

# Annual Report

## 2022-23



# YEARS

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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# VISION, MISSION, & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## VISION

“Communities for the future”

Creating Links aspires to be a leading community service provider, strengthening and building community capacity.

## MISSION

At Creating Links, we aim to develop resilient, productive, and inclusive communities and families.

We are an evolving, forward-thinking organisation that values:

- Our socially and culturally diverse community.
- Our ability to create opportunities to provide services and programs.
- Our collaboration and partnerships with various networks; and
- Our role in providing services in partnership with government.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Creating Links acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live and work.

We acknowledge Elders past and present who have walked and managed these lands for many generations and recognise their ongoing contribution.

We are committed to approaching culture with humility, respect, and curiosity. We acknowledge the children who are our hope for a brighter future.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & CHAIRPERSON



**Greg Benson**  
CEO

This year Creating Links was acknowledged by the City of Canterbury Bankstown Council as the Organisation of the Year as part of the Australia Day celebrations. Although we don't work in the community sector with the aim to receive awards it is positive to see that the efforts of our team, foster carers, and partners were recognised and gave us the opportunity to celebrate.



**Raad Richards**  
Chairperson

It was also a year of renewal with Creating Links relocating our Head Office, Child and Family and Disability Services to join our Out of Home Care services in Civic Tower on Rickard Road in Bankstown. There have been many benefits to the relocation with increased collaboration between our teams and access to shared spaces for our community members to access.

It is with great pleasure that we present our Annual Report for 2022-23. This was a special year for Creating Links as we celebrated our 50th Anniversary as an organisation creating a positive impact in the community. We celebrated our journey throughout the year and the contributions of hundreds of team and community members over the 50 years. It culminated with a community celebration in February that brought together our team, children and families, and incredibly generous community partners. A personal highlight was a dinner with current and former Directors of Creating Links where they shared stories and reflections of the organisation and the community, and how they have grown and developed together.

This year our organisation developed our Strategic Plan for 2023-25. The plan is underpinned by a customer centric culture, placing our participants, clients, children and young people, and Foster Carers at the centre of Creating Links – championing continuous and systematic improvements in their service experience. This will be enabled by investing in our people and leaders through learning and development to ensure that Creating Links is an organisation of choice. We will embed technology to improve service delivery and our ability to communicate positive social impact in our community.

The Strategic Plan was developed as a collaboration between our team, Executive, Board of Directors, foster carers, and partners GHO, Metropolis Advisory, and DataOrganica.

As part of developing the strategic plan, the Creating Links Board of Directors and Executive refreshed our risk management framework, implementing a new approach to enterprise Risk Management that will enable the organisation to further develop guided by a robust risk informed culture.

We also unveiled the organisation's new website, [www.creatinglinks.org.au](http://www.creatinglinks.org.au), significantly updating the website and our brand scheme to meet the needs of Creating Links and our community. The website enables us to connect with the community, provide information, and for families to book into our community events and programs.

### IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY

We have continued to grow our impact in the community, with all our programs increasing their participants, carers, children and young people, and families supported. 50 new participants joined our NDIS services as the NDIS team increased their offering in the community with new programs. 46 community members started their fostering journey, and nearly 800 families and individuals accessed our Child and Family services.

We are proud that our Permanency Support Program has achieved an increase in permanency outcomes for children in Out of Home Care with 21 children either adopted, have legal guardianship with their carer, or were restored to their families. This is only possible through the quality practice of our team members and our collaboration with our Foster Carers and families.

### OUR PEOPLE

Creating Links has a highly committed, talented, diverse, and capable team of 120 staff members. We have continued to build the capability of our exceptional team with the introduction of a Performance and Development Framework and introducing key new positions such as a Reportable Conduct Officer and Child Protection Specialist who provide guidance and coaching to our people on these areas. We also invested in a HR management system (Elmo) which has streamlined many HR processes and lifted the capability of our managers in recruiting and training our people.

We acknowledge the incredible impact of the 180 foster carers who open their homes and hearts to children. We had the opportunity to come together

in October for a Carer Appreciation Dinner and have partnered with many carers to overcome challenges for the children in our shared care. Thank you all.

