Barnardos Australia | Because every child needs a champion™

Moving forward with purpose

Annual Review 2025-2026





Barnardos acknowledges the Traditional 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 acknowledge the children who are our hope for a brighter future.


You belong here
Barnardos Australia

Message from our Chair



Liesel Wett OAM
Chair, Barnardos Australia

> “
> It has been a period of transformation, learning, and resilience, with our teams continuing to deliver exceptional support to children.

As I commence my second year as Chair of Barnardos Australia, I reflect on the last 12 months with pride and look to the future with ambition.

It has been a year of significant change, yet our commitment to children and families remains steadfast. Many Australians continue to live with the impacts of cost-of-living pressures, housing insecurity, poverty, and domestic and family violence. In the face of adversity, Barnardos continues to deliver practical, evidence-informed services to those in need – determined as always to create hopeful futures.

This year marked the conclusion of our two-year *A Brighter Barnardos* strategy. It has been a period of transformation, learning, and resilience, with our teams continuing to deliver exceptional support to children.

We continued to advocate for children and families experiencing domestic and family violence. This included growing our caseworkers' skills in responding to complex domestic and family violence; establishing a new program to provide therapeutic care to children with disability who have also experienced violence; and made the experiences of children as victim-survivors in their own right visible through our campaigns.

Our commitment to continuous learning was also strengthened through collaboration with experts, researchers, and sector partners. These partnerships ensure that Barnardos continues to innovate, share knowledge and deliver services that respond to the changing needs of children and families. The Board takes its governance responsibilities seriously, which is why we completed an external review of our governance structures, systems and performance in late 2025. We are working through the recommendations to uplift the organisation's governance practices to ensure they remain contemporary and that we are set up for success in the future.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our dedicated supporters for their ongoing commitment to our mission. Barnardos work would not be possible without the dedication of volunteers, supporters, partners, and of course, our wonderful staff - including my colleagues on the Barnardos Australia Board who provide the strategic thinking and foresight to help us shape our organisation for the future. I want to welcome and acknowledge the positive impact of our new CEO, Dr Kate Alexander. Kate has stepped into the role with energy and warmth and brought with her a depth of expertise that will support Barnardos to strengthen and grow.

As we look ahead to the next chapter at Barnardos Australia, we do so with optimism and purpose. Together, we will continue to champion the rights of children, strengthen families, and build more hopeful futures.

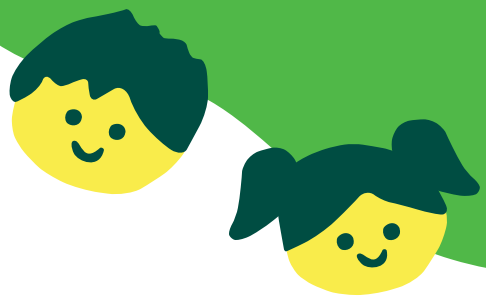



Barnardos Australia
GHANDA



Dr Kate Alexander with children from the Yalmambirra Homework Club.

Message from our CEO



As my first year at Barnardos draws to a close, I have so much to be grateful for and so much to be hopeful about. And what a year it has been.

Barnardos has been through a great deal of change this year. Our new Executive Leadership team has brought infectious energy and determination from the start. Together, we launched our new Strategic Directions that are grounded firmly on Children's Rights. There is no better way to unite our wonderfully diverse workforce, spread across NSW and the ACT, than through the shared responsibility to uphold the rights of children to safety, love, culture, family, and belonging.

Other changes we have led have been difficult. As part of our commitment to responsible stewardship of donor, government, and community resources, we reviewed our operating model and realigned expenditure to better support services to children and families and future growth opportunities. Throughout this challenging time, our workforce showed remarkable understanding, maturity, resilience, and commitment to children and families.

Talking about our impressive workforce means talking about the quality of services we provide at Barnardos. Whether that's children thriving in foster care or finding security through adoption; or children being supported through our safety and prevention streams with skilled whole-of-family approaches. The stories that have moved me are many and varied. At the top of the list are those where our dedicated workforce has supported children to leave care to return to family. This work is so important, and it requires incredibly skilful staff and extraordinary foster carers. Luckily, we have ample stores of both at Barnardos.

I have also loved learning about how deeply Barnardos services are situated within communities and the difference our support makes in those networks. There is no better example of this community impact than our supported playgroups where our staff travel long distances in Western NSW to connect mothers and children to each other in powerful ways, reducing isolation and loneliness and supporting social development. The dedication of our staff who load their cars up with toys and set off on these visits is second to none.

Much of the work we do brings us face-to-face with the realities of choices available to families. We have supported many mothers who are faced with the option between homelessness and being hurt by a man using violence. Our programs provide safety and guidance for women and children and we are building our expertise in this work. We also provide safe housing for young people through our youth homelessness service, Our Place, in the ACT. These young people are so inspiring. Seeing how the community, safety, and security of this program support them to independence has been an absolute highlight.

I am forever grateful for our incredible supporters, Barnardos Board, our Executive Leadership team, and the outstanding workforce for work, partnerships, and commitment that make the best difference. It's been an amazing year, and I cannot wait for the next one.

Dr Kate Alexander
CEO, Barnardos Australia

> "This work is so important, and it requires incredibly skilful staff and extraordinary foster carers. Luckily, we have ample stores of both at Barnardos.



At Barnardos, our purpose is to stand with children and families to create lasting positive change.

Our vision

Safe children. Supported families. Hopeful futures.

Our values

- We aim higher
- We never give up
- We do what's right
- We stand with you
- We speak up

At Barnardos Australia we champion children. We listen, we act, and we advocate for the rights and safety of children and families. We are committed to supporting families to address barriers, strengthen opportunities, and advance equity.

For over 100 years, we have worked alongside children, young people, families, and communities to create lasting positive change. Guided by evidence and research, we deliver tailored services that protect children from harm, support them to heal, and strengthen connections within their families, culture, and communities. For children who cannot live safely at home, we find them safety and stability through kinship care, foster care, and open adoption, helping them find a place to belong and build a hopeful future.



