Capital Region Community Services

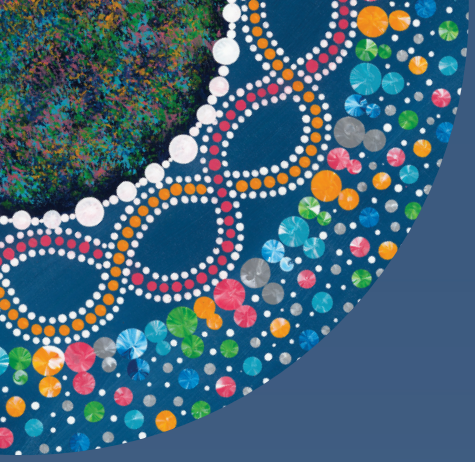
Annual Impact Report

2025–2026

An Inclusive, Connected Community

02 6264 0200
contact@crcs.com.au
crcs.com.au

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



Acknowledgement of Country

Capital Region Community Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across the Capital Region where we support community. We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded, and the land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal lands. We pay our respects to the traditional Elders across the region, past and present, and thank them for caring for the land, waters and skies, and for their culture, teaching and knowledge passed down through generations.



Inclusive Connections
Sarah Richards

October 2022
Acrylic on Canvas

About
Inclusive Connections

In 2022, CRCS partnered with Marrawuy Journeys (www.mjourneys.com.au) to begin our most recent reconciliation journey, resulting in the creation of Inclusive Connections, a painting that reflects connection, inclusion, and the relationships at the heart of our community. The artwork is displayed in our head office in Bruce, ACT, as a visual reminder of our ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

"Capital Region Community Services (CRCS) has a vision of an inclusive, connected community and Inclusive Connections represents their commitment to their vision.

Starting at the left of the artwork, is a circular element that represents CRCS surrounded by their employees, followed by two interlocking lines that represent their commitment to individuals, families, children, and young people (different coloured people around the outside) that they provide a wide range of programs and services to (different coloured individual dots). It also represents their commitment to the reconciliation journey and working towards their vision for reconciliation.

CRCS currently provides their services in seven locations in the capital region and the paths that journey out from the circular element represent this diverse reach. The opportunities and the positive impact that CRCS provides for the communities they service is subtly captured by the ripple rings that can be seen in the background of the piece.

The key themes of **Inclusive Connections** *are connection, journey and diversity and it is hoped that all who view the piece can feel that inclusion and connection to the CRCS journey."*

Reflection by artist Sarah Richards

Table of Content

1 Acknowledgement of Country
2 Inclusive Connections by Sarah Richards
3 Table of Contents
4 Message from CEO
6 Message from Chair
8 Impact at a Glance (infographics)
10 About CRCS (includes Our History)
12 Our Strategic Direction
13 Our Reconciliation Journey (RAP)
15 Our People
- Board and Executive Leadership
- Our Volunteers
  - Volunteering in action
- Employee and Volunteer Awards
- Highlights

22 Keeping Children and Young People Safe at CRCS
23 Guided by Three Impact Themes
24 Executive Report – Ruth
25 Improving Through Evidence

Connection and Belonging
26 Overview
28 Education and Care
29 Living Well
30 Child, Youth and Families

Purpose and Wellbeing
34 Overview
35 Education and Care
36 Living Well
37 Child, Youth and Families

Participant Voice
40 Overview
41 Education and Care
42 Living Well
44 Child, Youth and Families

Our Programs and Performance
47 Executive Manager – Programs and Services Report
48 Education and Care: Year in Review
50 Living Well: Year in Review
54 Child, Youth and Families: Year in Review
61 Community Facilities, Sport and Recreation

Business, Finance and Funders
63 Financial Report 2025-2026
64 Financial Overview
65 Quality, Governance and Continuous Improvement
66 Partnerships and Collaboration
67 Thanks and Acknowledgements

Message from Our CEO



Welcome to the Capital Region Community Services Annual Impact Report for 2025–26.

This year marked an important milestone for CRCS as we celebrated 50 years of supporting people and strengthening communities across the Capital Region. It was an opportunity to recognise the many employees, volunteers, participants, partners and community members who have shaped our organisation, while also looking ahead to how we can continue responding to changing community needs.

Throughout the year, our purpose remained clear: to empower people to live their best lives by building connected communities, delivering relevant and person-centred services, and creating choice and opportunity. The stories and results throughout this report show what that purpose looks like in practice.

We strengthened our commitment to understanding and demonstrating the difference our work makes. Our social impact approach brings together evidence, participant feedback and the experiences of the people who engage with our services. Through the themes of Connection and Belonging, Purpose and Wellbeing, and Participant Voice, we are building a clearer picture of what is changing in people's lives and how we can continue to improve. Participant feedback was encouraging, with 94 per cent of surveyed participants reporting that they trusted CRCS to do the right thing and 90 per cent saying CRCS helped them connect with their community.

Against the continuing challenge of loneliness and social isolation in our region, these results reinforce the importance of CRCS's role in creating connection, belonging and practical support. They also show that our commitment to listening to participants and using evidence to guide improvement is strengthening how we understand, demonstrate and increase our impact. As community needs continue to change, this approach helps ensure our services remain relevant, responsive and grounded in what matters most to the people and communities we serve.

A significant achievement was the launch of our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan during National Reconciliation Week. The plan provides a practical foundation for strengthening cultural understanding and embedding reconciliation across our relationships, decisions, services and everyday practice. It represents the next stage of a journey that requires sustained commitment, accountability and learning.

We also continued to strengthen our safeguarding-first approach. The appointment of a dedicated safeguarding and quality leadership role has supported more consistent practice, training, oversight and continuous improvement across CRCS. Keeping children

and young people safe, respecting their rights and listening to their voices remain paramount in every part of our work.

The establishment of the Belconnen Child and Family Hub was another important step forward. By bringing together support for families from pregnancy and early parenting through to age five, the Hub is helping families connect with information, early support and coordinated services. This reflects our commitment to responding early, working across traditional program boundaries and strengthening outcomes for children and families.

Across Living Well, Education and Care, Child, Youth and Families, and Community Development, our employees and volunteers adapted programs, strengthened partnerships and responded thoughtfully to participant feedback. We also continued preparing for significant sector reforms, including Commissioning and changes in aged care, while strengthening governance, quality systems and evidence-informed practice.

None of this work happens in isolation. Our partnerships with government, community organisations, schools, health services, research institutions, funders and local groups allow us to offer more connected pathways and respond to needs that no single organisation can address alone. I sincerely thank every partner who has worked alongside us during the year.

I also acknowledge our Board for its stewardship and oversight, and our Executive Leadership Team for guiding CRCS through a year of growth, change and opportunity.

Most importantly, I thank our employees and volunteers. Their professionalism, compassion and willingness to learn underpin every outcome described in this report. Employee survey results showed that 90 per cent of employees were clear about their roles, 88 per cent viewed CRCS as an inclusive organisation and 87 per cent felt respected at work. These results provide a strong foundation, while also reminding us of our responsibility to continue investing in a safe, inclusive and capable workforce.

To the children, young people, families, older people and community members who engage with CRCS, thank you for your trust, your feedback and the contribution you make to our community. Your experiences and voices help us understand what matters, where we are making a difference and where we must do better.

As we begin our next chapter, CRCS will continue to listen, learn and adapt. We will build on 50 years of community connection while remaining focused on safe, inclusive, accountable and evidence-informed services. Together, we will continue working towards our vision of an inclusive, connected community.

Mandy Green
Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Chair



As Chair of the Capital Region Community Services (CRCS) Board, I am pleased to present the 2025–26 Annual Impact Report.

This year has been one of both reflection and progress. In October 2025, CRCS celebrated 50 years of supporting individuals, families and communities across the Capital Region. This significant milestone provided an opportunity to recognise the people, partnerships and shared commitment that have shaped our organisation over five decades, while also looking ahead to the opportunities and challenges that will define our future. CRCS has evolved considerably since its beginnings as Belconnen Community Service, yet our purpose remains unchanged: creating inclusive, connected communities where people feel supported to live their best lives.

The Board has continued to focus on providing strong governance, strategic oversight and stewardship of the organisation. Throughout the year, we have worked closely with the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership Team to ensure CRCS remains responsive to emerging community needs, financially sustainable, and positioned to deliver meaningful impact across the ACT and surrounding regions. We are committed to balancing innovation and growth with the accountability and discipline expected of a trusted community organisation.

This report demonstrates the breadth and depth of CRCS's contribution to the community. Across Education and Care, Child, Youth and Families, Living Well, Community Development and Community Facilities, thousands of people accessed services, programs and opportunities that strengthened connection, wellbeing, participation and inclusion. Importantly, the report does more than describe what we delivered; it demonstrates the outcomes achieved for children, young people, families, older people and communities through participant feedback, evidence and lived experience. CRCS's ongoing commitment to measuring and understanding social impact strengthens our ability to remain accountable, learn and continuously improve.

One of the most significant achievements of the year was the development and launch of CRCS's first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. The Board strongly supports this important commitment and recognises the responsibility organisations like ours have in advancing reconciliation through meaningful action, respectful relationships

and ongoing learning. The launch of the RAP marks an important step in embedding reconciliation more deeply across our governance, operations and service delivery.

The Board also welcomed new Directors during the year, broadening the range of skills, professional expertise and community perspectives available around the Board table. We welcomed Dr. Nigel Nutt, Adam Stankevicius and Naresh Gunasekere to the Board and said farewell to Vicky Choice. On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge and thank Vicky, who concluded her service during the year, for her contribution and commitment to the organisation. We are fortunate to have Directors who generously contribute their time, expertise and passion in support of our mission and community impact.

The Board has maintained a strong focus on risk management, organisational performance, quality and safeguarding. We welcome the strengthening of CRCS's safeguarding capability through the appointment of a dedicated safeguarding leadership role and the continued emphasis on creating safe environments for children and young people. The safety, wellbeing and rights of those who engage with CRCS remain central to our governance responsibilities and organisational culture.

