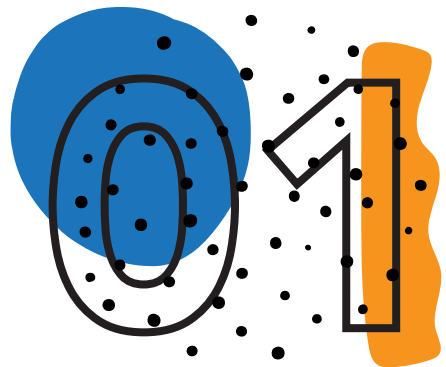


2020 Annual Report

A SAFE, CONNECTED AND JUST COMMUNITY





OUR VISION

We achieve this through leadership, collaboration and facilitating access to resources, support and information.

Our Vision.

A safe, connected and just community.

Our Mission.

To be a leader in building and fostering the capacity of our community to be inclusive, safe and connected.

Our Values.

Inclusion – We believe that inclusive and connected communities foster meaningful relationships and social networks and reinforce people's right to self-determination.

Safety – We uphold people's rights to enjoy places and spaces that are culturally safe, welcoming and respectful of diversity and difference.

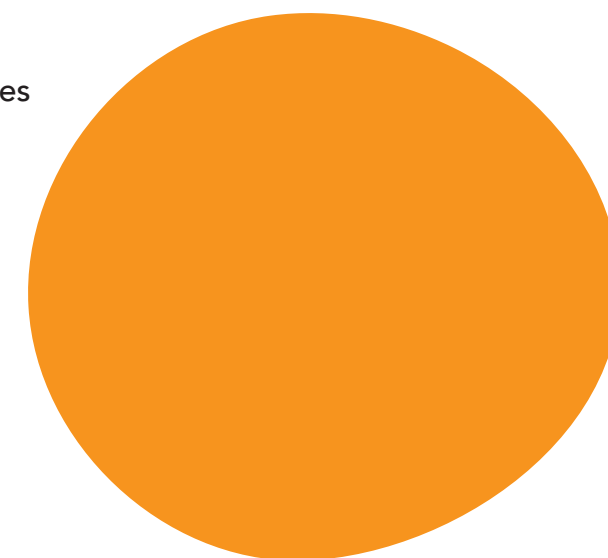
Justice – We believe that access to social, legal, environmental and economic justice is a basic human right for all.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, Northside Connect Inc acknowledges the traditional custodians of the country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all First Nations people today.



03



NEW NAME: NORTHSIDE CONNECT

Following extensive consultation with staff, management committee and other key stakeholders, Nundah Community Support Group Inc officially changed its name to Northside Connect Inc in March 2020.

The name change reflects the fact that we, like the communities we service, are evolving. While we continue to be based in Nundah and be a prominent stakeholder in that area, we know that our clients are from a wider area than that. We are very much a part of the fabric of Brisbane's northern suburbs. Our links with local, state and federal Governments, organisations and entities reinforce this. As Northside Connect Inc, we will continue to be a strong and distinctive voice for the interests of our local and broader community.

Management and staffing of Northside Connect Inc will also remain the same and we will continue to deliver services via our 3 program areas:

- The Domestic Violence and Family Support Program
- The Nundah Neighbourhood Centre Program
- The Brisbane North Community Legal Service.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

How many times in 2020 have we heard the word 'unprecedented'? How often did we think of how strange and surreal our lives have become? How many of us have seen our work, personal, family and community lives turned upside down and carried out in ways that none of us had even imagined before?

All these questions apply to community organisations as well and in 2020, Northside Connect has had to do a lot of thinking on its feet. As recently as a few days ago, our centre coordinator Sharon was talking with me about how the centre is going to reopen for in-person services. I am certain I never thought I'd be writing that sentence in my annual report foreword!

And yet, like the rest of the world in 2020, this challenge has had the unexpected benefit of giving us a silver lining, in the form of resilience. Our centre, its services, the dedicated team of staff and volunteers which provide them, the management committee overseeing it and the community of which it is all a part, have found extraordinary reserves of patience, flexibility and inner strength. It's not only that we've had to do that, it's also that we recognise what will work best for everyone.

We've been providing many of services remotely in 2020 and while there are

challenges in doing so, the results are in fact promising. Like many other sectors, the community services sector is finding that having people being at home more means they can be more committed, more involved and more engaged about what is going on, in a way they couldn't before. That said, restoration of our in-person services, such as the Journeys domestic violence group, English Language Classes, Food relief and social inclusion activities like sewing and yoga remain a work in progress. That's yet another 2020 learning for Northside Connect: rarely is there an immediate answer or outcome, it's more a series of steps to hopefully bring us to a good conclusion.

Is there more to 2020 than the pandemic? Definitely. For example, you may have noticed that we're now Northside Connect. Our name change isn't just a cosmetic thing. It's a reflection of where the management committee sees our organisation, as a fundamental part of the northern-suburbs community. We are not 'just' a service provider, we are a stakeholder, a voice and a way of linking up – the 'connect' part of the name – people with other people or entities that can guide them through challenging times in their lives.

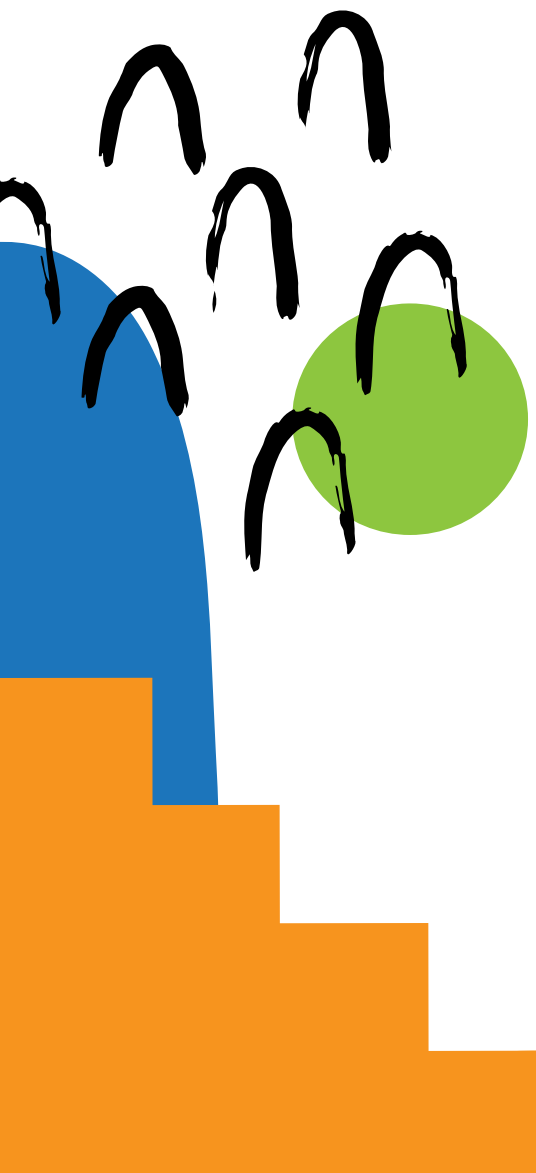
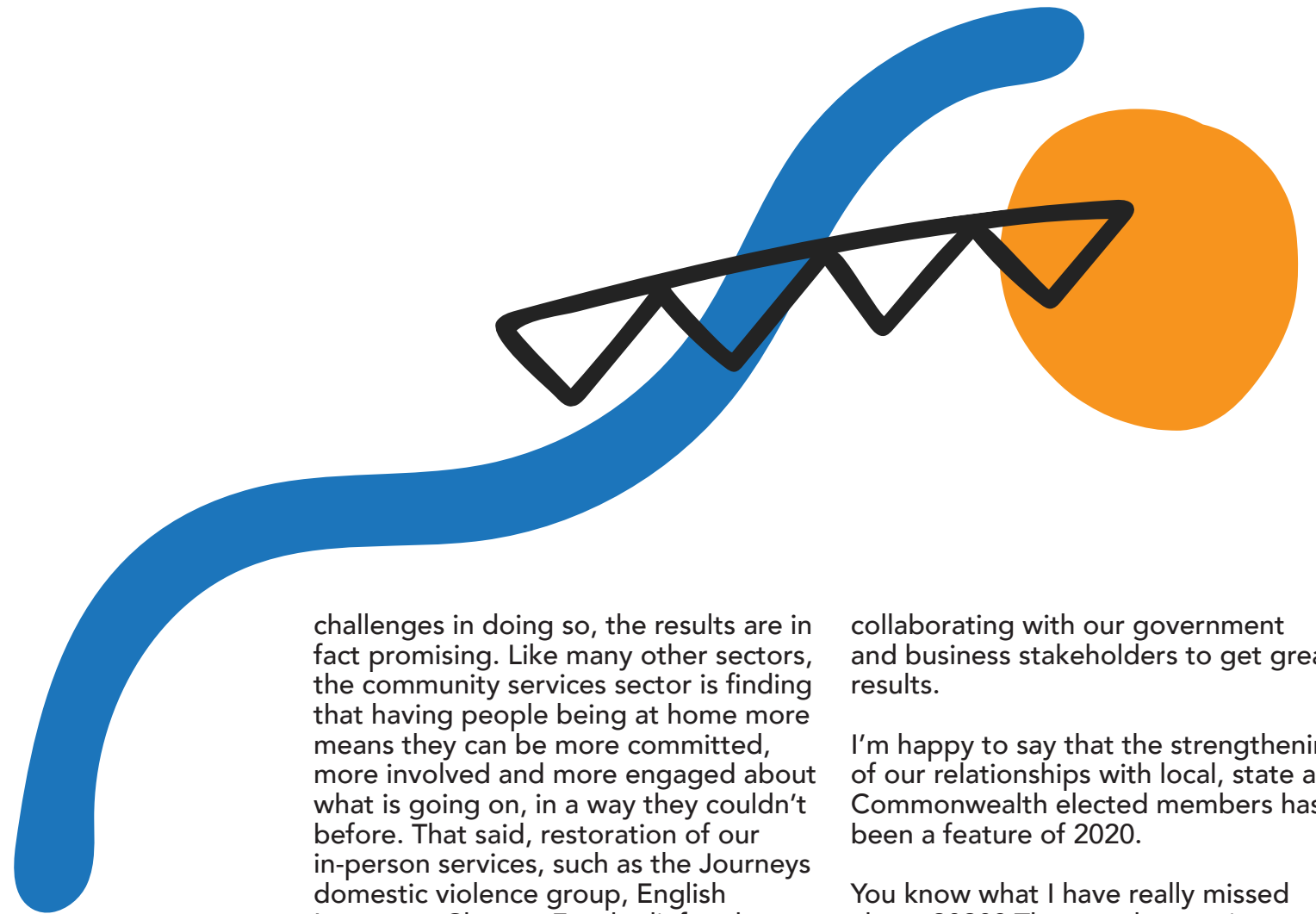
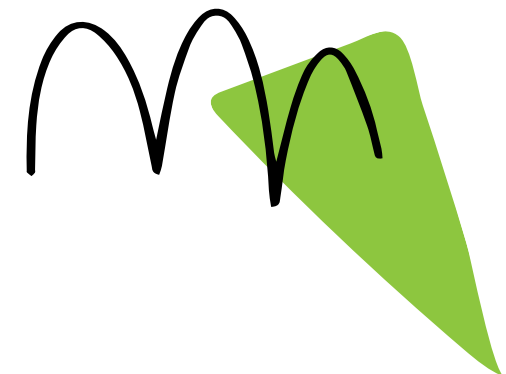
The name also reflects that we want to contribute to our local communities,