This year at Barnardos we made a difference

12,039 children, young people, and families found a safe place to turn for help through our Hubs

4,371 home visits brought support directly to families

120 programs and services helped children and families build more hopeful futures

Our programs and outreach supported 25,342 children, young people, and families when they needed it most

Nearly 9 in 10 children and families felt more confident to overcome challenges

93% of early intervention families felt understood by Barnardos staff

How we help

Our Child and Family Hubs often provide the first point of contact for children, young people, and families facing challenges, enabling early intervention and prevention of further issues. We walk alongside families beyond the point of crisis, helping them build hopeful futures through tailored support and strong relationships.

Barnardos Australia is also a leading out-of-home care provider, supporting children who are unable to live safely with their birth parents. Through emergency, short-term, and long-term foster and kinship care, children can find safety, stability, and a sense of belonging, while working towards restoration with their birth families whenever it is safe and possible, or lifelong belonging through open adoption.

- We reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect by ensuring children, young people, and families receive the advocacy and support they need.
- We support children and young people to heal from harm and mistreatment.
- We connect children, young people, and families to community, so they never feel isolated or alone.
- We give children, young people, and families the tools to cope with life's challenges and improve their wellbeing.
- We motivate children, young people, and families to embrace learning and education so they can reach their goals and look forward to a more hopeful future.
- We amplify the voices of young people to influence Government on issues that affect their lives.
- We celebrate diversity and encourage children, young people, and families to embrace their culture, history, and identity.





Campaign hero imagery.

Turning fear into safety with your support

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We help them find their voice because some children don’t get asked about their experiences and they become invisible.

Jo
Barnardos Caseworker

Earlier this year, Barnardos launched our Fear Doesn’t Live Here campaign.

This campaign highlighted the impact of domestic and family violence (DFV) on children and the role Barnardos plays in making them safe. Children experiencing DFV need more than just short-term support. They need people who recognise the signs of DFV; who have the skills and training to talk about what has been happening; and the knowledge and connections to help families find stability and security in their homes.

With your support, we can continue to help children recover, rebuild their confidence, and create more hopeful futures. Together, we can shine a light on a growing issue in Australia and begin to turn fear into safety.

‘We try to make all our interactions with children as meaningful as possible. We help them find their voice because some children don’t get asked about their experiences and they become invisible.’

- Jo, Barnardos Caseworker.

The campaign delivered a powerful message of hope, reflected in strong engagement with 5.58 million impressions across all media channels.



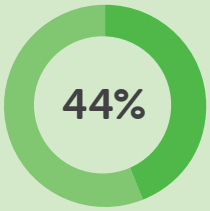
Two in five children have experienced domestic and family violence *

Domestic violence thrives in silence. We ensure children are seen and heard. Many children don't know who to talk to and worry that they won't be believed. Our staff at Barnardos know how to talk to children safely, helping them feel heard, supported, and connected.



Three in five young children seeking homelessness support have experienced domestic violence ^

We see the signs of domestic violence and help families find safety. Domestic violence often leads to unsafe and unstable living situations for families. Barnardos recognises the signs early and provides specialist service support, and practical help to guide families through one of their most difficult times.



of children first experience violence before the age of four **

We provide support to families and children, so domestic violence doesn't shape their future. We walk alongside children and families for as long as they need, supporting them with safety planning, housing applications, school needs, and other day-to-day supplies.

*Australian Child Maltreatment Study 2023.
^Family, domestic and sexual violence, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2024-25
**Barnardos Australia Research Report 2022.



Visit the webpage for the Fear Doesn't Live Here campaign by scanning our QR code or go to barnardos.org.au/fearless

Your support helped a child and their mum find safety

> “When he threatened my life that night, I didn’t feel scared for me. I felt scared for my son.
>
> Sarah
> Alfie’s mum

The story of Alfie* and Sarah* portrays a reality many families face: leaving a partner who uses violence can be terrifying. Financial insecurity, shame, the fear of losing custody, and the threat of abuse getting worse. But there is also another, more basic reason – often there is nowhere safe to go.

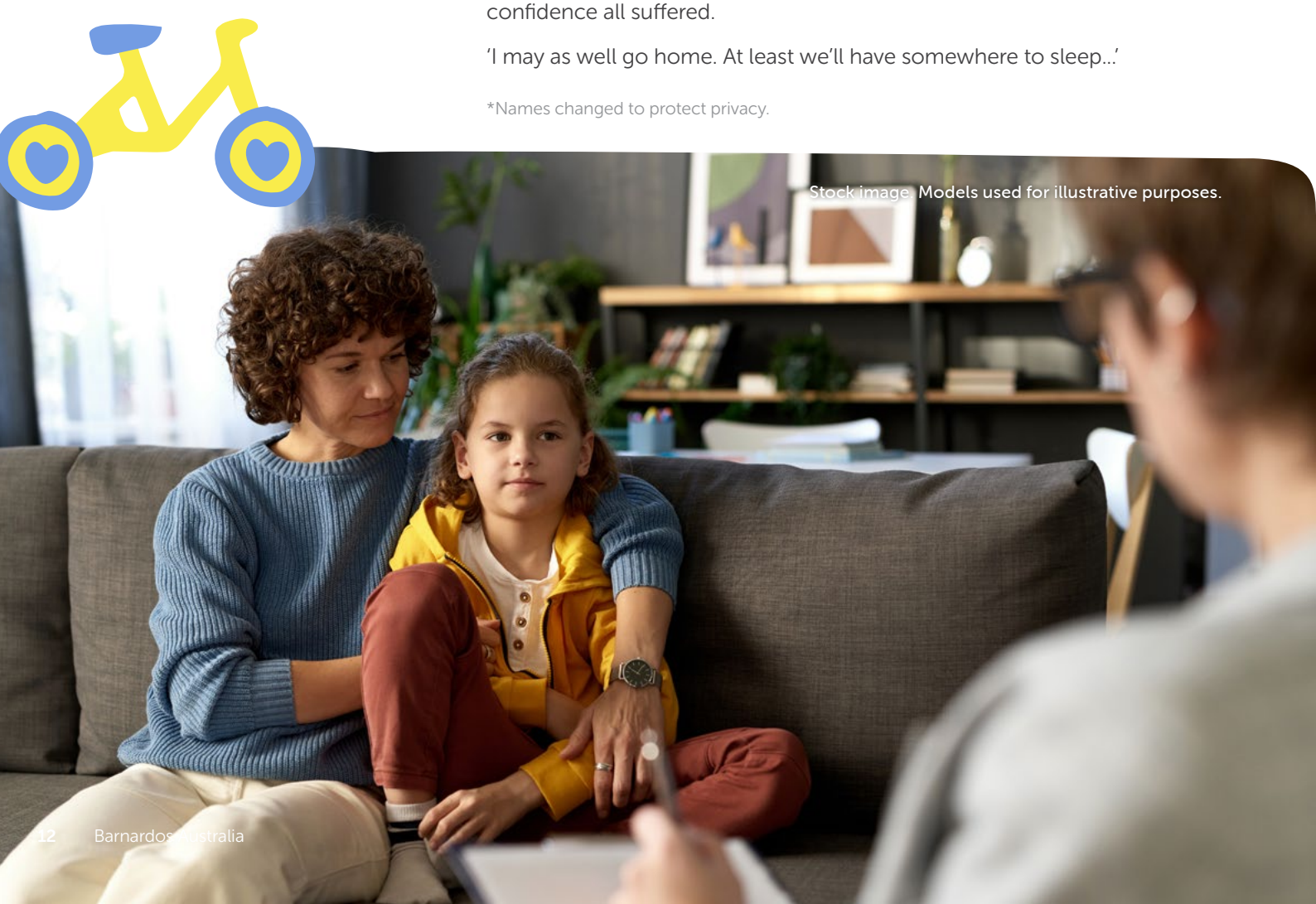
Sarah had been living with her partner for 20 years. His abuse increased once their son, Alfie, was born. Her partner took her wages, ran up debts in her name, and controlled every aspect of her life. Last year, his use of violence escalated to death threats against both her and Alfie. That was the day Sarah knew it was time for them to leave.

