

2021



Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd

Annual Report 2021

All children. All abilities. All possibilities.



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.



Our Vision & Mission

> Our Vision

Our vision is for children and their families to have supportive connections, discover possibilities and participate to their full potential in all aspects of family and community life.

> Our Mission

We create and support learning and social opportunities in caring environments for all children and young people in our areas of operation.

> Our Core Values



Self Determination



Access & Equity



Collaboration



Respect



Ethics & Integrity



Sustainability

President's Report



“Morgan and her team, working seamlessly together, have stepped up to the challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to present some unique challenges for Koorana during the 2021 Financial Year.

However, under the leadership of Morgan, supported by the whole Koorana team, we have been able to successfully transform our operating models to continue delivering our services, as encapsulated in our mission to support All Children, All Abilities, All Possibilities. I am pleased to present the Annual Report for Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd for the year ending June 2021 on behalf of the Koorana Board of Directors, the staff and all stakeholders.

Morgan and her team, working seamlessly together, have stepped up to the challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19, by developing, complementing and enabling our NDIS and other services to be effectively delivered in digital models by embracing technology.

Even though we are now pleased to be able to revert to our preferred face-to-face service delivery model, from this digital experience, Koorana is now able to deliver allied telehealth and other services to our clients such as online playgroups.

The Koorana team continues to demonstrate their service commitment to all of our services covering NDIS - early intervention and therapeutic supports, playgroups, capacity building and early childhood education. We are proud to be able to continue to provide our unique blend of services to the many cultures that live in the communities that we serve. It gives us pleasure to enable opportunities for families to have fun with their children in learning environments.

The establishment of a third preschool, despite the funding granted by the Department, continues to take significantly longer than expected because of the challenges in identifying an appropriate site based on changing market fundamentals.

The Koorana Board continues to work with the executive team on a number of key initiatives including:

- Ongoing implementation of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan which includes identifying new fee-based services and online services which are aligned to our core skills and values which will enable us to support a larger group of clients across the communities we serve.
- Embedding our governance structures covering our policies, risk management framework, financial reporting, client satisfaction monitoring and the implementation of new processes as required.
- Ensuring that there is appropriate corporate and infrastructure support for the service delivery teams including adequate financial capacity, enhanced technologies and appropriate corporate, service delivery and preschool accommodation platforms.
- Working with our skills-based Board members within specialist committees, to ensure there is succession of Board members to support executive management in ensuring that Koorana has the required ongoing financial sustainability.

Koorana continues to grow, with the breadth of our service delivery widening, our family and children client base continually increasing. We are also pleased to continually receive excellent client satisfaction ratings. With enhanced marketing initiatives, we plan to focus on growing our influence across the sector based on the great Koorana brand.

Acknowledgements

As always, I am grateful for the trust and support that we continue to receive from the communities we serve and our growing client base. The Board wishes to acknowledge and thank our many families who continue to choose our services and who have remained loyal to Koorana, despite the challenges of the last year.

We also extend our thanks to the government funding bodies that support us and the members of our local community for their support, providing Koorana with supplemental grants to be able to enhance the services that we provide.

I would also like to thank the Board members for the time and the efforts they contribute to Koorana and in turn to the community. Their expertise and support is critical to Koorana's ongoing success.

I would like to acknowledge our auditors, Stewart Brown and our other external partners, who support our governance and provide management services.

Despite the challenges, this last year has once again been a success. This would not have been achieved without the passion, the on-going dedication and the commitment of Morgan as our CEO, always able to demonstrate leadership to the executive team and all our employees using her collaborative engagement style and energy. But of equal importance are the tireless efforts of the Koorana team in servicing and assisting our growing loyal customer base of families and children.

Rodney Timm
President

CEO's Report



“We believe that all children will grow and thrive if their families are well supported.”

It is an enormous pleasure to be presenting this annual report to our stakeholders.

This year has been an exciting year for Koorana as we, like many organisations, re-stabilised our focus after the initial shock of the COVID-19 public health crisis and we began looking once again to the future.

In doing this, Koorana has taken the opportunity to assess how our COVID-19 service offerings can enhance our long term services to our clients. Koorana continues to deliver telehealth services for allied health (Koorana Online) and also online supported playgroups.

In our sector capacity building space, we are excited to see the ongoing value from our virtual community pages on Facebook and through email newsletters.

We greatly enjoyed re-opening much of our face-to-face service delivery in late 2020 and this will always be our primary means of connecting; however, these online service delivery capabilities add great supplementary value to our families and stakeholders and we are excited to continue them.

In other areas, the year has had three primary focus areas:

1. Ensuring our people are well supported and their contributions valued;
2. Rebuilding our financial reserves to ensure the organisation is sustainable into the future; and
3. Ensuring our systems, processes and governance structures are fit-for-purpose.

Some of the highlights of these focuses include:

- Completion of a staff satisfaction survey reflecting an overall staff satisfaction rating of 8.2 out of 10.
- Evolution of our performance-based remuneration model after further staff consultation to update position descriptions and implement a capability-based system.
- Review of our pay scales for our intervention team to align these to market rates.
- Implementation of an employee values campaign to recognise and reward staff contributions.
- Implementation of new staff benefits including paid parental leave and novated leasing.
- Succession planning throughout the organisation to ensure we invest in our internal talent.
- Implementation of new planning tools to ensure clear focus of priorities across the organisation.
- Consolidation of our Campsie office into our Belmore site to create the opportunity for more collaboration between our corporate and service teams.
- Continued review of our policies and procedures to ensure these are user-friendly and up-to-date.
- Implementation activities under our new risk management framework including two staff training sessions.
- Review of our IT service needs and transition to a third party provider.
- Successful once again, we achieved our NDIS accreditation against the Quality and Safeguarding Standards.
- Our Croydon Street Preschool completed its assessments and ratings visit and achieved 'Meeting' for all standards.
- Underwent an external audit of our contractual and compliance requirements.
- Delivered a surplus for the year of \$317K.

Going forward

Koorana will continue to be focused on these important areas but most important is continuing excellence in our service offerings for all families in need. We are striving to be a trusted advisor and parenting partner to families. We believe that all children will grow and thrive if their families are well supported.

From a sector point of view, Koorana has participated in the reform consultations on the NDIS services, particularly with regard to the Early Childhood Intervention Reset.

Koorana joined Re-Imagine in its response, as well as, partnering with other like-minded organisations to share our own response. Koorana is passionate about ensuring that access to these services for families is improved and that families continue to have choice and control.

As we close this year and look forward, I would like to thank our team of dedicated employees for coming along on the journey with us. We have achieved so much due to the combined efforts of the team and their commitment to Koorana's vision. The positive strides that we have made this year would not be possible without their involvement. I would also like to thank our Board for their continued support. Lastly, we could not do what we do without our stakeholders including our local Members of Parliament Hon Sophie Costis and Hon Jihad Dib, funding partners including Canterbury Leagues Club and Colliers, and other community partners.

I would also like to thank both our outgoing audit firm Conroy Audit & Advisory and our incoming firm Stewart Brown. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work together and look forward to working with all of you over the ensuing years.

