprised of comprehensive intake assessments with all young people accessing BYS services for ongoing planned support over

the past seven years. Data has been collected from more than 3,000 young people seeking support at BYS.

This year, we published two reports from this dataset – one on young people's self-reported mental health and one on young people's experiences of domestic and family violence, including intimate partner violence. In the coming months we will be adding an eighth and ninth year to the dataset and will conduct more in-depth analysis on the co-occurring needs of young people accessing the service. We will also be publishing a report looking at what this data tells us about young people's experiences of different types of homelessness and housing, which was the subject of an article we authored for the April edition of *Parity*, the homelessness sector journal.

In the quality, auditing and compliance space, the team successfully led the Human Services Quality Framework recertification audit in November, with no areas of non-conformance. The organisation received excellent feedback from the auditor about the standard of the service young people receive and was particularly impressed by the young people interviewed for the audit and their candid and positive feedback about BYS.

As we do every year, we conducted the Annual BYS Client Survey, which is one of the ways we seek feedback from young people and their families on the quality and impact of the services we provide. Young people gave BYS a Net Promoter Score® of 66, which is a great result (the industry benchmark for charities in Australia is 27). Young people told us that they were safer and happier after receiving BYS support.

The QRI team continued to support the advocacy work of the organisation. We worked with BYS service delivery teams to make a written submission to the Australian Government Department of Social Services National Housing and Homelessness Plan consultation. We argued for the creation of an



integrated ecosystem of housing and service supports for young people.

We were also excited to join the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP) Framing Initiative Community of Practice. The Framing Initiative is a joint initiative of TQKP and the Queensland Family and Child Commission, with advisory support provided by FrameWorks Institute. This initiative's purpose is to facilitate the broader use of framing principles drawn from rigorous research on effective communication.

This year has been exceptionally successful for our team as we continue to enhance practice at BYS and contribute evidence and insights that drive impactful, high-quality programs and services for young people.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AT BYS

Following the development of the Youth Engagement Framework in 2022-23, this year saw further opportunities created for young people to have a voice at BYS, and for us to be guided by their voices and lived experience.

Five projects were delivered this year with a focus on young people influencing the work of BYS and the broader sector. Across these projects, 52 young participants spent more than 30 hours sharing their insights, ideas, and lived experience with us.

In January 2024, we collaborated with young people around the development of the BYS Youth Domestic and Family Violence Practice Framework and how BYS can best support young people who are using or experiencing domestic and family violence. These insights are currently being incorporated into the framework.

Another key youth engagement project was the design of the new BYS Youth Support Centre. Young people contributed to the design of the service delivery area in the



new building through a short survey and a participatory workshop. This process produced many exciting ideas and highlighted the diverse needs of young people who use the current BYS Hub. Listening to young people throughout this project has led to several important developments for the new Youth Support Centre, particularly regarding inclusivity and accessibility for young people.

BYS also worked with the Australian Human Rights Commission to consult young people at BYS about reform in the youth justice system. This was a remarkable opportunity for the young people we work with to influence decision making and sector change at a high level.

In addition to the youth engagement projects, 2023-24 saw the development of the BYS Storytellers as an emerging opportunity for young people linked to BYS. The BYS Storytellers are a group of young people who share their personal stories to raise awareness, impact the sector beyond BYS, and inspire other young people.

The BYS Storytellers may contribute their stories to feature in the media, in BYS publications, or they may present their story at a BYS or sector event. Throughout this year, the BYS Storytellers concept, role, and supporting resources were developed alongside a co-design process with young people. This project has continued to grow throughout 2023-24, with multiple young people signing up and receiving support to share their stories.

OUR PEOPLE

At the heart of Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) is a diverse team of over 140 full-time, part-time, and casual staff dedicated to creating new futures for young people.



The talent BYS attracts are driven by a shared purpose to empower vulnerable young people and their children to navigate life challenges and thrive in the community. A dynamic mix of experience and specialised skills, our people are caring, dedicated, resilient, and the key to helping young people achieve meaningful, positive change.



EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT



PAM BARKER **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Pam joined BYs in 2022, bringing 18 years of experience in youth-focused services, including Yfoundations and Open Doors Youth Service. Passionate about empowering young leaders and ending youth homelessness, she advocates for policy reform at state and federal levels, particularly for LGBTIQ+ youth. Pam holds a Bachelor of Psychology and is pursuing a postgraduate degree in Clinical Psychology. Her personal journey overcoming homelessness inspires her commitment to creating positive change.



DI MAHONEY **SERVICE DELIVERY DIRECTOR**

Di joined BYs as the Service Delivery Director in 2018. Di has more than 30 years' experience working in the community, youth and local government sectors with expertise in service innovation, design, delivery, and evaluation. Di has been key to service growth and development at BYs, achieved through effective partnerships, grant seeking, proposals and tender submissions. Di really enjoys coaching, mentoring, and supporting individual staff and organisational development. Di has a Master of Human Services, Graduate Diploma in Education and Training and a Bachelor of Social Science. Prior to moving to Brisbane in 2014, Di was the Director of Byron Youth Service.



JORDAN MCCARTHY **CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTOR**

Jordan joined BYs as the Corporate Services Director in early 2021. Before that, she worked at The University of Queensland Business School, managing internal and external communications during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jordan holds Master's degrees in International Business and International Communications, along with a Bachelor of Science in Management (Finance). She is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. With extensive experience across the non-profit and education sectors, Jordan has focused on helping NGOs enhance their reputations, become more customer-focused, and modernise systems for greater efficiency.