collaborating with our government and business stakeholders to get great results.

I'm happy to say that the strengthening of our relationships with local, state and Commonwealth elected members has been a feature of 2020.

You know what I have really missed about 2020? The people-centric events that Northside Connect is an integral participant in: the long-table dinner and the Nundah Festival, just to name a few. Absence of course makes the heart grow fonder, and my anticipation for these things to return in 2021 is strong. I'm sure that is the same for everyone who interacts with the centre. While the year that's been is like no other in our recent memory, I'm pretty confident we can learn from it to make 2021 demonstrably, exceedingly better as a result. I hope that as many of you as possible can be part of that experience.

Chris Irons
President





ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FUNDING

The Northside Connect Inc (NCI) would like to acknowledge funding from the following sources:

The Nundah Neighbourhood Centre Program receives funding from the Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors. The Brisbane North Community Legal Service is funded by Federal and State Government, distributed by the Attorney General of Qld under the National Partnership Agreement. The Domestic Violence and Family Support Program is funded through a combination of both Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors and Federal and State Government funding,

distributed by the Attorney General of Qld. NCI also receive additional assistance through one off grants from Government and Philanthropic sources and generous donations from community members, local businesses and other organisations.



THANK YOU

Maike Hale has once again lent her exceptional design skills to the creative development of the report and we thank her for her time and input.

Maike is a Social Worker with over 20 years' experience in the Australian Human Service Sector. She acquired a graphic design qualification 4 years ago while residing in North China. She has since moved with her family to Medellin, Colombia (Yes! She gets around!).

Distance has not lessened her passion to support small Australian non-profits, even through small gestures such as designing their Annual Reports.

You can contact Maike via email at: maike.hale@gmail.com

Front cover credit: Maike designed the front cover using the copyright free illustrations created by [drawkit](https://www.drawkit.com/)



OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chris Irons, President



Chris Irons joined the management committee in November 2017. As a proud Nundah resident, Chris wanted to contribute something to the diverse community of which he is part.

Chris brings to his role over 20 years experience across a range of roles in the Queensland Public Sector. After 5 years as Queensland's Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management, Chris took up a role in the private sector in February 2020 and is an adviser with Brisbane-based body corporate law firm Hynes Legal.

He is also a board member of Strata Community Association (Qld), the peak body for strata issues in Queensland.

Wendy Clark, Treasurer



Wendy Clark has lived in and around Nundah since the 90s and joined the Management Committee as Treasurer in 2018.

Wendy holds a bachelor degree in Management – Accounting and has worked in small to medium businesses in administration and finance for 25 years as well as running her own bookkeeping service.

Wendy's current role is working for a global software company managing administration staff and accountants in 9 countries.



OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Eleesa Johnstone



Eleesa Johnstone is a local resident of Nundah and has enjoyed living in the community for over 25 years.

Eleesa has a background in social work and is passionate about helping build communities as welcoming and safe places for all residents. She works for Griffith University, School of Human Services and Social Work and has been involved with Northside Connect since 2013 and held the position of President until 2018.

Our People: The Northside Connect Inc Management Committee for 2019 - 2020

Stephanie Ewart



Stephanie Ewart has been a solicitor for over 20 years, working in law firms and community legal centres.

She is now Principal Lawyer and Director of her own firm, Whippet Legal. Stephanie is passionate about community organisations and grateful for the opportunity to contribute as a member of the management committee.



OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Patricia McArthur

Patricia retired after spending her career working for the Queensland Courts, Office of State Coroner, Department of Justice and Attorney General and Victim Assist Queensland.

Patricia is an active volunteer with Northside Connect offering her assistance with administrative support, event management and fundraising activities. Patricia has been on the Management Committee since 2011.



Coralie Kingston

Coralie Kingston is retired after working in the community services sector, government and faith-based organisations for over thirty years - in areas of social justice, eco-justice and human rights.

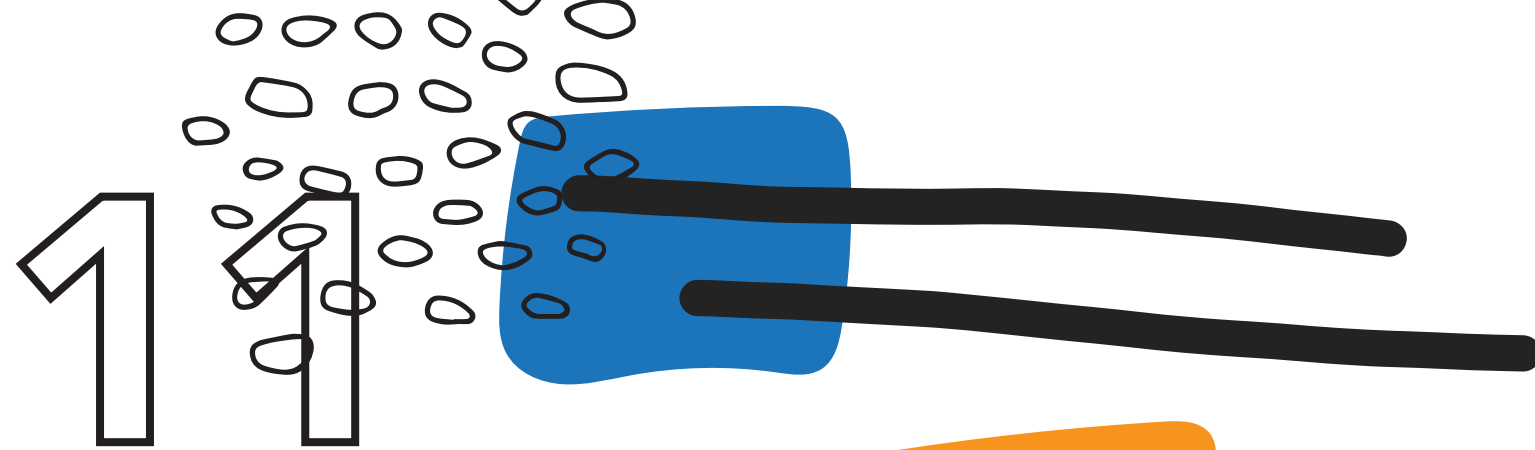
Being on the Management Committee of Northside Connect is a way to support the great work of the centre and its welcoming culture for everyone in the local community. Members of her family have lived in the area since the 1930's so Nundah is a favourite place.

