



Impact Report

FY20 - 21

**WE CARE
CONNECT**

FY2021

2539 children supported with
full program packs + further
700 assisted with smaller packs

9626

children helped
since 2016

65t.

saved from
landfill

121 prams

164 cots

149 car seats

35 bassinets

30 high chairs

414 birthday gifts

204 Back2School

2,100 Xmas gifts

**804 packets of
nappies**

\$912,500

second hand value of the
amount of items re-homed

254

Case workers

78

Support agencies

8

Drop off locations

"The items provided a huge relief for them and they reflected their excitement and joy when they went through the bags with the children and were especially touched by the care and effort that went into the packages"
Local Case worker.

104,900

items re-homed

\$451

Average value of
support provided

\$42

Average cost to support
each child

95%

of items
distributed are
community
donated

49,824

items of children's clothing
re-homed



We Care about local kids living in poverty

OUR PURPOSE

Over 30,000 children live under the poverty line on the Central Coast and Hunter. A statistic that breaks out heart.

So, we're changing the story.

We started in 2016 helping 300 children, five years on, we are supporting close to 3,000 each year. Over this time we have provided practical assistance to over 9,600 children. But it's not enough. There's more work to do.

10,000 children live below the poverty line on the Central Coast and this number is doubled in the Hunter Region.

Our mission: to fundamentally reverse the impact of childhood disadvantage.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Young mum-to-be. Seven months pregnant and no family to support her, filling the nursery feels like a distant dream.

Mum and four kids. Have come from interstate escaping domestic violence, leaving all their belongings behind. Living in a small room in a hostel, they now have to rebuild their lives from scratch.

Pensioner Grandparents. Unexpectedly caring for traumatised grandchildren. With no car seats, they cannot even leave the house.

Sadly, these stories and statistics are far too common in our community.

Supporting vulnerable children



Chairperson's report

Although the Covid pandemic presented We Care Connect with major challenges during the 20/21 financial year, the organisation has continued to operate successfully, meet its goals and plan for expansion.

Registering We Care Connect as an essential service enabled us to keep operating when lengthy lockdowns were forced. This ensured the increased demand for our services was able to be met for families in need. Another benefit being the continuation of our volunteers' efforts that supports a sense of pride and wellbeing and social contact.

The operation of the Board has been impacted yet support from the Board members has been maintained through on-line meetings, direct communications, and informal contact when permissible. I thank the Board members for their flexibility and ongoing commitment during this period.

Significant progress has been achieved towards our Strategic Plan. There has been a steady increase in the number of volunteers, additional storage and workplaces have been developed at the facility, two delivery vans are now in operation and the expansion into the Newcastle region is poised for strong growth.

The Board is very appreciative of the local organisations and businesses who continue to provide us with financial, material and pro-bono support. Many individuals are very committed to our goals and their support and encouragement is greatly appreciated.

Future challenges for We Care Connect will no doubt be accepted and resolved due to the strong leadership and vision of our CEO, Derryck. The support provided by Jackie our Board Secretary is never ending and the efforts of Helen, in Partnerships & Fundraising, in improving our financial position are very significant.

Our footprint and network are ever expanding, and I am confident We Care Connect is well placed to continue its service to the Central Coast and Hunter communities.

Robert Dixon
Chairperson

**Donations
that delight**



CEO's report

This has been an incredible year and I am immensely proud of our volunteers who enabled us to continue non-stop during the Covid lockdowns and provide the urgent support so many children needed. This year we supported more children than ever.

We also had a major anniversary on March 28th when we celebrated our first five years! We have come so far over the intervening years, but our key principles have never wavered. We continue to focus on the positive; making a difference to the lives of hundreds of vulnerable children each month, enabling wonderful people in our community to reach out to help children in need in a tangible meaningful way by sharing their pre-loved children's clothing, linen, cots, prams and everything! And our wonderful volunteers who say "no" to poverty and inequality.

Whatever the causes, the bottom line is that children should not have to suffer for deficiencies in our society. We Care has no barriers, if there is a child in need then enough said.