I would like to acknowledge Mandy Green, Chief Executive Officer, and the Executive Leadership Team for their leadership throughout the year. Their commitment, professionalism and strategic focus have enabled CRCS to continue evolving while remaining firmly grounded in its purpose and values. I also thank every employee and volunteer whose dedication brings our vision to life each day. The positive outcomes highlighted throughout this report are only possible because of your care, expertise and commitment to community. Employee engagement results, participant feedback and ongoing service quality outcomes demonstrate the strength of the culture that has been built across the organisation.

Finally, I would like to thank our participants, partners, funders, supporters and community members for the trust they place in CRCS. The challenges facing our communities are increasingly complex, but they also create opportunities for collaboration, innovation and impact. By working together, we can continue to strengthen connection, inclusion and wellbeing for people across the Capital Region.

As we begin our next chapter, the Board remains confident in CRCS's future. Building on 50 years of history, strong community relationships and a clear strategic direction, we are well positioned to continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of the people and communities we serve.

Deiwane Bakkum AM
Chair, CRCS Board of Directors

The Year in Highlights

Measures that capture the difference CRCS made across our community in 2025-26.

94%

trusted CRCS to do the right thing

90%

helps them connect with their community

95%

said CRCS met or exceeded their expectations

77.7 → 90

Life satisfaction increased from 77.7 to 90 out of 100 among surveyed aged care participants.

+44%

Emotional wellbeing improved by 44% for ACT Community Assistance and Temporary Supports participants.

45% → 74%

3 in 4 Bungee participants felt confident making new friends after the program.

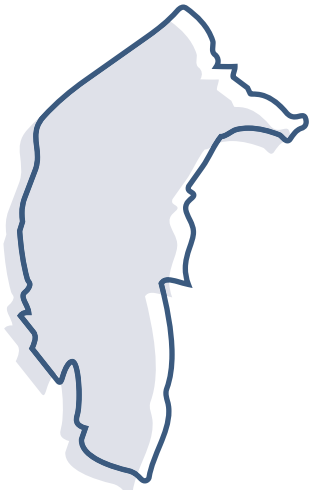
69% → 89%

Family Support and Education helped parents strengthen emotional connections with their children.



50 Years Strong

Five decades of creating connection, belonging and opportunity across the Capital Region.



What This Year's Impact Tells Us

As CRCS celebrated fifty years of supporting the Capital Region, participant feedback, outcomes and experiences during the year highlighted common themes across life stages, helping us understand our impact and guide our future work.

1. **Connection and belonging matter**
   Across all ages, opportunities to build relationships and participate in community life helped people feel connected and supported.

2. **Early support makes a difference**
   Parenting programs, family services and youth support helped people build skills and confidence to navigate challenges.

3. **Trust is central to meaningful support**
   Participants' feedback highlighted the importance of feeling respected, listened to and supported through trusted relationships.

4. **Participant voice strengthens our services**
   Participants, families and community members shaped activities and support, helping services respond to their needs, preferences and goals.

5. **Community impact is created together**
   Participants, volunteers, employees and partners brought different knowledge, experiences and resources together to strengthen support and create opportunities.

These insights will guide CRCS as we strengthen services and partnerships, creating more opportunities for people to belong, participate and improve their wellbeing.

Positive change is more likely when people feel connected, respected and heard.

About CRCS

Capital Region Community Services (CRCS) is a not-for-profit supporting people across the ACT and wider Capital Region. We support people at every stage of life – from early childhood to youth, families, adults and older community members – with programs and services that build wellbeing, independence and community connection. Our programs include early education and care, youth engagement, family support, aged care, therapeutic services, community transport and community development.

50 Years Strong

In October 2025, CRCS celebrated 50 years of creating connection, belonging and opportunities across the Capital Region. We thank the employees, volunteers, partners and community members who have shaped our organisation, and the many individuals and families who continue to place their trust in us.







Our History:
CRCS Through the Years

1960s–1970s

Belconnen Community Service (BCS) was formed in 1970 by local church groups and doctors to support residents. Early programs included the "Welcome Wagon" visiting service, bereavement counselling, and family assistance. In 1975, BCS was officially incorporated.

1980s

Family Day Care and Occasional Care Centres were launched, along with after-school and holiday programs. In 1986, the first community development and family support workers were employed. A year later, the Belconnen Community Centre opened, becoming a hub for local services.

1980s

Programs expanded to support families, older people, and new migrants. In 1996, BCS took over management of the Belconnen Community Centre. By 1997, Family Day Care became fully coordinated, and new community arts and wellness programs began.

2000s–2010s

New initiatives like Good Beginnings, Bridges, U-Turn, and Open Art were introduced. In 2004, the first Belconnen Festival showcased community creativity. In 2011, a new structure, logo, and website reflected a modern, growing organisation.

2020

To expand beyond the ACT, BCS became a Company Limited by Guarantee and changed its name to Capital Region Community Services (CRCS), reaching into regional NSW.

Today

CRCS is proud to deliver programs that create inclusive, connected communities. From early childhood education and playgroups, to youth initiatives like Friday Night Dinners and Bungee, to Living Well social groups, therapeutic services, and family support and education, we support people at every stage of life. Our focus is on increasing community connection, strengthening wellbeing, and ensuring those we support have both a voice and real choice. Every day, we help individuals and families connect, belong and thrive.



Our Strategic Direction

94%

trust CRCS to do the right thing



Our Purpose

We empower people to live their best life through:

- building and connecting communities
- delivering relevant, person-centered services
- providing choice and opportunity

Our Vision

- Inclusive, connected communities within the Capital Region

Strategic Goals

- Engage and connect with communities across the Capital Region.
- Provide high quality services, placing people and the community at the heart of everything we do.
- Be inclusive, responsible and exceptional as an organisation and an employer.
- Strengthen our innovative and collaborative capacity to achieve greater social impact.

Our Values

Respectful

Inclusive

Ethical

Optimistic

Accountable

Innovative

Our Reconciliation Journey

In 2025–26, CRCS developed, submitted and launched our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, creating a clearer organisation-wide approach to reconciliation.

Developed with guidance from a dedicated RAP Working Group, the plan identifies practical actions to strengthen cultural understanding and ensure reconciliation is embedded in our relationships, everyday practice, decision-making and service delivery. It was launched during National Reconciliation Week in May 2026, marking the beginning of its implementation.

> *"Through this plan, we aim to deepen our understanding of our sphere of influence and the unique role CRCS can play in advancing reconciliation across the five dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity, and historical acceptance."*
> ***– Mandy Green, Chief Executive Officer***







Culture, identity and inclusion

At Budawang Early Learning Centre, educators worked with Aboriginal team members to embed Aboriginal perspectives in everyday learning and strengthen the centre's culturally safe and welcoming environment.

Children explored local Dhurga language through displays of native animals and sea creatures, while Aboriginal stories were incorporated into literacy, storytelling and creative arts. Inspired by No Way Yirrikipayi! by Alison Lester, children also created a collaborative art installation that supported learning about culture, language, storytelling and community.

NAIDOC Week sewing project

To recognise 50 years of NAIDOC Week, children and educators at Budawang created a collaborative wall hanging that combined cultural learning, creativity and practical skill development.

Children contributed ideas about colours, symbols and their meanings while developing fine motor skills through sewing. The finished piece features symbols representing the river and sun, along with handprints from an Aboriginal educator and Budawang's youngest child. It is now displayed at the centre as a lasting representation of the children's learning and participation.

The launch marked the beginning of a more structured approach to reconciliation and reflects our commitment to progressing this work with care, respect and responsibility.



Our People

Every day, CRCS employees and volunteers help people feel safe, respected, included and connected. In 2025-26, we expanded our volunteer community, including support for Connect Up social groups and community transport services.

Our 2025 Employee Engagement Survey reflected this commitment, with **90%** of employees clear about their role, **88%** describing CRCS as an inclusive organisation, **87%** feeling respected at work, and **86%** saying their manager encourages their development. More than four in five employees (**81%**) said CRCS's vision and purpose makes their work feel important.

Across CRCS, our people bring diverse skills and experience to their work with children, young people, families and older people. During the year, we appointed a dedicated Program Manager – Safeguarding and Quality to further strengthen child and youth safeguarding practice across the organisation.














CRCS Board and Executive Leadership

Led by Chair Deiwane Bakkum, the CRCS Board provides governance, oversight and strategic direction. New members joined during 2025–26, broadening the Board's mix of community, sector, executive and governance experience.

On 30 June 2026, the CRCS Board of Directors was:



Deiwane Bakkum AM
Board Chair
Joined 2024



Dr Nigel Nutt
Vice Chair
Joined 2025



Ellen Samuels
Secretary
Joined 2023



Margaret Anderson
Director
Joined 2023



Adam Stankevicius
Director
Joined 2025



Naresh Gunasekere
Director
Joined 2025

Board members who left during the financial year:
Victoria Choice, Chair
Joined 2023

CEO Mandy Green and the Executive Leadership Team provided strategic and operational leadership through a year of growth, change and evolving community needs.

On 30 June 2026, the CRCS Executive Leadership Team was:



Mandy Green
Chief Executive Officer



Stella Shin
Executive Manager
Programs and Services



Ruth Jalloh
Executive Manager
Impact and Engagement



Kate Luck
Executive Manager
Business and Infrastructure

Our Volunteers

Volunteers make an important contribution across CRCS, sharing their time, skills and local knowledge to support participants, strengthen programs and create opportunities for connection. During the year, **35 volunteers** contributed more than **1,000 hours** across social groups, transport, youth services, community activities, events and organisational support. We also strengthened our volunteer onboarding process, with clearer information, improved induction and additional training and information sessions to help volunteers feel confident, prepared and supported in their roles.

Volunteering in Action

Across CRCS, volunteers also supported community transport, youth activities, early childhood centre gardens, events and organisational operations. Involve Woodworking participants repaired outdoor furniture for Bruce Ridge Early Childhood Centre, while longstanding volunteers such as Helen helped make Belconnen Community Centre welcoming through plants and arrangements lovingly grown and created.