MEL BRADFORD **PEOPLE & CULTURE DIRECTOR**

Mel Bradford is a seasoned Human Resource professional with over 25 years of experience, including HR roles in Children's Services in inner-city London. Since joining BYs, she has focused on strategic planning, process development, and improving operational efficiencies to support business growth. Mel is passionate about organisations that value their people and dedicated to building a capable, engaged, and effective workforce.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Executive Management Team

Service Delivery

Housing Services

Housing & Tenancy Support

Sustaining Young Tenancies and Transitions

Windsor House

Phoenix House

Sandgate House

Falconer House

Health Services

Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drugs Support

Medical Clinic

Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships

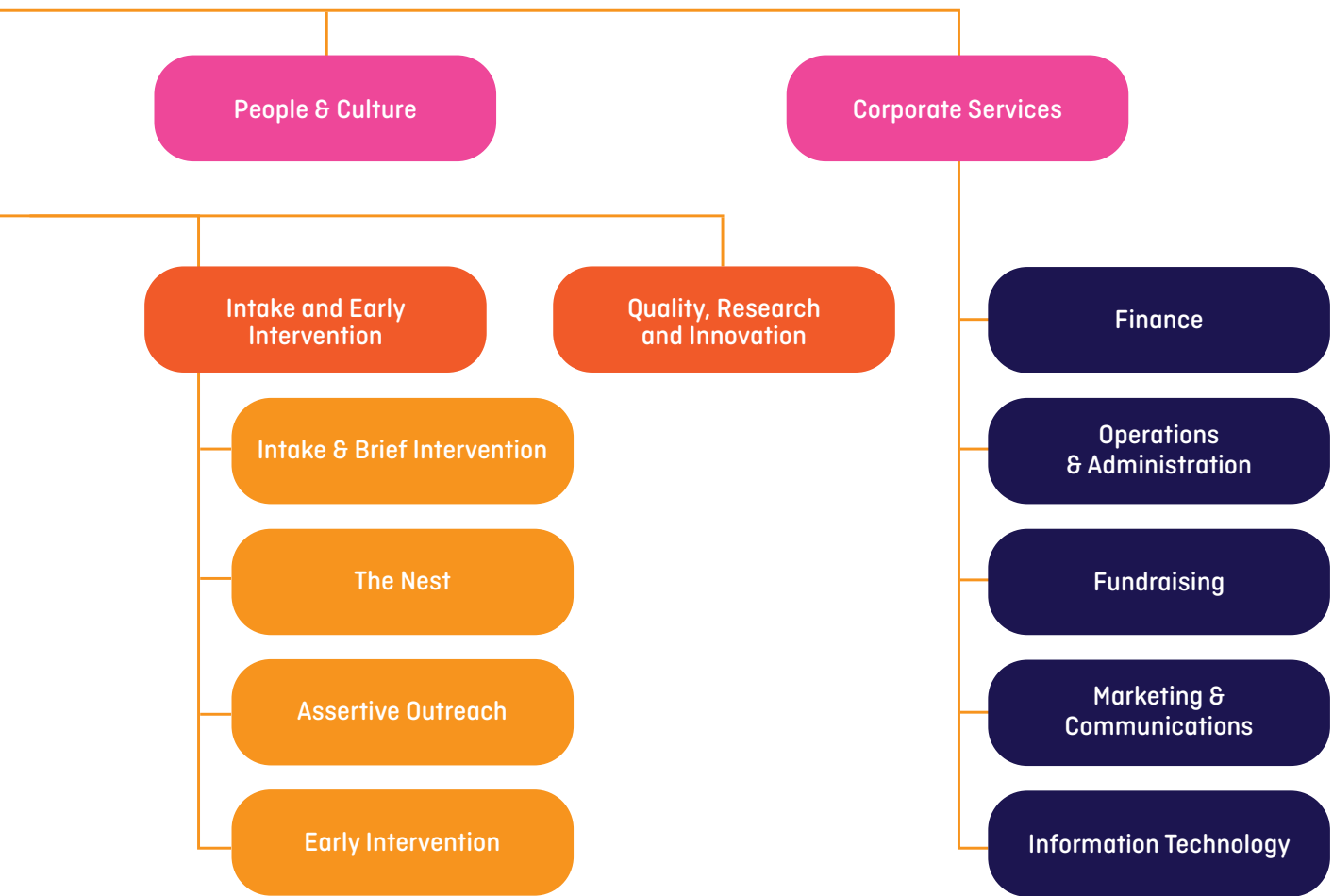
Young Women & Young Families

Immediate Housing Relief

Young Dads

Safe Relationships

Youth Domestic & Family Violence



PARTNERSHIPS

Our valued partners are instrumental in creating pathways out of homelessness and in fostering hope for the vulnerable young people we work with. From donations of time, skills and services to food and furniture, our partners play an invaluable role in the impact of Brisbane Youth Service (BYS).

BYS is incredibly proud to align with those who share our commitment and passion. Partnerships like these serve as a testament to the transformative power of community-driven initiatives in uplifting the lives of our next generation. Together, we are paving the way for brighter futures, where all young people have the support and resources they need to thrive.

BHC

The partnership between BYS and BHC continues to grow each year, and we are so thankful for their ongoing commitment to housing young people. Our Sustaining Young Tenancies workers continue to support five tenancies within BHC's affordable housing complex in Woollongabba. BHC are also currently building more social and affordable housing complexes throughout the Brisbane region. When those developments are ready, BYS will expand our supported tenancies for young people potentially by up to 30 additional units of housing.

CHARTER HALL & INVESTA

This year, BYS was thrilled to welcome an exciting new partnership with Charter Hall and Investa, in collaboration with the innovative 360 Queen Street development. Volunteers from their project partners, Hutchinson Builders and RCP Australia, played a pivotal role in revitalising our new Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships support centre, transforming the property into a safe and welcoming space. In addition to their renovation efforts, Charter Hall and Investa helped stock the pantry at BYS's Fortitude Valley Hub, collecting 50 shopping bags full of donated food and essential toiletries. These contributions ensured that young people in need had access to essential supplies during the Christmas period.



Pictured: Charter Hall and Investa and 360 Queen Street project partners, Hutchinson Builders and RCP Australia help to transform BYS's new Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships support centre.

FINLAYSON'S TIMBER & HARDWARE

We were incredibly proud and grateful to be the chosen partner for Finlayson's Timber and Hardware's inaugural charity golf day this year. The event was a tremendous success, raising more than \$27,000 to help provide life-changing support and services for young people in need. BYS thanks all the event sponsors, players, and supporters for their generosity and involvement.





Pictured: Jarred Murfet from Finlayson’s Timber and Hardware presents BYS CEO, Pam Barker with a cheque for funds raised at their inaugural charity golf day.

Plans are underway for an even bigger and better event next year, and we are excited to partner with Finlayson’s Timber and Hardware once again. This ongoing partnership will continue to bring vital resources and attention to our cause, enabling BYS to expand its reach and impact. Together, we will be able to offer even more support and opportunities to the young people who need it most.