‘When he threatened my life that night, I didn’t feel scared for me. I felt scared for my son.’

The weeks that followed were difficult. Sarah and her seven-year-old son slept in spare rooms, on sofas, and wherever someone could offer temporary shelter. Whenever their abuser stalked them and discovered their location, they had to move again. Life was full of fear and deeply stressful for them both. Alfie’s relationship with school, his friends, and his confidence all suffered.

‘I may as well go home. At least we’ll have somewhere to sleep...’

*Names changed to protect privacy.



Stock image. Models used for illustrative purposes.

It was during these times that Sarah debated whether leaving the relationship was the right choice because the abuse never stopped. On the one hand, Alfie would have stability at home and could go to the same school but on the other, was the reality of violence. No parent should ever face such an impossible choice.

That's when Barnardos stepped in. Barnardos Safety and Prevention programs provide a critical safety net for children when systems fall short. That safety net exists thanks to your support. When Sarah was referred to Barnardos and left our office that first time, she was still frightened but no longer felt alone in helping to keep Alfie safe.

Beyond emergency assistance such as food and essential items, our caseworkers worked tirelessly with Alfie and Sarah, offering financial and legal advice, school support, as well as help with housing applications for long-term stability.

Alfie's wellbeing was all that Sarah wanted, and her determination to provide him with safety and stability never wavered. Today, he is thriving at school, often laughing with friends and no longer carrying the fear of his father's violence. With the security of long-term accommodation and legal protections in place, Sarah can now focus on building a hopeful future, free from the constant stress and terror that once shaped their daily lives. Thanks to our generous supporters and Barnardos caseworkers, they know where to turn for support and have a strong community around them as they move forward.



Alfie and Sarah's story was recently featured in our 2026 tax appeal and raised a phenomenal $400,000.

Thank you to all our incredible supporters who share our belief in safer childhoods, supported families, and hopeful futures. Your generosity and commitment to helping those in need is what makes our work possible.

Stock image. Models used for illustrative purposes.



Tracee and the children at our Baradine playgroup.

Bringing playgroups to the community out West

1,122 children and families were supported through Barnardos playgroups.



Barnardos delivers supported playgroups across a range of locations in NSW.

These playgroups provide trusted community settings for families to access early childhood education, play experiences that support children's development, parenting coaching and support, and referral pathways to other services.

Barnardos playgroups offer children a safe place to play, learn, and grow. Through fun, play-based activities, children can build new skills, confidence, and friendships. The benefits also extend beyond the children. Parents and carers can connect with other families, strengthen their relationships with their children, and gain confidence in their parenting.

In many rural and remote communities, these playgroups are a vital source of connection, helping families feel supported, welcomed, and part of something bigger.

We're incredibly proud of our supported playgroups and the impact they have on the communities we work with, especially in rural and remote areas where families can often face limited access to services and greater isolation.

Over the last year, 1,122 children and families were supported through Barnardos playgroups, helping children to strengthen their skills, confidence, and connections.

Learn how the playgroups have personally impacted the community and our staff



Caroline

Barnardos Family Support Worker

'Barnardos Mudgee has been delivering playgroups to families across the region for over 20 years. I currently facilitate weekly sessions in Mudgee, as well as fortnightly sessions in both Gulgong and Kandos – and I absolutely love it. The smiles and happiness of the children and families I welcome into our groups are enough to remind me why I do what I do. It's incredibly rewarding watching the children grow, seeing their personalities shine, and celebrating their achievements along the way.

Being able to talk freely with families and listen to their questions in a safe and welcoming environment allows me to offer the right support. We incorporate the *Smalltalk* program into our playgroup activities, which helps build on existing parenting strengths and provides gentle reminders about the importance of listening to, understanding, and guiding children in a positive and responsive way.'



Felicity

Barnardos Family Support Worker

'I have been providing playgroups in Warren and Nevertire since 2022 on a weekly and fortnightly basis. To me, there is nothing more rewarding than witnessing children achieve their milestones and grow in confidence, even through the smallest of accomplishments. I enjoy supporting families throughout their journey and learning from their experiences.

My goal is to continue creating meaningful opportunities that support families and children in growing, connecting, and feeling a sense of belonging.'