Connect Up

Connect Up volunteers welcome participants, facilitate activities and help younger adults build friendships and feel part of their community. Their contribution is central to the program's volunteer-led model.



Involve Social Groups

Volunteers support Involve groups, outings and activities, helping create welcoming spaces where people can connect, share interests and participate in community life.



Giving Tree Appeal

Volunteers sorted, packed and prepared donations for the CRCS Giving Tree Appeal, helping gifts and essential items reach local children and families during the festive season.



Employee and Volunteer Awards

The annual CRCS All Star Awards recognise employees and volunteers who make an outstanding contribution to our organisation and community. The Good Fun Awards also celebrate the creativity, humour and team spirit that contribute to a positive workplace.





CRCS employee and volunteer award recipients at our end-of-year 70s-themed celebration in December 2025.

2025 Winners

All Star Awards

Leadership: Arianne Velasco

Respect: Aiden Watson

Innovation: Therese Beckman

Inclusion: Domi Henss

Accountability: Anita Logan

Ethics: Lyne Bowman

Optimism: Ossian Bonnitcha

Inspirational Volunteer: June Wallace

Good Fun Awards

Buzz Lightyear: Julie Trueman

Chief Fun Fairy: Sarah Helmers

Dream Team: CRCS Reception/Customer Service Team

Rookie of the Year: Jesse Gayfer

Safety Superstar: Paul Collins

Walking Wikipedia: Ally Sullings

June: Inspirational Volunteer



June's weekly visits to Tiny Tumblers are a highlight for children and families, bringing engaging activities and a sense of intergenerational connection that enriches the entire community. She also mentors younger employees, sharing decades of life experience, warmth and kindness. At ninety-one, June exemplifies the spirit of lifelong community service. In recognition of her contribution, she received the CRCS Inspirational Volunteer Award in 2025.

What Participants Told Us

The quality of our services is shaped by the people who deliver them every day. Feedback from participants highlights the positive impact of CRCS employees and volunteers, reflecting our commitment to respect, inclusion, quality practice and strong relationships.

90%

said employees treat them with respect always or most of the time.

96%

said employees are appropriately skilled always or most of the time.

94%

said they trust CRCS to do the right thing by them.

These results reflect the care, professionalism and dedication of the people behind our services, and the trust they build with the children, young people, families and older people who engage with CRCS.





Employee and Volunteer Highlights 2025-26

Celebrating 50 Years of CRCS

Employees, volunteers and supporters came together at our end-of-year celebration to recognise 50 years of CRCS. The event celebrated the people, relationships and shared commitment that have shaped our organisation and its contribution to the Canberra community.



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

In 2025–26, CRCS launched its first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, providing a practical framework to strengthen cultural understanding and embed reconciliation across our organisation, services and everyday practice.



Giving Tree Appeal

CRCS employees and community members supported the annual Giving Tree Appeal, helping provide gifts and practical support to local children and families. Their generosity helped make the festive season brighter for people experiencing financial pressure or difficult circumstances.



Canberra Day Appeal

Funds raised helped purchase new furniture for the Belconnen Community Centre. Thank you to the suppliers, community members and employees who donated or took the initiative to raise money, helping create more comfortable and welcoming community spaces.



Building a Connected Culture

Everyday conversations and connections help create a welcoming culture across CRCS. Whether sharing ideas, supporting colleagues or spending time together, our employees strengthen the relationships that help our teams work well and deliver positive experiences for participants.



Working Across Teams

Employees from across CRCS worked together to promote volunteer driving opportunities and welcome prospective volunteers. This collaboration brought together program knowledge, community engagement and practical support to help strengthen an essential service for local community members.



A Taste of Harmony

Employees celebrated A Taste of Harmony by sharing dishes connected to their cultures, families and personal favourites. The brunch created space to enjoy food, exchange stories and learn more about the diverse experiences and backgrounds represented across the CRCS team.



Keeping Children and Young People Safe at CRCS

Capital Region community Services (CRCS) applies a safeguarding-first approach across all programs and is committed to the Child Safe Standards and to building a child safe culture. The safety, rights and best interests of children and young people are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and operations involving children and young people. This principle prevails over all other considerations, including financial, operational or administrative concerns, as well as adult preferences or convenience

Safeguarding is embedded in our everyday practice and guides how we work across our programs, services and community spaces.

In 2025-26, we strengthened our organisation-wide approach through the appointment of a dedicated Program Manager – Quality and Safeguarding. This role provides focused leadership across CRCS, supporting consistent safeguarding practice and building capacity, quality improvement and a strong culture of accountability.

This included:

- regular site visits, audits and practice reviews across programs and services
- updates to safeguarding policies, procedures and processes
- support and guidance for employees and leaders
- regular safeguarding updates
- mandatory annual training
- continued alignment with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- timely review of relevant processes following February 2026 reforms to the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
- ongoing engagement with Children's Education and Care Assurance, NSW Early Learning Commission, NSW Education, ACT Government and relevant stakeholders.



This work also includes careful recruitment and screening, clear professional standards, safe environments, and processes for raising and responding to concerns.

Above all, keeping children and young people safe means supporting their wellbeing, listening to them, respecting their rights and voices, and creating spaces where they feel safe, included, supported and able to participate.

Our Impact

We understand and measure our social impact through three themes: Connection and Belonging, Purpose and Wellbeing, and Participant Voice. Together, they show how our programs and services contribute to meaningful change for people and communities.

Connection and Belonging

Reducing isolation and strengthening community ties.

Purpose and Wellbeing

Highlighting growth, resilience and positive change.

Participant Voice

Ensuring participant voices are front and centre.



Executive Report

Measuring What Matters: Social Impact at CRCS



At Capital Region Community Services (CRCS), understanding our impact is grounded in our commitment to the children, young people, families, carers and community members we support every day. Across our services, people come to CRCS seeking connection, stability, inclusion, practical support and opportunities to participate more fully in community life. We want to understand what is changing for the people we walk alongside, what is making the greatest difference, and how we can continue to strengthen our practice, partnerships and outcomes.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the CRCS employees, volunteers, funders, partners and community members who make this work possible. Your commitment to listening, learning and adapting helps ensure our services remain responsive, respectful and grounded in the realities of people's lives. The voices of children, young people, families and the community are central to this work, helping us see not only what we deliver, but what changes because of our support.

Measuring social impact across community services is complex. The needs of our communities are diverse, and the outcomes that matter most are often built over time through trust, relationships and consistent support. For CRCS, meaningful impact measurement is not about perfection; it is about accountability, curiosity and continuous improvement. It helps us understand where we are making a difference, where we need to adapt, and how we can better demonstrate the value of place based support.

This annual report provides an overview of our impact and helps us strengthen our work across the Capital Region through participant voice, data, storytelling and learning loops that shape services that are inclusive and connected.

CRCS will build on its 50-year history of service, partnership and community connection to continue creating meaningful and measurable change across the Capital Region, now and into the future.

Ruth Jalloh
Executive Manager – Impact and Engagement

Improving Through Evidence

During the year, CRCS continued to strengthen how we understand, measure and improve the difference our services make in people's lives. This work focused on building a more consistent, outcomes-based approach across the organisation, with significant progress made within child and family services.

The new CRCS Child and Family Wellbeing Framework was introduced to provide teams with a shared approach to understanding and supporting outcomes for children and families. CRCS also embedded its evaluation framework and developed program-level evaluation plans, giving teams practical tools to track progress, use evidence to inform decisions and continuously improve service quality.

Employee insights and feedback remained an important part of this process, helping to refine program delivery, strengthen consistency in practice and improve participant experiences across services.

CRCS also developed an implementation plan for Pillar 6 of the Social Impact Framework. This established clear priorities and measures to strengthen how we capture, communicate and demonstrate the impact of our work overtime.



"Letting my little one explore and interact with others his age in a safe and education space. I can also engage with other parents in the community."
- Parent, CRCS Playgroups



Connection and Belonging

Creating opportunities and pathways for connection and belonging is a key focus across CRCS. Our services bring people together, support relationships and participation, and help people feel connected through different stages of life.

This is particularly important in the ACT, where **40%** of residents meet the criteria for loneliness.[1] Younger adults experience the highest rates,[2] while living alone, declining health, reduced mobility, dementia and bereavement can increase risks for older people.[3] By creating welcoming opportunities to connect and participate, we help strengthen individual wellbeing and community ties.

90%
of participants surveyed said CRCS helps connect them with their community.

[1] ACT Legislative Assembly, Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT, 2024, p. 9.

[2] ACT Legislative Assembly, Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT, 2024, p. 10.

[3] ACT Government, Submission 34: Loneliness and Social Isolation, 2024, pp. 2–3.

Case Study

Max's Journey: Finding a Place to Connect

For young people experiencing social anxiety, connection cannot be rushed. It begins with feeling safe, accepted and able to participate without judgement.

Max is in their late teens, has autism and was experiencing complex mental health challenges. Although they wanted to build social connections, anxiety made engaging with peers difficult.

> *"Max was able 'to be' – respected and accepted without judgement – and progress in their own time."*

A supported introduction to CRCS

Max was receiving support through T25, a free, mobile, nurse-led health and wellbeing service operating across Canberra. T25 introduced Max to CRCS Youth Support Practitioners and the Belconnen Youth Centre, providing a bridge into an unfamiliar environment. Max initially played a musical instrument in the quiet room, away from the larger group. Practitioners provided the predictability and consistency they needed, allowing them to become familiar with the centre at their own pace.

Building trust and connection

As Max grew more comfortable, practitioners supported them to interact with other young people in small groups. Gradually, Max began joining groups independently and attended the Youth Centre most days. Practitioners also helped Max develop strategies for managing anxiety and connect with mental health services when their NDIS funding no longer covered specialist appointments. Max then began exploring a return to education. They completed CRCS's Bridge to Brighter Futures program, helping them identify the support they might need for further study. They later chose to engage in Planned Support for assistance with their NDIS plan and preparation for work experience.

From quiet participation to new possibilities

Max has progressed from playing music alone to independently connecting with other young people. They have strengthened their ability to manage anxiety and continued their education journey at CIT. Max is now working towards music-related study and hopes to complete a placement at the Youth Centre, using music to help other young people connect.