(Coralie resigned from the management committee in June 2020).

Michael Power

Michael Power joined the Committee of Northside Connect at the end of 2016. Michael's experience as a social worker for over 25 years, including management and operational positions, in the areas of child protection, family law, family support, mental health and victims of crime contributes to the broader work of the committee.

Michael is committed to supporting the creativity and contribution of the centre as part of the fabric of the local community.



OUR STAFF

Sharon Gingell, Coordinator

Sharon Gingell has been the Coordinator of Northside Connect since March 2012. She has over 26 years' experience in the Community Sector and has experience working in homelessness, family support, domestic violence and mental health.

The Coordinator is responsible for the day to day operation, management and development of the Northside Connect Inc programs and activities.

Eugene White, Principal Solicitor

As Principal Solicitor Eugene oversees the provision of legal information, advice and referral to members of the community through Northside Connect.

Eugene has been in the role of Principal Solicitor since 2008, was admitted as a Solicitor in 1980 and has practiced primarily in Brisbane, in generalist private practice litigation with various periods interstate and in corporate, public and community practice.

Yolandi Beer, Family Law Solicitor

Yolandi commenced in the role of Family Law Solicitor in February 2019. Yolandi completed her law degree in 2013 and went on to complete her Graduate Diploma in Practical Legal Training in 2014 and has a wide range of experience in Family Law, Domestic Violence and Property Law matters. Yolandi is passionate about assisting vulnerable clients from all walks of life in Family Law and Domestic Violence issues and strongly believes there is no "one size fits all" approach to resolve legal matters.

Lisa Berlin, Social Worker

Lisa has enjoyed a long career with Northside Connect, commencing employment with the organisation in 1993, shortly after receiving incorporation and funding. Lisa is highly regarded for her expertise in domestic and family violence and is responsible for the development and delivery of a number of domestic violence programs including the Journey's Program. Lisa provides individual and family support services through a centre based, counselling focused model of service delivery.



Kellie Darben, Finance Manager

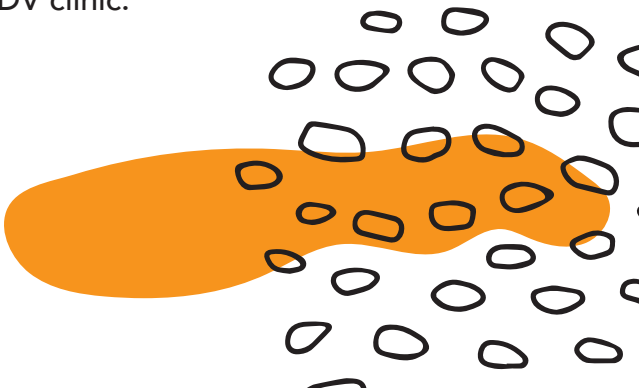
Commencing as Finance Manager in 2013, Kellie's significant experience in financial management has been essential to the ongoing viability and management of the organisation. Kellie provides financial administration services to the NCI and Secretariat support to the Management Committee of Northside Connect.

Jo Money, Legal Administrator

As the Legal Administrator, Jo provides administrative support to the legal service including coordination of the Wednesday Evening Walk In Service. Jo has worked as both a volunteer and paid staff since joining the organisation in 2012 and has been in her current role for the past 5 years.

Jancey Grefstad, Centre Administrator

Jancey has been in the role of Centre Administrator for over 12 years. Jancey has worked in the community sector for 22 years in the areas of domestic violence, housing and homelessness. The Centre Administrator supports the Northside Connect staff team through the provision of administrative duties and management of the front space and reception at the Nundah Neighbourhood Centre. Jancey has also taken on the role of DV Legal Service Administrator, assisting the Family Law Solicitor with the administrative duties of the DV clinic.



farewell

A VERY FOND

TO CORALIE KINGSTON

Our annual report wouldn't be complete without mention of Coralie Kingston and her efforts on the Management Committee and with our centre more generally.

Coralie is a well-known figure in the not-for-profit sector, having contributed to many roles and organisations over the years. As a member of Northside Connect's management committee for 5 years, Coralie demonstrated her passion for the community services sector and social justice and was committed to ensuring high standards of governance were maintained.

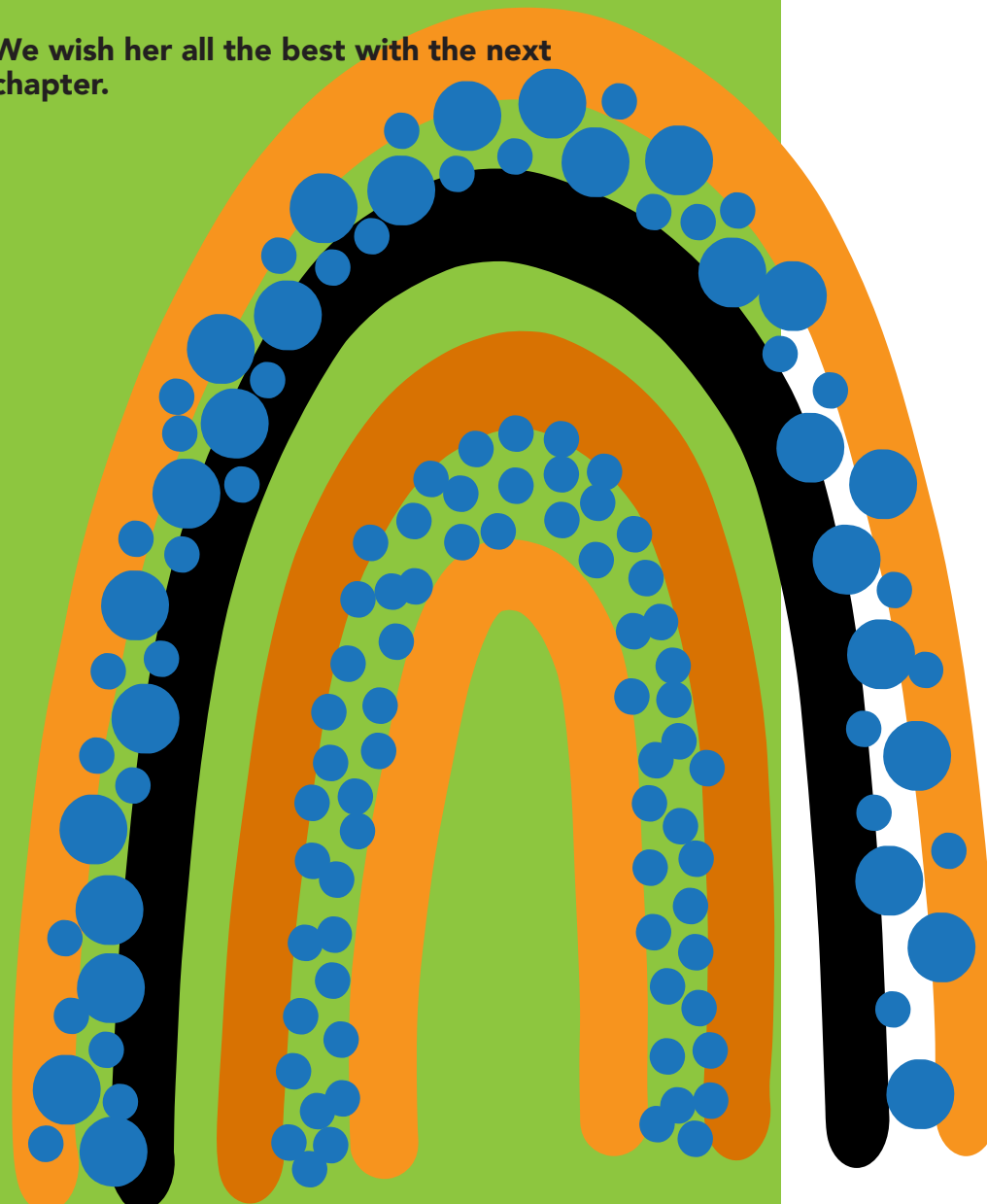
During her time on the Management Committee Coralie also assisted with the initial exploration of the organisation's still-developing Reconciliation Action Plan and took a lead role in ensuring the organisation had good risk management strategies in place. Coralie was also a keen supporter of the Centres composting program and an active volunteer and participant in many of our events throughout the years.