**“Our Strategic Plan for 2023-25 is underpinned by a customer centric culture, placing our participants, clients, children and young people, and Foster Carers at the centre of Creating Links – championing continuous and systematic improvements in their service experience”.**

The Creating Links Board of Directors continues to be a source of leadership for Creating Links. Every year they volunteer their time and expertise, and this year more than most with our 50th Anniversary celebrations, refreshing our risk management framework, and the development of our strategic plan. They provide governance and stability and have worked with our Executive team to create a clear direction for our future.

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge and thank Rose Fernandes who left Creating Links as Chief Financial Officer in April after 6 years at Creating Links. Rose played an important role over that time, partnering with 3 CEOs to lead the organisation forward.

### THE COMING YEAR

After a transformational 2022/23, we are looking forward to continuing to embed our new HR, Risk, and Performance and Development systems whilst moving forward with new initiatives identified through our strategic plan.

This will include training and coaching for all our leaders, capturing client feedback and championing client, carer and staff stories, development of a technology road map to guide our investments over the coming years, and diversifying our revenue streams with the introduction of new services.

On behalf of the Board and the Executive Team we express our sincere thanks for all your support and look forward to Creating Links positively impacting our community for another 50 years.

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



The 50th anniversary celebration of Creating Links brought together the entire community for a year of festivities and recognition of the many people who have contributed to the organisation and community over the 50 years. The centrepiece of the celebration was the Family Fun Day, to celebrate our commitment to the well-being of families, children, and young people in our community. The event featured fun activities including rides that brought a smile to many children's faces, creative face painting, and local performers celebrating the multicultural community of Bankstown.



One of the highlights of the celebration was the inspiring speeches given by distinguished guests, including former Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones. Her words resonated deeply with the audience, emphasising the importance of community service organisations and their positive impact on people's lives. These speeches served as a reminder of the valuable work Creating Links has done over the past half-century and the promise of an even brighter future.

Educational workshops added an enriching element to the day, providing valuable insights and knowledge to community members, reinforcing the organization's commitment to continuous learning and growth. Special thank you to our partners for making the day possible, Lighthouse Community Services, Knock Out Martial Arts and Fitness, Giving Back Australia, GWS Giants, Human Appeal Australia, Bunnings Kingsgrove, St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, Uncle John and Bent El 2rez.

In addition to the Family Fun Day, the organisation hosted a Foster Carer Appreciation Dinner, recognising the exceptional individuals who have opened their hearts and homes to care for vulnerable children and young people in our community. This event was a heartwarming tribute to their selfless dedication and compassion.









# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



We also unveiled the organisation's new website [www.creatinglinks.org.au](http://www.creatinglinks.org.au), a modern digital gateway to connect with the community, share resources, and provide a platform for valuable information and support. This launch symbolised our commitment to evolving with the times while maintaining our core mission.

The celebrations continued with a Board and Executive Management Dinner, where past and present board members came together to celebrate the organisation's 50-year journey. It was a night of reflection, acknowledgment, and gratitude for the leadership and staff both past and present that has shaped the organisation's path and continues to drive its mission forward.



# CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR

In January 2023, our organisation was bestowed with the Canterbury-Bankstown Organisation of the Year Award as part of the Australia Day celebrations. This accolade stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to serving the community and providing vital Disability, Foster Care, and Child and Family services. This award is a symbol of the remarkable dedication and tireless efforts of our team, the profound impact we have on the lives of countless individuals, and our integral role in fostering a stronger, more inclusive community.

Receiving the Canterbury-Bankstown Organisation of the Year Award reflects the outstanding achievements and contributions we have made to the community over the last 50 years. It is a recognition of our tireless work in enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities, providing loving foster homes, and supporting families in times of need. This award acknowledges that we have not only met but exceeded the expectations of our community.

Our organisation's success is inherently tied to the positive changes we have instigated within the community. Through our disability services, we have empowered individuals to lead fulfilling lives, fostering inclusivity and independence.

Our dedication to foster care has provided loving homes and bright futures for vulnerable children and young people, and our child and family services team have offered a lifeline to those facing adversity. This award is a celebration of the lives we have touched, the futures we have transformed, and the stronger, more resilient community we have collectively built.