Their journey shows the value of collaboration between T25, CRCS Youth Engagement, Bridge to Brighter Futures, Planned Support, mental health services and CIT, creating a flexible pathway from isolation towards connection, education and future participation.

Education and Care

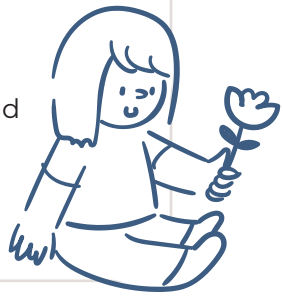
Strong connections help children feel safe, confident and ready to learn. Across our Early Childhood Centres (ECC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) program, CRCS creates welcoming environments where children and families can build relationships, participate in their communities and develop a genuine sense of belonging.

Reflecting this impact, 96% of Education and Care participants said CRCS helps them connect to and engage with their community most or all of the time. Through trusted relationships with educators, partnerships with families and access to additional support when needed, children and families become part of a connected and supportive community.

93%
of surveyed ECC families said CRCS helped them connect with their community.

100%
of participants surveyed trust CRCS to do the right thing by them

100%
would recommend CRCS to family and friends





Bruce Ridge Early Childhood Centre children developed an ongoing connection with North Canberra Hospital through cards and visits.



At Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre, regular excursions to Tiny Tumblers in the Belconnen Community Centre helped children build confidence and social skills in community settings.



Family celebrations such as Mother's Day were an opportunity to bring children, families and educators together to create community.

Living Well

Living Well supports older people to age well in their community by maintaining independence, supporting health and wellbeing, strengthening social connections and reducing reliance on higher-intensity support services.

Connection and belonging are central to this work. Living Well programs help people maintain relationships, build new connections and continue participating in community life. Transport removes practical barriers to staying involved, Aged Care provides companionship and support at home, and Involve Social Groups offer welcoming opportunities to connect through shared interests.

Community Transport

Community Transport helped participants reach social activities, shops, community services and events that may otherwise have been difficult to access. Reliable transport supported people to maintain routines, relationships and involvement in the places and activities that mattered to them.

77%

said CRCS helps them connect to and engage with their community most of the time or always

Aged Care

Individual social support provided companionship and helped older people remain connected to family, friends and community life. Flexible assistance also enabled participants to attend appointments, complete everyday tasks and take part in social activities.

Participants received

2,348

hours of individual social support appointments.

Involve Social Groups

Involve Social Groups gave participants regular opportunities to meet others, build friendships and share activities and experiences. New cultural groups and supported outings expanded the ways people could connect, including through language, culture and common interests.

78%

said CRCS helps them connect to and engage with their community most of the time or always

Child, Youth and Family Services





Through playgroups, youth programs, family support and wellbeing services, CRCS Child, Youth and Family Services creates welcoming spaces where people can connect with others who share similar experiences and life stages. Playgroups provide important safe and informal "third spaces", where families see familiar faces each week, share experiences and build friendships that often continue beyond the CRCS setting. Alongside community activities and individual support, these programs strengthen social networks, reduce isolation and help children, young people and families feel connected and supported.

74%

of surveyed Bungee participants reported feeling accepted by others and that they belonged somewhere.

Confidence in making new friends among surveyed Bungee participants increased from

45% before the program to 74% afterwards.

80%

of surveyed Family Support participants said CRCS always helped them connect and engage with their community.

> *"The best thing about playgroups is that there are multiple groups organised every week. It can be really isolating and overwhelming being a stay-at-home mum and finding the motivation to take your kids to fun places by yourself. Feeling really blessed these groups exist and are even free of charge."* – ***Playgroups participant***

Youth Engagement

100% of young people surveyed said CRCS helps them connect to and engage with their community most of the time or always. Youth Engagement provides welcoming spaces where young people can spend time with peers, participate in activities and events, develop trusted relationships and connect with support without judgement.



Family Foundations

83% of playgroup participants surveyed said CRCS helps them connect to and engage with their community. Playgroups bring families together to build friendships, strengthen local connections and access support.



Family Support and Education

Family Support helps families strengthen connections with community, services and support. After the program, parents' ability to build an emotional connection with their child increased from **69%** to **89%**, alongside parenting education and community-based support.



Bungee Youth Resilience Art-based Program

Bungee uses art, creativity, counselling and group experiences to help children and young people build relationships, strengthen social confidence and connect with others. After the program, the proportion who felt confident making new friends increased from **45%** to **74%**.



98% would recommend CRCS to their family, friends and community (This applies to all Child, Youth and Family Services programs.)

Community Development and Connect Up









Throughout 2025–26, CRCS Community Development worked with community members, volunteers and partners to create welcoming opportunities for people to connect, participate and feel part of their community.

A key achievement was transitioning the University of Canberra's Connect Up 2617 research pilot into an ongoing CRCS community development program. Originally designed for people aged 18–30 living in Belconnen Town Centre and Bruce, Connect Up has since expanded to include people aged 18–39 from across the broader Belconnen region, allowing the connections, activities and community-led opportunities created through the pilot to continue and grow.

Results of the research pilot found that more than **70% of participants increased their social connections, 75% felt part of a group** of like-minded people and almost **90% reported a stronger sense of belonging.**

> *"Connect Up is a natural fit with our vision and purpose. It's about helping young people feel connected and supported, giving them a sense of belonging, and creating more opportunities for engagement and inclusion in community life."*
> ***- Mandy Green, CRCS Chief Executive Officer***

During the year, CRCS hosted the Bring Your Bills event at Belconnen Community Centre and brought the Connect Up Festival to the CIT Bruce Open Day. We also expanded volunteering opportunities and introduced Social Pickleball alongside the popular Social Badminton program. The number of active volunteers grew to 15, helping to create friendly, inclusive activities where people could meet others and build lasting connections.

> *"The sessions aren't just about playing badminton; they're about building friendships, staying active and creating a space where everyone feels welcome. What keeps me coming back is the amazing energy and progress I see in the participants. It's incredibly rewarding to share my skills and watch their confidence grow."*
> ***- Connect Up Volunteer Facilitator and Participant***

Case Study

Putting down roots in a new city through Nature Journalling



When Anne* moved to Canberra from the United Kingdom, she found the transition challenging. Far from family and friends, she was adjusting to a new environment where the landscapes, plants, colours and smells felt very different from those she had known at home.

Through Connect Up, she joined Nature Journalling, an activity that brings together creativity, social participation and an appreciation of the local environment. Over time, her involvement grew from participant to volunteer facilitator, and she now helps others feel welcome, build confidence and connect through the activity.

> *"When I first arrived in Canberra, I didn't know anyone and everything felt unfamiliar. Nature Journalling helped me connect not only with other people, but also with the environment around me. Becoming a facilitator has given me the opportunity to help others feel welcome and find that same sense of belonging."*

Anne's journey from participant to volunteer facilitator reflects Connect Up's strengths-based approach. Community members are encouraged to share their skills, interests and experiences, while creating welcoming opportunities for others to participate and develop a sense of belonging.



Purpose and Wellbeing

Wellbeing reflects how people and communities feel about their quality of life. Purpose comes from having goals, relationships, roles and activities that matter. In 2024, 31.2% of Canberrans reported low wellbeing.[1] Guided by evidence-based approaches, including our Child and Family Wellbeing Framework, CRCS creates opportunities for growth, resilience and positive change.

We strengthen families, help young people build skills and access pathways, and support older people to reach healthcare, essential services and community life. This is why CRCS provides programs that build parents' and carers' confidence, strengthen family relationships and support children's development through their first 1,000 days and beyond.

95%

of participants said CRCS meets or exceeds their expectations, highlighting the positive outcomes achieved through their involvement with CRCS.

[1] ACT Government, ACT Wellbeing Framework: Personal wellbeing, drawing on the University of Canberra's 2024 Living Well in the ACT Region survey, updated April 2026.

Education and Care

A strong sense of purpose helps children build confidence, independence and a positive sense of self. Across Early Childhood Centres (ECC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), children make choices, explore their interests, develop new skills and contribute to their learning communities. Child-led learning, play, meaningful relationships and responsive support help children feel capable, valued and heard, while building foundations for wellbeing, resilience and lifelong learning.

Families are supported alongside their children. Child and Family Practitioners from CRCS Family Foundations worked with families accessing our Education and Care services to address challenges early, strengthen family wellbeing and connect them with additional support when needed. Among surveyed Education and Care families, 100% said they get the services they need most of the time or always, 100% said employees are appropriately skilled, and 100% trusted CRCS to do the right thing by them.

> *"At Ginninderra ECC, the educators prepare thoughtful learning activities and engage children in them. At pick-up, I see most children involved with an educator or choosing their own activity. This is in contrast to other ELCs I've experienced, and makes a huge difference in creating a safe space for exploring and learning."*
> **— Parent, Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre**



- Tiny Tumblers supported children to develop movement skills, coordination and confidence.
- OSHC children explored safeguarding, children's rights, speaking up and knowing where to seek help.
- Tailored strategies and visual supports helped children participate confidently and navigate shared spaces.
- Gardening, recycling and sustainability projects encouraged responsibility and contribution.

Living Well

Purpose and wellbeing are closely connected. For older adults, having meaningful activities, staying connected to community life, maintaining independence and trying new experiences can make a significant difference to confidence, mental health and quality of life. Through aged care, community transport and social groups, Living Well supports older people to remain active, pursue their interests and continue doing the things that matter most to them. Survey results show strong improvements in wellbeing, life satisfaction and participants' ability to stay engaged with their communities.

Participants reported high levels of confidence in CRCS services, with 93% saying they get the services they need most of the time or always and 96% trusting CRCS to do the right thing by them. These benefits extend to families and carers, who reported greater peace of mind knowing their loved ones were receiving trusted support, maintaining independence and staying connected.