Pictured: Finlayson’s Timber and Hardware invited their customers and associates to swing for a cause at their inaugural charity golf day, raising life-changing funds for BYS.

FLIP

In an inspiring collaboration, Brisbane creative agency Flip partnered with BYS to raise awareness about the youth homelessness crisis and advocate for crucial early intervention measures and funding. By offering pro bono creative services, Flip played a pivotal role in amplifying BYS’s mission through innovative marketing campaigns. In 2023, this partnership led to the creation of a new corporate video



Pictured: Flip and goa Billboards help launch “Not for Rent” campaign at the iconic Abbotsford Road location.

and the impactful “Not For Rent” campaign, prominently featured on goa billboards across Brisbane. These initiatives have been powerful tools in highlighting the challenges faced by vulnerable young people and emphasising the urgent need for early intervention to create brighter futures.

GOA BILLBOARDS

A heartfelt thank you to goa for believing in our cause and selecting BYS as one of the charity partners in their Community Partnerships Program this year. Their generous contribution of \$260,000 in pro bono advertising – combined with their collaboration with Flip and our fundraising and marketing and communications team – was instrumental in launching our “Not For Rent” campaign in alignment with our Christmas appeal. The high visibility of the billboard campaign, along with public relations efforts that garnered local and national news coverage, played a crucial role in achieving significant wins for vulnerable young people in Brisbane. Thanks to goa and Flip, this appeal became our most successful fundraising campaign ever!

HAND HEART POCKET

Throughout 2023-24, Hand Heart Pocket continues to be one of BYs's strongest community partnerships. Their continued support of our early intervention Safe and Connected Futures program is making a significant impact by helping reconnect families and prevent young people from becoming homeless. Hand Heart Pocket has also helped fund a new youth foyer-like model at a property secured with Brisbane City Council as well as contributed funding for emergency supplies for young people. BYs was able to secure its long-term future with the new Youth Support Centre opening in late 2024.

HOLDING REDLICH

For many years, Holding Redlich have been steadfast supporters of BYs. Beyond their generous workplace giving program, which matches staff donations, they continue to support our annual campaigns and appeals, as well as providing invaluable pro bono support, helping to address the needs of an increasing number of young people seeking safety and support.

JACARANDA HOUSING

The ongoing partnership with Jacaranda Housing enabled us to move young families out of motel accommodation and into brand new housing. We are thankful for our partnership with Jacaranda Housing and their continued commitment to helping ensure young people and young families have access to new accommodation, while receiving support from BYs to sustain their tenancies. This year we formalised our valued partnership by developing and signing off an MOU together.

KPMG

In addition to their valued pro bono consultancy and support, KPMG are also proud supporters of our annual campaigns and appeals. Their Brisbane RunWell running club once again partnered with BYs for Bridge to Brisbane 2023, helping to raise our profile within the major community event, as well as vital funds for young people and young families in need.



Pictured: KPMG Brisbane's RunWell team take on the 2023 Bridge to Brisbane 10km to support young people in need.

MINTERELLISON

Throughout many of BYs's achievements for vulnerable young people over the years, MinterEllison has been there, generously giving their time, skills and expertise behind the scenes. The team at MinterEllison have played a key role in making significant projects possible, such as our purpose-built Youth Support Centre in Fortitude Valley, negotiating lease agreements and fit-out contracts for this exciting and much-needed new space.

Beyond their pro bono legal support, the team at MinterEllison haven't been afraid to don a daggy jumper or roll up their sleeves to give hands-on support for young people doing it tough. This year, volunteers from the firm joined our working bee at Falconer House – turning a vacant house into a home for four young people experiencing homelessness. We are also honoured to be involved in MinterEllison's bi-annual clerkship program, inspiring a new generation of lawyers to give back to the local



community. This year, the firm donated funds for clerks to purchase therapeutic items for use in our new Youth Support Centre consulting rooms. These donations will help create trauma-informed and welcoming spaces for the young people and families who seek support from BYS.

PROPERTY INDUSTRY FOUNDATION

One of our valued allies in the sector, the Property Industry Foundation, and a team of corporate sponsors transformed another four-bedroom property that had been made available to BYS to house young people facing homelessness. Special mention to Built, Kane Constructions, King Living Foundation, MBM, MinterEllison, and Saunders Havill Group who donated new furnishings and decor, and volunteered their time to set up welcoming new living spaces for the four young people who now call our second Falconer House home. Special thanks also to the Property Industry Foundation's Christmas celebration guests who generously donated gifts for our new Young Women, Families and Safe Relationships centre.



Pictured: Property Industry Foundation working bee to furnish and set up BYS's second Advantaged Thinking Model Falconer House for young people facing homelessness.

SERVICE DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

BYS also works alongside many other organisations to deliver quality services and support for young people and young families. Our service delivery partnerships include Memorandums of Understanding and agreements with the *Queensland Children's Hospital, The Prince Charles Hospital, LawRight, Communify and Hart 4000, Micah Projects and Street to Home, Brisbane Domestic Violence Service (BDVS), Brisbane Zero, Bric Housing, Zig Zag, Children by Choice (CbyC), Terry White Pharmacy Fortitude Valley, GynaeHealth, Metro South Oral Health, AXIS Psychology, Mind Wise Psychology, ATSICHS, IUHI, Murriwatch, Red Cross Night Café, Open Doors Youth Service, The Umbrella Group, Eating Disorders Queensland, and Brisbane City Council Community Housing Partnerships.*

MinterEllison's Pro Bono & Community Program is all about channeling our resources into focus areas such as empowering youth and addressing homelessness. We ensure the effectiveness of our activities by partnering with organisations that have on-the-ground knowledge of and experience in our focus areas. For that reason, we are honoured to work alongside an organisation like BYS and there is a wide spread of people right across our Brisbane office involved in that work. We know that whatever we do to assist BYS will contribute to the tremendous work that it does for vulnerable young Queenslanders and we find that incredibly rewarding and inspiring.

— Robert Reed, MinterEllison

FUNDRAISING

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) is powered by an incredible community of partners, donors, and supporters.