Of all our successes over the year, perhaps the one I am most delighted with is our overarching "value add" program that increases the quality and impact of what we do. Our volunteers over-achieved in our target of implementing 'at least one value-add initiative per month' and the range and quality of what we do continues to expand. This is what it's all about, being poor should never mean feeling second best.

Thank you, all our volunteers, all our community supporters and our wonderful funders. The We Care Village is a fabulous place!

Derryck Klarkowski
CEO & Founder

**Saying no to
childhood
poverty and
disadvantage**

WE CARE
CONNECT

How we care

We care about making a difference to the lives of these families, to the lives of these kids. Why? Because poverty is more than deprivation – poverty stunts children's emotional and mental development creating a new cycle of poverty.

Together we can change the story on childhood poverty.

We care.

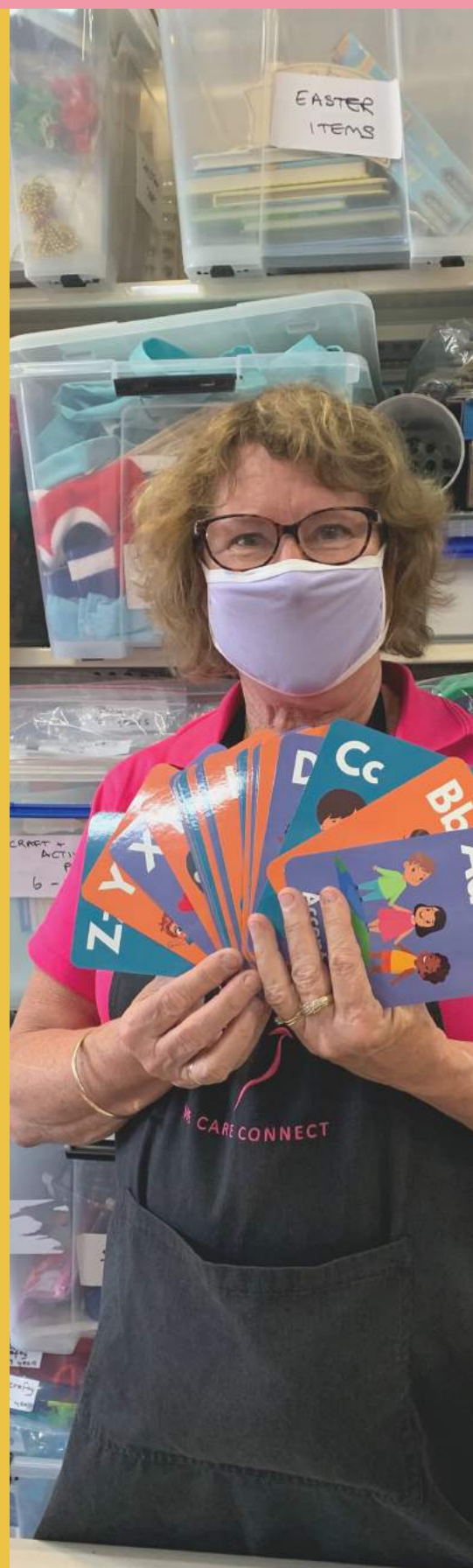
We give donations that make a difference. Our quality standard? "Would I be delighted to receive this for my child?"

We connect.

Partnering with professional caseworkers from community centres and family support agencies who provide individual requests for the families they are helping.

Our volunteers prepare support packages tailored to the family's needs. Support can include clothes, nappies, bedding, cots, prams, car seats, toys, books and other essential items that families of young children need.

The simple act of giving to families in need is at the heart of everything we do.



How we help



These programs distribute community donated items to local children living in social disadvantage.

Sleep through the night: maintenance and distribution of cots, linen and nursery equipment.

The wheels on the bus: we re-home prams, car seats and baby carriers to keep families safe, social and mobile.

Girl power: Some girls dream of being a doctor, some playing soccer for the Matildas, or some a pop star; this program provides bundles of girls' clothing, books, toys and craft packs so families can spend time playing, caring, and nurturing these dreams.

Boys will be boys: We want children to be having fun, playing superheros and riding scooters and bikes - and their clothing takes a toll. Boy bundles include clothing along with balls, cars, books, craft and teddies.