The award serves as a reminder of the impact we have made and a catalyst for even greater achievements in the future. We are immensely proud of this accolade, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team, loyal supporters, and the community we serve. As we move forward, we are more committed than ever to supporting the community. This award is not the culmination of our efforts but a springboard for the positive change we will continue to create in the lives of those we serve.







# OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS



In 2022/23 Creating Links celebrates its 50th Anniversary, and across 50 years the needs and aspirations of our community have evolved. There is growing demand for community services amid cost-of-living pressures, inflation, and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and increased expectations of high-quality service experiences enabled by technology and delivered by skilled and passionate people.

There is growing complexity and compliance requirements within our regulatory environment and growing expectation from funding bodies and within organisations to measure and demonstrate the impact of our efforts with greater sophistication and rigor.

Community services organisations must continuously adapt and innovate. There is significant competition for team members with a large workforce gap across the sector and the need for organisations to ensure a strong value proposition to team members and psychologically safe working cultures.

This context provides both challenges and opportunities for community organisations to grow and amplify their social impact in the community. Creating Links 2019-21 Strategic Plan focused on service consolidation and our role in the community following a period of significant growth.

Guided by our Board of Directors, services were reviewed for the impact and performance, which resulted in ceasing our Aged Care and Out of School Hours Care services. There was consolidation in each of our core program areas with the reforms to the Permanency Support Program, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and Targeted Earlier Intervention program embedding during the plan. The Challenge of Covid-19 in our community required Creating Links to innovate and transition to hybrid ways of working and service delivery. This innovation and client centric culture underpins our strategic direction.

The consolidation of 2019-21 has positioned Creating Links to meet the challenges facing our organisation as we move forward. It is within this context that we launch the Creating Links Strategic Springboard 2023-25.

The plan is underpinned by a customer centric culture, placing our participants, clients, children and young people, and Foster Carers at the centre of Creating Links – championing continuous and systematic improvements in their service experience. This will be enabled by investing in our people and leaders through learning and development to ensure that Creating Links is an organisation of choice. We will embed technology to improve service delivery and our ability to communicate positive social impact in our community.

# STRATEGIC SPRINGBOARD

## STRATEGIC PILLARS

“We’re moving from a culture of survival, to embarking on a positive **change period**. As we do so it’s **important to reflect**, express this to one another and to think more **strategically – together**”.

### SERVICE DIVERSIFICATION

Diversifying income through service innovation. Expanding on existing services and developing new streams.

- Diversifying service delivery within our key areas of expertise.
- Branching out to **explore new areas of service** opportunity.
- Undertake **feasibility studies and dedicated planning** activities across a number of service diversification strands.

### CLIENT CENTRICITY

Improving client experience and client engagement to strengthen our sector position.

- Engage clients in shaping the way we deliver services.
- Develop the **culture and capability** needed to continually review and **improve the client experience**.
- Leverage **technology** to elevate our customer experience.

### TALENT ACQUISITION

Strengthening our internal capability and skills through talent acquisition, retention, mentorship and training.

- Demonstrate the virtues of working at Creating Links.
- Empower **executive teams**, develop their skills and leadership qualities, to the benefit of the organisation and our clients.
- Develop a **culture of learning & development** organisation wide.

### PROCESS SYSTEMISATION

Optimising systems infrastructure, data management, analytics & reporting to create efficiencies, and **technology to**

- Better leverage data & analytics to **deliver strategic insights**.
- Break down **data silos** and optimise data **storage and security**.
- Improve use of technology to innovate and deliver our services.
- Reduce **carer pain points**: Key interactions and data exchange.

### CULTURAL ENHANCEMENT

Celebrating and **strengthening the people and values** that make our culture unique and elevating that **both internally & externally**.

- Celebrate and elevate our passion and organisational values.
- Create a **'safe place'** for sharing ideas and opportunities.
- Encourage greater **cross-functional collaboration**.
- Promote **diversity, inclusion & reflection** organisation wide.