Whether you donned a Daggy Jumper, donated to an appeal, fundraised at your school or workplace, or provided pro bono support, we are so grateful for your unwavering dedication and generosity over the past year. Your support is vital in addressing the urgent needs of young people in crisis, providing immediate relief and longer-term, wraparound support.

Whether it's providing emergency accommodation, essential daily supplies, or boosting housing, health, and domestic and family violence programs and services, your generosity ensures we can be agile and effective in our mission. Each contribution, whether big or small, plays a pivotal role in our ability to effect change and help those who need it most.

Together, we are creating new futures and lasting change in the lives of some of the most vulnerable young people and young families in our community.

APPEALS

Our deepest thanks to everyone who generously donated to our Not For Rent annual Christmas appeal. Together, you raised over \$62,000 to help fund urgent crisis relief and life-changing support for vulnerable young people facing homelessness. Christmas can be a particularly difficult time of year for the many young people we work with, especially with the worsening housing and cost-of-living crises continuing to impact rental affordability and housing options over the holiday season.

Special thanks to Flip, goa Billboards, Insurance Advisernet Foundation and National Australia Bank for their significant support. Special mention also to BHC, Fulton Hogan Utilities, Holding Redlich, KPMG, MinterEllison, Ray White Alderley, Reidy House St Joseph's

College Gregory Terrace, and Wheller House Brisbane Boys College, who kindly donated over 300 food hampers which were gifted to young people and young families over the holidays. Thank you!



Pictured: Sector partners unite with BYS at goa Billboards' Digital Spring Hill Iconic site featuring the Not For Rent appeal.

A sincere thank you also to all those who supported young people and young families caught in crisis by generously giving to our Break the Cycle appeal over the end-of-financial-year period. Over \$47,600 was raised to help provide youth-specific early intervention programs and specialist domestic and family violence support, giving young people the chance to break the cycle of homelessness and violence, and the opportunity for a stable life and brighter future. Special thanks to Flip, Rotary Club of New Farm, and the Thunderbird 2 Foundation for their kind support.



Pictured: MinterEllison delivering Christmas Hampers and breaking their office record for most hampers donated!





COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We are very grateful for the local community groups, organisations and schools who donated essential items and helped raise critical funds and awareness for our work. Special thanks to Reidy House at St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace who have been friends of BYS and loyal supporters for many years, as well as Ambrose Treacy College, Boomerang Bags, Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Brisbane Grammar School, Cavendish Road State High School, Citipointe College, GIVIT, Kiwanis Brisbane, Marshall Road State School, Mary MacKillop College, Pirri House Corinda State High School, Rotary Club of New Farm, Share the Dignity, and Umbrella Brisbane.

According to St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace, the partnership with Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) goes beyond charity; it's about friendship and mutual respect. **"Reidy is very proud of its ongoing association with BYS," Mr. Wooldridge expressed. "The youth homelessness crisis is one existing in our community right now. There is also the chance that in the future the boys may find themselves in difficult circumstances and it is important for them to know that there is support available in the community."**



Pictured: One of Umbrella Brisbane's many donation drop offs to BYS this year; care bags for young people supplied to our medical clinic (Nurse Karen and Intake and Early Intervention Senior Manager Ricco).

CORPORATE SUPPORT

A big thank you to our incredible community of corporate donors. Outcomes for the young people we work with are significantly improved thanks to your generous financial and in-kind support. Special mention to Alexilum, City Beach, Commonwealth Bank Brisbane City Branches, Grant Thornton, M3Property, Mills Oakley, Oztix, and Walker Hill Group.



Pictured: Long-time supporters and friends of BYS, KPMG, delivering their winter drive donations of much-needed sleeping bags, blankets, backpacks, socks, beanies, and more. (L-R: BYS Corporate Services Director Jordan McCarthy, KPMG Qld Chairman Michael Hiller, BYS Head of Fundraising Laura Watson, and Annie Munro and James Shoring from KPMG).

DAGGY JUMPER DAY

It was wonderful to have so many of BYS's friends and supporters join us to celebrate our 11th Daggy Jumper Day on 9th August, and to see the community come together in support of the young people we work with.

The Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP, the Hon. Di Farmer MP, Councilor Vicki Howard, BYS Patron Steve Renouf, Elijah Buol OAM, along with our school, sector, corporate, and community supporters, gathered to show their support. Many even strutted their stuff for a good cause in a daggy fashion parade, all vying for the coveted 'daggiest jumper' award.

Special thanks to Ambrose Treacy College, BCU Bank, BHC & Elevate Residential, Brisbane Grammar School, Grant Thornton, KPMG, Qld Family & Child Commission, Reidy House – St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace, and White Spot Group for their fundraising efforts and wonderful support.



Pictured: (L-R) BYS Patron Steve Renouf, BYS CEO Pam Barker, Hon. Di Farmer MP, Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP, Councilor Vicki Howard, and Elijah Buol OAM.



Pictured: (L-R) BYS Head of Fundraising Laura Watson, BYS Patron Steve Renouf, 2023 Daggiest Jumper Winner and Reidy House Dean St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace Michael Wooldridge, and Reidy House students.



Pictured: Daggy cookies were a very coordinated crowd favourite on Daggy Jumper Day 2023.

PHILANTHROPY

BYS is particularly grateful to the Shepherd Family Foundation for their ongoing commitment to creating new futures for vulnerable young people through our housing, health, and family support programs. The Foundation's generous donations will not only help to provide a safe and supportive place for young people to live while actively pursuing their education and employment goals. They have also provided a rent-free property for our Young Women, Families, and Safe Relationships centre which is a huge support for vulnerable young families in Brisbane.

Special thanks also to the Frangipani Foundation and the Thunderbird 2 Foundation.



Pictured: BYS thanks The Shepherd Family Foundation and the Property Industry Foundation for their incredible support in setting up a new home for our Young Women, Families and Safe Relationships program.

THANK YOU





YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY

On April 17, our community once again came together to acknowledge Youth Homelessness Matters Day – the annual national day to raise awareness, break stereotypes, and advocate for greater support for young people experiencing homelessness.



Pictured: “Youth homelessness matters to me!” Guests tested their youth homelessness knowledge and awareness during a pop-quizz with BYs Research and Evaluation Coordinator, Catherine Mann.

