

Kids+
WHEN EXPERTISE MATTERS



Annual Report 2021

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Message from the Chair and CEO

It is pleasing to report that Kids+ remains a robust, resilient, and reflective organisation committed to advancing the interests of the young people we work with and their families.

A focus for us this year was in the following key areas:

- **Participate:** how do we ensure that the lived experience and goals of the young people we work with are at the forefront of service delivery and design
- **Educate & Advocate:** how can we better, and more publicly, support the interests and empowerment of young people with disabilities
- **Innovate:** how can we encourage and embrace new ideas that improve and enhance the outcomes we seek
- **Elevate:** how do we continue to build capability, raise our profile, and enhance our reputation

We understand that everybody's best is different. We commit to supporting young people to do what they like and want to do, to **"be their best"**. We value new ideas that build on and enhance previous ones.

Kids+ is committed to partnering with young people and research institutions to **"find the best"** so that the best information finds its way into day-to-day life.

We have a role in shaping the way services are delivered within our sector and have created a range of professional development training programs so that we can **"share the best"**.

Kids+ recognises that the interests of young people with disabilities will only be advanced when the broader community better supports inclusion and participation. To this end, we embrace our responsibility to be an advocate because when the whole community is involved, it's **"for the best"**.

Highlights for 2021 included:

- Responding and adapting to the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID pandemic. It was pleasing that Kids+ maintained high service provision levels despite our client group's underlying health conditions.
- Convening the inaugural *Kids+ Changemakers Conference*. Changemakers brings together the experiences of sector leaders, community practitioners, and those with lived experience to facilitate discussion and action about disability, rights, and opportunities. We will stage Changemakers again in 2023.
- Organising the inaugural *Kids+ Kite for Kids Festival*, an event that celebrates diversity and provides an accessible and inclusive experience for people of all abilities. The Kite Festival will be an annual event aimed at featuring prominently on Geelong's community events calendar.
- Appointing a Research Fellow as part of the Kids+ team. A joint appointment with Deakin University, the role is to support the translation of research findings into practice.
- Confirming Kids+ reputation for excellence, two members of the Kids+ team received national awards. Jenna O'Brien for her pioneering work supporting non-verbal children with complex communication conditions and Noah Callan was recognised as the 'Local Hero' at the Australasian Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine Conference for his community advocacy efforts.

As we look to the year ahead, development projects for Kids+ include:

- Expansion of the Kids+ Centre: The proposed development will add a hydrotherapy pool, designated teaching spaces, designated infant areas, telehealth pods, and additional outdoor therapy/play spaces. Kids+ has secured \$3M towards the estimated \$6M project.
- Translating Kids+ innovative early intervention practice supporting high-risk infants into training modules to support other service providers.
- Expanding our 'intensive' therapy program to support more families from regional and rural Victoria access specialist therapy support during 5-10 day block periods.
- Developing our 'parent to parent' program, a peer support program aimed at matching new families to Kids+ with those more advanced on their journey

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we thank the young people attending Kids+ and their families for their ongoing support and collaboration, and the Kids+ team for their continuing commitment, care, and creativity.

Paul Hulett
Chair

Shaun Cannon
Chief Executive

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KIDS+ STORIES

Kids+ Family Reflection 'The Reddington Family'



Kids+ have been a key part of our family's life since our first child was just 10 weeks old. As first-time parents, having a premmie was a daunting experience. Kids+ gave us the support and confidence we needed to understand and advocate for our child's needs.

When our second child was born even earlier, Kids+ were again there with a clear pathway to manage his conditions and improve daily living, as well as listening and providing emotional support to us as parents. They always put genuine time and care into supporting what our kids need for their development and provide exceptional opportunities for kids to thrive (the Surf Ed Program has been a particular highlight!).

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KIDS+ STORIES

Kids+ Family Reflection 'The Skewes Family'



Throughout Hamish's journey with cerebral palsy, we have been incredibly fortunate to have Kids+ there every step of the way. From Hamish's first home visit at 5 weeks of age, his therapy team have been a pillar of support for all of us.

Kids+ have removed the uncertainty by informing and educating us while providing empathy and support. We feel empowered and equipped with the knowledge and skills required to implement strategies and complete meaningful tasks and exercises at home that have a real impact. The team have thought of everything before we have and they are always thinking of the next milestone, how we are going to get there and what supports are required.

Visiting Kids+ for therapy is often the highlight of Hamish's day. The bond he shares with his therapy team is so strong and this is a true testament to the kind, compassionate, fun, understanding people they are. We are continually amazed by how Kids+ can make challenging work fun and engaging for him.

There have been countless occasions where we have messaged Hamish's therapy team to share moments of achievement with them. Whenever Hamish makes incremental progress it is acknowledged and celebrated, and we absolutely love this. For a kid who has to work so hard at everything he does, this means the world to him and us and we're so thankful to have such an amazing crew to share and celebrate all of his wins.