### BRAND BUILDING

**Uplifting our brand profile** and marketing activity to better communicate the value we deliver.

- Better communicate the value in the services we deliver. Elevate **brand, comms and marketing** as more valued functions.
- Demonstrate **impact** and celebrate **the people making it happen**.
- Mitigate **risk** in external communications channels.

# PEOPLE & CULTURE SNAPSHOT

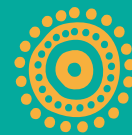
Creating Links impact in the community is achieved through the efforts of a dedicated and hard working team who demonstrate a commitment to service excellence, fostering an environment and culture of passion and dedication that sets our people apart.

A major initiative over the past year has been the implementation of our new HRIS system known as ELMO. The new system has significantly enhanced our efficiency and effectiveness in managing human resources. The system has enabled us to seamlessly integrate a new staff performance and development framework, providing our team with valuable insights, feedback, and personalised growth opportunities. This framework not only benefits our team in their professional journey but also supports the organisational performance.



## 120

Total Employees



## 2.47%

Aboriginal &  
Torres Strait Islander



## 54%

of employees speak additional  
languages other than English.

“I am proud of the free space Creating Links provides their staff to explore their own strengths, and work within their own communities to help bring change.”





“The organisation achieves a lot of positive impacts in the community. There is a sense of upward momentum and improvement.”

# 82%

of employees are proud to work at Creating Links.

In May, we conducted a staff engagement survey, reflecting the organisation's commitment to nurturing its culture and fostering an environment where every employee finds inspiration in their work.

The survey results were nothing short of inspiring, as an overwhelming 82% of our team members expressed their pride in being part of Creating Links. These results confirmed that our organisation aligns with our vision and values, affirming our collective dedication to making a positive impact in our community and the lives of those we serve.

Moreover, we have strategically introduced a number of specialty roles across the organisation to improve the quality of our services. These roles, staffed with experts in their respective fields, empower us to coach and train our team to improve their practice and support to our clients and community

Our team remains the cornerstone of our success. Their passion, dedication, and commitment to our mission, coupled with the implementation of ELMO and our new staff performance and development framework, continue to drive Creating Links to increased impact. With the support of our specialised teams, we are confident in our ability to consistently deliver exceptional results to our clients and make a positive impact on our community.

“I love working with the team in an environment of collaboration, respect and inclusion has been key for me.”

# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES



**59**  
FAMILIES

Case Management  
Clients



**684**  
INDIVIDUAL  
CLIENTS

Group Programs



**47.8%**  
CALD  
CLIENTS



**4.8/5**  
SATISFACTION

I am pleased to present the Child and Family Services Annual Report for 2022/23. Throughout the year, the dedicated Child and Family Services team continued delivering programs to a diverse range of families, children, and young people. The Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) team supports our clients through case management, counselling, and an array of programs tailored to both parents and children. The primary objective of TEI services is to empower our clients, enhance parenting skills, mitigate feelings of isolation, promote positive developmental outcomes for children, and foster a sense of connection within their community. Moreover, these efforts are instrumental in reducing the incidence of children entering the statutory child protection system.

A key area of focus in 2022/23 has been working with the team to review and redevelop our current processes used to gather evidence that emphasises the positive impact achieved throughout the families engagement with our TEI programs.

Our Parent-Child Mother Goose program, funded by The Smith Family through their Communities for Children funding, experienced another positive year in providing assistance to parents and their children aged 0-5 to enhance healthy attachments while fostering children's development and learning with language and social skills.

Initially designed to operate four times at Greenacre Area Community Centre, Yagoona Community Centre, Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre, Condell Park Community Centre and Punchbowl Public School, we secured additional funding enabling us to extend our reach by establishing a fifth program at Wiley Park Public School. This expansion significantly broadened our program's impact, making it more accessible to a wider range of families.

Our Restoration Team supported 25 families with children in Foster Care in their goal to have their children restored to their care. The team supports parents to increase parenting skills, facilitate access to essential services and resources, foster an understanding of the profound effects of trauma, and forge productive collaborations with a diverse array of service providers and organisations. Restoration is a team effort with parents, the children's Case Manager, Restoration Case Managers, the children's foster carer, and other professionals working together to achieve a permanent restoration to family. In 2022/23 9 children were restored to their parents.