The sector relies so heavily on the efforts of its volunteers to ensure that things get done. Volunteers donate considerable amounts of their time, doing so because they believe in getting the best outcomes for clients.

All of these things are certainly true of Coralie.

With her retirement from Management Committee duties, Coralie's expertise will be missed.

We wish her all the best with the next chapter.



OUR STUDENTS



Second Semester 2019

- Manali Shah, Bachelor of Social Work
- Kyla Ranger, Bachelor of Human Services and Bachelor of Creative Industries
- Alex Amankwah, Bachelor of Human Services

First Semester 2020

- Zoe Butler, Bachelor of Social Work
- Jingjing, Bachelor of Social Work
- Nicky Hickman, Bachelor of Human Services
- Emili Fitzpatrick, Bachelor of Human Services





OUR VOLUNTEERS

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE VOLUNTEERS	ESL	Community Lunch	Garden
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LorraineBethElaineGaryLeonieCarolynAnnabelSandraSue CRoseMartha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BillLarraineDiGeorgieRosaMariaAngie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sue WAinyaRachelAnaRogerCommunity Living Program SWQ participants
	Food Relief	Sewing Group	Events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sue WDavidRogerRichardSharon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RobynNancyPaulineShirley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MatthewLilyTrishMaggie
	Grounds & Maintenance	Playgroup	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JohnAna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nicola	<ul style="list-style-type: none">TrishDidiBrenton

WEDNESDAY EVENING LEGAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Lawyers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Philip AnthonyAaron BallShannon BowndsMichael BurgessGlenn CarthewOnjawli ChakravartySharon DavidKerala DrewBrodie FarleyJason GoebelRachael GoodmanMark Jeffrey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Natalie JonesKiarah KellyTegan MartensDarren MooreDylan MorganEbony MorrisKatrina NathanTarnya NorthAndrew OsborneKate PopeManisha PrasadTyrone PriskGraham Roberts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rebecca RosserStephanie Saint JamesAnthony SandersonLiam SpargoJarryd SpenceMelanie ThorleyStephanie TsimosSarah WardEugene WhiteVictor WongCalum WoodsJoshua Zande
Students (including Graduates)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kennedy AllenMichael AndersonEmily BallardDaniel BarkerWade ButterworthMaryam CataniaJacinda DaviesBridget Donaldson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Natalie CoricaBridget DudaJohnathan GrassoHala HamedIsabella HarrisonKavisha KalamaniAbby MavrenskiTenayah Miano	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Dominique PerryEllen PurcellRowan PurcellZoe PurvisMichael QuirkDavid RigbyLachlan TaylorJulie UbbersenMillie VolckSara WylieJane Zhao

OUR VOLUNTEER'S STORY

I commenced volunteering at the centre after retiring from a career with the Queensland Government. I began employment with the Justice Department and continued in that field across many areas including Office of the State Coroner, Small Claims Tribunal, Victim Assist Queensland, Children's Services Tribunal to name a few. I also undertook studies as a result of my work experience and completed a Bachelor of Science in Psychology.

After leaving full-time employment I looked for ways to continue my involvement in the community sector. My partner, who is a legal service volunteer, suggested I become a member of the centre.

I became a volunteer committee member in 2012, and since joining my involvement grew to volunteer duties in front desk admin. One of my greatest joys is being Santa's helper at Christmas at the centre and the Village when Santa arrives in a police car with siren blazing.

Over the years, I have seen the Centre continue to grow to meet the needs of our clientele. I am very proud of the way Sharon and the staff have evolved the services to continue supporting their needs. We have come a long way since 2012 because of the professionalism and commitment of the staff.



In particular I am proud of staff and volunteer commitment during the restrictions imposed by COVID. Sharon and all staff show such passion and commitment to ensuring services are maintained for everyone. Even though the work-load has increased because of new procedures, staff remain committed to maintaining a robust service. We have been able to restore Food Relief, sewing has again started. Our community book- shelf remains popular.

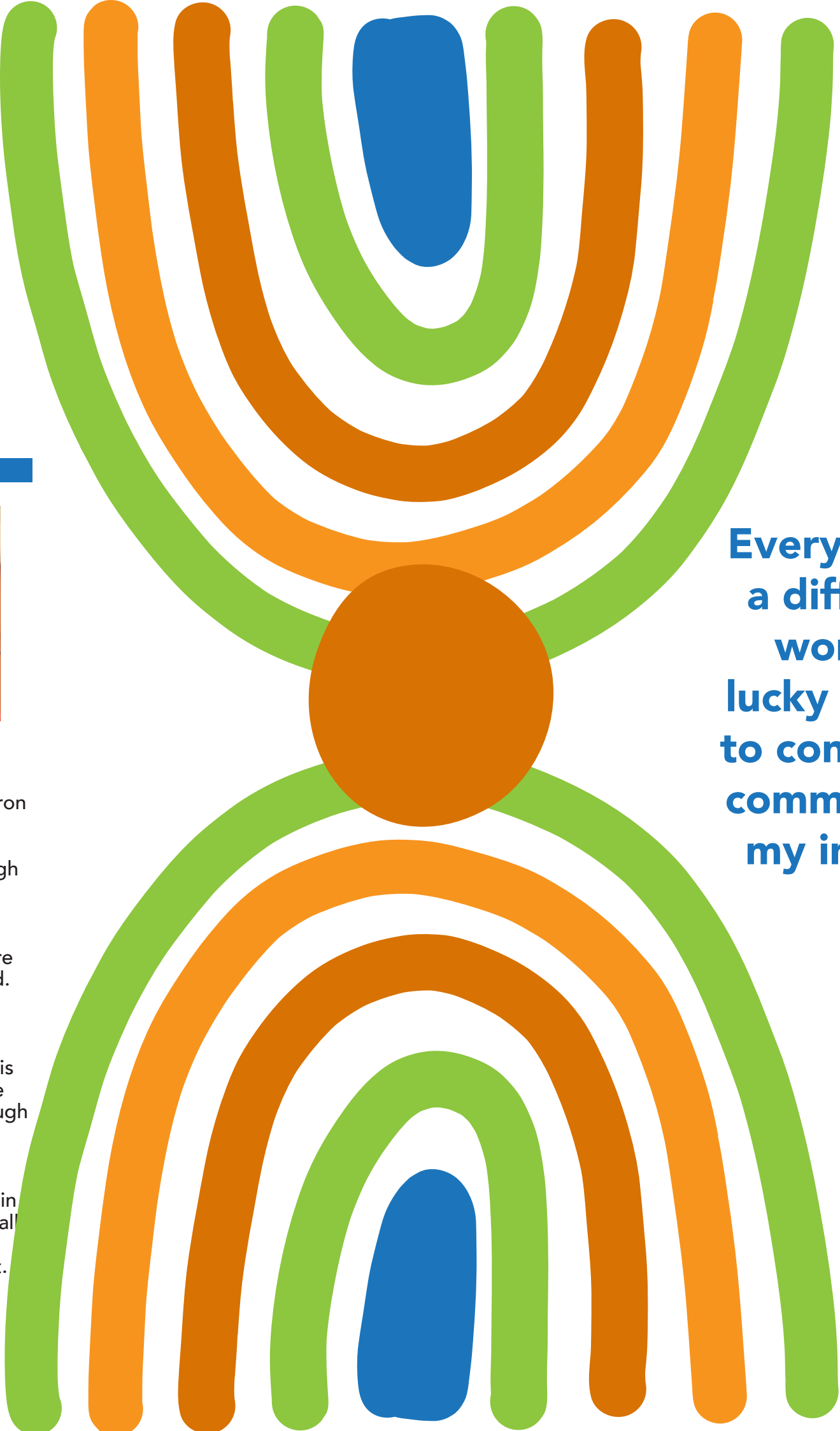
Everyone can make a difference in this world. I feel very lucky that I am able to contribute to the community through my involvement at the centre.

I again just want to thank all the staff and volunteers for their contribution in maintaining a vibrant, safe space for all.

Thank you for letting me be part of it.

Trish
NCI Volunteer

Everyone can make a difference in this world. I feel very lucky that I am able to contribute to the community through my involvement at the centre.