Morgan A. Fitzpatrick
CEO

The Year in Review 2020 – 2021

>  **1,269** Children and young people supported in > **62** Suburbs & 20 LGAs

26

Supporting siblings of children with a disability program (SIBS)

156

Specialist Education

26

Sector capacity building programs

4

School screening clinics

157

Start Strong Pathways
For parents.

137

Children in preschools
Including 50 children with additional needs.

520

Children attending playgroups*
275 in parks and 204 based in venues.

340 Speech Therapy

325 Occupational Therapy

29 Multidisciplinary (Over 7 years old)

127 Transdisciplinary (Under 7 years old)

945

Intervention Support and Disability Services (NDIS Packages)



COVID-19 Impact

As we review this year, it is worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the nature of many of our services. Key areas where we typically have extended community reach are our supported playgroups and Start Strong Pathways programs. Both programs were delivered online only for approximately six months of the year.





Our Services

This year, Koorana provided a broad range of therapeutic and educational services to 1,269 children and young people between the ages of 0-18 years and their families.

Our services are divided into streams of service activity:

- Early Childhood Education
- Intervention and Disability Support
- Child and Family Support Services
- Capacity Building Services

Each area of our service streams support children and their families access a variety of services embedded in their local schools, communities, and homes.

Koorana strives for outcomes that are built upon a foundation of:

- complete customer focus;
- delivering evidence based best practice;
- service delivery in the natural environment;
- continuous quality improvement;
- financial sustainability; and
- strong governance framework.

“
Koorana strives for an inclusive society where all children, of all abilities have complete and equal access to all possibilities.

Early Childhood Education

> Preschools

Koorana's preschools are inclusive environments. This means that all children, regardless of gender, culture, beliefs and abilities, have access to all parts of the preschool program. Our two preschools, located at Roselands and Lakemba, provide early childhood education and care to children aged 3-6 years and our services align with the National Quality and Early Years Learning Frameworks.

Our transdisciplinary model of support (team-around-the-child) approach involves having an in-house Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and Specialist Teachers who work in a capacity building approach within the preschool setting providing consistency for the children, families and educators. This leads to more substantial outcomes.

Over the course of this financial year, the preschools enrolled a total of 247 children and we are proud to say that 77 of those children were in supported places due to disability or additional needs.

To support our deep commitment to the provision of opportunities that nurture individual potential, we continue to employ additional staff above regulatory requirements to embed practices that facilitate the natural participation of all children.

COVID-19 has been an ongoing challenge in 2020-21. Our preschools have had to support families during lockdowns and as a result, we have had to adapt our service offerings. The preschool team implemented online sessions for children and families. This has been in addition to our weekly online learning module and pre-recorded StoryPark content to support families learning from home during COVID-19 lockdowns.

The teams also developed take-home packs, with the option of contactless collection. The packs contained items that children could engage in their preschool experiences from home. The focus educators would action phone calls 'wellness checks' with the families and discuss their child's goals and strategies, and ways to support them from home. All of this was achieved while also maintaining our face-to-face program.

We are grateful for the COVID-19 Free Preschool Funding Program for community preschools during 2021 which allowed up to 15 hours of free preschool per child.

We have introduced our new KIOSK station which is a major upgrade from paper sign in and out that we have previously used. The KIOSK station is a digital sign in and out system allowing for families to drop off and pick up their children entering a quick and easy digital PIN.

Koorana believes that not only we are preparing children for school, but also helping them to develop lifelong skills. We work with each child to help lay the foundations of such skills by helping the child to learn:

- Resilience to help the children learn to manage stress and be able to face challenges or uncomfortable situations.
- Self-regulation to help children learn to understand, name, and manage emotions.
- Skills to support children to develop their self-help skills and independence.
- Confidence to role model positive social interactions and the ability to make friends as they play together in small groups.
- Self-expression to let children know that they can be self-expressive.
- Sharing and turn-taking to support the children as they learn about fairness.
- Routines and boundaries to role model what is acceptable behaviour and support children in a positive manner as they learn about boundaries.
- Group settings to support children to learn about collaboration and problem-solving in a group.
- Inclusion to learn that we are all different, that our differences make us unique and are a cause for celebration.



In the last year, we have remained committed to a diverse and inclusive educational program. Some of FY21 highlights were:

- Both preschools continued to work closely with Dalmarri finishing an eight week cultural program. The program honours, respects and embeds aboriginal traditions, culture, and ways of learning in Pedagogy.
- Our preschools have introduced sustainability approaches including small green steps modules, composting, growing their own fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers, a worm farm, and Australian native beehives.
- We have continued to build our relationship with the Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA) with them running both “Ready Set Grow” a program to help children transition to primary school and “Grow Active Programs” which is a physical education program.
- Our Social Skills Program which is a comprehensive evidence-based early intervention program led by our Speech Pathologists. The Social Skills Program aims to strengthen children’s social and emotional competencies and communication skills, helping them develop in a range of areas.
- Phillip Street Preschool has proudly participated in the ELLA Program (Early Learning Languages Australia). We have been learning Cantonese.
- Stage one of both Croydon Street and Phillip Street landscaping was completed. The upgrade has allowed for the children to be very active from planting the seeds, to tending to the garden as well as participating in cooking experiences from the produce that they have grown. Outdoor play, which is a healthy and fun experience for our children and allows them to develop new skills and share their knowledge on science and nature from a hands-on learning approach.
- Croydon Street’s dedication to sustainability arose from their participation in the Small Green Steps Module. They are proudly glitter free and are aiming to be as plastic bag reduced, if not plastic bag free by 2022.
- Supporting language development in the early years free family information sessions to help parents understand their child’s speech, language, and social developments.
- The introduction of “The Engine Room” which is a dedicated space at Phillip Street Preschool including a sensory gym, calming space and inclusion support classroom.
- Phillip Street has been host to a play therapist student. During her time with us, she built our capacity, understanding and appreciation of the importance of play therapy.

- Phillip Street hosted our first in a series of information sessions for families regarding Childhood Speech Therapy: Supporting language development in early years.

In this FREE session, families got a chance to speak to one of our highly trained speech therapists about:

- Their child’s personalised developmental milestones;
- Strategies to build their child’s language and social skills;
- Speech development concerns;
- General practical advice.

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Our team at Koorana
believes that not only we are
preparing children for school,
but also helping them to
develop lifelong skills.

Looking Forward

Koorana is focussed on expanding its preschool footprint through an additional preschool site. This has been delayed due to COVID-19, but we hope that 2022 will bring the launch of a new preschool for Koorana and an opportunity to offer inclusive early childhood education experiences to more of our local community.

Croydon Street team wish to embed a lot of the good quality practices we have achieved in our seven quality areas and show that we have the ability to achieve an excellent rating in the next assessment and rating visit from ACECQA.

Phillip Street team will be focusing on Preschools in the Park; an all-inclusive enriched learning experience where children and educators spend unhurried time playing in nature, participate in adventurous journeys to deepen learning and develop positive attitudes to themselves as capable learners.

Pictured: Koorana Preschools: Philip Street landscape 2020 update.