Tracee

Barnardos Family Support Worker

'I've been with Barnardos for seven years, leading supported playgroups in Baradine, Mendooran, and Coonabarabran. Playgroups are an excellent soft entry point for people to engage with Barnardos. After making a connection with families and gaining their trust, we often discover other needs they may have. It's really rewarding when somebody comes to you with a problem, and you can provide them with a bit of information, referral to specialists, or simply help keep a situation from escalating.

I really enjoy seeing families make connections and just love watching the kids grow, develop, and have fun. It's so nice to help them achieve in a safe and neutral space where they can come together for support.'

Creating a home and community for young people

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Our Place may be where I work, but it is their home. Every achievement they make reminds me how important that is.



Patrick
Barnardos Program Manager

Most people picture homelessness as sleeping rough or living in a car.

But for many young people in Australia, it is largely invisible. It is couch surfing, overcrowded housing, or sleeping on the street or in unsafe accommodation – simply because they have nowhere else to go.

Our Place Youth Foyer is a fantastic Barnardos program that provides safe and supported accommodation to young people aged 16-21 who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness in Canberra. For more than a decade we have supported young people to feel connected, capable, and equipped with greater skills, so they can move from crisis into stable, independent lives.

From July 2025-June 2026 all of the young people who moved on from Our Place found safe and secure long-term housing and none ended up back in homelessness. Even more impressive is that 87.5% of residents met all their agreed goals.

More than just a place of work

‘The most rewarding part of my role as Program Manager of Our Place is witnessing the young people I support rebuild their lives. I’ve seen so many young people achieve amazing things: completing their university and vocational studies, gaining full-time high payment employment, and growing their skills to live independently.

I’ve worked at Barnardos since 2016, where I started as a case manager in youth homelessness. It was my first job in the community sector, which was a bit daunting as I was still technically a young person myself! I learnt so much in my first year as I was incredibly lucky to shadow many wonderful youth workers and case managers. In 2025, I was offered the position of Our Place Program Manager, and it has been some of the most rewarding work in my career.

Our Place is an incredibly important program. It provides safe, stable accommodation for young people experiencing homelessness, as well as an environment where they can draw on their strengths to achieve their goals. Whether those goals relate to education, employment or developing independence, Our Place is a community that believes in young people’s strengths and capabilities. We walk beside them as they work to ‘Live, Learn and Achieve’.

Our Place’s success would not be possible without its amazing team. I have the privilege of working alongside some of the best youth development coaches, community development officers, counsellors, and tenancy coordinators in the sector. I see them tirelessly advocating for, supporting, and encouraging young people to achieve their goals.

Most importantly, I want to thank the young people of Our Place. Our Place may be where I work, but it is their home. Every achievement they make reminds me how important that is.

The support and belief of the wider community and the sector keep Our Place going. They make it possible for us to invest in young people’s strengths and potential, and to support them in achieving their dreams.’



A home that inspires change

‘Looking back on my youth, I was facing things no 14-year-old should have to endure. I spent the majority of my teenage years couch surfing with friends or sleeping on the streets, all while trying to graduate high school.

From ages 16-18, I resided in accommodation services for homeless youth. I finally had a home and a community I could feel safe in. I’m so grateful to have connected with Our Place and to have been supported by the staff. Sometimes I look back and think, what if I didn’t find this service? Where would I be? What would my life be like?

The staff at Our Place changed my life and inspired me to use my experiences as a strength to help people. I am currently completing my Certificate IV in community services with the goal of working with young people who are going through a hard time. I hope to one day work in policing, where I can make a bigger impact on the wider community and support people in times of crisis.

I think going through homelessness, especially at such a young age, is an incredibly isolating experience and I want to use my past to help others experiencing homelessness feel less alone.

I hope my story can remind others that your past doesn’t have to define your future. No matter where you come from or what you’ve been through, you can still dream big and build a life you’re proud of.’



Mikayla

Young person supported by Our Place



Residents in the common area at Our Place Youth Foyer.

A family built on unconditional love

> “As a foster carer, I love that I have been able to keep biological siblings together in my home to maintain that important connection.

Ruby Smith
Mother

For Ruby* and Michael Smith*, family is not just defined by biology. Family is built on unconditional love. With eight children under one roof – each with their own unique story – the Smiths are a family like no other.

After experiencing some initial difficulties conceiving and through the help of IVF, Ruby and Michael were blessed with their first child, Charlie*. Three years later, their son Leo* was born. Watching the amazing bond between her boys and Michael made Ruby think about other children who were missing that kind of family connection. Together, Ruby and Michael reached out to Barnardos and decided to open their home to foster care and adoption.

After a year of assessments and preparation, the Smiths welcomed nine-month-old Hudson* into their family with open arms. He bonded immediately with the older boys and within weeks, they couldn't imagine life without him.

Ruby speaks about how adoption feels no different from raising her own biological children.

'Lots of people ask if it's different to loving your biological kids. And I always thought, there's no way it can be the same. But there's absolutely no difference.'

The family stayed in touch with Hudson's birth mother who had more children, including a baby girl named Ellie*. Sadly, the birth mother was unable to care for her. The Smiths didn't hesitate for a second to extend their family. The idea of welcoming Ellie felt natural, especially knowing she was Hudson's biological sister.

But then COVID hit. Weeks turned into months, and Ellie was safely placed with temporary foster carers. Eventually things started moving again and after an approval process, Ellie was embraced eagerly by the Smith family.

Shortly after Ellie moved in - and as fate would have it – Ruby and Michael received a call about a little boy named Ben*, who urgently needed a ten-week foster family after his previous care arrangement broke down. The decision was easy. And it felt perfectly timed as the older boys had just gotten bunk beds, so there was now a spare room available.

Ben was a timid five-year-old child with autism. Change was hard for him, but his need for connection was strong. As soon as he arrived and saw Ruby and Michael, he looked up and whispered, 'Hi Mum. Hi Dad.'

That first night around the dinner table, seven-year-old Leo looked at Ben and asked, 'How come he can only stay ten weeks? We're a family - he needs a family. So why can't we be his?'

They called their caseworker first thing in the morning.