The team played a pivotal role in advancing the overarching objective of the Permanency Support Program, which is to realise sustainable permanency goals for the children and young people in our care. To advance this mission of achieving permanency, the team reviewed our practice against international evidence of what works to create permanent restoration. From this we developed a Restoration Model of practice. The review reinforced the strengths of our model and areas where practice could be further developed, such as deeper engagement with foster carers during the restoration process.

This invaluable guide not only explains the Restoration process for parents but also outlines the vital support offered by Restoration case managers during this critical phase. Additionally, it serves as an informative resource for other service providers and The Department of Communities and Justice, shedding light on the Model we employ to strengthen and nurture families in need.

**Ebony-Ann Blewitt**

- Executive Manager Child and Family Services

# FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

With the increasing pressures of the cost of living, there has been a growing issue within the community to seek the support of financial counsellors making this service all the more important for community members to manage their financial situation and seek support during times of hardship.

Throughout 2022/23, we were able to support clients with concerns pertaining to financial matters. The areas of support covered were managing debt issues, budgeting, inadequate income sources and referrals to utility support programs.

Having access to a financial counsellor has improved the financial lives of the clients who have engaged with our service, giving them the tools and support to have more financial security in the future.



**72**  
CLIENTS  
SUPPORTED



**57%**  
OF CLIENTS  
were from a Culturally and  
linguistically diverse background



**4.4/5**  
SATISFACTION



# NGOC LAN LE

## STAFF PROFILE



Ngoc Lan Le, affectionately known as Lan, has been an integral part of Creating Links for three decades. Her journey began as a Family Support Worker when Creating Links was still recognised as the Bankstown Neighbourhood Centre. Lan embarked on this career path as part of a pilot program aimed at supporting the Vietnamese community and enhancing their community involvement.

Lan's first program, run in collaboration with her then-manager, was the "English in Everyday Australian Cultural" program. This program not only offered staff and clients an exceptional opportunity to delve into each other's cultures but also fostered a stronger connection to the community. Additionally, it aided clients in improving their English proficiency and gaining a better understanding of Australian colloquialisms.

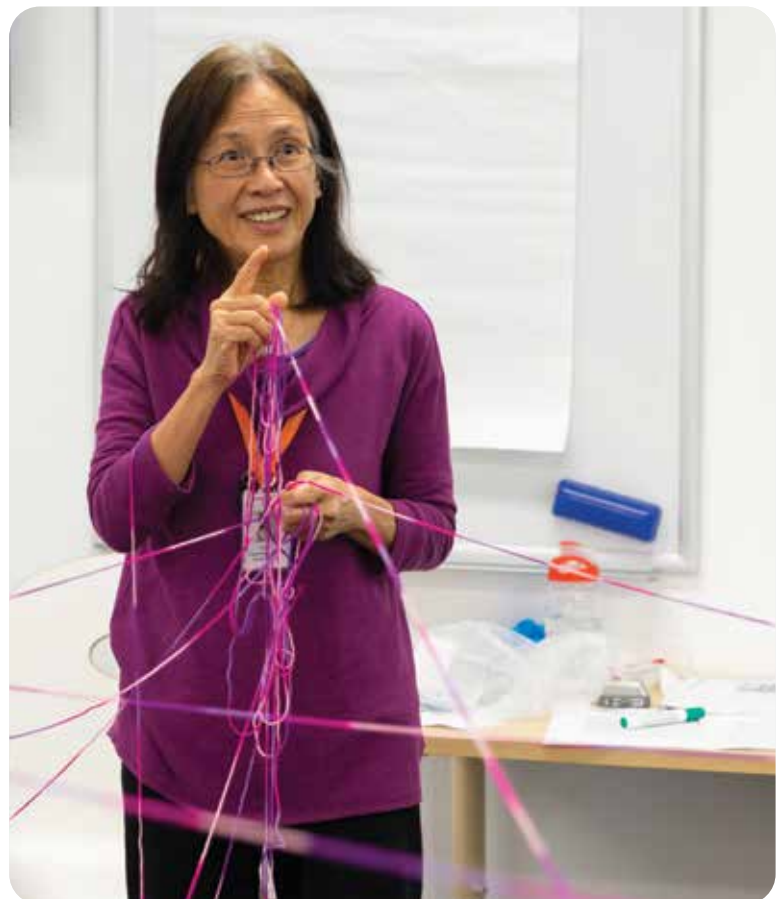
Lan continued her dedicated service, providing an array of programs to support the Vietnamese community and all who accessed the Neighbourhood Centre's services. She was an invaluable part of the

'Families First Initiative' and 'Families NSW projects', allowing her to carry on the work she had grown so passionate about.