Intervention and Disability Support

➤ Client Access to our Intervention Services

Koorana's Intake and Client Access Team offers a no-cost pathway into service access. We employ specialist teachers with a deep understanding of early intervention, NDIS and of children's developmental learning needs. Every family referred to Koorana meets these specialist teachers, who help the families gain an understanding of their funding package and explain the service opportunities available to them within Koorana.

The Client Access Team met hundreds of families in the local community and delivered nearly 1,231 hours of support last year, helping them through the NDIS process for the first time or to assist with an ongoing NDIS plan.

While the planning process in the NDIS helps a family develop goals for a child with additional needs, the Koorana Client Access Team helps each family break these broad goals down into manageable components and identify which therapists will be best suited to meet their needs. Families also be assisted to determine how many sessions of each type of therapy and assistance can be provided during the funded period.

Accessing intervention can be a complex, confusing, and daunting process. Koorana's approach is designed to support the family, while also build the family's understanding of the intervention process, identify what supports work best for their child or young person and manage any adjustments or changes to their plans when they are reviewed and renewed. The Client Access Team supports families when plans are changed or if additional support is needed during transition periods, such as starting or leaving school.



> Intervention and Service Delivery

Koorana employs a wide range of highly qualified, experienced, and professional staff to deliver a broad suite of educational intervention and therapeutic services to children and young people between the ages of 0 and 18 years, and to their families. Last year our team supported 945 NDIS packages and there were nearly 14,777 client services and contacts.

Our team provide a range of supports that are family-focused, while using evidenced-based best practice to ensure the best outcomes for the child and family. The team of specialist teachers, speech and occupational therapists employ the latest research-based practices and discipline-specific trends. Koorana works with each family to tailor individual supports, that will maximise their child's ability to reach their potential, now and into the future.

Each therapeutic area is led by experienced discipline-specific leaders, who guide and support their team. They provide feedback, support, regular clinical supervision, professional development, and opportunities for collaboration with other teams. Koorana is an experienced provider of working within culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse communities. We have a successful history of reading and adjusting service provision to meet the everchanging needs of communities within shifting economic and social landscapes.

COVID-19 had a major impact on the way that Koorana was able to continue to support children and their families in the community. During the COVID-19 pandemic we were able to move our therapeutic services quickly and efficiently to a new online service platform called Koorana Online. Koorana Online therapy sessions were structured with the parent/child interacting on one end and a therapist on the other. The sessions focused on coaching and guiding the parent to conduct the session, thereby developing skills and capabilities. During the height of the pandemic, we were able to see the vast majority of clients via these new service offerings.

During this time, Koorana intervention staff continued to develop and fine tune their skills in the delivery and design of Koorana Online and have been able to engage both children and parents daily with a view to continuing goal attainment strategies seamlessly despite restricted movement.

Koorana has also continued to support children and families through the provision of home activity packs. As with all intervention, activity packs are individually tailored to suit the goals and interests of each child and support is provided to parents to assist them to work through the activities with their child/ren. Follow up support can be provided through follow up online sessions, phone calls or even via parents sending videos to the practitioner who then emails comments and suggestions in return.

Koorana has continued to encourage families to think about opportunities to promote their child's learning potential, even during the challenges of lockdown. Our team continues to be flexible in their approach and will deliver sessions in the best way that meets individual needs and promote positive outcomes.

As a result of the pandemic, we have been able to build the capacity of both staff and families to deliver and receive therapy through these different modes. As we continue to be challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, Koorana looks forward with confidence that we can continue to meet the needs of our families through the anticipated ups and downs of infection rates and precautions. Whilst the transition to the new service offerings was met with initial reluctance or concern, it has demonstrated the great resilience of our families and practitioners. During lockdown, 'peer sessions' for children have become more feasible, because telehealth removes potential barriers of distance/location and families have more flexible schedules.

Success Stories

A peer session was organised with two boys that have autism and can struggle to play with friends at school. However, they immediately got along very well and were then excited for upcoming sessions when they knew they would see the peer again. This has provided a good opportunity to work on social skills during the lockdown, when certain social experiences are limited.

Another example is an eight year old boy who previously had a highly restricted diet and would gag and vomit if he even saw someone eating foods that he did not like. He has made significant progress in his eating. He can now usually sit with others while they eat any food and has also increased the range of foods in his own diet. Telehealth has supported this progress, because previously, only school visits were possible, but now that his parents/grandparents are involved in therapy and they are able to continue with his therapy at home between sessions (e.g., they now regularly involve him in cooking and he has become very proud of sharing food that he cooks).

Looking forward

Koorana is focussed on:

- > Expanding our team to include Physiotherapists, Psychologists and offer a more comprehensive intervention service.
- > Continuing to grow our capacity to provide services to new and existing families.
- > Launching feeding therapy groups, social skills groups and lego group therapy.
- > Building a sensory gym in our new offices.
- > Continuing to upskill our team through targeted group and individual professional development opportunities.

Our Stories

> Meet Natalie* 2020 follow on

A follow on from last year's story about Natalie, her mum went on to study therapy assistance and is looking to do her student placement with Koorana.

She is now coaching other parents in our preschool community through information sessions on how to support their children with higher learning support need.

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Koorana services are great because their therapists helped to get a holistic treatment plan for my child.

> Meet Liam*

How long has your family been involved with Koorana and how did you first get involved/hear about us?

Since 2017 starting the transdisciplinary model with Koorana. We got a referral from the Childcare Principal.

What services, programs or community supports have you accessed through Koorana?

We have accessed the Belmore Preschool program in 2017 and the transdisciplinary support program since 2017 – 2020: Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy and Specialist Education. And Speech Therapy from Jan 2021 till now.

Have you noticed any improvements in Liam since he started receiving services with Koorana? If yes, what have they been?

Liam has improved in handwriting, emotional regulation and play skills. For example, Liam's play skills in cutting playdoh improved a lot with the Occupational Therapist and specialist teacher intervention. Liam has also improved a lot in language and social skills. Before the start of this current therapy block, Liam struggled to recall the things in school in the right sequences and used wrong grammatical items in sentences. After the speech therapy, Liam is using the right tenses, prepositions, and making sentences in a longer and more accurate structure.

As a parent, how does it make you feel to see Liam progress?

The therapy has changed Liam's and our lives, it really helped with a smooth transition from kindy to school and we felt less pressure and pleased to see Liam improving in many aspects.

As a parent what do you think of the new Koorana therapeutic Preschool model?

It's great because a group of therapists helped to get a holistic treatment plan for Liam's ASD diagnosis and they can also go to the same school together to see him.

Would you recommend Koorana to others? What would you say to other parents who are looking for support for their child or teenager?

We have already recommended to a few families who have similar diagnoses as Liam. We recommend Koorana to others because the therapists are on time, an organisation with clear procedures in billing, and clear documentation (e.g., progress notes with suggested skills and homework).

What would you say to parents who are looking for support for their child or teenager?

I would tell them that Koorana has a multidisciplinary team that can provide different services and that they are very clear about goals and working towards helping the kids grow.

> Meet Jason*

Jason's family has been involved with Koorana since May 2019. He accesses speech pathology, a specialist teacher and occupational therapy sessions through Phillip Street Preschool intervention team.

When Jason started, he was non-verbal with no communication strategies in place. Supported by his preschool intervention staff and preschool educators (and their team approach, working together) Jason moved from PECs (Picture Exchange Communication System), ALDs (Aided Learning Displays), AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) communication to now speaking verbally!