Life satisfaction among surveyed aged care participants increased from **77.67** to **90 out of 100**, compared with a Canberra average of **76.1.**

Community Transport

Reliable transport helps people stay independent, connected and engaged in everyday life. During the year, CRCS Community Transport enabled participants to complete 18,114 medical journeys, supporting access to healthcare, essential services and activities that contribute to wellbeing.

Aged Care

Living Well Aged Care helps older adults maintain independence, pursue personal goals and continue living the life they choose. Participants reported improvements across multiple wellbeing measures, including health, achievement and overall life satisfaction.

Participants reported improvements across key wellbeing measures, including health (**71.5** to **80**), achievement (**77.2** to **85**) and life satisfaction (**77.7** to **90** out of **100**).

Involve Social Groups

Activities supported wellbeing through social connection, movement, creativity and learning. Gym and yoga programs built confidence, encouraged activity and strengthened social connection, Creative projects like *A Moment in Time* enabled participants to share their stories in a meaningful, lasting way.

Participants received more than

28,399

hours of support through Involve Social Groups, activities and individual opportunities.

Community Assistance and Temporary Supports (CATS): Participants' overall emotional wellbeing improved by **44%**, while the proportion feeling active and energetic increased by 103%. Participants reporting their daily life was filled with interesting things also increased by 81%.

Child, Youth and Family Services

Child, Youth and Family Services helps children, young people and parents build confidence, skills and resilience to navigate challenges and pursue opportunities that matter to them. Support ranges from emotional regulation and parenting confidence to practical life skills, independence, education and employment pathways.

Impact at a glance

89% of surveyed Bungee participants

reported being able to find ways to feel calm.

78% of surveyed Bungee participants

reported feeling confident and believing in themselves.

100% of surveyed Circle of Security

participants said they felt more confident as parents and better understood their child's behaviour.

> *"The support I received over the six weeks helped transform the way I communicate with my children. Since completing the program, the level of respect between us and our family dynamics have improved significantly."*
> **– Parent, Tuning in to Teens participant**







Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement helps young people build practical skills, confidence and independence through individual support and education and employment pathways. After completing Easy P, **100%** felt more confident making safer road-safety choices, while Bridge to Brighter Futures helps young people prepare for further study or employment.



Family Foundations

Through Family Foundations, child and family practitioners work with the whole family for up to 18 free sessions to strengthen children's development and family wellbeing, build parents' and carers' confidence, address challenges and connect families with other supports early.



Family Support and Education

Evidence-based programs including Circle of Security and Tuning in to Kids help strengthen family relationships. After Circle of Security, **100%** of surveyed parents felt more confident, while their average ability to identify children's emotional needs increased by **21%.**



Bungee Youth Resilience Art-based Program

Through creative and therapeutic approaches, Bungee helps children and young people express emotions, build confidence and manage challenges. Following the program, strong agreement about expressing feelings increased by **37%.**



Case Study

Annie's Journey: Staying Active, Independent and Connected

For Annie, wellbeing means making her own decisions, staying active and participating in social activities she enjoys. Annie is 75 and lives independently, with support from her daughter and grandchildren in Brisbane. After migrating from Malta in 1963, she built a rich life through family, work and community involvement. However, arthritis, reduced mobility and a fall began disrupting her routines. Losing the ability to drive also made it harder to attend appointments, shop and participate in community activities, affecting her confidence and connections.



"The most meaningful change has been Annie's increased social engagement. She feels connected, supported and part of a community."

Finding support through My Aged Care

Annie contacted My Aged Care and, following an assessment in August 2025, was referred to CRCS's Involve program. Her goals were to remain physically active, socially connected and able to safely access community activities. Annie continued making her own health and lifestyle decisions, with employees listening to her preferences and providing accessible information.

Support shaped around Annie

Through Involve, Annie began attending weekly drumming sessions, supporting coordination, enjoyment and social connection. She also joined Back in Balance, a gentle exercise class supporting strength, balance and confidence following her fall. Both activities reflected Annie's interests, mobility needs and goals. She remained in control, choosing her pace, taking breaks and speaking openly with employees about her comfort and wellbeing.

Friendships beyond the program

The activities have helped Annie maintain her wellbeing and a meaningful weekly routine, but one of the most important outcomes has been new friendships. Annie now meets other participants for afternoon tea after exercise classes, enjoying conversation, companionship and shared stories.

These catch-ups have strengthened her sense of belonging and reduced the isolation associated with limited transport and social opportunities. Annie continues to live independently, remain active and make her own choices. Her experience shows how flexible, person-centred activities can support wellbeing through movement, routine and welcoming spaces where friendships extend beyond the program.



Participant Voice

Participant voice means ensuring the experiences, perspectives and preferences of the people we support shape the services they receive. CRCS has clear pathways for participants to share feedback, concerns and ideas, including our organisation-wide participant survey. We listen, take feedback seriously and use it to improve how programs and services are designed and delivered.

We also develop age-appropriate materials and feedback approaches so children can have a meaningful say in matters affecting them. Alongside listening, we measure the impact our programs and services make in people's lives.

92% of participants said CRCS consults with them and provides choice and control over the services they receive.

Education and Care

At CRCS, children and families help shape the experiences, relationships and opportunities that matter to them. Children's interests, ideas and choices guide learning and play, while families contribute valuable insights that help educators tailor support and continuously improve services. This shared approach to decision-making helps create environments where children feel confident to express themselves, pursue their interests and take an active role in their learning. Families are respected as experts in their children's lives and trusted partners in achieving positive outcomes.

87% of ECC families surveyed felt consulted and provided with choice most or all of the time









Living Well

Living Well services are shaped around each participant's needs, preferences and goals. Employees build trusted relationships with participants, families and carers, creating opportunities for people to share feedback and influence decisions.

Across Living Well services, 91% of surveyed participants said employees always or most of the time followed up when they raised feedback or concerns.

> *"The best thing about CRCS is having people you trust with your care. The support is person-centred and empathetic."*
> ***- Participant, Aged Care Supports***

Community Transport

Community Transport is shaped around what matters to participants. Employees listen to individual preferences and feedback, adapting support to make travel easier and ensuring the service remains reliable, respectful and responsive to people's everyday needs.

94%

said employees always or most of the time followed up when they raised something about their service

Aged Care

Aged Care support is built around each participant's routines, priorities and goals. Trusted relationships with participants, and often their families and carers, help employees recognise changing needs and adjust support so people feel heard, respected and involved in decisions about their care.

76%

of participants said they received choice and control most or all of the time, and

80%

said employees always or most of the time followed up when they raised something about their service.

Involve Social Groups

Participants help shape Involve Social Groups. Their interests and feedback inform changes to existing groups and inspire new activities, wellbeing programs and outings. New cultural groups, expanded gym and yoga programs, and additional outings were introduced in response to participant feedback.

90%

of participants said employees always or most of the time followed up when they raised something about their service.

Participant Voice

Strengthening Participant Voice – ACPAG

The Aged Care Participant Advisory Group (ACPAG) gives older adults an active role in shaping CRCS Living Well services. Meeting every two months, participants share lived experience, identify improvements and influence service decisions. This supports co-design and a rights-based approach, where older adults have a voice, exercise choice and contribute to the services they use.

During 2025–26, ACPAG feedback led to a stronger CRCS employee presence at meetings, creating more opportunities to ask questions about My Aged Care, intake processes, service availability and funding limitations. Members also reported improvements in driver conduct and service following additional driver training.

The group helped shape the Living Well newsletter's structure, content and accessibility, and informed the scheduling and promotion of Involve social groups, activities and events. These contributions show how participant feedback leads to practical improvements and keeps services responsive to participants' interests and needs.

Out and About with CRCS Living Well











Child, Youth and Family Services

Children, young people and families are more likely to benefit from services when they feel listened to and can influence the support they receive. Across Child, Youth and Families, participant feedback shapes individual support, group activities and broader service delivery, keeping programs responsive to people's needs and aspirations.

100% of surveyed Family Foundations participants

said CRCS consulted with them and provided choice and control.

85% of surveyed Bungee participants

said important people listened to and understood how they were feeling.

74% of surveyed Bungee participants

reported feeling able to be themselves around other people.

Youth Engagement

Young people's feedback directly shapes Youth Engagement activities, opening arrangements, outreach and events, with Advantaged Thinking placing young people's strengths, aspirations and potential at the centre of the program.

Family Foundations

Family Foundations works closely with parents and caregivers to understand their circumstances and priorities, helping families influence the support they receive and connecting them with assistance that responds to their individual needs.

Family Support and Education

Family Support works collaboratively with families, tailoring support and education to their circumstances and offering flexible approaches, including individual delivery where barriers make participation in group programs difficult.

Bungee Youth Resilience Art-based Program

Bungee creates supportive environments where children and young people can express themselves, share how they are feeling and influence their experience, with participant feedback helping guide therapeutic and creative approaches.

Case Study

Supporting Change on Her Own Terms

When a parent came to CRCS Family Foundations, she was managing the demands of raising her children alongside significant external pressures. Bedtime routines and behavioural concerns had become difficult, leaving her overwhelmed and less confident. However, she was committed to creating positive change for her family.

> *"Meaningful outcomes are often achieved through small, consistent changes rather than large interventions."*

Reaching out to CRCS

The parent self-referred to Family Foundations for support with routines and her children's behavioural and emotional needs. Working with a Family Practitioner, she identified her priorities: creating consistent routines, responding calmly to challenging behaviour and building confidence in her parenting. Regular communication ensured the support reflected her family's circumstances and that she remained involved in decisions.

Developing strategies together

Through one-on-one sessions, the parent received practical coaching, parenting education and guided reflection. Together, she and the practitioner developed strategies, agreed on achievable goals and reviewed what was working. This approach recognised the knowledge, resilience and capabilities she already brought to parenting. When external pressures made it difficult to implement strategies consistently, the practitioner responded flexibly. Goals were broken into manageable steps and adjusted as circumstances changed, helping the parent remain engaged without judgement.

Greater confidence at home

The parent developed a practical toolkit for managing bedtime, maintaining routines and responding calmly to difficult behaviour. She also adjusted household routines to create more time for self-care. She reported feeling less overwhelmed, more emotionally regulated and more confident as a parent. She now feels equipped to continue adapting the strategies developed through the program. These outcomes align with the Valued, Loved and Safe, Healthy and Learning domains of ARACY's The Nest wellbeing framework.