Today, Lan is an indispensable member of the Child and Family Services Team, serving as a Client Service Officer. Her role involves providing essential case management support and leading various groups, catering to the local Vietnamese community and all families who engage with the service.

When Lan reflects on her tenure at Creating Links, she describes it as an extension of her family. Her own two children have now grown into adults, and Lan has embraced the role of a grandparent.

While some of her colleagues have retired, relocated, or passed away, Lan's enthusiasm for her work remains unwavering. She continues to relish the opportunity to step into the office each day, nurturing the relationships and making a positive impact on the lives of those she serves.



# MELISSA

## CLIENT PROFILE



Melissa is a dedicated single parent raising three children, comprising two daughters and a son. She first joined the Creating Links Child and Family Services program in 2021, following a referral to our team for case management support.

Melissa's journey began when she relocated to a new area, seeking assistance and guidance in connecting with essential services and support systems. This was particularly crucial for her as Creating Links provided support for her children's wellbeing. Additionally, Melissa was grappling with the financial strain of covering rent and day-to-day living expenses.

During this challenging period, Melissa and her children were able to access programs tailored to their unique needs. Her youngest daughter benefitted from participating in programs like "Buddies and Me" and "Drumbeat" and her eldest daughter was supported through our counselling services and throughout the NDIS application process.



**"Melissa is currently pursuing a Diploma in Community Services at TAFE NSW, which has boosted her confidence in self-advocacy and accessing services."**

With perseverance and determination Melissa successfully achieved her goals with support from the Client Service Officer through regular in-home visits and phone calls.

Melissa is currently pursuing a Diploma in Community Services at TAFE NSW, which has boosted her confidence in self-advocacy and accessing services. She aims to create a better future for herself and her children.

While Melissa is still working towards stable housing, she emphasises the importance of services like Creating Links in navigating parenting challenges, particularly for children with additional needs. These services offer emotional and social support, help build confidence, and empower individuals to face future life challenges with resilience.

# OUT OF HOME CARE



5

ADOPTIONS



7

GUARDIANSHIPS



9

RESTORATIONS



46

NEW CARERS



181

CURRENT  
CARERS

Over the past year, the Out of Home Care program focused on improving our practice, reinforcing our commitment to providing better processes and enhancing outcomes for children and young people. Our unwavering focus on improving the carer and child experience, as outlined in our strategic plan, has remained at the forefront of all our endeavours.

Our commitment to engaging the community in the important role of caregiving has yielded positive results. We've authorised 46 new carer households throughout the year, bringing our total number of authorised carer households to 181. These numbers clearly demonstrate the community's commitment to providing a safe and secure home for children and young people in need.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our dedicated carers, who are the lifeblood of our service and play a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our children and young people. Your unwavering commitment, coupled with the support of Creating Links staff, has achieved remarkable outcomes for many of our children and young people.

An area of focus has been engaging with carers on their experience of Creating Links and the OOHC system and using those insights to improve our services. In January a group of carers participated in research that identified several ideas that would improve the experience of all carers. This included developing videos from carers on the care experience, improving processes for payments and financial approvals, and increasing support to carers in the initial period of a placement. From this we have actioned the carer videos, are reviewing the technology to enable improved process for payments, and are currently trialling a Therapeutic Carer Support initiative for

carers in the first 3 months of a placement. We will continue to listen and partner with our carers to improve.

One of the standout achievements of the year has been working with carers, families, and children to achieve permanency outcomes. Creating Links is immensely proud to have supported 5 Adoptions, 7 Guardianships, and 9 Restorations throughout the year. These accomplishments exemplify our ongoing commitment to achieving permanency goals and better outcomes for children and young people.