Koorana Phillip Street Preschool has made all the difference for this family in accessing support that they need for Jason.





> Meet Aliah*

How long has your family been involved with Koorana and how did you first get involved/hear about us?

Going back nine years, a friend was going to a Koorana playgroups since her daughter was born 11 years ago, she saw me at a library function, and she mentioned that it would be great if I came and that it was free, in the park, you could just turn up/or not turn up and they had everything, so I thought 'why not' and I have been a lover ever since. All four of my children who are 12, 9, 5, 3 have attended playgroups.

How has playgroups benefited you and your children? Have you noticed any changes in your children since starting playgroups with Koorana? If yes, what have they been?

We started when my son was 2.5 years old, and he was not going to a playgroups then only a small family day-care where there were three kids and most of them were younger. Because there is such a variety of kids there, he just gravitated towards whomever he wanted to play with and every week there might be someone different, so he was always interacting with different people.

We did not have that opportunity because we did not have the money to send him to a proper preschool, he was young, and I was a stay-at-home mum with a newborn.

One teacher knows everything about everything and the other usually knows all about play-based play. If I was busy, my eldest would interact with the teachers or the other kids. All my children have gained something just from seeing the same teachers every week or me getting information from the teachers.

For example, my eldest son has high anxiety and my second child had learning difficulties, I had to get information and I needed to tap into those resources, they have been an absolute wealth of information helping me get that.

All my kids have benefited from these playgroups, my youngest is very shy and he loves other kids but not adults. I have noticed him especially, he was never interested in songs and singing he would always sit there or walk away but since attending playgroups he has started to sit with the group and sing and walk away from playgroups singing.

“Koorana playgroups has helped my child engage and open up with the teachers and other adults.”

As a parent, how does it make you feel to see your children progress?

It makes me feel extremely happy that is why I keep going back, I love the way that they leave, and they have made a new friend or developed a new skill. I remember when my son went to school a teacher commented on how well he could cut things and that is because at playgroups they are always cutting things like magazines and crafts.

My kids always leave happier, that is why I keep going back because they are always getting something out of it.

What do your children enjoy about playgroups with Koorana?

My children love to attend the playgroups in the park, they love to play with playdough and every week there are new toys and activities for my children to play and do. Some weeks there is sand, dolls or playdough and these are often things I do not have at home.

They enjoy the interaction with the other kids, and they love the teachers. They are always talking about Ms Lee, Carla, and Helen. They always gravitate towards the teacher as they will play with them and always have time for them.

Playgroups is exciting and they love going to the park and seeing all this fun stuff and their friends.

Would you recommend Koorana to others? What would you say to other parents who are looking for support for their child or teenager?

I recommend Koorana to everyone! If someone puts a post on social media in a community group, I will be the first person to recommend Koorana playgroups. I often stay at the park after playgroups for a few hours and I always recommend it to parents I see that day. I tell everyone as I love it.

What would you say to parents who are looking for support for their child?

I always tell them to come to playgroups and they have all the information and if they don't, they will find it. If I have ever had a concern in the past the Koorana team have gone out of their way to help me find resources and information.

I say the kids can play while you speak to someone who can give you the right information for your child, it's a relaxed setting so no kids get in trouble and parents and kids can feel comfortable getting help.

Child and Family Support Services

Supported Playgroups

Koorana delivers 14 supported playgroups that are run each week in venues and parks across the Canterbury and Bankstown regions and online through Zoom and Facebook, funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. In FY21 we have had 520 people attend Playgroup and ran 116 sessions.

Each playgroup is supported by an Educator and a Family Worker. This model enables us to connect with many families and children each week and offer a diverse skillset of supports. The Family Workers and Educators model early connections and assist families with any concerns they may have in their lives, or developmentally for their children. Over a process of relationship building each week, issues are identified and shared so that support can be provided. Relationships develop between families and children too, breaking down the isolation experienced by many families – especially newly arrived families, away from their families of origin.

Preference for the less formal, park-based playgroups is a growing trend with families enjoying a soft entry access to supports and referrals. Families enjoy the relaxed structure of our playgroups and often attend playgroups depending upon their needs; for example, they may come to seek information or discuss concerns about their child's development. Each playgroup is tailored to the needs of the group of families attending.

Prior to COVID-19 lockdown we were able to do some face-to-face activities which included school holiday CCFI Big Day Out and 21 playgroup members attended a free school holiday excursion to Symbio Wildlife Park. Delivering our activities in a COVID-19 environment was challenging due to the public nature of the events. We are proud that our team developed a variety of creative ways to continue to meet the needs of the families within these communities.

In 2020 the team developed a closed Facebook group to share activities and ideas for families isolating at home with young children. We have seen 300 families join and become regular participants on our Facebook page. Our online activities included book readings, songs, dance, and exercise at home, which encouraged physical activities for children, as many were isolating at home and not accessing park environments.

A school readiness program was developed and launched via Zoom in September last year. Families were delivered a pack with all resources necessary for each session. The program was developed in consultation with a Koorana Specialist Teacher.

The Koorana team also hosted real-time online playgroups with activities to inspire and support families at home. This enabled families to enjoy the same playgroup fun but from the security and safety of their homes.

Each virtual playgroup includes creating an activity using items that families would have at home e.g., story time, a music session or modelling a morning tea snack. Because these were live and interactive sessions, children and parents could participate fully and ask any questions or make comments.

Success Stories

A family attending our weekly park playgroup has embraced the Zoom playgroup sessions during lockdown, attending every session available. The family were concerned that their son was isolated and not seeing other children or adults. The mother expressed concern that her son is not interested in sitting and using pencils or scissors, “so how will he go at school next year”. Our team were able to give some tips and her son now sits and participates in the whole zoom session including completing the craft activity. The creation of a playgroup for babies up to 1 year old was planned for 2020 when lockdown occurred. Due to COVID-19, the group meets were moved to online. Families who attended these online sessions reported that they valued the opportunity to join. Moving forward we will expand this to start two year old group when we are able to resume face-to-face.

We are working with our partners and peak bodies to find a way to return to face-to-face venues in a way which is safe and aligns with the government COVID-19 guidelines for the new financial year.



Start Strong Pathways

The Start Strong Pathways Program is a government-funded program that aims to provide educational supports for young children prior to preschool enrolment, supports pathways to preschools, and help promote the importance of early childhood education to parents.

Start Strong Pathways is designed for families who have babies and children under 5 years of age, but with a focus on 0 to 3 years of age. Start Strong Pathways has been able to reach families from cultural and linguistical backgrounds, families from non-English speaking backgrounds, single parents, isolated families, vulnerable families and children with a disability. Prior to COVID-19 the team were extremely active in the community running parenting workshops, playgroups, information sessions, and visiting families in their home. During our third year of the program, we have consistently been in contact with approximately 100 families in the community.

Due to COVID-19 we were unable to run our normal programs, so we adopted new strategies including an online weekly Zoom program, parent information sessions, individual parent Zoom sessions, personal deliveries for disadvantaged families and SMS text messages and emails to provide information and resources to parents on a variety of topics to help them during lockdown. These resources included information about developmental milestones, strategies on behaviour management, and tips on managing challenging behaviours.