Stock image. Models used for illustrative purposes.

In the midst of Ben permanently settling into their home, Ruby found out she was pregnant again and nine months later they also welcomed their sixth child, baby Theo*.

Filled with children and overflowing with love and laughter, their home had become a busy hub. But they always made time to visit the children's birth families when they could. This included Hudson and Ellie's 16-year-old biological sister, Lily*. At one of their family gatherings, Lily seemed stressed and confided in Ruby and Michael that she was struggling in her current foster placement. When asked to provide her with emergency respite care one weekend, they immediately said yes. That weekend changed everything. Lily bonded quickly with the other children, feeling relaxed, connected, and full of laughter.

At their annual review, the Smiths asked their caseworker if they could be considered a long-term family for Lily. Another urgent assessment followed, and they converted their study into another bedroom. Lily settled in quickly and with two of her biological siblings already part of the family, she felt a sense of belonging from the moment she arrived.

Just when they thought seven children was a full household, they found out they were expecting once again. They were delighted by the birth of their baby girl, Harper*.

Today, the Smith home is a haven overflowing with belonging and stability (and eight children!). Some of the children share DNA, while some share history. But no matter their journey, from the moment they arrived, they became a family.

*Names changed to protect privacy.

Barnardos heads to the Great Wall of China

In June 2026, Barnardos introduced a new way of fundraising by offering our supporters the chance to hike the Great Wall of China.

Eleven brave participants set off on their journey, all in the hope of raising vital funds for Barnardos programs and services. Over five days, they trekked through demanding conditions and 30+ degree heat, driven by their goal of helping children, young people, and families facing some of life's toughest challenges.

Barnardos very own Alyssa and Tamara took part this year.



Alyssa
Barnardos Program Manager

Alyssa's reflection on the hike

'Every step of the hike represented more than just a personal achievement—it symbolised a commitment to giving back to the community and helping create brighter futures for children who may not otherwise have the same opportunities to thrive.

I found the experience to be incredibly rewarding and genuinely unforgettable. While there were moments when I questioned whether I could keep going, I was able to push through with determination, a few well-timed breaks, and plenty of hydration.

The group was incredibly supportive, and there was a real sense of camaraderie throughout the journey. Whether it was checking in on one another, taking a moment to rest together, or sharing the personal reasons that motivated each of us to take part, the encouragement and connection made the experience even more meaningful.'



The Hike for Brighter Futures Team and guide Luis



Alyssa and Brooke.



Tamara's take on the hike

'I was so excited when I saw this opportunity come up – hike the Great Wall of China and support Barnardos Australia. I didn't really have to think twice about it; it just felt like something I wanted to be involved in, and I'm so glad I was.

I loved every second of the experience (even the 1,600 steps up on day four in the heat and humidity!). There were moments where I'd pause to contemplate the soreness or exhaustion, however, as soon as I looked out to the mountains or reflected that I was standing on or next to something as old and historically important as the Great Wall, it was all worth it.

Sharing the sense of achievement with the group at the end of every hiking day just summed the experience up.'



Tamara
Barnardos Program Manager

Over $24,000 was raised by the hike!

We are so grateful for the dedication and support of each participant. Together, they raised an incredible $24,619 to help create lasting positive change for children, young people, and families.

Stay tuned for next year's adventure.



Celebrating the launch of the Barnardos bus.

The difference your partnership makes

Over the next three years, AMF-Cufa will invest $100,000 annually for the Bundaleer Community Centre and our Reconnect program.

Premier partner

This year, Barnardos was strengthened by partners who share our values and commitment to ensure children are seen, supported, and safe from harm.

We are so grateful to our premier partner, AMF–Cufa, who continue to redefine deep and meaningful corporate partnership. The whole company approach to fundraising has delivered a dedicated community bus for Wellington, connecting children and families to the Yalmambirra Learning Centre and essential supports. Its continued investment in Beyond Barbed Wire also helps to provide mothers impacted by the criminal justice system with the tools to rebuild safe and stable futures for their children.

As we enter a new three-year partnership, AMF-Cufa will invest $100,000 per annum into the Bundaleer Community Centre on the South Coast and continue to support Sydney Metro Reconnect, expanding youth wellbeing, cultural connection, and early intervention. This partnership is transformational. Together, we can keep children visible and give families the chance to thrive.



Supporting partners

For 22 years, BNP Paribas has stood beside Barnardos, contributing more than $500,000 and engaging wholeheartedly through volunteering, events, and global advocacy. Its Dream Up grant fuels our Arts in the Dust program, delivering creative workshops and art therapy for socially isolated young people in Western NSW - helping regional youth feel heard, respected, and supported.

YSG Studio brings generosity, heart, and genuine care to our Aboriginal Early Years program. It contributes $30,000 annually to provide family visits, parenting support, and practical essentials that government funding doesn't cover. The generosity of YSG Studio reflects a deep commitment to Indigenous children and cultural pride, and we are incredibly grateful for their support.

Across four years of partnership, Inova's workplace giving community has raised $150,000 for Barnardos – a powerful demonstration of how small, regular donations, given collectively, can have an extraordinary impact in creating more hopeful futures.

Barnardos also acknowledge the long-term support of AbbVie and Yancoal, whose annual grants, volunteering work, and advocacy continue to support children, while strengthening families and regional communities.

Over 22 years BNP Paribas has contributed over $500,000.



Barnardos CEO Kate Alexander and Partnerships Manager Beverley with the BNP Paribas team.

Peter Pan Committee

Since 1974, the Peter Pan Committee has raised many millions of dollars for Barnardos Australia, helping generations of children and families through more than five decades of volunteer-led philanthropy and community support.

This year, they generously hosted an Op Shop and Literary Lunch, raising important funds to help children and families across our programs.

This year's Literary Lunch welcomed renowned author Geraldine Brooks and raised an incredible $150,000 in support of Barnardos Beyond Barbed Wire program.

It was a meaningful day, with guests hearing firsthand about the difference the program makes in helping children maintain and strengthen their connection with their mothers during incarceration. By supporting these family relationships, the program helps build hope, stability, and stronger futures for children and families.