We are proud to announce the appointment of Aracely Duran as the new Manager of Therapeutic Services at Creating Links. Aracely brings a wealth of expertise in Therapeutic Practices and Quality Assurance and Improvement. Under her guidance, the Therapeutic Program continues to embed a clinical model of practice, leading our internal therapeutic response and ensuring a therapeutic approach is evident in all interactions with our carers, children, young people, and stakeholders. The team is dedicated to further strengthening the therapeutic delivery of our program moving forward.

Looking ahead to the coming year, the Out of Home Care team remains dedicated to improving outcomes for children and young people. We are committed to furthering best practices and building upon the progress achieved this year, ensuring that we continue to deliver positive results for all children and young people in our care.

**Jamie Upton**

- Executive Manager OOHC/PSP

“We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our dedicated carers, who are the lifeblood of our service and play a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our children and young people.”



# SARAH ISAAC

## STAFF PROFILE



Meet Sarah, a Senior Case Manager at Creating Links, where she has dedicated two and a half years of her professional journey.

Sarah began with Creating Links in the role of Case Manager and was promoted to Senior Case Manager.

Sarah's involvement in the community services sector spans over 4 and a half years, but her passion for making a difference extends back to when she began volunteering at the age of 16.

Sarah says "working at Creating Links has been a truly enriching experience for me. It has not only illuminated the importance of teamwork but also exemplified the value of fostering a positive work culture and environment".

During Sarah's time at Creating Links, she has supported many children and young people who are now employed full-time, been successfully restored back to their birth family, and supported teenage siblings to overcome drug use and absconding to live meaningful lives.

Sarah says "the most fulfilling aspect of my work is witnessing these children defy the odds stacked against them by the system and observing the pride they take in their own achievements. It's a truly rewarding journey, and I look forward to continuing to make a positive impact on the lives of those I support".





# SUNDAS AND MOHAMMAD

## CLIENT PROFILE



Sundas and Mohammad have been foster parents for the past four years. Their decision to become foster parents was driven by their commitment to give back to the community.

Their mission is to offer a safe and nurturing environment for vulnerable children while supporting both the child and their family on their path to restoration. They firmly believe that every child deserves the stability and love of a secure home.

Sundas and Mohammad said “our daily routine is centred around the unique needs of each child and their

contact schedule. Some children come to us with additional requirements or traumatic experiences, demanding extra care and support from their foster parents. Yet, it’s incredibly fulfilling to be a sanctuary for these children during their most vulnerable moments”.

**“Their (Sundas and Mohammad) mission is to offer a safe and nurturing environment for vulnerable children while supporting both the child and their family on their path to restoration.”**

“Our partnership with the Case Managers and CARTS team in this process has been remarkable. The support we’ve received from our little one’s team has been invaluable. Effective communication and an open channel for addressing concerns have made us feel truly heard and supported.

Sundas and Mohammad aim to break the cycle and provide these children and many more with a chance at a better life.

“It’s a journey that continues to be profoundly rewarding”.

**“Effective communication and an open channel for addressing concerns have made us feel truly heard and supported.”**

# DISABILITY SERVICES



**148**  
SUPPORTED  
PARTICIPANTS



**52%**  
INCREASE  
in participants from  
previous financial year



**\$2,300**  
Successful grant  
from Vicinity Group

I am pleased to present the Disability Annual Report for 2022/23. Our disability program continued its mission of providing exceptional support and care to individuals with disabilities. This year was marked by significant achievements and growth, a successful NDIS mid-term audit, progress towards re-accreditation in 2024, the addition of a new team leader, and heartwarming feedback from the participants we proudly serve.

Our commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities has led to substantial growth in our services. Over the past year, we expanded our outreach, collaborated with participants to develop new programs and reached more individuals and families in need than ever before. This expansion reflects our dedication to inclusivity, collaboration and our resolve to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our team worked tirelessly to design and implement our new "Skys the Limit" day programs that aim to empower participants by fostering personal growth, skill development, and community engagement.

I am delighted to report that our disability program successfully passed the NDIS mid-term audit in March 2023. This accomplishment reaffirms our unwavering commitment to high-quality service standards set by Creating Links and the practice standards of the NDIS.