Moving forward we will be focusing on our online programs until we can move to face-to-face.



SIBS Group

Koorana has been running a SIBs program for many years to support the siblings who have a brother or sister with a disability. The program is designed for children who are aged between 7 and 12 years, and this year 26 children have participated in the program.

The SIBs program is a recreationally based program, that combines social activities with structured feedback sessions, which enable children to learn life skills and coping mechanisms all within a relaxed, fun, and safe environment.

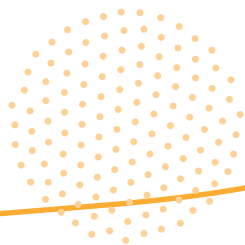
Our team work collaboratively to deliver a program that helps the sibling understand and manage their feelings associated with having a sibling who has additional needs.

In 2020 due to COVID-19 we have had to face challenges with our SIBs program when our face-to-face program was postponed. We overcame these challenges by using online meeting tools to connect with the SIBs group while they were not able to meet in person. This has enabled children to stay connected and positively engaged using online games and other activities in the COVID-19 period. Our online activities included: a Microsoft facilitated Minecraft four week program, facilitated art classes, in home cooking and lantern making.

In Term 1 of 2021 we were able to resume our face-to-face excursions. We tried to incorporate skills-based and learning experiences for the children, the activities included Australia Maritime Museum, Bowling and Laser Tag.

We worked with Colliers, who continue to support us by generously funding the development and launch of our SIBs online program.

“Looking forward in 2022 we will implement two day holiday programs and two-three online sessions per term to connect with the children.”



Capacity Building Services

> Sector Capacity Building Program

Koorana's Sector Capacity Building Program employs one specialist teacher who provides support, resources, and training for 25 community-based preschools to enable the inclusion of children with a disability and additional learning needs into their preschools.

Our specialist teacher works with each preschool to meet their individual needs so that they have practical resources and on-the-floor coaching to promote positive learning outcomes for each child.

The Sector Capacity Building program assists preschools to:

- > Increase their capacity to include children with a disability and additional needs on the same basis as their peers.
- > Enable equitable outcomes for children with a disability and additional needs consistent with the five outcomes areas of the Early Years Learning Framework.
- > Understand the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as it relates to the delivery of supports for children through the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) approach within an educational setting.

During COVID-19 the program utilised Facebook, online meeting formats and a variety of other technologies to remain connected and to encourage networking between the preschools that are supported. This initiative has been highly successful with the closed Facebook page reaching 53 connections. The Facebook page consists of a minimum of three posts per week promoting professional learning, community events and celebrations, connectivity and belonging.

The SCBP run a variety of specifically tailored training programs based on requests from each of the preschools. Every preschool is unique, and the program has facilitated training support to cover topics such as:

- > Understand the Disability Inclusion Program (DIP) guidelines
- > Understand the ECEI approach
- > Support the use of research-based assessment tools
- > Plan accessibility improvements
- > Support the development of self-reflective practices
- > Development of policies and procedures for collaborative practice
- > Embed research-based therapy supports into the program
- > Deliver research based educational supports
- > Use the Working Together Agreement to promote a coordinated approach
- > Formal and informal professional learning
- > Critiquing many professional practices

The SCBP has also engaged Koorana's speech pathologists and occupational therapists to provide practical advice for preschool educators supporting children with disabilities and additional needs. The sector capacity team have participated in 1,600 hours of support over the past two years, to promote inclusion in the community.

The Sector Capacity Building program is in its third year, and we have been able to reconnect with the teams in each preschool and celebrate their successes. Koorana has been notified by the Department of Education – Early Childhood Directorate, that the program will cease in December 2021.

> Canterbury Child and Family Interagency

CCFI is a project funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. Its aim is to facilitate professional networking, knowledge-sharing and to promote interagency collaboration across the Canterbury region. This interagency collaboration ensures that outcomes are improved and coordinated so that all children have equal access to services in the Canterbury region.

This year CCFI group membership has continued to grow, and the network has reached up to 184 members. Over 85 child and family workers from 45 services participated in regular interagency meetings, training, and a variety of collaborative projects. The monthly interagency meetings have become an important platform for workers to share information, discuss local issues and develop plans and strategies to address them.

The services that are represented at the CCFI include health, education, Council, child protection, family support, disability support, community neighbourhood centres, multicultural services, and ethnic community organisations.

With COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, we postponed many community engagement activities such as playgroups in Roselands Shops and Paint the Town Read. However, we successfully organised an outdoor event for children 0-12 years called "Big Day Out" during the April school holidays this year. Over 250 people attended the event and families got connected with each other, as well as with local services including health, education, and family support.

We also provided training for workers in the areas of parenting, group work and online services delivery. Throughout the year we continued to advocate for families who have been further disadvantaged due to COVID-19, including families experiencing financial hardship and children waiting significant times to access community health services.

Overall, the team at Koorana has risen to the challenge presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and excelled in many ways. In many areas, the engagement with families has improved both in quality and quantity and there are aspects of service delivery developed which we will be able to continue in the future.





Our People
Koorana Staff as of June 2021

> **53**
Staff members

18
Preschools

18
Intervention Support &
Disability Services

7
Playgroups

9
Corporate
Services


15
Early Child
Educators



3
Administration &
Management


6
Speech
Pathologists


4
Occupational
Therapists


7
Specialist
Teachers


3
Social
Workers


4
Casual
Workers

“
**Koorana is committed to the
opportunity for development of all of
our staff to reach their full potential.**

Governance Report

The Board of Directors

As a community owned, not for profit organisation, Koorana is run by a Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the governance of Koorana and its outputs.

Board membership is voluntary and is made up of four executive positions (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) and non-executive positions. Board members bring with them specific professional expertise in finance, IT, property, education, human resources, law and not-for-profit management.

To ensure due diligence, four subcommittees complement the general Board structure:

- › Stakeholder Feedback
- › Risk Management
- › Governance and Performance
- › Finance

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Koorana is fortunate to have a Board of Directors who are deeply passionate about our mission to support all children and volunteer their unique skills to lead this mission.



Rodney Timm

President

2017 - Present

Rodney Timm joined the Koorana Board in 2016. Rodney has in excess of 30 years experience in the construction and real estate industry and has been involved in property and facilities management, valuation and development. He has provided consultancy services to both the property funds management and the corporate real estate sectors.



Allan Laurie

Vice President

2017 - Present

Allan is an executive search consultant with a background in business analytics, operational performance talent identification/assessment/attraction, business development and government advisory. He consults to a group of diverse businesses in the Local, State and Commonwealth Government, infrastructure, heavy engineering, agriculture, education, health, social purpose and the cultural sectors.



Sandra Angel

Secretary

2014 - Present

Sandra, Principal of Earlwood Public School, has a passion for serving the community and working together with families to ensure equality and opportunity. Her vision is that all children have access to the best possible opportunities to grow and develop to become positive contributors to society. Sandra's interest in Koorana's Board supports her commitment to fostering strong community relationships.