In addition to appealing for financial support to help meet the immediate needs of young people caught in crisis, BYs encouraged our partners, supporters, and the wider community to show that youth homelessness matters to them by signing Yfoundations’ petition to develop a standalone national strategy to end child and youth homelessness.

Thank you to everyone who got involved and gave generously.



Pictured: “Youth homelessness matters to me!” The Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP with BYs Corporate Services Director, Jordan McCarthy.



Pictured: “Youth homelessness matters to me!” Councillor Vicki Howard with BYs CEO, Pam Barker.

2023 AGM MINUTES

HELD AT:

42 McLachlan Street, Fortitude Valley
Tuesday, 22 November 2022 at 3:30pm.

| Attendees | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Admire Matsika | BYS Board Member |
| Amy Maynard | Hand Heart Pocket |
| Andrea Osborne | BYS Staff |
| Annette Abrahams | BYS Board Member |
| Awhina Faulkner | BYS Staff |
| Ben Stevens | Hand Heart Pocket |
| Brenda Hassan | BYS Staff |
| Brian Tucker | BYS Member |
| Cheryl Mason | Pitcher Partners |
| Damien Hoffman | National Australia Bank |
| Deb McConnell | Department of Housing |
| Di Mahoney | BYS Staff and Member |
| Ella Austin | BYS Staff |
| Emily Nunes | BYS Staff |
| Famin Ahmed | MinterEllison |
| Fiona Caniglia | QShelter |
| Gai Lemon | PHN Brisbane North |
| Gary Vidler | Shaw and Partners |
| James Shoring | KPMG |
| Joel Laycock | BYS Staff |
| Jordan McCarthy | BYS Staff and Member |
| Josh Higgins | Youth Advocacy Centre |
| Katherine Hayes | Youth Advocacy Centre |
| Laura Watson | BYS Staff |
| Lee-Anne Hoyer | Youth Advocacy Centre |

| Attendees | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Lou Baker | BYS Staff |
| Mark Wheatley | BYS Board Member |
| Mel Bradford | BYS Staff |
| Melissa Eales | Department of Housing |
| Pam Barker | BYS Staff and Member |
| Reanne Smith | Walker Hill |
| Ruth Keshia | Hand Heart Pocket |
| Sarah Dybing | BYS Staff |
| Shelley Sorrenson | BYS Board Member |
| Sophie Swart | BYS Staff and Member |
| Tania Allen | Australian Red Cross |
| Tyla King-Paul | BYS Staff |
| Wally Dethlefs | BYS Member |
| Vicki Campbell | Brisbane City Council |
| Zoe Lloyd | BYS Staff and Member |

| Apologies | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Rt Hon. Adrian Schrinner MP | Lord Mayor |
| Aimee McVeigh | QCOSS |
| Andrew Gunn | BYS Member |
| Annemaree Callander | CHIA Qld |
| Ann Wallin | BYS Supporter |
| Anna Spencer | BYS Board Member |
| Brian Chladil | OzTix |
| Brooke Seymour | Finlayson's Timber & Hardware |
| Hon. Cameron Dick MP | Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment |
| Cheryl Walker | Department of Justice and Attorney-General |
| Dean Bartlett | Aryon |
| Kate Connors | Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services |
| Dr. Kylie Stephen | Department of Justice and Attorney-General |
| Hon Leanne Linard MP | Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs |



| Apologies | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Hon Leeanne Enoch MP | Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts |
| Luke Geary | Mills Oakley |
| Mark Crocker | Mark Crocker Photography |
| Hon. Mark Ryan MP | Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services |
| Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP | Minister for Housing |
| Michael Hiller | KPMG |
| Michelle Wade | BYS Board Member |
| Nick Hill | Walker Hill |
| Hon Di Farmer MP | Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice |
| Deidre Mulkerin | Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services |
| Elijah Buol OAM | Red Cross |
| Fiona Worrel | Peggy's Place |
| Georgia Bailey | Holding Redlich |
| Jacob Arden | BYS Member |
| Jane Sadural | Commonwealth Bank |
| Jane West | BRIC Housing |
| Jennifer Smith | Residential Tenancies Authority |
| Joanne Rennick | BYS Supporter |
| John Stevenson | Aryon |
| Rob Reed OAM | MinterEllison |
| Roslynn Black | Hand Heart Pocket |
| Sara Parrott | Hand Heart Pocket |
| Hon. Shannon Fentiman MP | Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women |
| Shelley Semmens | Holding Redlich |
| Siyavash Doostkhah | YANQ |
| Steve Renouf | BYS Patron |
| Hon. Dr. Steven Miles MP | Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure |

| Apologies | |
|----------------------|---|
| Tim O'Brien | BYS Board Member |
| Cr. Vicki Howard | Civic Cabinet Chair for Community, Arts and Nighttime Economy |
| Hon. Yvette D'Ath MP | Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence |

PROCEEDINGS:

MEETING OPEN

Mark Wheatley opened the meeting at 3:35pm, thanked everyone for attending, and passed on apologies for those that could not attend.

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Kathryn Fisher, an Aboriginal elder, led the Welcome to Country on behalf of Song Woman Maroochy of the Turrbal People, which acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and a blessing.

BYS STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pam Barker acknowledged two BYS staff members, Awhina Faulkner, Intake and Brief Intervention Worker and Laura Pollard, Family Support Senior Practitioner, who both reached their 10-year anniversary working with BYS. Pam Barker also acknowledged the continued commitment and expertise of all BYS staff.

CORPORATE VIDEO

Mark Wheatley presented the BYS corporate video and acknowledged Flip Creative who produced the video pro bono. He noted the video will be an invaluable resource for BYS information sharing, recruitment, and fundraising.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE

Mark Wheatley acknowledged the young people who provided their personal stories and quotes in this year's annual report and expressed his hope that the voices of the young people that BYS support continue to come through.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mark Wheatley spoke to the President's report noting, the significant challenges experienced during the 2022/23 financial year, particularly those associated with the housing crisis. He highlighted that the needs of homeless young people are very specific and differ from the more prevalent adult-centric approaches to homelessness. He emphasised the lack of available appropriate housing and noted that despite this BYS had made significant strides in reducing the number of young people living in unsafe housing, with a remarkable 95% decrease after receiving support. Mark Wheatley made special mention of the BYS staff and their work and emphasised the amazing achievements of BYS as a whole.