OUR EVENTS

Over 2150 people
attended our events
across the year.

20

August 2019

Homelessness Week - Reel Stories

NCI hosted an outdoor screening in Platform 14, of an award winning documentary US & THEM as part of Homelessness Week 2019. Guests brought along a pillow and blanket, rugged up under the stars with some hot soup and enjoyed viewing this touching documentary.

1-7 September 2019

Guiding Light, Child Protection Week

Guiding Light was an event which aimed to bring together all members of the community, especially young children and their families to raise awareness on Child Protection in Queensland. Following this year's Child Protection Week theme: "to raise thriving kids, parents need support to navigate life's choppy waters" we invited young children between the ages of 2-10 to decorate a paper lantern (symbolic of a guiding light) OR join in our colouring competition which depicts this year's theme.

8 September 2019

Bubbles and Brands Pop Up Shop

The "Bubbles & Brands" event was a combined Champagne Bar and Pop-Up Preloved Fashion Shop that stocked 2nd hand donated designer, high end fashion items for sale. The event was held at the Nundah Festival on 8th September at Platform 14 and aimed to raise funds to stock our Food Pantry at the Centre and assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

10 October 2019

What were you wearing?

The Northside Sexual Assault Action Network (NSAAN), which Northside Connect is a member of invited survivors, community folks, supporters/allies and workers to attend a very special awareness-raising event during Sexual Violence Awareness Month (SVAM). Attendees viewed art installations of replicated clothing that was worn by women when they were sexually assaulted along with a short story of the experience.

15 November 2019

We Care Week, Pamper Day

The Pamper Day is run by Majestic Church volunteers for women who have experienced domestic violence. On the day participants were treated to a range of pampering session including haircuts and style, manicures and pedicures, make overs and mini massages. The women also enjoyed a catered lunch and were given a small gift at the end of the day.

28 November 2019

Orange the World

The 25th November is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. As an organisation with a strong focus on the prevention of violence against women NCI staff helped run a stall outside Kmart at Chermide Shopping Centre. The stall aimed to engage with people at the Shopping Centre about the issue and give people an opportunity to talk to workers about issues such as domestic and family violence.

28 November 2019

Volunteer Thank You Breakfast

The Volunteer Thank You Breakfast, is our opportunity to show our appreciation to our many wonderful volunteers, who have shown such commitment and dedication to the Centre over the year.

5 December 2019

Nundah Now Inc Christmas Party

Nundah Now Inc, worked with NCI to hold a community Christmas party, open to anyone living in the Nundah and surrounding suburbs. There were performances by local school children, sausage sizzle by local Rotary, visit from Santa and a small gift for all children in attendance.

12 December 2019

Centre Christmas Party

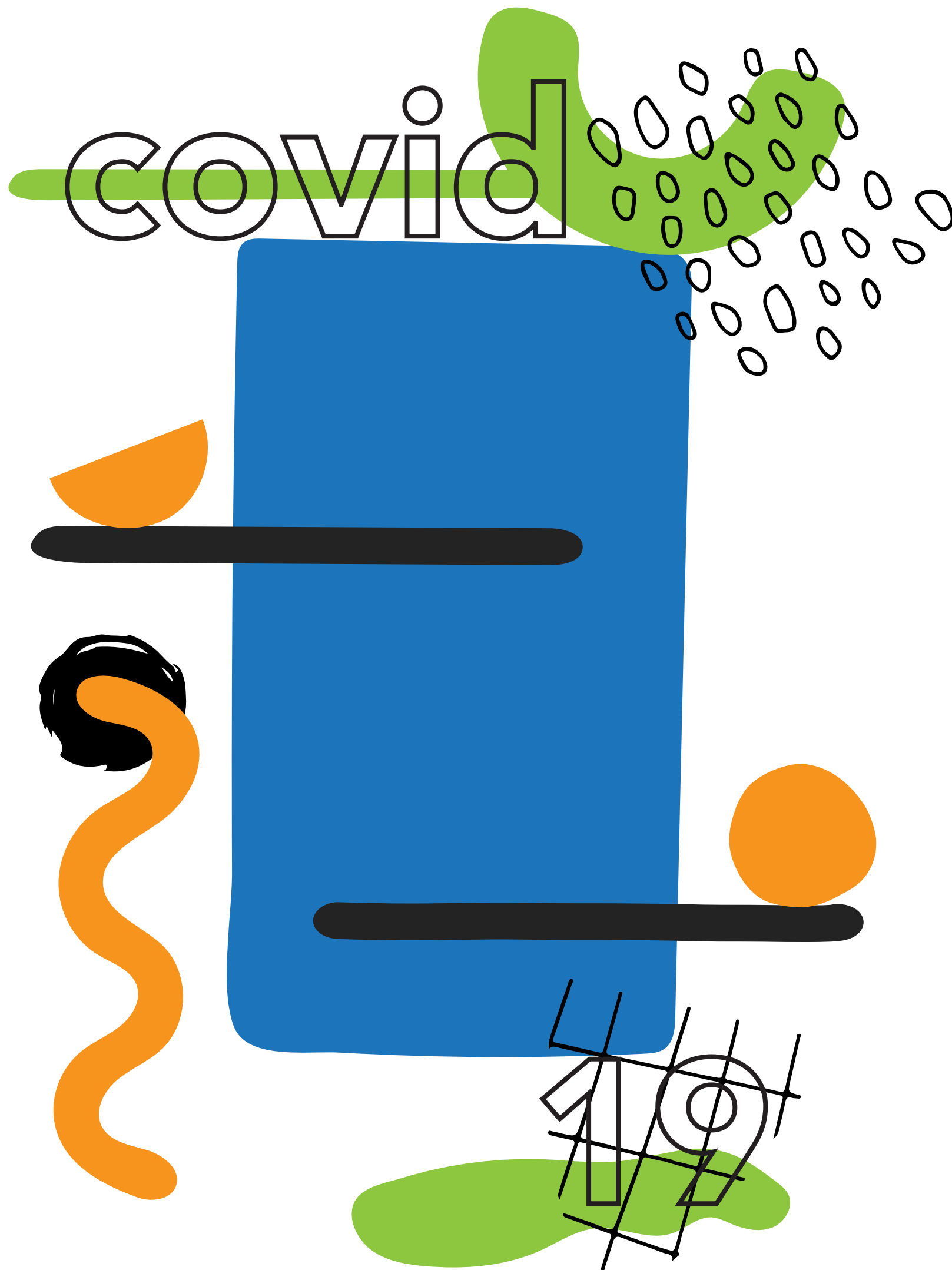
The end of year Christmas Party is an excellent opportunity to bring together our diverse community and client group, celebrate the achievements of the year. With a gourmet BBQ, entertainment and a visit from Santa, it's was a fantastic day for all.

10 March 2020

International Women's Day

The event was a lunch held at Northside Connect and a rock painting activity giving women an opportunity to use creative skills to express the feelings and thoughts on celebrating women.





SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



In March 2020, Northside Connect closed its doors to the community with no certainty of when we could reopen them again. COVID 19 and its associated restrictions to stop the spread of the pandemic had hit Brisbane. The decision to close our doors was not an easy one and challenged all staff, volunteers and Management Committee; completely going against our values and how we respond to the needs of our local community. Having an open door service, where members of the community and those seeking support and assistance can drop in at anytime, have a coffee and a chat, get something to eat or access an activity has always been essential to being an accessible and connected service.

Added to this, witnessing the increasing line up at Nundah Centrelink with job losses; hearing the stories of people's fears for how they would care for themselves and their families; and talking to local businesses about their

challenges of closing down, we knew we could continue to assist some things and alleviate some of these stressors.

As an essential service, we were able to continue operating on a limited basis and actioned the following changes:

- Legal Services immediately transitioned from face to face advice to over the phone advice to ensure continued response to the need for timely, accurate legal advice
- Counselling and domestic violence support services immediately transitioned from face to face to phone or video conferences.
- Staff worked from home to ensure reduction in risk of infection and seamless delivery of services.
- Food relief moved outside to manage social distancing.
- Collaboration with other emergency relief and local community organisations increased to ensure a full response to local community needs.
- The utilisation of Facebook to providing information on emergency relief options, domestic violence and crisis support services and other essential information to survive lock down
- Updating our policies and procedures to allow for changes in service delivery and staff working from home

Nundah Neighbourhood Centre Program





SOCIAL INCLUSION...