Syed Ammar Hasan

Treasurer

2008 - Present

Syed Ammar Hasan came to know about the work of Koorana when his children, now aged 14 and 16, attended one of the Supported Playgroups. Syed is the Senior Finance Manager at Toll Logistics, he is the Finance lead for their Retail, Consumer, Auto (RCA) and Grocery divisions. Syed brings with him a wealth of knowledge on best practice financial reporting. Syed has influenced Koorana's development of financial procedures and reporting.



Sujeet Jena

Non-Executive Director

2018 - Present

Sujeet Jena is a senior finance and audit executive with career highlights from global professional services, the community sector and academia. He is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a Fellow of Chartered Accountants of India. Sujeet is also the president of an Australia-wide cultural community organisation. He joined the Board in 2018.



Lisa Giacomelli

Non-Executive Director

2018 - 2020

Lisa brings significant commercial acumen having held senior executive positions in the 'for purpose' sector, as a business consultant and in local government where she engaged on a professional level with Koorana. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Social Science and a Bachelor of Law and has a particular interest in social policy and planning, organisational strategy, communications, and stakeholder relations. Lisa finished her appointment on the Koorana Board at the November 2020 AGM.



Luisa Vumbaca

Non-Executive Director

2021 - Present

Luisa joined the Koorana Board in 2021 as a Non-executive Director. Bringing a wealth of industry experience, Luisa is a strategically focused senior marketing and communications professional, who has worked within multi-stakeholder organisations, across a variety of sectors. Admitted as a legal practitioner in NSW, Luisa also has in-house experience in ESG, policy and compliance, and commercial matters. Luisa is passionate about social justice and is a strong believer in the power of education where even the smallest effort can make a big difference.



Jodie Rollason

Non-Executive Director

2021 - Present

Jodie joined the Board in 2021 as a non-executive Director. Bringing over 10 years experience in the Not-for-Profit Sector, Jodie is the principal solicitor for a state-wide community legal service specialising in assisting clients with First Nations and Multicultural backgrounds to overcome their challenges. With her passion for helping disadvantaged communities, Jodie thrives on advocacy and is committed to reducing social inequalities and systemic barriers to provide opportunities for the most vulnerable.

Treasurer’s Report



“Koorana has proven to be a strong organisation and delivered another solid year in terms of their financial performance, sustainability, and excellence in service.

It is with great pleasure I am presenting the report on the financials of Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd, for the year ending 30th June 2021.

The result for the year has been audited and signed off by StewartBrown, our external auditors on 20th September 2021.

The Koorana Board of Directors and Members have passed a resolution to replace the previous Auditor “Conroy Audit & Advisory” and appointed a new Auditor “StewartBrown.” I would like to thank Auditor David Conroy on his long association with Koorana and acknowledge the contribution he and his team have made in the past several years. At the same time, I would like to welcome our new Auditor “StewartBrown” on board.

Despite of various challenges, Koorana has proven to be a strong organisation and delivered another solid year in terms of their financial performance, sustainability, and excellence in service.

Koorana reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic with the real Australian spirit. Our management efforts to make Koorana a safe place, our staff efforts to reach out to families and make sure they were well supported and the support that the Government provided during this critical time helped a lot, without this support we would have struggled.

Koorana proves strong community engagement and has been able to demonstrate high standard of service deliverables, which will remain focus on the journey to the safe, efficient, and prosperous future that lies beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our total families reached, we were proud to deliver continuity of care to the community. Koorana serves approximately 1,269 families compared to 4,153 families for the same period last year through its various activities and will continue to provide flexible and responsive services to families and children, with a deep commitment to an inclusive and holistic approach to early education, intervention, and family support.

This report covers the financial accounts for the period ending June 30th, 2021 which represents the annual transactions of all Koorana activities delivered through our three sites located at Croydon Street-Lakemba, Phillip Street-Roselands and Cleary Avenue- Belmore.

Cash flow
As of 30th June 2021, Koorana held cash of \$1,468,023 compared to the same period last year of \$1,097,588.

Equity
As of 30th June 2021, Koorana retain equity balance of \$2,557,762 compared to the same period last year of \$2,240,199.

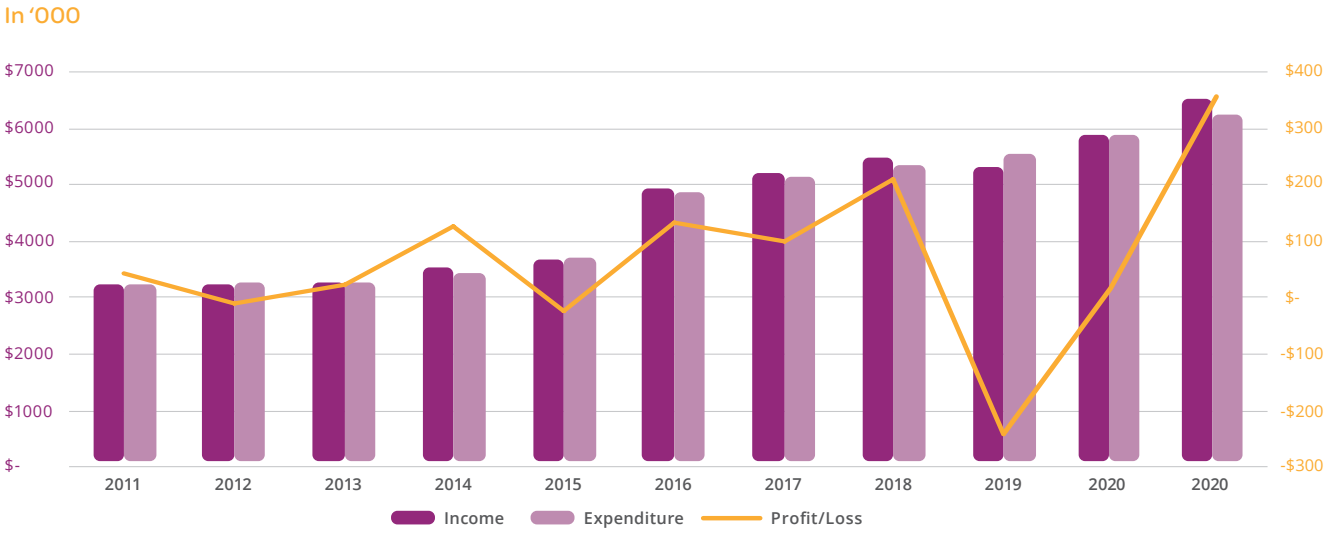
In General
Our consistent performance and service delivery this year would not be possible without the collaboration of our stakeholders. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to All Staff - for their hard work and support, All Board Members - for their commitment and vision, StewartBrown – Chartered Accountants - for their support and expert advice and last but not least, our Donors, Sponsors and Families; we could not achieve what we achieved in this year.

The accounts for the period ending 30th June 2021 are herein presented for your perusal and acceptance, duly audited by StewartBrown – Chartered Accountants.

If you have any questions about the results or would like more information on anything mentioned above, please contact myself or Morgan A. Fitzpatrick, CEO or send us an email at accounts@koorana.org.au.