Her journey demonstrates that effective early intervention begins by listening to families and recognising their strengths. She set the goals, made the decisions and is leading lasting change for her family.



Our Programs and Performance

Executive Report

Supporting Everyday Lives: CRCS Programs and Services



Programs and Services is where CRCS's purpose is experienced in everyday life. It is seen when a child feels safe, included and ready to learn; when a young person finds someone they can trust; when a parent feels less alone; when an older person can attend an important appointment; or when a family receives support at the right time.

This year, our teams continued to provide care, connection and practical support across education and care, child, youth and family services, aged care, transport and community programs. Many people came to us during periods of change, uncertainty, vulnerability or isolation. Our role has been to respond with respect, kindness and practical support, while continuing to strengthen service quality, safety and inclusion.

A key focus this year has been strengthening how our programs work together. Cross-program support, referral pathways and shared planning have continued to improve, helping people connect with the right support more easily. This included work such as embedding the Belconnen Integrated Child and Family Hub and strengthening links between services for children, young people and families.

We also continued to invest in the quality of our programs and the capability of our employees. Across the year, we strengthened our focus on safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, evidence-informed approaches, cultural capability and inclusive service delivery. This work supports our teams to provide services that are safe, respectful, responsive and grounded in the needs of our diverse communities.

I sincerely thank our employees, volunteers, leaders and partners for their dedication, compassion and professionalism. I also thank the children, young people, families, older people and community members who have trusted CRCS to be part of their lives.

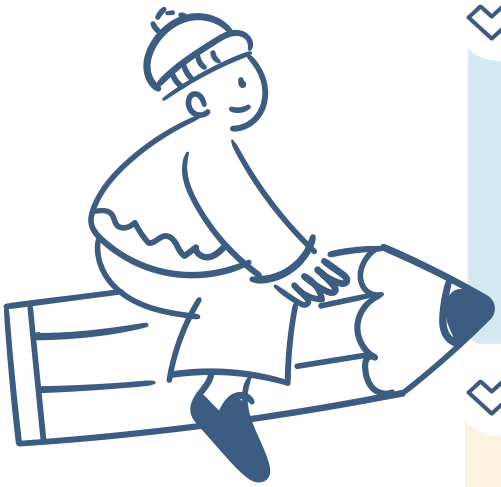
As we look ahead, we will continue to listen, learn and strengthen services that are inclusive, responsive and grounded in community.

Stella Shin
Executive Manager, Programs and Services

Education and Care

Early Childhood Centres

CRCS Early Childhood Centres (ECC) supported children and families through Bruce Ridge Early Childhood Centre (Bruce ACT), Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre (Belconnen ACT) and Budawang Early Learning Centre (Milton NSW). Our centres provided safe, inclusive and play-based learning environments where children could build relationships, build confidence and develop a strong foundation for lifelong learning. Throughout the year, we continued to strengthen outcomes for children and families through targeted support services, workforce development initiatives and partnerships that enhanced participation, wellbeing and educational opportunities.



Delivered the ACT Three-Year-Old Preschool Program to **30 children**

Supported approximately 10 families through the Family Foundations Team partnership at GECC to support children's wellbeing, development and participation

Supported student placements through partnerships with KU Children's Services and the Canberra Institute of Technology

Bruce Ridge Early Childhood Centre: **138 children enrolled**, supporting 118 families

Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre: **134 children enrolled**, supporting 127 families

Budawang Early Learning Centre: **53 children enrolled**, supporting 46 families

Outside School Hours Care

CRCS Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) supported children and families at Charnwood-Dunlop School and Florey Primary School. Across both services, children enjoyed safe, inclusive and engaging environments before and after school, where they could connect with peers, explore their interests and participate in activities shaped by their own ideas and feedback. Educators used children's voices and observations to develop responsive term-based programs, while creative, recreational, physical and social-emotional learning experiences supported wellbeing, confidence and connection. Individualised supports, visual resources and strong partnerships with families and schools helped ensure every child could participate and feel included.

298 children
enrolled

4,741 attendances
at Charnwood-Dunlop throughout the year

218 before school, after school and school holiday
sessions delivered at Charnwood-Dunlop

220 families
supported throughout the year

Highlights

Safety, wellbeing and inclusion:

Children explored personal safety, safeguarding, their rights, speaking up and knowing where to seek help. Educators also used tailored strategies, visual supports and responsive approaches to help children feel secure, participate confidently and build emotional regulation and respectful relationships.

Children's voice in action:

Children's interests, ideas and feedback shaped programming across the year, from creative activities and sport to cooking, construction, group challenges and quiet wellbeing spaces. Educators worked with children to adapt activities and support choice, agency and participation.



CRCS Education and Care at the ACT Child Safety in OSHC Forum with Yvette Berry MLA.

Living Well

Living Well brings together Community Transport, Aged Care, Involve social groups, participant engagement through ACPAG and community development to support people to age well. Services connect around each person's goals, strengths and preferences, helping participants maintain independence, access practical support and stay connected to community life. This coordinated approach helps identify changing needs earlier and supports smoother pathways between services for participants, families and carers.

During 2025–26, Living Well delivered 30,311 transport trips, 13,094 support hours and 28,400 social group support hours.

CRCS strengthened workforce capability, participant education and readiness for aged care reforms commencing on 1 November 2025, embedding rights-based practices across Living Well. CRCS also refined its service offering, discontinuing Home Care Package services to expand Community Transport capacity and strengthen Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services.

Participant feedback continued to shape service delivery and Involve activities, with ACPAG providing opportunities for older adults to influence decisions and help keep services responsive to their needs and interests.

Community Transport

CRCS Community Transport delivered 30,311 trips for 1,162 customers, travelling more than 362,112 kilometres across Canberra in 2025–26. Participants accessed healthcare, shopping, social activities, community services and events across 124 suburbs. More than 16,700 trips supported people aged 75 and over. Beyond transportation, the service helped participants maintain independence, sustain relationships and participate in community life.

Feedback remained strong, with 94% of surveyed participants rating service quality as high or very high. All respondents reported respectful treatment and support from skilled employees, while 97% trusted CRCS and would recommend the service.

18,114	7,811	3,623	763
medical trips	social and recreational trips	shopping and access trips	event-related trips

Aged Care

CRCS Aged Care provided individualised support to help older people manage daily tasks and continue living safely and independently at home during 2025–26.

All surveyed participants said employees were respectful and appropriately skilled. A further 93% trusted CRCS to do the right thing, while 87% would recommend the service.

7,338 hours
of domestic assistance across **5,268** appointments

3,408 hours
of home and garden maintenance

2,348 hours
of individual social support across **1,405** appointments

606 hours
of personal care across **922** appointments

175 hours
of flexible respite provided to participants

Social Groups

Involve continued to respond to participants' changing interests and feedback, introducing Korean and Chinese cultural groups to better reflect the community's diversity and create opportunities for cultural connection and belonging. The program also expanded gym and yoga sessions and added Winery Adventures and Golden Getaway outings. Alongside existing activities, these opportunities played an important role in reducing loneliness, helping participants stay active, build friendships and support one another, strengthen mental wellbeing and support healthy ageing.

All surveyed participants said employees treated them with respect, reflecting the program's focus on accessible, welcoming and participant-informed services.

7,121
appointments and sessions

698
participants supported through Involve

28,400
hours of support to develop skills, achieve goals and engage in community life

243
volunteer hours

Highlights

Seniors Expo

Connected with current and prospective participants at the Canberra Seniors Expo, showcasing CRCS services and strengthening community awareness, engagement and pathways to social connection and support.



ACT Seniors Month

Celebrated ACT Seniors Month with a community morning tea and Involve Exhibition at Belconnen Community Centre, bringing older people together to connect, share stories and celebrate creativity and community participation.





Involve Quilt Project – A Moment in Time



What began as a simple idea within CRCS's Living Well – Involve program grew into A Moment in Time, a community quilt celebrating creativity, culture and connection.

Guided by Therese's warmth and "why not?" attitude, participants from Australia and around the world created individual squares reflecting their memories, heritage and personal stories. Together, these pieces formed a vibrant record of the diverse experiences and relationships that make the Involve community special.

Completed in late 2025, the quilt was unveiled at Belconnen Community Centre at an event attended by participants, families, volunteers and employees. As people gathered around the finished work, they shared stories, rediscovered memories and celebrated what they had created together.

More than a creative project, the quilt became a symbol of belonging and shared experience. It reflects the friendships formed through Involve and the power of inclusive activities to bring people together.

This sense of connection is also reflected in participant feedback, with 97% of surveyed Involve participants saying CRCS helps them connect and engage with their community.



Child, Youth and Family Services

From a child's first playgroup to a young person accessing individual support, CRCS Child, Youth and Family Services provided welcoming places to connect, build confidence and receive support.

During 2025–26, Youth Engagement, Family Support, Family Foundations, Bungee Youth Resilience Art-based Prgram and Wellbeings delivered early intervention, family and therapeutic support, education, creative programs and community activities. Services were guided by participants' feedback and delivered with schools, community organisations and specialist providers.

Teams focused on providing support before challenges escalated, creating safe and inclusive environments, strengthening social and emotional wellbeing, and helping families build confidence and connections. They also improved pathways to CRCS and external services and delivered culturally responsive, accessible programs.

Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement combined centre-based based activities such as Friday night dinners and Bit Bent, outreach, early intervention, education and employment pathways, wellbeing support and individualised planned support.

Throughout the year, young people age 10-24 accessed welcoming spaces where they could connect with peers and trusted employees, take part in activities, seek practical assistance and receive support shaped around their individual circumstances and goals. The team also expanded its school outreach, continued youth holiday activities, Belconnen Youth Centre drop-in sessions, and delivered activities and events informed by young people's feedback.

371
people engaged with the service

4,018
individual engagements

402
people participated in youth holiday activities

164
people regularly participated in centre-based activities

89
people obtained their learner licence through the Pre-Learner Licence Course

25
people participated in Bridge to Brighter Futures.