Mark Wheatley took the opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of former Board members, Ben Paris, Jake Arden, and Chris Emzin. He also gave special thanks to Queensland Government and industry partners and donors whose contributions have been instrumental in BYS being able to assist increased numbers of young people in need.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Annette Abrahams spoke to the Treasurer's report highlighting the impact of the housing and cost-of-living crises which resulted in an 18% increase in grant revenue, which was predominantly from additional brokerage funding from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy and used directly for young people and their immediate needs. Annette Abrahams also acknowledged the great work done to streamline other costs, with an increase of 4% to the total Members Fund.

Annette Abrahams reflected on her first year as Treasurer and Board Member and has enjoyed seeing the progress BYS has made in such a short amount of time. She spoke to the commitment of the staff and thanked her fellow Board members for their continued efforts with BYS.

Motion:

That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

Moved:

Shelley Sorrenson

Seconded:

Jordan McCarthy

Motion carried

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Pam Barker reflected on her first year as CEO and expressed how proud she was to be working in an organisation made up of such hard working, dedicated and passionate humans, who truly reflect BYS's values of respect, optimism, accountability, and resilience.

Pam Barker spoke to the CEO report, highlighting that BYS has provided 58,664 occasions of support this reporting period, which is a 15% increase compared to the year before. The young people seeking support from BYS come from diverse backgrounds, and often have complex needs, including housing instability, a history of family violence, and mental health diagnoses. Despite these challenges, BYS has continued to see positive outcomes, which is testament to the hard work of staff and the resilience of the young people BYS serves.

Pam Barker spoke to other key achievements during the year, including being awarded the Voice Project's National "Best Workplace Award" 2022; the establishment of an Advantaged Thinking model of accommodation; supporting the Immediate Housing Response for Families, which provides an alternative to sleeping rough for families presenting as homeless; joining Brisbane Zero, which is a collaboration of peak bodies, service providers and stakeholders who, along with the Department of Housing, are working to find and allocate young people social housing opportunities; and the extension of the K.I.N.D. program through the generosity of

philanthropic funding. Pam Barker expressed her gratitude and thanks to all BYS funding bodies and partners for their valuable support.

ADOPTION OF 2022 MINUTES

Mark Wheatley called for BYS members to confirm and accept the 2022 minutes. There were no objections to the minutes as they were recorded.

Motion:

That the minutes of the Brisbane Youth Service Annual General Meeting held on 22 November 2022 be accepted.

Moved:

Jordan McCarthy

Seconded:

Admire Matsika

Motion carried

ELECTION OF THE 2023 BOARD

The AGM was declared quorate by Mel Bradford, Returning Officer. Mel Bradford declared four Board Member positions vacant and being eligible for nomination. Mel Bradford announced the nomination of four Board Members as follows:

| Nominee | Proposer | Seconded |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Admire Matsika | Mark Wheatley | Annette Abrahams |
| Timothy O'Brien | Mark Wheatley | Annette Abrahams |
| Shelley Sorrenson | Mark Wheatley | Annette Abrahams |
| Anna Spencer | Mark Wheatley | Annette Abrahams |

A vote was called from BYS Members. 13 votes were received **FOR** the nominations and 0 votes were received **AGAINST** the nominations. All positions were declared elected unopposed by the Returning Officer.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Mark Wheatley called for the appointment of the Auditor for 2023-24.

Motion:

That the Auditor for the financial year 2023-24 be Pitcher Partners Brisbane.

Moved:

Annette Abrahams

Seconded:

Shelley Sorrenson

Motion carried

MEETING CLOSE

There being no further business, Mark Wheatley declared the meeting closed at 4:42pm.

Confirmed:

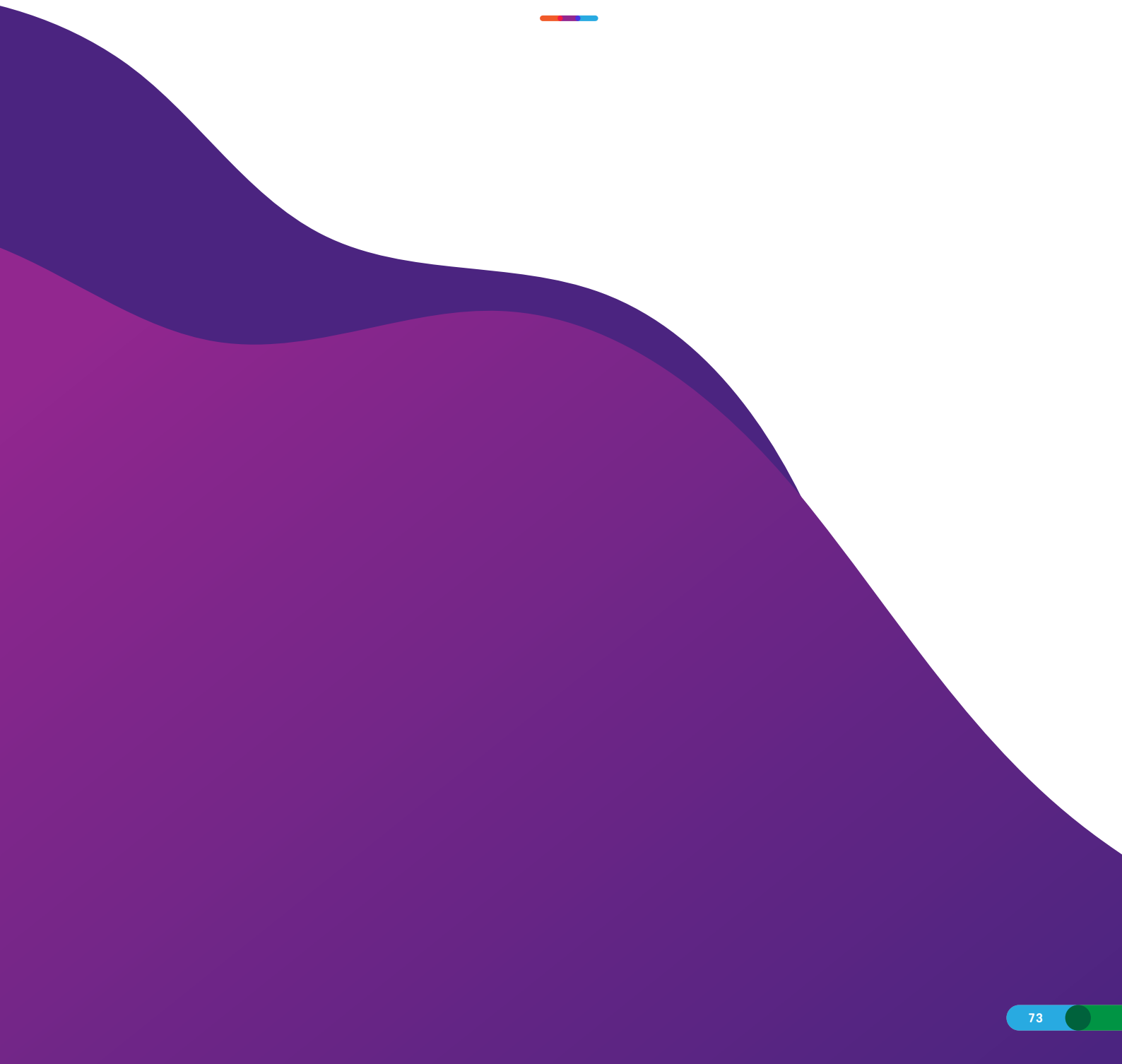


Mark Wheatley | President

Date: 23/02/2023



FINANCIAL REPORT 2023-24



Concise Financial Report

The information contained in the concise financial report is expressed in Australian dollars. In addition, the Committee make the following representations:

- The concise financial report is an extract from the financial report;
- The financial statements and specific disclosures included in the concise financial report have been derived from the financial report;
- The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide a full understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the entity as the full audited financial report; and
- Further information can be obtained from the full audited financial report and that financial report is available, free of charge, on request to the organisation.

The concise financial report includes the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income and statement of changes in members funds for the year then ended. Copies of our 2023-24 audited financial reports can be obtained by writing to the Secretary, Brisbane Youth Service, PO Box 1389, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006.



1. BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE INC.
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE
INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

| | 2024 (\$) | 2023 (\$) |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Revenue and other income | | |
| Grant revenue | 15,773,526 | 10,419,172 |
| Other revenue | 1,128,225 | 901,295 |
| Other income | 332,509 | 151,359 |
| | <u>17,234,260</u> | <u>11,471,826</u> |
| Less: expenses | | |
| Employee benefits expense | (10,531,960) | (8,116,236) |
| Client support services expense | (3,010,992) | (1,401,666) |
| IT costs | (540,124) | (382,382) |
| Property expenses | (563,044) | (337,360) |
| Depreciation expense | (265,080) | (175,959) |
| Motor vehicle and travel expenses | (175,891) | (148,795) |
| Audit, legal and consultancy fees | (241,511) | (208,563) |
| Insurance expense | (110,764) | (112,358) |
| Finance costs | (20,214) | (5,371) |
| Other operating costs | (701,693) | (476,961) |
| | <u>(16,161,273)</u> | <u>(11,365,651)</u> |
| Surplus before income tax expense | 1,072,987 | 106,175 |
| Income tax expense | - | - |
| Surplus for the year | <u>1,072,987</u> | <u>106,175</u> |
| Other comprehensive income | | |
| <i>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit and loss</i> | | |
| Revaluation of property, plant and equipment, net of tax | 820,000 | 100,000 |
| Net change in fair value of financial assets designated at fair value through other comprehensive income, net of tax | (8,142) | 51,228 |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | <u>811,858</u> | <u>151,228</u> |
| Total comprehensive income | <u><u>1,884,845</u></u> | <u><u>257,403</u></u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

2. BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE INC.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

| | 2024 (\$) | 2023 (\$) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Current assets | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 6,496,004 | 2,917,884 |
| Receivables | 231,041 | 222,162 |
| Other assets | 59,384 | 94,541 |
| Total current assets | <u>6,786,429</u> | <u>3,234,587</u> |
| Non-current assets | | |
| Receivables | 141,430 | 68,227 |
| Other financial assets | 3,267,607 | 3,089,887 |
| Lease assets | 384,006 | 93,135 |
| Property, plant and equipment | 2,488,446 | 2,455,268 |
| Total non-current assets | <u>6,281,489</u> | <u>5,706,517</u> |
| Total assets | <u>13,067,918</u> | <u>8,941,104</u> |
| Current liabilities | | |
| Payables | 1,305,404 | 625,439 |
| Lease liabilities | 127,395 | 100,143 |
| Provisions | 842,813 | 637,060 |
| Contract liabilities | 1,370,194 | 496,649 |
| Total current liabilities | <u>3,645,806</u> | <u>1,859,291</u> |
| Non-current liabilities | | |
| Lease liabilities | 255,799 | - |
| Borrowings | 391,000 | 238,000 |
| Provisions | 221,676 | 175,021 |
| Total non-current liabilities | <u>868,475</u> | <u>413,021</u> |
| Total liabilities | <u>4,514,281</u> | <u>2,272,312</u> |
| Net assets | <u>8,553,637</u> | <u>6,668,792</u> |
| Equity | | |
| Reserves | 1,647,949 | 1,575,502 |
| Accumulated surplus | 6,905,688 | 5,093,290 |
| Total equity | <u>8,553,637</u> | <u>6,668,792</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



3. BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE INC.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN MEMBERS FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

| | Reserves (\$) | Accumulated Surplus (\$) | Total Equity (\$) |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Balance as at 1 July 2022 | 1,424,274 | 4,987,115 | 6,411,389 |
| Surplus for the year | - | 106,175 | 106,175 |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | 151,228 | - | 151,228 |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | <u>151,228</u> | <u>106,175</u> | <u>257,403</u> |
| Balance as at 30 June 2023 | <u><u>1,575,502</u></u> | <u><u>5,093,290</u></u> | <u><u>6,668,792</u></u> |
| | | | |
| Balance as at 1 July 2023 | 1,575,502 | 5,093,290 | 6,668,792 |
| Surplus for the year | - | 1,072,987 | 1,072,987 |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | 811,858 | - | 811,858 |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | <u>811,858</u> | <u>1,072,987</u> | <u>1,884,845</u> |
| Transfer to retained earnings on disposal of property | (739,411) | 739,411 | - |
| Balance as at 30 June 2024 | <u><u>1,647,949</u></u> | <u><u>6,905,688</u></u> | <u><u>8,553,637</u></u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

4. BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE INC. NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

BASIS OF PREPARATION

The concise financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Association Incorporation Act 1981 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, Interpretations and other applicable authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). This includes compliance with the recognition and measurement of requirements of all Australian Accounting Standards, Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the disclosure requirements of AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities*. The financial report was approved by the Committee on 26 September 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates the realisation of assets and liabilities in the ordinary course of business.