Syed Ammar Hasan
Treasurer

Year to year performance, 2011 to 2021



2021 Financial Highlights



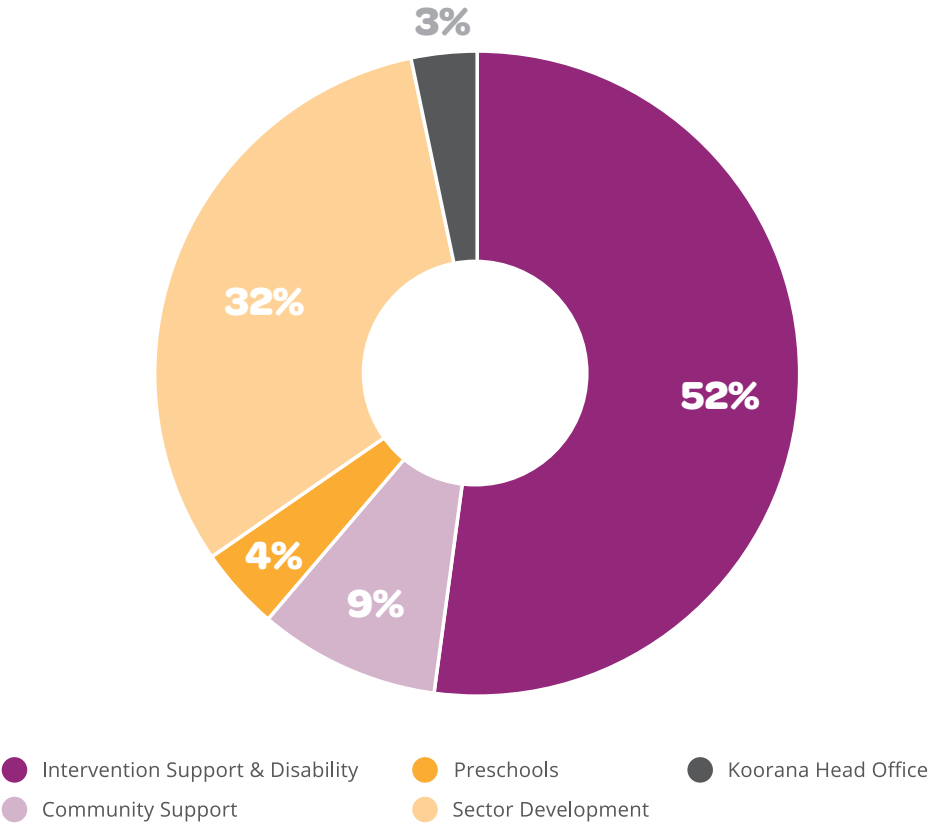
Treasurer's Report

Income

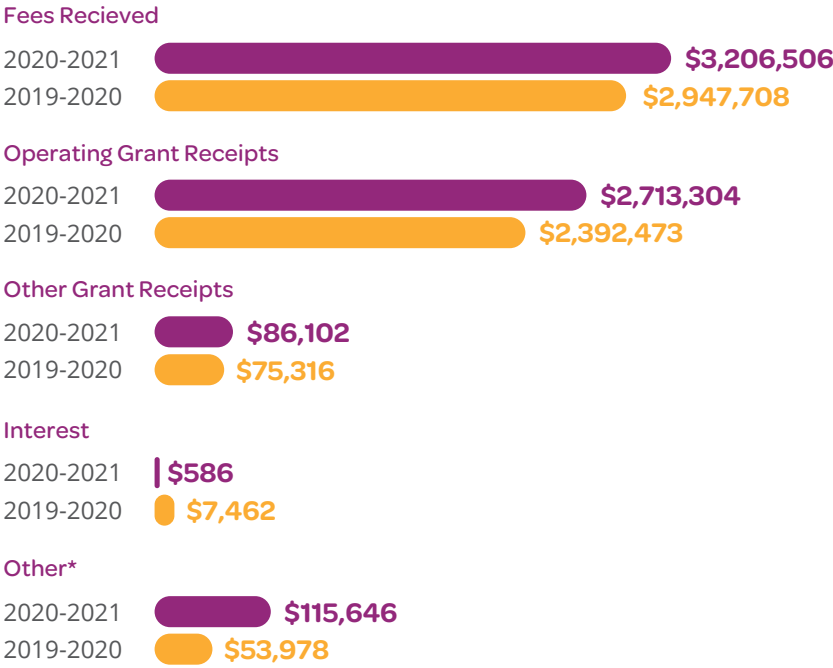
Overall Income Comparison



Income Breakdown



Summary Income Sources Comparison



*Includes \$50,000 COVID-19 support received in 2020-21 compared to the same \$50,000 for the same period last year.