Family Support and Education

Family Support provided early intervention, parenting education, service coordination and community connection for families across Canberra.

Families received practical and individualised assistance to address challenges early, strengthen relationships and connect with appropriate community and specialist supports. Evidence-based parenting programs were delivered in group settings, with one-to-one options available for families experiencing barriers to participation. The team also continued culturally responsive community outreach and collaborative delivery with the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre.

80 families
received Family Support

67 families
were referred to these services

175 participants
attended **17 family education groups**, including Circle of Security, Tuning in to Kids and Seasons for Growth

128 participants
took part in **eight community groups** delivered with the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre.



Family Foundations

Family Foundations grew its team of Child and Family Practitioners and continued to expand its reach through playgroups, early intervention, wraparound family support, parenting education and community engagement.

Playgroups provided welcoming places for children to learn through play while parents and caregivers built relationships, shared experiences and connected with support. Attendance doubled, and in some locations tripled, during the year.

The program also strengthened referral pathways and partnerships, working with more than 80 organisations to help families access coordinated support.

1,401 children
and **1,069 parents** and caregivers participated in playgroups

161 playgroup
sessions delivered

19 referrals
received from external sources

16 participants
received wraparound support across **90 sessions**

263 hours of support
provided at Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre

13 INFANT sessions
and **18 Circle of Security Parenting** sessions delivered.



Bungee Youth Resilience Program

Bungee is an art-bsed program that uses creative and therapeutic approaches to strengthen the emotional and social wellbeing of children and young people.

Programs were delivered across primary schools, high schools and colleges, alongside counselling for children, teenagers and families. Through art, emotional literacy activities and evidence-based parenting programs, participants were supported to identify and express their feelings, build resilience and strengthen relationships.

2025-26 highlights included:

- **3,173** individual participations across Bungee activities
- counselling provided to children, teenagers and families
- Tuning in to Kids and Tuning in to Teens programs delivered
- four school-holiday programs held at Florey Primary School
- two exhibitions showcasing participants' artwork, with more than 200 people attending the opening events.

Participant feedback was strong:

100%

said employees treated them with respect

89%

trusted CRCS to do the right thing

100%

would recommend CRCS to others



Wellbeings

Wellbeings is CRCS's multidisciplinary allied health practice, providing accessible, evidence-based mental health support for children, young people, adults and families. Services include psychology, counselling and autism and ADHD assessments, with support tailored to each person's needs and circumstances.

During 2025–26, CRCS focused on strengthening the foundations of Wellbeings and preparing the service for expanded delivery in 2026–27. This included reviewing intake processes, strengthening clinical and assessment systems, and building partnerships to support a more structured and responsive service.

A key development was Wellbeings' partnership with Think Mental Health. Through this partnership, CRCS is strengthening the clinical and operational foundations of Wellbeings, creating more connected pathways for people seeking mental health support, and expanding the range of services available to the Canberra community. This work will support Wellbeings to grow as a responsive, evidence-informed and accessible service for children, young people, adults and families.



Highlights

Celebrating creativity through Bungee

Two Bungee exhibitions showcased children's and young people's creativity, attracting more than 200 people to their opening events. The exhibitions gave participants an opportunity to proudly share their artwork, ideas and experiences with family, friends and the broader community.



Harmony Day: celebrating diversity

Families came together for Harmony Day through culturally responsive activities, shared stories, songs and the creation of a 100-metre community paper chain. The chain represented the diversity, connection and collective strength of the Family Foundations community.



Wear It Purple Week

Young people celebrated pride, inclusion and self-expression through a week of activities, including drag makeup sessions, live performances, trivia, prizes and a vibrant community celebration.



Building emotional literacy through art

Bungee continued to explore creative ways to strengthen resilience. Art and emotional literacy activities helped children recognise, express and better understand their feelings in safe and accessible ways.



National Playgroup Week

Families celebrated National Playgroup Week with face painting, music, games and interactive activities. The event created joyful opportunities for children and caregivers to connect, form relationships and feel part of their local community.



Belconnen Child and Family Hub

This year, CRCS launched the Belconnen Child and Family Hub, a new pilot initiative bringing together support for families from pregnancy and early parenting through to age five. The Hub provides a coordinated, family-centred approach that helps families access the right support at the right time, while strengthening connections between services.

At the heart of the Hub is the Family Foundations wraparound support service, offering free tailored assistance for families with young children. Support may include parenting strategies, help with sleep and behaviour challenges, child development guidance, support following trauma or significant life events, and connections to specialist services. Through playgroups, neurodevelopmental supports and parenting programs, families can also build relationships and connect with others in their community.

The Hub is delivered by a multidisciplinary team of Child and Family Practitioners, neurodevelopmental specialists, counsellors, early childhood educators and other experienced professionals. Building on CRCS' longstanding expertise in supporting children and families, the team provides strengths-based, coordinated support tailored to each family's circumstances.

Underpinned by the CRCS Child and Family Wellbeing Framework and informed by the ARACY Nest outcomes framework, the Hub recognises that strong families are the foundation of thriving children. By supporting families early and connecting them with the services they need, the Hub helps build confidence, strengthen relationships and improve outcomes for children and families.

> *"By supporting families early and connecting them with the right services, the Hub helps children and families thrive."*



Community Facilities, Sport and Recreation

Belconnen Community Centre (BCC) is a busy and welcoming hub where people can join activities, access support and connect with others.

For many people, BCC is much more than a venue. It is a safe, familiar place outside home where people of all ages and backgrounds can participate, seek support and feel part of community life. Each day, people come through its doors to learn new skills, stay active, express their creativity and build meaningful connections.

BCC offers a range of affordable and accessible spaces, including a theatre, gallery, sports hall, meeting rooms and activity areas. These spaces support community groups, not-for-profit organisations, social enterprises and service providers, helping create a vibrant and inclusive hub.

Throughout the year, BCC hosts theatre productions, art exhibitions, sports and dance programs, language classes, workshops and community meetings. By providing welcoming places for people to come together, share experiences and pursue their interests, BCC strengthens connection, participation and belonging across Belconnen.

Sport and recreation throughout the week
The sports hall is one of BCC's most popular spaces, hosting a wide range of activities throughout the week and on weekends.





Governance, Funding and Finance

Financial Report 2025-2026



CRCS achieved a surplus of $516,267 for 2025–2026, compared with a surplus of $79,690 in the previous year. This result strengthens CRCS's financial position and supports the organisation's longer term sustainability and capacity to respond to changing community needs and operating conditions. This reflects a diversified service and revenue base, developing partnerships, philanthropic support and careful stewardship of the organisation's financial resources.

CRCS's complementary service portfolios include Early Education, OSHC Programs, Child, Youth and Family Services, Involve Community Programs and Specialised Services, providing a broad range of services to the community while supporting the organisation's financial sustainability.

Strong demand for theatre and venue hire contributed positively to CRCS's financial result, while supporting access to spaces for community groups and activities.

Demand for CRCS transport services continued to grow, with 30,311 trips delivered during 2025–2026, supporting community members to access essential and social services.

We thank all of our funders and partners for their generous contributions and continued support. We are also grateful for the support of the Snow Foundation, whose funding has enabled CRCS to respond to emerging community needs, including transport support and access to neurodevelopmental assessments.

Prudent management of CRCS's cash reserves and investment strategy generated approximately $122,255 in interest income during the year, strengthening the organisation's capacity to invest in services for the community.

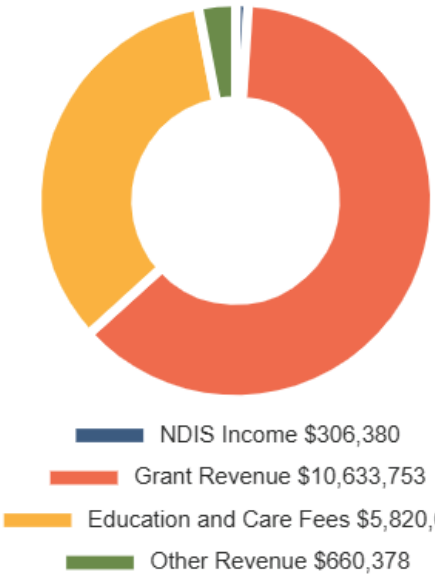
Our partnership approach to service delivery has continued through programs such as CATS and is increasingly informing CRCS's broader strategy. Building on this experience, CRCS is working collaboratively with other community organisations on future funding opportunities, strengthening sector partnerships, sharing capability and developing sustainable approaches to meeting community need.

The 2025–2026 result provides a strong foundation for CRCS as we continue to respond to changing community needs and operating conditions. Maintaining financial sustainability will remain an important focus, supporting our capacity to deliver services, invest in our communities and pursue opportunities that strengthen our impact over the longer term.