Begin Bright: We support mums and families with the essentials they need to set up home with a newborn. Items can include smaller pieces such as baby clothes, swaddles and wraps, nappies, wipes, breast pumps, baby bottles or formula to larger one-off items such as highchairs, baby mats, change tables and nappy bags.

Youth Connect: Disadvantaged teenagers are highly susceptible to low self-esteem and social exclusion and this can be a very damaging time. As well as providing urgently needed clothing items, this program provides the important items such as decent shoes, movie passes, headphones, backpacks and internet access.

Craft Connect: Bringing craft into the home builds on the fundamental life skills all children should have access to, including fine motor skills, literacy, maths, creativity and bonding.

Back 2 School: Provision of school essentials such as backpacks, drink bottles, lunch boxes, calculators, pencil cases & texts.

Christmas Program : We want every child to wake up with a present under the tree at Christmas. This program provides up to 1,000 children with a brand new gift and stocking fillers.

It takes a Village: This program ranges from everything from covering fuel for volunteers to collect and distribute items; tea, milk, coffee and biscuit expenses to keep our volunteers smiling; aprons and name badges; rent costs to house our items and operational expenses which we try our absolute hardest to keep to a minimum!



"I have been blessed to receive a lot of help from your amazing business when my children and i left my ex DV partner. I was in tears when I received all my newborn package off Ashleigh I was so happy and relieved"

Local mum

"Hi my name is K**, I look after my Great Granddaughter she is 1 year old. I received bags of clothes and baby linen. I just want u to know how much I appreciate the work you do. Beautifully presented , and made with love."

Local grandmother

"This really touched the family who are going through the unimaginable right now.

The items have been put to very good use and this is one less thing they needed to be worried about. Thank you!"

Local case worker

"The twin babies are quite small and behind in their gross motor development. Maybe bigger toys that they can grab and play with on the floor. The flooring in the house is terrible come to think of it so a play mat would be ideal."

Local case worker



Volunteer highlight



In 2020, long term volunteer Mel King was recognised as one of Westfield Tuggerah's Local Heroes.

As a child, Mel knew what it felt like to go without, so she always goes the extra mile for children and families in need. Mel volunteers for 20 hours a week helping put together packages of clothing, linen and baby items for caseworkers helping disadvantaged local children. She can't help but be touched by the children's stories and takes extra care to include special items that meet individual needs. "It's wonderful when caseworkers tell us their clients are so relieved and overwhelmed on receiving the items we gave them," she says.

As part of the recognition, We Care Connect received a \$10,000 grant that was used to expand our programs to meet the increased need in these difficult times.

Thank you to Westfield for your ongoing support for We Care Connect, including the Christmas Wrapping activity where volunteers wrapped pressies raising over \$2,000 for We Care!

Westfield
Local Heroes

Vote for me

The We Care Team

Caring. Dedicated. Passionate. And a cup full of joy. That's what makes up our team of volunteers. Our volunteers are the foundation of We Care Connect.

Led by volunteer CEO, Derryck Klarkowski, we have over 40 regular volunteers, their dedication and passion throughout the last 12 months was truly inspiring. Our volunteers collect items, sort, wash and iron, clean, safety check, re-pack items. They liaise with case workers, other volunteers, Board members, funders and supporters alike. We cannot over-emphasise how appreciative we are, without our volunteers, we simply couldn't have the impact and support the large number of families that we do.

As we grow and mature as a charity, the workload and behind the scene operations to keep everything going grows in demand too. This is exacerbated by our ambitious nature to support more and more children each year. We are hopeful to employ a part time Operations Coordinator in FY22 to support the day-to-day operations to help us grow, develop, maintain consistency, and continue the wonderful community connection that has been established.

OUR SUPPORTERS

As a grassroots charity, the contributions we receive from businesses, individuals and other organisations are critical for our operations.

Australian Ethical Foundation
Central Coast Council
Central Coast Leagues Club
Colliers Foundation
Community Capital Foundation
The Doylo
St George Foundation
Tucker Foundation
Westfield Tuggerah
Wyong Roos Foundation
Wyong Rugby League Club Group

In Kind Supporters

Good 360

The Nappy Collective

Thread Together

Shoebox Revolution

To our community of fundraisers who've been out organising events, morning teas, Bunnings BBQs and donating to our appeals - thank you.