We are so grateful for our partnership with the Peter Pan Committee, and for the dedication and generosity they continue to show year after year.



Kate McClymont and Geraldine Brooks.

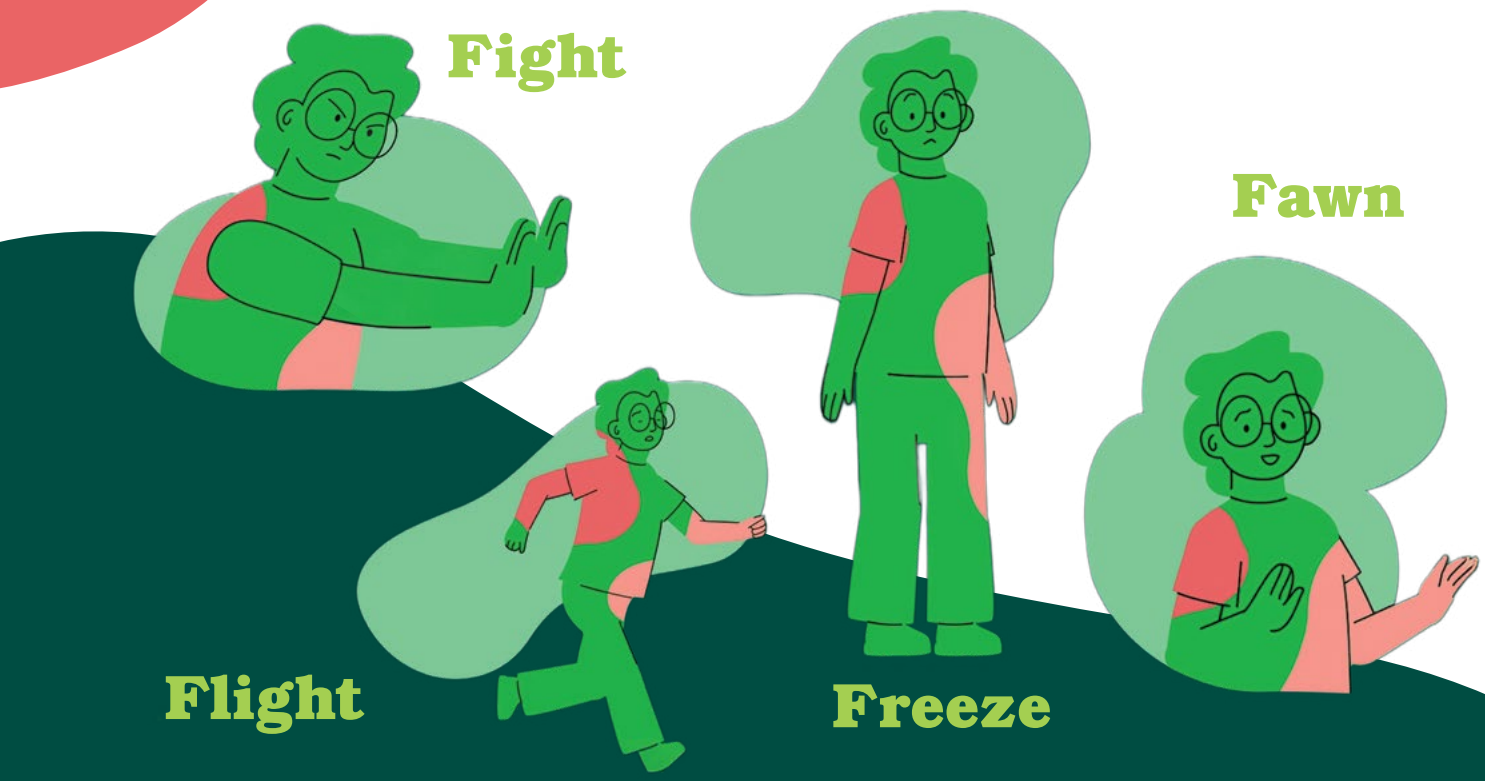
Connecting Three Dots: Giving children a chance to heal

For children and young people with disability who have experienced domestic, family or sexual violence, the road to healing is often long and complex.

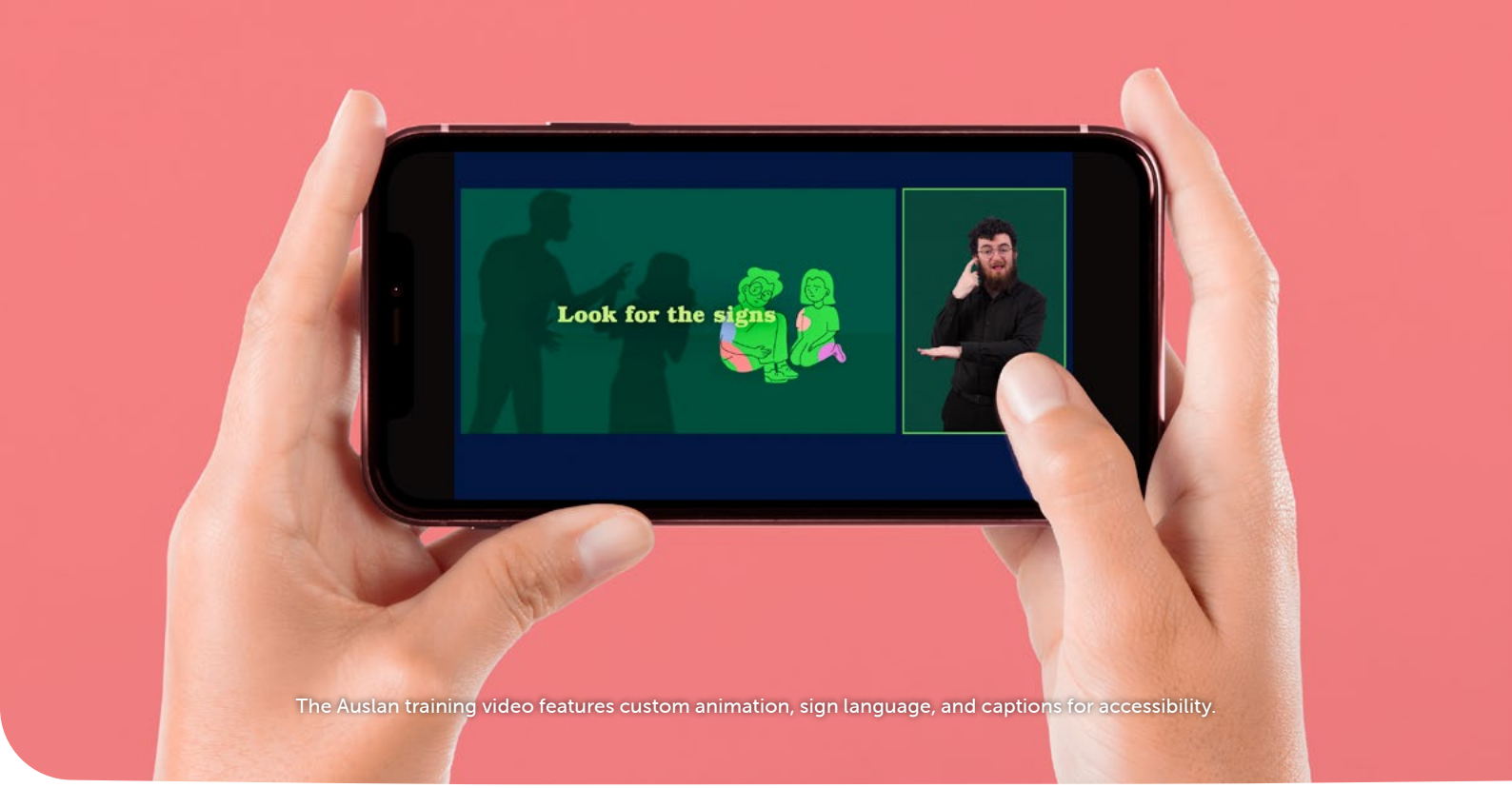
Too often, the services available to them are crisis-driven, fragmented or difficult to access. Connecting Three Dots was created to change that.