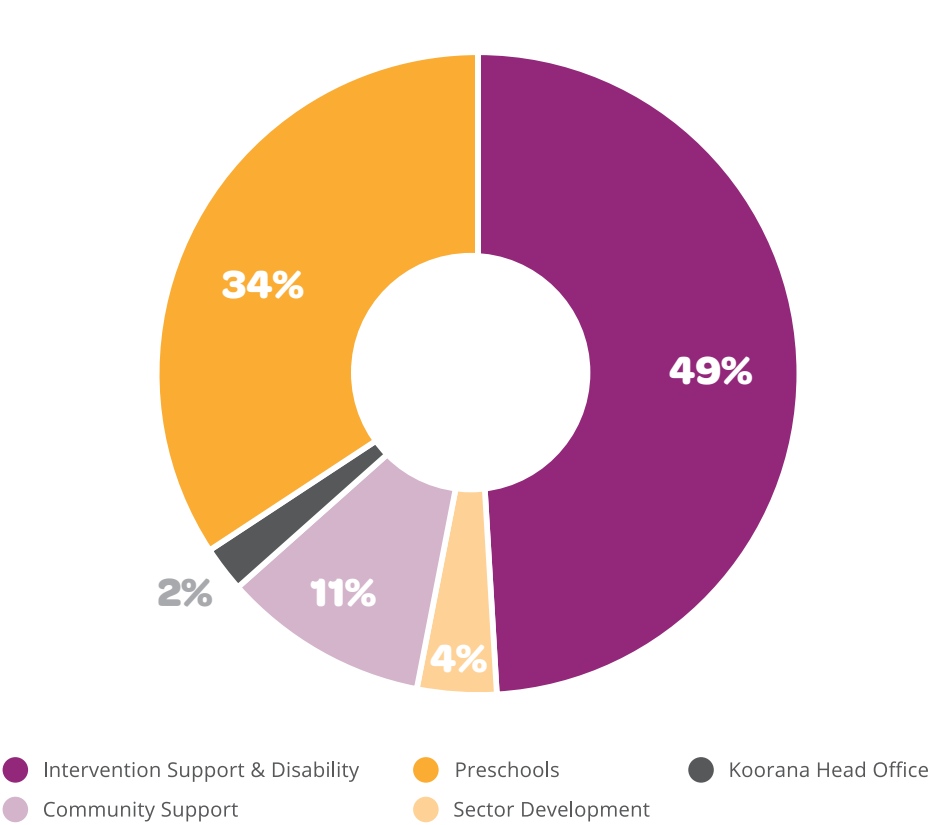
Treasurer's Report

Expenses

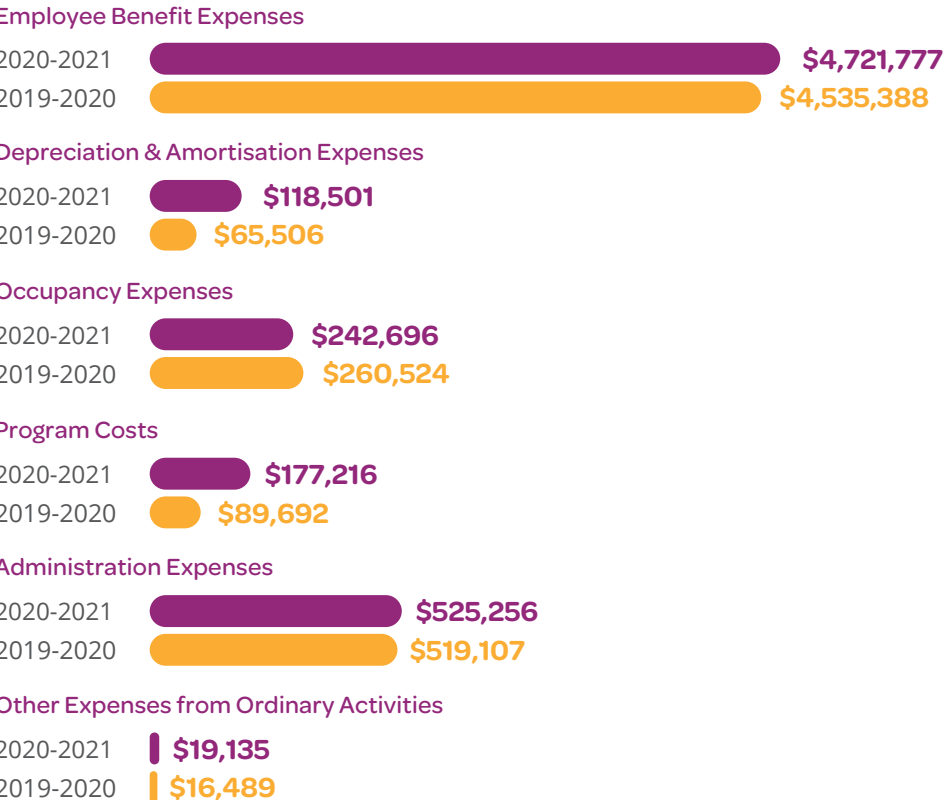
Overall Expenses Comparison



Expenses Breakdown



Summary Expenses Services Comparison



Letter from the Auditor

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Directors’ Declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd is in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

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 Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board’s APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (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 confirm that the independence declaration required by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, which has been given to the Directors of the company, would be in the same terms if given to the Directors as at the time of this auditor’s report.

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

Directors’ Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company’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 Directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Directors are responsible for overseeing the company’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 the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at The Auditing and Assurance Standards Board and the website address is <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>

We communicate with the Directors 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.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

In addition, our audit report has also been prepared for the members of the Company in accordance with section 24(2) of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991. Accordingly, we have performed additional work beyond that which is performed in our capacity as auditors pursuant to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. These additional procedures included obtaining an understanding of the internal control structure for fundraising appeal activities and examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting compliance with the accounting and associated record keeping requirements for fundraising appeal activities pursuant to the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and Regulations.

It should be noted that the accounting records and data relied upon for reporting on fundraising appeal activities are not continuously audited and do not necessarily reflect after the event accounting adjustments and the normal year-end financial adjustments for such matters as accruals, prepayments, provisioning and valuations necessary for year-end financial report preparation.

The performance of our statutory audit included a review of internal controls for the purpose of determining the appropriate audit procedures to enable an opinion to be expressed on the financial report. This review is not a comprehensive review of all those systems or of the system taken as a whole and is not designed to uncover all weaknesses in those systems. The audit opinion expressed in this report pursuant to the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 has been formed on the above basis.

Auditor’s opinion

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 24(2) of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 we report that, in our opinion:

- a) the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial result of fundraising appeal activities for the financial year ended 30 June 2021; and
- b) the financial report has been properly drawn up, and the associated records have been properly kept for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and Regulations; and
- c) money received as a result of fundraising appeal activities conducted during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 has been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and Regulations; and
- d) at the date of this report there are reasonable grounds to believe that company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.



Stewart Brown
Chartered Accountants

20 September 2021



S.J. Hutcheon
Partner



Thank you

Koorana would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge our generous partners and supporters. Your continued support of our work has enabled Koorana to support children and families through what has been an extremely challenging year.

- NSW Department of Communities & Justice (DOCJ)
- NSW Department of Education & Training (DET)
- National Disability Services (NDS)
- Our local Members of Parliament – Hon Sophie Costis and Hon Jihad Dib
- Canterbury City Council
- Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL
- City of Canterbury Bankstown
- Bankstown Sports Club
- Canterbury League Club
- Colliers
- Breakthru
- Microsoft Pty Ltd
- Western Sydney University
- UNSW Sydney
- Early Childhood Early Intervention Partners: LifeStart & EACH
- CCFI Interagency Partners
- Belmore PCYC and Bankstown PCYC
- Public Schools: Bass Hill, Chullora, Panania North, Hampden Park, Hannans Road, Campsie, Earlwood, Belmore South, Narellen and Yandelora
- Belmore South St Mel's Catholic School

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We would also like to thank the many parents, families and carers who have generously shared their skills to support our organisational activities.

Get Involved

If you would like to support the important work that Koorana does there are many ways to get involved.

➤ Make a Donation

A small donation can make the difference in a child's life by giving access to much needed therapies. Please contact us via phone or email to donate.

➤ Join the Board

If you would like to use your expertise to make a difference by volunteering on our Board please send your resume to hr@koorana.org.au or call us.

➤ Volunteer

By volunteering a few hours of your time you can help to support your local community and make the world a more inclusive place for all children. Call us now to discover a world of possibility.

➤ Fundraise for Koorana

Fundraising is a great way to support children in your local community, while having fun and meeting people. Talk to Koorana about fundraising initiatives such as an fun social event or a fundraising page that can support children in need.

➤ Remember us in Your Will

A gift to Koorana in your Will means that your generosity will be remembered and live on. Talk to us about how you would like your generous gift to be remembered.

➤ Become a Partner

Koorana believes that working in partnership with businesses, the community and government can provide educational, therapeutic and family support for all children. Partnering with Koorana can help improve staff engagement, boost morale, and support the community. Talk to us about how partnering with Koorana can help you.

➤ **Koorana guarantees that 100% of your donation will directly contribute to the provision of early education, intervention and family support.**

For more information on how you can help Koorana continue to provide important early childhood services and programs in your local community, please call the Koorana office on **02 8321 9600** or visit our website at **koorana.org.au**

Koorana holds endorsement as a deductible gift recipient. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

All photos are of Koorana clients and staff, taken and printed with permission.

All photos have been taken by Good Thanks Media.





Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd

1A Cleary Avenue, Belmore NSW 2192
PO Box 403, Belmore NSW 2192

Call us **02 8321 9600**
Email us **enquiries@koorana.org.au**

 @koorana
 @koorana_child_and_family
 koorana.org.au