We remain focussed on enhancing our processes, policies, and practices to provide the best possible support to our participants.

Additionally, in April 2023, we welcomed a new team leader to our disability program. Their extensive experience and dedication to supporting people with disabilities have already made a positive impact

on our team and our participants. This addition strengthens our leadership and allows us to continue provide quality support and services.

In 2022/23, our disability program achieved significant milestones and continued to make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Our growth, successful audit, new leadership, and positive interactions with participants all highlight our commitment to excellence. As we look ahead to 2024, we remain dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for those we support and expanding our impact in the disability services sector.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team, our participants, their families, and our partners for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities.

**Matthew Richards**  
- Executive Manager Marketing,  
Communications and Business Development





“Over the past year, we expanded our outreach, collaborated with participants to develop new programs and reached more individuals and families in need than ever before.”



# AIMEE NICHOLS

## STAFF PROFILE



Congratulations to Aimee on her recent achievement—successfully completing her Diploma of Community Services. Aimee's dedication to personal and professional growth is a commitment to our mission. We look forward to witnessing her continued success and the positive impact she will undoubtedly bring to the lives of those she supports.

**“Throughout her tenure, Aimee has been a beacon of support for numerous participants, offering both group and one-on-one support.”**

Meet Aimee, a dedicated member of our disability program. Aimee's journey as a disability support worker at Creating Links spans over four years.

Throughout her tenure, Aimee has been a beacon of support for numerous participants, offering both group and one-on-one support. Her efforts have not only enabled participants to actively engage with their communities but have also facilitated the development of their skills and the pursuit of more meaningful lives.

Aimee's passion for her work is profound. She loves her role at Creating Links, attributing her fondness to the deep and meaningful connections she has forged with fellow staff members, participants, and their families. Her commitment to helping individuals with disabilities achieve their goals is truly commendable.



# TAHLIA

## CLIENT PROFILE



Meet Tahlia, one of the newest participants in Creating Links' vibrant adult day program. Tahlia is a remarkable and dynamic young lady, poised to make her mark on the world.

Thanks to her NDIS "Skys the Limit" plan, Tahlia has harnessed her support system to acquire new skills, forge meaningful friendships, and embark on exciting adventures alongside lifelong companions.

Tahlia's passions extend to the culinary arts, fashion, and savouring diverse cuisines. However, her true love lies in the world of music, specifically singing. This newfound journey is propelling her to cultivate her talents in areas such as reading, writing, technology, and essential life skills.

With the firm backing of Creating Links, Tahlia aspires to establish a micro-enterprise, crafting exquisite jewellery and accessories with the unique "Tahlia touch."

"Tahlia's passions extend to the culinary arts, fashion, and savouring diverse cuisines. However, her true love lies in the world of music, specifically singing."



# PARTNERSHIPS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of our partners who have played an integral role in our mission to serve and support the community. Your commitment, generosity, and collaboration have made a profound impact on the lives of those we serve.

Together, we have positively impacted countless children, young people, participants, carers, and families. Your support, whether through financial contributions, volunteering, or sharing your expertise, has been the cornerstone of our success. We are grateful for your continued partnership and look forward to another year of working together to make a positive social impact.





# EXECUTIVE TEAM

Our Executive Management team provides effective leadership to steer our organisation towards its strategic objectives, executing business plans that align with our overarching goals and ensuring positive outcomes for children, young people, participants and families.



**Greg Benson**

Chief Executive Officer



**Jamie Upton**

Executive Manager

Out of Home Care



**Ebony-Ann Blewitt**

Executive Manager

Child and Family Services



**Matthew Richards**

Executive Manager

Marketing, Communications  
and Business Development



**Joseph Magri**

Executive Manager

Accreditation and Policy



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors have a wealth of professional skills and governance expertise and is responsible for our strategic direction, establishing goals for management and provide invaluable leadership to ensure our mission and goals are achieved effectively and ethically.



**Raad Richards**

Chairperson



**Rana Moubacher**

Director



**Joseph Azzi**

Director



**Henry Tan**

Director



**Anne Zele**

Director



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