Social inclusion and community engagement is evident across all of our Neighbourhood Centre activities. The centre offers weekly activities that attendees don't require bookings nor do they need to meet extensive eligibility criteria. The key to these programs' effectiveness is the creation of time for connecting and building support networks. Volunteers and participants alike regularly share the huge value that results from these activities, in that they not only provide an opportunity for skill development or sharing a meal, but also a safe space to make friends, develop connections and a sense of belonging. Activities include:

- **The Community Garden** – Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers as well as participants from Community Living Association: Skilling Workers for Qld program, the garden has thrived producing amazing produce that was used for community lunches and shared with the local community.
- **The Sewing Group** – Every Wednesday, the sewing group met to share skills, knowledge and make a range of items including clothes, linen items, Christmas decorations, bags, etc. All materials for the sewing groups are donated.
- **Yoga** – This year we added a weekly yoga class to our program list with Carmel volunteering her services. Aimed at all abilities and well known

for its physical and mental health benefits the classes have a weekly dedicated group of participants.

- **English as a Second Language classes - Conversational English Classes** were held twice a week on Monday and Thursday mornings, throughout the year. The classes were open to anyone wanting to improve their English conversation skills, with three ability levels offered. The students who attend come from all over the world, with over 15 different countries represented on any given day.
- **Playgroup** – Operates weekly on a Monday during school term with families who have children under 5yrs old attending and enjoying a range of activities focused on having fun and making friends.
- **Community Lunch** – Is a key activity held every Tuesday. Our volunteers arrive early to prepare a delicious meal utilising food donated by Ozharvest and by lunchtime, the back garden is full of people chatting and sharing food together.
- **Drop in support** – Emotional support and practical assistance provided included: access to computers/internet to assist with seeking employment and connecting with friends and family; free phone access; tea, coffee and food; and completing forms, photocopying, scanning and printing.

...AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

group WEEKLY ATTENDANCE activities



Note: The numbers are reflective of the average, weekly attendance (number of people who attended) at group activities, over a three month period, before COVID.

15861

7027	Emergency Relief
6628	Other
1046	Housing
665	Programs
208	Journeys
132	Counselling
96	Room Hire
59	Parenting/Family

The Total Number of Information & Referrals provided across the year.



INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Our Information and referral services continue to be in high demand. Each day staff, volunteers and students respond to requests for assistance from individuals or colleagues on a range of issues including legal advice, emergency

relief, housing assistance, domestic and family violence support and assistance, family and parenting support as well as enquiries about the programs and activities run at the Centre.

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Over the 12 months, the Centre continued to assist people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness with food, toiletries, clothing, blankets and linen and other items. This program is still unfunded and relies solely on the donations and support from other services, including food rescue services, businesses, and local community members. These supporters include:



- Wavell Slimmers Club who make up individual toiletry bags for men, women and children
- Oz Harvest who collect and deliver hundreds of kilos of donated food to Nundah and other support services
- St Vincent De Paul whose volunteers provide emergency relief vouchers and assistance from the Nundah Neighbourhood Centre twice a week
- Norris Motors who provide significant financial assistance to the program
- Share the Dignity who provided a Pink Box which provides sanitary items for free to women
- JJ Richards for providing a recycling bin to dispose of all the boxes from food delivery
- Our local community who have fund raised for us, donated money, food, clothes, blankets, linen, small household items and much more in order to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable community members.



COLLABORATING WITH...

We could not achieve all that we do without the assistance and input of many other community organisations. This year we had a number of partnerships that supported the work of the Organisation:

- St Vincent De Paul continued their Emergency Assistance Program from the Centre two afternoons a week. This collaboration has been very successful and has led to a number of vulnerable community members who we were not in contact with now accessing a range of services at the Centre including food relief, legal advice, assistance for domestic violence and social support activities such as playgroup, sewing group and English language classes
- Micah Projects who partnered with us to deliver the Journey's Program.
- Neami, which offered the Optimal Health Program to clients and volunteers of the service;



- Sandbag who offered Employment Assistance Services to people with Disabilities at the Centre one day a week; and
- Ozharvest continued to deliver much needed food donations for our community lunch and food relief program and we connected with a range of other services to ensure the people we work with were accessing the supports and services they desperately needed.

We also collaborated with a number of other organisations throughout the year to run events, raise awareness and assist with program support and evaluation.

Finally thank you to Helana Jones Correctional Centre who provided catering for our Christmas party, Volunteer Breakfast and other events; and the bi-weekly centre cleaning.



OUR COMMUNITY

case study

Camilla first came to the Centre to access the fruit and veg and community lunch each week. Camilla had recently moved to Australia with her family after the breakdown of her marriage in the hope of a better life for her children. Camilla also started attending English Language Classes to help improve her English. At the beginning, Camilla was quite reserved and had limited interaction with the staff and

volunteers; and staff got a sense that she was having difficulty settling into life in Australia.

After a few months of coming to the Centre regularly, Camilla approached staff asking about volunteering. She was linked in with a Job provider and was doing some study but was very interested in being more involved in the Centre and doing something practical. Camilla also said that she was finding it difficult to meet new people and make friends because of her limited English and thought volunteering would help with this as well.

Camilla started helping in the garden and with organising and handing out the fruit and veg. Very quickly Camilla started to come out of her shell and you could see that the volunteering gave her a sense of purpose. She also started to make stronger connections with others at the Centre and was often seen talking to staff, volunteers and clients, practicing her English and enjoying the company of others.

Camilla has also been able to get some casual work that she is hopeful will lead to more opportunities and financial independence. Camilla is a valued member of our Northside Connect community and her confidence and interactions with other have improved greatly from her involvement in the day to day life of the Centre.



Brisbane North Community Legal Service



INTRODUCTION

The reporting year has been overshadowed by the COVID 19 pandemic with its massive impact on us professionally and personally; on our community, society; and globally. For our legal clients we saw its blunt impact especially in family, consumer, employment and tenancy law and in QCAT and court procedures. By end of the reporting period we have planned a post Covid19 transition to something akin to "normal".

Significant work had already been completed in reviewing policies and new processes and procedures consequent of Covid19 public health imperatives with staff working from home. Covid19 did cause our targets, like those of other centres, to be reduced in consultation with funders.





OUR CLIENTS



Our generalist service provides advice at Nundah, in most areas of law via our Wednesday night drop in service and the daytime service.

From 16 March 2020 all advices were provided over the phone and then sent electronically. This proved challenging but with some hard work and open minds, we created and revised effective protocols in changed circumstances.

Overall cases have proven harder and more complex both legally and in the nature of human problems - and significantly more time consuming. Beyond those, extra time was spent researching and keeping current with frequently changing public health directives, court practice directions and administrative and retail protocols - including our own, with extra client e-communications and handling of their material which itself entailed heightened risk management.

Provided are examples of how the BNCLS made a difference.

One was a Peace and Good Behaviour matter where the client reported by email:

"You were kind enough to give some solid advice on the process and what I could expect... The magistrate issued an order in my favour. Thank you for your advice".

Another was a consumer matter where the client sent an unsolicited email:

"... following you[r] advice, I sent one final email and they refunded the money... I want to thank you again ... I really appreciated that."

There was an estate matter where a financial institution refused to pay funds without Letters of Administration:

A targeted referral to a highly experienced solicitor led to an effective submission to waive that requirement at minimal legal cost, saving the older client at least a couple of thousand dollars and significant stress.

COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

We continued our valuable Community Legal Education (CLE) work empowering clients – specifically to seniors and students. The Principal Solicitor gave the "Young People and the Law" talk to:

- Grade 11 Brisbane Legal Studies Conference
- Mary MacKillop College
- St Ritas College
- All Souls St Gabriels School
- Kedron SHS
- Craigsleie SHS

Elder Law talks to:

- Viridian Retirement Complex
- Estia Health Albany Creek

Feedback was positive:

"Well received by the students"

"Related to younger teenage audiences"

"Loved every moment of this session. Thank you"

COLLABORATION

BNCLS was actively engaged in professional legal and non-legal collaboration and consultation/ referrals with other CLCs especially Pine Rivers; LAQ and private practitioners.

This has taken the form of sharing information and resources; active attendance at conferences, networking especially at our regular Community Legal Education Legal Assistance Forum [CLELAF] meetings, one of which we hosted.

The Principal Solicitor attended CLCQ Forum in Cairns; for BNCLS, formally

joined in an open letter seeking to end any proposed merger of the Family and Federal Circuit Courts organised by our national peak now re-branded as Community Legal Centres Australia [CLCA] and helped out Moreton Bay CLS by undertaking their Crosscheck.

Since Covid19 struck there was no physical collaboration with e-communications and meetings becoming the norm eg. with CLCQ colleagues, for "virtual coffee".

Stats.