This new specialist service provides trauma-informed therapeutic support to children and young people aged 5–18 years. Through play therapy and individual counselling, Connecting Three Dots is helping children to process trauma in ways that are safe, compassionate, and responsive to their needs.

Early feedback suggests the program is already contributing to positive change in the lives of families: children beginning to regulate their emotions, re-engage at school and build trust again; parents gaining confidence and understanding; and families experiencing stronger connection at a time when they need it most.



Children subject to abuse can choose to react in different ways. The above artwork is from the Auslan video.



The Auslan training video features custom animation, sign language, and captions for accessibility.

One parent described what she characterised as a 'massive' change in her son: 'where previously he would have been unable to stop once escalated, he now sometimes pauses at the point of escalation, sits to take deep breaths, or asks specifically for one of [the program] tools - including a weighted neck pillow that he has identified as calming for himself.'

'One child's mother explained that in the previous year, her son had experienced three to four significant incidents per week at school and had been on suspension lists; in the current term, there had been only two incidents across the entire term.'

Connecting Three Dots: Implementation Evaluation, June 2026

We are deeply grateful to the Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Foundation for their partnership in making this work possible. The Foundation's support is helping Barnardos respond to a clear and urgent gap in the system – and to do so with care, consistency, and hope.

We are also proud to have developed an Auslan training animation in partnership with the Deaf community, helping to make the service more accessible and strengthening understanding across the workforce.

Connecting Three Dots is more than just a program. It is a promise that children with disability who have experienced violence have a right to expert support, dignity, and a real chance to heal.

> "... he now sometimes pauses at the point of escalation, sits to take deep breaths, or asks specifically for one of [the program] tools...

Parent of a child supported by Connecting Three Dots

Watch the video on our website by scanning our QR code or visit https://www.barnardos.org.au/services/child-and-family-hubs/connecting-three-dots/

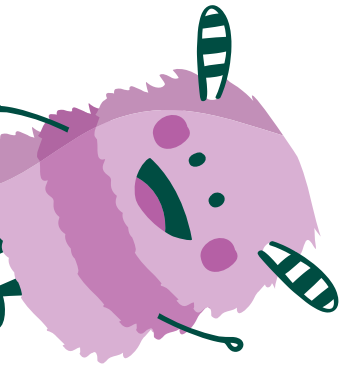




The Engagement and Giving Team on our first ever Giving Day.

Barnardos Buddies: Creating a lifetime of change





Every month, Barnardos Buddies help children and families move forward with purpose.

These donations from our regular givers enable Barnardos caseworkers to provide consistent care and help families access counselling services, education support, family assistance, and safe housing.

In a year of significant change, the commitment of Barnardos Buddies remained constant. Thank you for your unwavering support as it continues to help children and families build safety, stability, and hopeful futures.

With your help we raised $181,000 in only 24 hours!

Giving Day 2025: A collective response

On 4 September 2025, Barnardos held its first Giving Day: The Big Give for Brighter Futures.

Across 24 hours, 622 supporters came together to raise more than $181,000, with matched funding doubling the impact of every donation.

The campaign highlighted an urgent reality: two in five children experience domestic and family violence*. Through the power of community and collective action, supporters responded with incredible generosity, determined to provide safety, practical assistance, and support for children and families rebuilding their lives after violence.

*Australian Child Maltreatment Study 2023

Cash appeals and single giving

In FY2025–2026, Barnardos raised $776,369 through cash appeals and single giving initiatives.

These campaigns focused on supporting children and families experiencing domestic and family violence, helping to provide counselling, links to accommodation, and practical support during times of crisis and transition.

Support from one-off donations helped fund:

- family support and early intervention programs
- youth and family services
- domestic and family violence support
- parenting programs
- practical assistance for families rebuilding after crisis.

Because these donations are flexible, Barnardos can deliver support where it is needed most, creating an immediate and meaningful impact for children and families.



Because of your support, families in our programs saw big improvements

Families nearly tripled their capacity to support their wellbeing and mental health

Families more than tripled their ability to manage financial pressures

Families almost doubled their sense of safety and security

More children reached key developmental milestones, building stronger futures

Families more than doubled their engagement in learning, creating new opportunities

Families more than doubled community connections, reducing isolation

Repaying a debt of gratitude

This year, we received $7.77 million through wills and bequests, helping us continue supporting children and their families.