Thank you to all of our volunteers, supporters and funders



The Terrigal Joy Project

Donations that bring joy to our hearts and music to our ears

Hayley & her son Albie from The Terrigal Joy Project Choir organised a fundraiser with their community choir group.

They got in touch to ask our what our most needed items were: doonas, warm PJs for older kids, mattress protectors, warm blankets - vital things to keep vulnerable kids warm over winter.

Mother's Day High Tea

Our inaugural Mother's Day High Tea at the recently re-opened Beachie Hotel in Toukley had over 100 local ladies come together to support We Care Connect. Over \$12,000 was raised through ticket sales and raffles on the day. A big thank you to the local community who attended, donated prizes and entertained us throughout the event! Sarah Forster from Star 104.5 came to MC, and local singers Mustwang Sally performed throughout the High Tea.

Inner Wheel

The Inner Wheel Clubs of North Gosford and Tuggerah Lakes have been fantastic supporters of We Care Connect. These energetic ladies raise funds for us, make beautiful care bags, donate baby and children's clothes, toys and craft and enthusiastically promote the work we do.

Wyang Hotel fundraising raffle

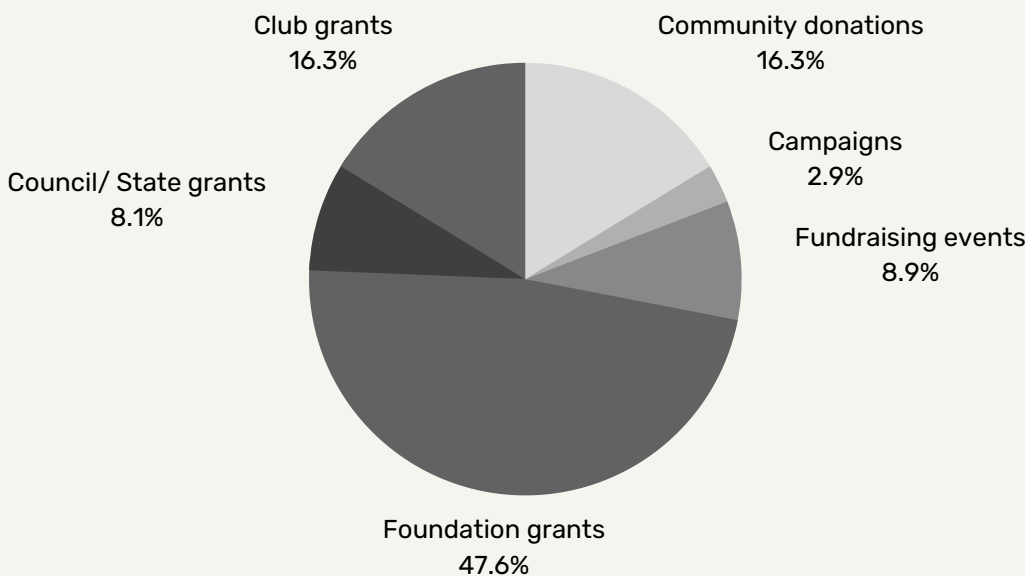
Local publicans the Wyong Hotel, Frank & Marney, organised a raffle with the Charmhaven Lions Club - and came to visit the We Care base bringing in a wonderful cheque.

Community kindness

All of the money raised through these community events go directly towards running the programs we've included in this report. Your donations make a direct difference to the lives of disadvantaged children.

Financial snapshot

Income breakdown



\$230,730
raised

On average it
cost \$42 to help
a family with
\$451 worth of
value during the
FY21 period.

We Care Board of Directors

John Davidson	Director
Ariane Dixon	Director
Rob Dixon	Chairperson
Jacqueline Klarkowski	Secretary
Janice Smith	Director
Nathan West	Director

Thank you

It takes a village to raise a child

We are a growing community of passionate, local families who say no to childhood poverty.

Contact us on the details below if you would like to join our village, we'd love to hear from you.

We thank you for your continued support for We Care Connect



We Care Connect
Central Coast & Hunter, NSW
www.wecareconnect.org.au
info@wecareconnect.org.au
ABN: 32 628 557 960