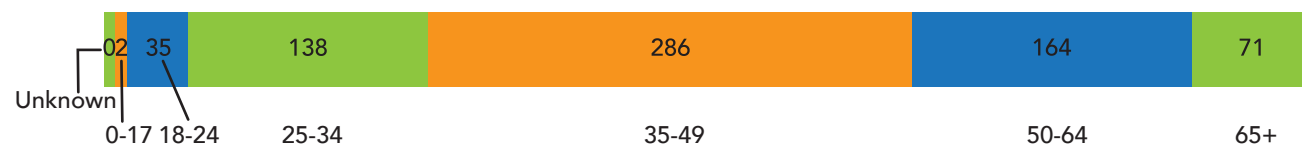
BNCLS (including the DV & FV Clinic)

714
Total Number of Clients Seen

1. Gender



2. Age Range (years)



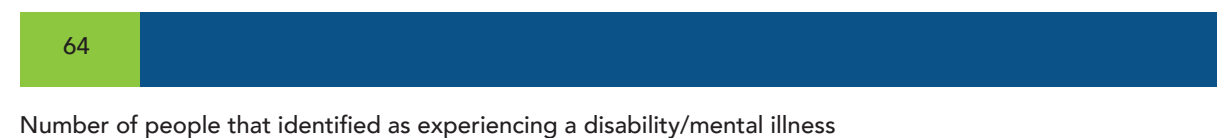
3. Financial Circumstance/Income



4. Families with dependent children



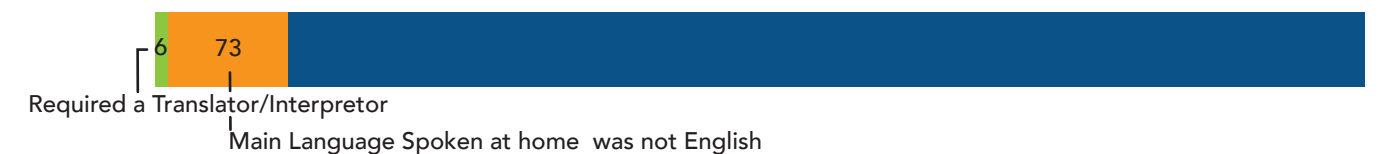
5. Disability &/or Mental Illness



6. Indigenous Australians



7. Culturally or Linguistically Diverse



8. Experiencing Domestic/Family Violence



9. Living Situation



Stats.

714

=

No. of
Clients
Seen

Total
Legal
Advices

=

991

7

=

Community
Legal
Education
Sessions

40

NETWORKING/PROFILE/CPD

As part of the NCI, BNCLS remains committed to a broader professional and local community profile and its holistic service.

Consistent with the philosophy of "thinking globally, acting locally" the Principal Solicitor attended the 2019 NACLCs National Conference in Brisbane [with the Coordinator and Family Law Solicitor]; plus its Human Rights and Employment Networks meetings; the 2019 CLCQ Leadership Forum/AGM PII session; Day 1 of 2020

LAQ Civil Law Training and the 2020 QLS Symposium.

On a sad note, Daniel Coates, family lawyer, ex BNCLS volunteer and NCSGI Management Committee member passed away suddenly; his pride of his involvement specifically mentioned at his funeral.

QUEENSLAND HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Northside Connect welcomed the introduction of a Human Rights Act in Queensland, which came into force on 1 January 2020. It enhances the protections for Queenslanders in their daily lives and in their dealings with public entities and aims to:

- Protect and promote human rights
- Help build a culture in the Queensland, especially in the public sector that respects and promotes human rights and
- Help promote a dialogue about the nature, meaning and scope of human rights.

Always previously focused on human rights, the NCI has now undertaken a full review of our policies and procedures. We continue to be vigilant of breaches of human rights, as crystallised in the new legislation by others, when speaking to people about their experiences and offering support and advice on their options.

Domestic Violence & Family Support Program



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND

The Domestic Violence and Family Law Clinic (DV & FLC) continues to provide much needed legal assistance and support services for the local Nundah area but also to the broader Brisbane North communities. The Solicitor provides legal advice to women exclusively in the areas of domestic and/or family violence and family law. Men requiring assistance are provided legal advice by our generalist legal service.

The DV & FLC provides daytime appointments on Monday, Thursday and Friday from 9:30am – 4:00pm. This allows us to provide appointments during the times best available for women who have numerous family and life commitments. The appointments run for 90 minutes, allowing sufficient time to advise clients and assist with legal tasks.

In the past 12 months the DV & FLC provided a total of 272 advices which included; 107 face to face appointments and 165 phone advices, providing over 354 hours of legal advice at no cost to our clients. Over 80% of these client appointments dealt with issues of domestic and/or family violence.

In March 2020 the DV & FLC faced uncertainty in entering the COVID 19 restrictions and how we will continue to provide the much needed services to our clients and community. We

were no longer able to offer face to face appointments and had to quickly put systems in place to continue our important work remotely but also to ensure safety and accessibility to our vulnerable clients. We started offering phone advices to clients in mid-March 2020. It was pleasantly surprising to note that we recorded a lot less no show clients or canceled appointments.

The feedback we received from clients during March and July 2020 was that they prefer to have phone appointments as they did not have to commute to an appointment when they had children with them or having work commitments. We continue to offer phone appointments and are planning to include this in our service delivery options post COVID.

In addition to advice, the DV & FLC can assist clients with additional limited task-work relating to their matter. To date there has been 52 tasks completed on behalf of clients. The legal tasks are discrete limited assistance and includes but are not limited to applications for Domestic Violence Orders, writing affidavits, reviewing completed family law and domestic violence applications etc.

Continues on the next page...

FAMILY LAW CLINIC



DV & FLC Continued.

Due to the nature of this service it is difficult to determine satisfaction in the outcome of clients legal matters. However, of the clients seen, 43 clients returned to the DV & FLC for multiple appointments for further assistance.

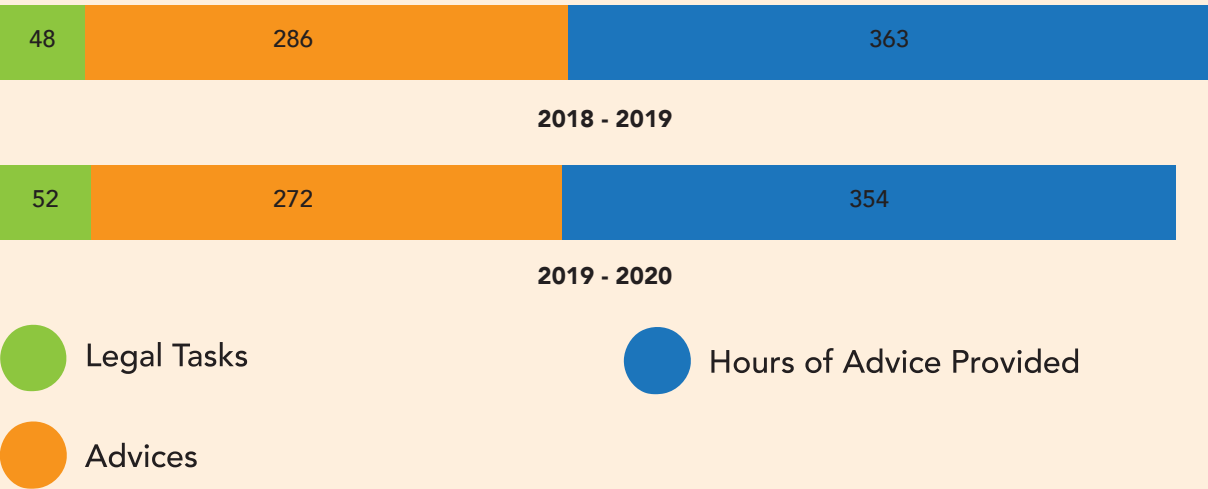
The legal service has a collaborative relationship with the Centre's Family Support Program (FSP) providing a range of services to women impacted by domestic and family violence. This holistic approach allows women to receive advice, information and support based on the current difficulties they are encountering.

When appropriate, outside referral pathways are provided for a wide

range of support services for additional assistance and we continue to build allies with networking partners in the appropriate support services and specialised community legal centres to best serve our clients where our funded services fall short.



DV & FLC Growth



COUNSELLING

As with all programs, the counselling program had to be delivered differently during the early months of Covid 19 due to social distancing restrictions. Telephone counselling and zoom counselling sessions were offered to clients from mid-March. The uptake on phone and zoom counselling was very high with only one previous client deciding against further counselling until she could attend again face to face.