Hamish was so excited to take his little brother to the Kids+ Family Christmas Party at the end of 2021. He was talking about this for days before and after the event, we know he is so proud to be a part of the Kids+ community.

Although the journey for us has been incredibly emotional and tough, there is absolutely no doubt in our minds that Hamish is where he is today thanks to the incredibly knowledgeable team at Kids+ and the early access to intervention he has received. We are so grateful for all that they do and the opportunities they have provided to enrich Hamish's life.

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KIDS+ STORIES

Kids+ Staff Reflection Rachel Harkin



Speech Pathologist

When I reflect on my 3 years of work at Kids Plus Foundation some of my biggest highlights have been:

- Seeing a young boy use eye gaze symbol-based communication for the first time to express a full sentence after years of communicating with him through speech and showing him the symbols in his communication books
- Running parent/caregiver training programs to support them to become the best communication partners they can be to help their young people improve their communication skills
- Facilitating a group of young adults to use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) while hanging out with their friends and upskilling their support workers at the same time
- Going to Market Square to train up shop assistants to be able to communicate with people who use AAC
- Running a group to support teenagers with food aversions to try new foods and hearing that they've been trying a range of new textures and foods after the group
- Supporting young people to harness the power of their 'strong' voice so that they can be heard and understood by unfamiliar people.
- Working together with team members to learn how to support a young person with their motor development, regulation, play skills and cognition
- Supporting the running of the participant advisory group to hear feedback and new ideas from our participants that we can put into practice to make Kids Plus an even better place
- The support we receive at Kids Plus to continue to learn and ensure we are providing the best, participant-led therapy we can makes Kids Plus an exciting and dynamic place to work.

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KIDS+ STORIES

Kids+ Staff Reflection Laura Nielsen



Occupational Therapist

Since I walked into the pale-yellow house on Myers Street as Kids+ newest OT just over three years ago, there has been enormous growth and change within the organisation. The one thing that hasn't changed is the people, albeit just more of them! My first impression of Kids+ was these are the brightest, most dedicated bunch of therapists I have come across and today that still couldn't be truer. The tight knit team is such a huge strength of Kids+ and personally for me one of the most fulfilling parts of the job, it makes the dreaded morning alarm more bearable! Having the opportunity to learn from other therapists everyday enables us as a team to be continually evolving and dynamic to ensure we are providing the best service for our clients and families.

Speaking of clients and families, the highlight of this year so far has been seeing and hearing about all the successful prep transitions after what has been a disjointed couple of years. Incredible amounts of time, effort and thought (along with stress) goes into these transitions by families and being able to walk alongside and support these transitions has been an absolute privilege. It is exciting to see the shift with many of our families choosing their local mainstream school over specialist education. This unfortunately can come with many barriers, but seeing how these children and families navigate, educate, and inspire schools to adapt and change is incredibly special and going forward will hopefully reduce the barriers for our future young people.

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KIDS PLUS FOUNDATION

ABN 83 105 087 518

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Revenue	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Events and Sales		129,680	77,080
Funding		3,101,199	3,402,138
Gifts and Donation Revenue		456,480	299,468
Other Revenues		192,184	491,879
Services		1,174	7
Training		41,945	-
Total Revenue From Operating Activities		3,922,662	4,270,572
Expenses			
Administration Expenses		(1,187,998)	(863,232)
Depreciation Expense		(26,957)	(102,884)
Employee Leave Expense		(19,999)	(76,394)
Marketing and Fundraising Expenses		(70,299)	(36,417)
Therapy Projects Expense		(2,152,734)	(1,661,769)
Other Expenses From Continuing Operations		(43,812)	(1,790)
Total Expenses		(3,501,799)	(2,742,486)
Net Result For The Year		420,863	1,528,086
Income Tax Expense	1a	-	-
Comprehensive result for the Year		420,863	1,528,086

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KIDS PLUS FOUNDATION

ABN 83 105 087 518

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	1,997,985	2,815,555
Receivables	3	120,085	97,906
Financial Instruments	4	1,241,645	-
Total Current Assets		3,359,715	2,913,461
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	5	2,879,863	2,901,871
Total Non-Current Assets		2,879,863	2,901,871
Total Assets		6,239,578	5,815,332
Current Liabilities			
Annual Leave Accrual		182,265	162,332
Long Service Leave Accrual		48,195	56,104
Other Payables	6	189,481	206,097
Total Current Liabilities		419,941	424,533
Non-Current Liabilities			
Long Service Leave Accrual		47,043	39,068
Total Non-Current Liabilities		47,043	39,068
Total Liabilities		466,984	463,601
Net Assets		5,772,594	5,351,731
Equity			
Retained Profits		5,772,594	5,351,731
Total Equity		5,772,594	5,351,731