Kate Luck
Executive Manager, Business and Infrastructure

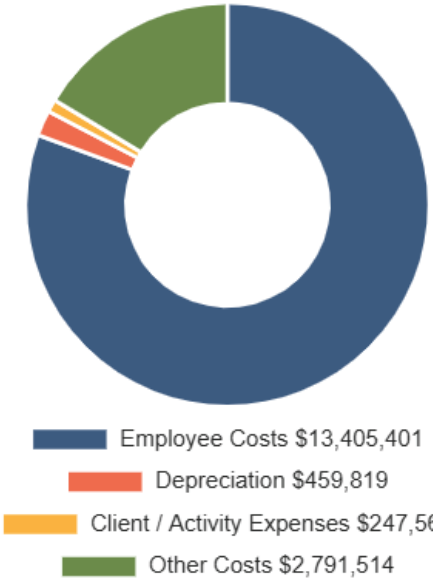
Finances at a Glance

Income Sources



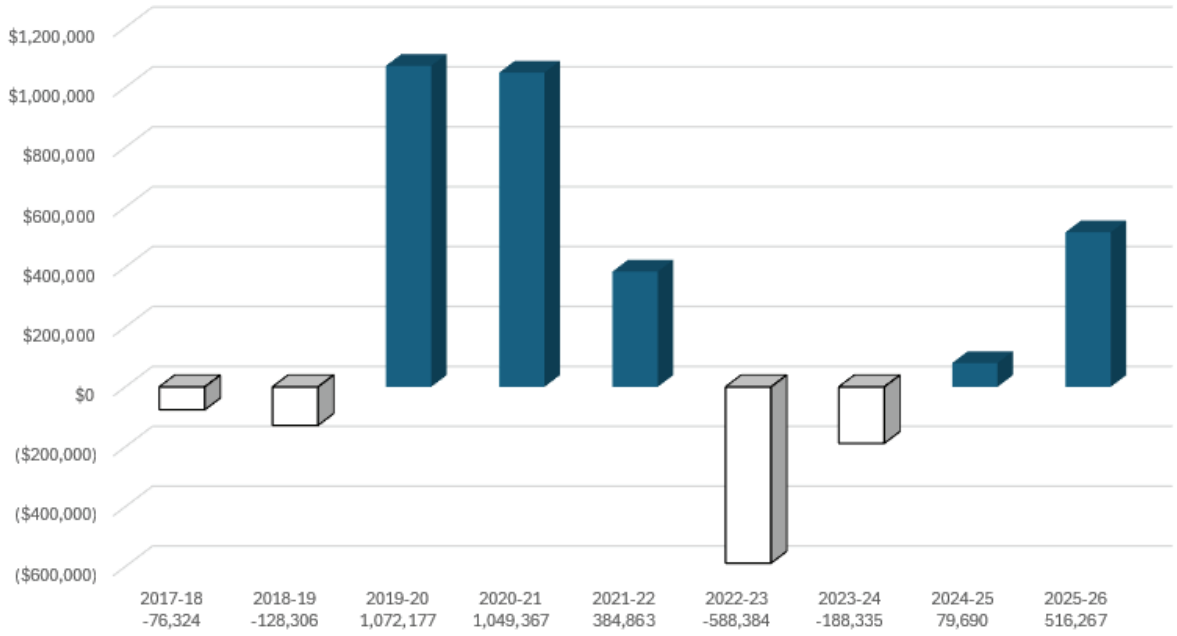
$17,420,562

Expenditure



$16,904,295

Financial Results 2017-2026



Quality, Governance and Continuous Improvement

Strong governance helps ensure people can trust CRCS to provide safe, high-quality and accountable services.

In 2025–26, we completed more than 170 hours of quality audits, improved 200 quality documents and completed 195 improvement actions. This helped keep service quality, compliance and safety front and centre. We introduced new trauma-informed and wellbeing frameworks to help make our services safer, more respectful, more inclusive and more consistent. These frameworks give participants more choice and voice, support the whole person, and help make our services more welcoming. We listen to participant experiences, track outcomes and use what we learn to keep improving services for children, participants, families and the wider community.

We continued to build a strong safety and risk management culture through the WHS and Wellbeing Committee, site inspections, improved safety processes, Toolbox Talks and employee training. This helped employees identify hazards and risks earlier and supported a greater focus on participant and workplace wellbeing. Feedback reporting increased strongly in 2025–26, with more than half of all feedback being positive and a record 183 compliments received. Participants continued to recognise helpful employees, responsive follow-up and good service.

We also appointed a dedicated Program Manager – Quality and Safeguarding to lead and strengthen safeguarding practices across CRCS. This role supports consistent policies, training, oversight and continuous improvement to help keep children and young people safe across our programs, services and community spaces.

Clear policies and rights statements help participants understand their choices, while accessible feedback and complaints processes provide meaningful opportunities to shape their experience.

94%
of partcipants surveyed trust CRCS to do the right thing

9 in **10**
rate the quality of CRCS services as high or very high

Partnerships and Collaboration

Strong partnerships are essential to creating lasting community impact. By working alongside funders, government agencies, research institutions and local partners, CRCS is expanding opportunities for people to connect, build skills and access the support they need to thrive. These collaborations help us strengthen service pathways, trial new approaches and ensure our programs remain responsive to community needs.

Improving access to ADHD and autism assessments

With $150,000 over three years from The Snow Foundation, CRCS is improving access to ADHD and autism assessments for children and families through Wellbeings. Cross-program collaboration between Wellbeings, Neurodevelopment Early Intervention Support and Training (NEIST), and CRCS Child and Family Practitioners is strengthening pathways for families to better understand their child's needs and access the right support sooner.

From the Ground Up community garden

A $10,000 community garden grant is supporting From the Ground Up at Humpy Hall in Scullin. Delivered through our Living Well Involve social groups, the project brings people together to plant vegetables, spend time outdoors and share the produce they grow, creating opportunities for connection, creativity and participation.

Connect Up 2617

The University of Canberra Health Research Institute's grant-funded Connect Up 2617 research pilot transitioned to CRCS Community Development during 2025–26, embedding the program within a community services organisation to support its long-term sustainability. A volunteer-led model now supports the ongoing facilitation of activities that help adults aged 18–39 build social connections.

Bridge to Brighter Futures

Through funding from the Adult Community Education (ACE) Grants Program, CRCS secured a two-year investment of $206,728 to deliver Bridge to Brighter Futures. The program supports vulnerable young people aged 17–24 who face educational, social, health or economic barriers, helping them build confidence, resilience and practical skills while creating supported pathways to further education, training, employment and other meaningful life opportunities.

Pre-Learner Licence Course

CRCS was approved as a provider of the ACT's Pre-Learner Licence Course (PLLC) through to June 2028. The partnership enables us to support young people to complete the mandatory training required before obtaining a learner licence, helping them develop the knowledge, confidence and decision-making skills needed to become safe and responsible drivers.

Our Funders and Partners

Thank you to our employees, volunteers, participants, and community partners. Your support powers CRCS and makes real impact possible.

1 and One Consulting
10 Yards Aranda
A Gender Agenda
A Village for Every Child
ACT Community Services Directorate
ACT Council of Social Service
ACT Education Directorate
ACT Government
ACT Health Directorate
ACT Housing
ACT Policing
ACT Regional Community Services Alliance
ACT Skip Hire
ACT Rubbish Removals
Alderman
ALDI Australia
Alzheimers Australia
Argyle Housing
Australia Catholic University
Australian Childhood Foundation
Australian Federal Police
Australian Red Cross
Baringa Early Learning Centre
Barnardos Our Place
Belconnen Community Council
BPD Awareness ACT
Braidwood Public School
Budding Theatre
Bunnings Belconnen
Capital Integration and Automation
Canberra Labor Club
Can the Can
Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
Canberra Blind Society
Canberra Environment Centre
Canberra Festival Ballet School
Canberra Health Services
Canberra Insitute of Technology
Canberra Raiders
Canberra Region Rugby League
Canberra Seed Savers Coop
Captains Flat Public School
Care Financial
Charnwood-Dunlop School
Child Players ACT
Child Youth Protection Services
Children First Alliance
Communities at Work
Community Law
Community Services #1
Conflict Resolution Service
Cooma North Public School
Cooma Public School
Council of Australian Governments
Cultural Facilities Corporation
Cut Price Skips
Daydream Machine
DeafACT
Defence Member and Family Support
Deloitte
Dementia Australia
Department of Health and Aged Care
Department of Regional NSW
Department of Social Services
Directions Health Services
Dolly Parton Imagination Library Kippax
Domestic Violence Crisis Service
Doris Women's Refuge
Drama Stars Academy
Early Years Community of Practice
Elrington Lawyers
Empress Eyrie
EveryMan
Families ACT
Florey Primary School
Fraser Primary School
Ghawazee Moon Bellydance

Ginninderry
Ginninderry Conservation Trust
GoBoat Canberra
Green Oak Theatre
Grill'd Woden
Gugan Gulwan
Gumnut Dance
Gundaroo Public School
Gungahlin Child and Family Centre
Hands Across Canberra
Helyer and Co
Housing ACT
iPlay Belconnen
Ickle Pickle Productions
Initiatives for Women in Need
Insane Championship Wrestling
Jindabyne Central School
Kamberra Indigenous Cleaning
Karinya House
Kennards Hire Belconnen
Kingston Reid
KPMG
Legal Aid
Libraries ACT
Lids 4 Kids
Lush
Marymead
Mecure Hotel Canberra
Men's Sheds
Menslink
Meridian
Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services
Monaro Family Support Service
Multicultural Hub Canberra
Narrabundah Early Childhood School
National Nursing Agency
Navitas English Language Group
NDIS / EACH
North Canberra Hospital / Calvary Hospital
Northside Community Services
OneLink
OPC IT
Orange Sky
OzHarvest
Palliative Care Australia
Perform Australia
Perinatal Wellbeing Centre
Programmed
Queanbeyan Players
Questacon
Radford College
Reclink Australia
Relationships Australia
Roundabout Canberra
RSL LifeCare
Scullin Community Group
SEE Change
Sentinel Apartments
Share the Dignity
SiTara's Story
Social Outcomes Lab
Sophie Edwards Choir
Snow Foundation
St Vincent de Paul
Stockland Ridgecrest Village
Suburban Land Agency
Tara Cheyne MLA
Tempo Theatre
Think Mental Health
The Men's Table
The Salvation Army
The Smith Family
Toora Women Inc.
Transport Canberra and City Services
Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre
Uniting Care Kippax
University of Canberra
Victim Support ACT
Villagio Sant' Antonio
VolunteeringACT
Walking Football
WaterWombats
West Belconnen Child and Family Centre
Westfield Belconnen
Woden Community Service
Women's Legal Centre
Woolworths Canberra
Youth Coalition of the ACT
YWCA Canberra

Capital Region Community Services

An Inclusive Connected Community

Postal address: PO Box 679,
Belconnen ACT 2616
Head office: 26 Chandler Street,
Belconnen ACT 2617

Email: contact@crcs.com.au
Telephone: 02 6264 0200
Website: crcs.com.au

ABN: 24 597 445 592
ACN: 639 117 061

REGISTERED CHARITY
acnc.gov.au/charityregister

QIC
Quality Innovation Performance
ACCREDITED