As we look to the future, it's important to acknowledge the past. Barnardos Australia recognises our historical connection to Barnardos UK and our shared philosophy that children have a right to the best possible start in life.

We share the story of Richard Blakeman and that of his late mother, Nancy, whose life was shaped by her experience as a Barnardos girl in post-World War I England.

Richard's family emigrated to Australia when he was a boy, and he has been a financial supporter of Barnardos for the last 30 years. This is Richard's retelling of his mother's story and how he came to include a gift to Barnardos in his will.

What began as a story of loss became one of opportunity, guidance and lifelong gratitude.

'My mother was born in England in 1917. At just 17 months old, her mother died of pneumonia and her father, having recently returned from military service in France, arranged for Nancy to enter Barnardos care.

At the age of 12, Nancy was placed in Forget-Me-Not Cottage at the Barnardos Girls' Village Home under the care of Cottage Mother, Miss A. E. Stevens, also known affectionately as 'Aunty' Stevens.

My mother wrote in her memoir that Aunty Stevens 'was to become the person who was my inspiration in everything I did after leaving the Village to make my own way in life.'



Helen (Richard's sister), Nancy, Richard and Kathryn (Richard's wife).

Barnardos gave Nancy opportunities that would most certainly have been beyond the reach of a working-class orphan in post-war England. At 16, she was placed in domestic service in the household of Miss Lilian Mary Faithfull CBE, one of Britain's foremost educational reformers and a tireless advocate for women's education and children's welfare.

Recognising Nancy's potential, Miss Faithfull encouraged her to train as a nurse. During the Second World War she served with distinction in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps in North Africa and Italy.

My mother devoted her entire life to caring for others. Whether as a nurse, midwife, military sister, wife, mother or friend, she possessed a quiet strength, deep compassion, strong Christian faith, and a smile that brightened the lives of those around her.

Barnardos changed the course of one little girl's life. Through its love, guidance, and belief in Nancy, it helped produce a nurse who cared for countless patients, a military sister who served her country in wartime, and a woman whose values and legacy continue to influence her family today.

For that, my family and I owe Barnardos a debt of gratitude that can never truly be repaid.'

> "My mother devoted her entire life to caring for others.
>
> Richard Blakeman, Nancy's son

In honour of his mother, Richard has regularly made donations to Barnardos over the years and decided to leave a gift in his will.

His hope is that in the future, a little girl in Australia, just like his mother in England more than a century ago, may have their life shaped through the support of Barnardos.

Thank you, Richard, for sharing your mother's story and we are grateful for your continued support of Barnardos, now and well into the future.



Nancy Ellen Blakeman, Rome 1946.



Dr Kate Alexander, Tim Oliphant from Yancoal and Mark, Program Manager.

Thank you to our partners

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Jim Pearse
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Philippa Warner
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Harry & Marion Dixon Foundation
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Tania Lamble
Tom Davis Foundation
Susan Maple-Brown AM

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Annetta Maria Dorothea Josephine Adami Trust
Bridgestar Pty Ltd (James Oswald Fairfax)
Edith Maude Roper Trust
Eleanor Smith Trust
Elizabeth Gabler Charitable Trust
Frederick Roper Trust
Heinrich Theodore Noske Estate
John & Gabriele Critoph Trust Fund
John Isaac
John Melrose Charitable Trust
Leslie Allan Maurer
Loeky Wiersma Charitable Fund
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The Catherine Ellen Carter Memorial Fund
The Edwin and Elizabeth Batchelder Trust
The John and Elizabeth Woodrow Memorial Fund
The K & G Gluck Trust
Thomas Aubrey Bowen

Bequests

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Diahnne Gai Berthold
Elizabeth June Dowton
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Jean Duncan Foley
John Brady
June Elizabeth Howard
Kevin Robert Couzens
Leslie Bruce Blackshaw
Nancy Mah Lan Lau
Pamela Ann Rose
Philip Hamilton Wollaston
Richard Leigh
Roslyn May Jones
Sabina Barbel Domagawa
Thusnelda Laurentia Gelich
William Roger Wood
Zoe-Patricia Abbott



Our finances for 2025-26

$100.9M

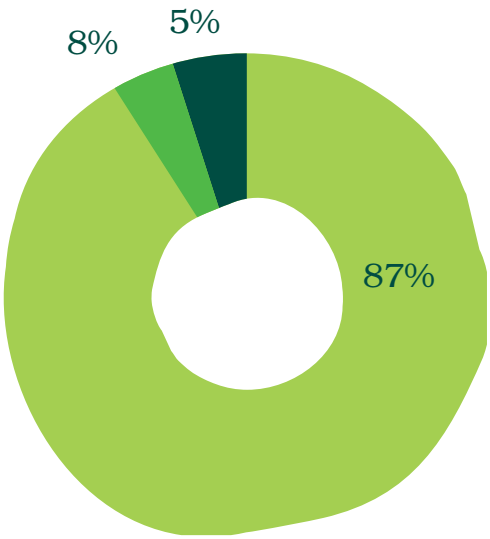
Total operating revenue

$88.8M

Total service delivery expenditure

Income that went back into services

- Social care centres
- Fundraising operations
- Administration support functions



* Please refer to the Barnardos Australia Annual Financial Report 30 June 2026 at barnardos.org.au for the full report.

Growing sustainable funding

Thank you for being a champion for children. With your amazing support, we raised over $13.9 million for children, young people and their families.

Corporate and philanthropic supporters donated over $10.35m to support children and families

11,684 people gave $2,776,907 through regular donations

127 corporate and philanthropic partners supported the delivery of essential services across NSW and the ACT

More than 16,000 people donated to help create lasting positive change

We welcomed 3,003 new donors, 1,594 Barnardos Buddies and 47 corporate and philanthropic partners to Barnardos this year



Safe children.
Supported families.
Hopeful futures.




Barnardos
Australia

Connect with us

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Foster care: 1800 663 441
info@barnardos.org.au

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Barnardos Australia

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