New, Revised or Amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations Adopted

Brisbane Youth Service Inc. has adopted all new, revised or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Brisbane Youth Service Inc.

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Brisbane Youth Service Inc. (the "Registered Entity"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in members funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including a summary of material accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Brisbane Youth Service Inc. has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Registered Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Registered Entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not for-profits Commission Act 2012* "ACNC Act" and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* "the Code" that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Registered Entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Members and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report.

The Members of the Registered Entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, responsible entities are responsible for assessing the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible entities either intends to liquidate the Registered Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Registered Entity's financial reporting process.

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 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 the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the 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 Registered Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entity'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 Registered Entity'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 Registered Entity 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 those charged with governance 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.

Independence

In conducting our review, we have complied with the independence requirement of the ACNC Act. We confirm that the independence declaration required by the ACNC Act, which has been given to the directors of Brisbane Youth Service Inc. would be in the same terms if given to the responsible entities as at the time of this auditor's report.

Pitcher Partners

PITCHER PARTNERS

Mason

CHERYL MASON

Partner

Brisbane, Queensland
26 September 2024

THANK YOU

Brisbane Youth Service extends our heartfelt gratitude to each and every organisation, funding body, and individual who supported our vision and purpose throughout 2023-24.

Your dedication and generosity support us to meet the growing need for crucial services and assistance for at-risk and vulnerable young people, and their children, when they need it most.

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Alexilum | Coles, New Farm | Kiwanis Brisbane |
| Ambrose Treacy College | Commonwealth Bank, Brisbane City branches | KPMG |
| Apollo Property | Communify | Law Image |
| Archway | Domino's New Farm | LawRight |
| Aruga | Evolution Private | M3Property |
| Aryon | Finlayson's Timber and Hardware | MICAH Projects |
| BCU Bank | Flip | Marshall Road State School |
| Beca | Foodbank | Mary MacKillop College |
| BHC Creating Liveable Communities | Fulton Hogan Utilities | MBM |
| Block 5 | Foyer Foundation | Metro South Oral Health Service |
| Boomerang Bags | goa Billboards | Mills Oakley |
| Brisbane Boys College | Givit | MinterEllison |
| Brisbane City Council | Grant Thornton | MP Studios |
| Brisbane Girls Grammar School | Guitar Brothers | Mosaic Property |
| Brisbane Grammar School | Griffith University | Nando's |
| Brisbane North Primary Health Network | Grill'd Local Matters | National Australia Bank |
| Brisbane Zero | Gynae Health | Open Doors Youth Service |
| Built | Hand Heart Pocket | OzHarvest |
| Cavendish Road State High School | Holding Redlich | Oztix |
| Charter Hall | Hutchinson Builders | Paul Ramsay Foundation |
| Children by Choice | Insurance Advisernet | Pepper Kids Therapy |
| Citipointe College | Investa | Perpetual |
| City Beach | Jacaranda Housing | Pirri House, Corinda State High School |
| | Kane Constructions | Project Net Zero |
| | King Living Foundation | Promo and Print Co. |



- Property Industry Foundation
- Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services
- Queensland Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts
- Queensland Department of Health
- Queensland Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works
- Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Queensland Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training
- Queensland Department of Premiere and Cabinet
- Ray White, Alderley
- RCP Australia
- Reidy House, St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace
- Residential Tenancies Authority
- Rhian Thomas
- Rotary Club of New Farm
- RSM Australia
- Saunders Havill Group
- Services and Practitioners for the Elimination of Abuse
- Queensland (SPEAQ)
- Share the Dignity
- Sing and Grow (Play Matters, Play Group Qld)
- Terry White Chemist Valley Metro
- TFM Digital
- Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership
- The Bubs Collective
- The Frangipani Foundation
- The LBD Shop
- The Lady Musgrave Trust
- The Nappy Collective
- The Shepherd Family Foundation
- Thread Together
- Thunderbird 2 Foundation
- True Relationships and Reproductive Health
- Umbrella Brisbane
- University of Queensland
- Walker Hill Group
- Wheller House, Brisbane Boys' College
- White Spot Group
- WorkUP Qld

"I worked as an artist in the BYS AIDS Education Team in the late 80s with youth workers Simon Kelly, Carol Graham and Tony Kelly. I worked with young people to make AIDS education materials – t shirts, comics, badges and a circus. At that time the whole BYS staff could fit into a combi.

Doing photography with BYS and its clients over the past six years has been an honour and a pleasure. I am delighted with how the organisation has grown and the enormous effect it has had on so many young people's lives."

— Mark Crocker, Photographer

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to **Mark Crocker**, who has provided Brisbane Youth Service with exceptional photography services at a heavily discounted rate for many years. Mark's warm, patient approach has made a lasting impact on our staff and the young people whose portraits he has captured. As Mark retires from commercial work, we wish him all the best for the future and express our deepest gratitude for his invaluable contribution to BYS.

HOW TO SUPPORT US

- Donate at www.brisyouth.org, by credit card over the phone on 07 3620 2400, or forward a cheque made payable to 'Brisbane Youth Service' to:
PO Box 1389 Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
- Become a regular giver by setting up recurring direct debit donations
- Establish a workplace giving program
- Participate in a Brisbane Youth Service annual fundraising campaign or event.
Visit www.brisyouth.org for more information
- Leave a bequest to Brisbane Youth Service in your Will

DONATIONS OF \$2 AND OVER ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

We would love to discuss how we can work together to create new futures for young people.

Email fundraising@brisyouth.org

BRISBANE
YOUTH SERVICE

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