The significant decrease in cancellations for counselling appointments demonstrates the advantage of being able to offer alternative counselling formats as it is obviously easier to show up to an appointment by phone than in person. Even after face to face counselling resumed, some of the women continue to prefer phone and/or zoom appointments.

DV ART ACTIVITY

In July 2019 NC held another full day therapeutic art activity for the women who had attended the previous Journeys Group Program. Wendy Cumes, a local Nundah artist, once again facilitated the full day program.

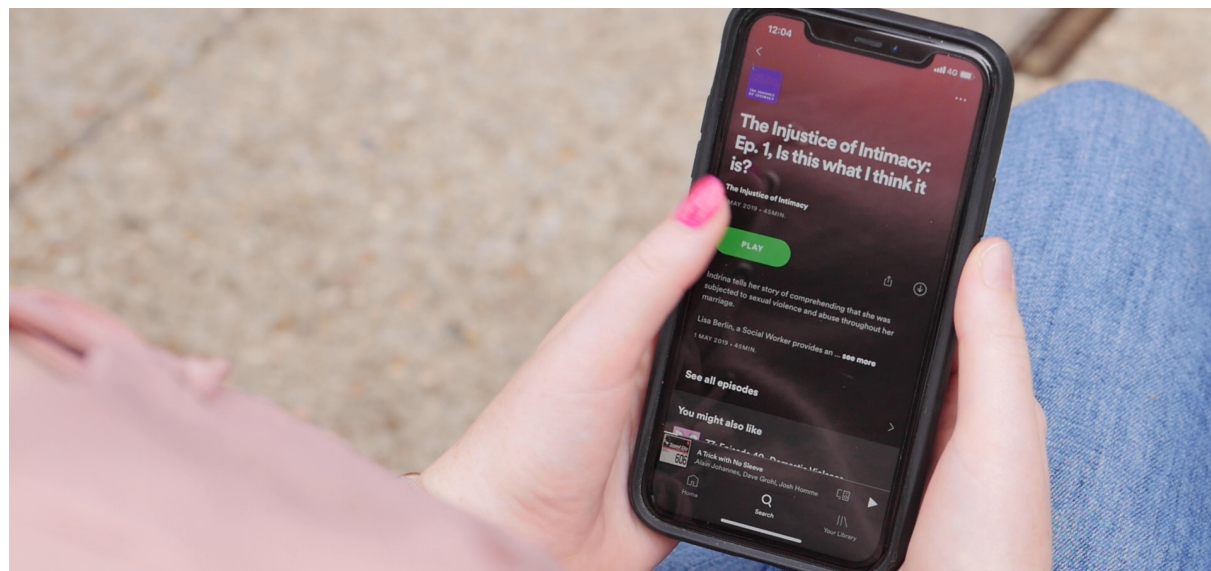
planned, women leave with a sense of accomplishment and pride even if they didn't previously believe they had artistic talents.

This program has continued to be a highlight for women who have completed the regular Journeys Program as it is an opportunity to catch up with each other again, stay connected and bask in a day of creativity. It is both a nurturing and creative experience for the women who leave with a piece of artwork they have created and is ready to be hung on a wall. And, importantly, the way the activity is structured and





'THE INJUSTICE OF INTIMACY'



On the 18th November the Social Worker and the Co-ordinator presented the 'Injustice of Intimacy' podcast (An Intimate Partner Sexual Violence [IPSV] Podcast Project), series to the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) at their national conference in Brisbane.

The 45 minute presentation focused on the process of creating the podcasts as a community development project working with both women with lived experience of IPSV and the professionals who assist women in these circumstances.

Much like the series of 5 podcasts that began with the question, 'Is this what I

think it is?' We began the presentation with the journey of recognizing the need for more information and awareness about this issue in order to respond appropriately.

And, in line with the next 4 podcasts, we reflected on 2) the barriers we faced in making this project come to fruition; 3) how to proceed - the practicalities of the project; 4) how to navigate the challenges, the surprises, what worked well, what would we change; 5) and finally the now what?

The podcasts can be found on all major podcast platforms, i.e. Spotify.



NAADV AND THE SEMINAR SERIES



The Social Worker continues to be an active member of the Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence (NAADV), a networking group of workers on the northside of Brisbane.

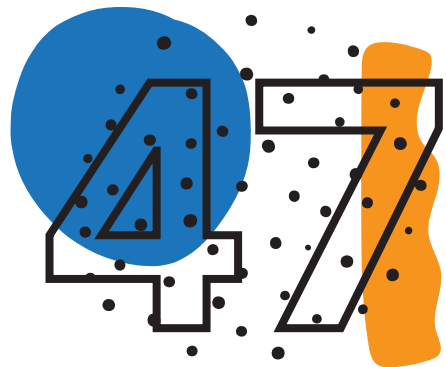
NAADV meets at Northside Connect and holds community education and awareness raising events throughout the year.

In October and November 2019, as part of Sexual Violence Awareness Month and the 16 Days of Activism, NAADV held a Seminar Series at Northside Connect targeting GPs and Psychologist in Brisbane north.

The training seminar series, held over three evenings, focused on:

- 1) DV risk assessment & safety planning;
- 2) Recognising and responding to non-lethal strangulation; and
- 3) Best practice medical responses to non-lethal strangulation.

NAADV continued to meet regularly via zoom once Covid set upon us in March.



JOURNEYS GROUP PROGRAM

The Journeys Program is a free, confidential group program for women who have experienced violence and/or other forms of abuse in their intimate relationships.

The group is facilitated by 2 domestic violence support workers and combines therapeutic and educational components. The program works from a feminist framework and uses trauma informed and strength based approaches to address issues such as:

- The impact of violence and abuse on women and children
- Safety for both women and children
- Personal strengths and resourcefulness

The Nundah Neighbourhood Centre/ Northside Connect has been running the Journeys program twice yearly for over 20 years and demand for the group has grown exponentially. As per usual, two group programs were completed in the past year, albeit the last 3 weeks of the second group program, which commenced in February 2020, was disrupted by Covid 19.

Health concerns regarding Covid saw some of the women choose to stay home by week 5. By week six NC had closed the doors for face to face contact.

In light of these drastic changes the facilitators creatively reformatted the program to one that could be delivered via emails and phone conversations. (This happened before Zoom became a common tool for practice.)

The women were provided with email programs and activities to work through each week individually and then the 3 facilitators (two DV workers and a social work student) divided up the women and contacted them individually by phone each week and went over the program and activities with them.

Given the unprecedented challenges, it was a good result with 8 women completing the program and provided positive feedback.



WEBCHAT WEDNESDAYS (WW)



Photo by Charles Deluvio on Unsplash

As a response to the isolation brought on by Covid 19 a new initiative, 'Webchat Wednesdays' was developed to help women from the Journeys group stay connected to others who were non-judgmental understood and shared some of the same concerns during the challenging time of isolation.

Zoe, the Social Work Student, and the social worker put together a weekly zoom session and chat that lasted approximately 1 hour on a Wednesday.

A flier was emailed to women and the Zoom sessions were scheduled for 4 consecutive Wednesdays. There were 4 regular attendees plus the social work student and myself. It was a new experience for all of us and, aside from a few minor technical difficulties in the

beginning, we can now zoom with the best of them.

The women reported finding WW very helpful and asked for them to be extended. WW met for an additional 4 weeks, making 8 in total.

It was an interesting platform and differed greatly from the more formal Journeys group sessions. Some of the learnings and noticeable advantages included:

- A greater level of comfort from the participants who are tuning in from their own homes – not surprisingly there have been many appearances from their fur babies.

Stats.

160

Clients engaged with the Family Support Program.

70 Telephone counselling

33 Face to face counselling

5 Zoom counselling

41 Journeys program

4 Webchat Wednesdays

7 DV Art Workshop

Face to face counselling

171 sessions x 1.25h = 213.75h

Phone counselling (pre COVID)

55 calls x 0.5 h = 27.5h

Phone counselling

98 calls x 1h = 98h

Zoom counselling

8 sessions x 1h = 8h

Journeys

2 programs x 7wks x 2.5h = 35h

DV Art Workshops

1 sessions x 6h = 6h

=

3888

Hours in Family Support Program service provision

case study

I had the pleasure of having Lisa Berlin as my social worker for the past year now. In this time, I've had an amazing journey of growth, acceptance, understanding and empowerment that I could not find previously, and that I honestly didn't think I could have reached without her guidance.

I had previously seen counsellors and each time I left feeling misunderstood, unheard, over dramatic, confused and more alone than ever. I attended my first session guarded, full of doubt and with low expectations. However, due to Lisa's many years of experience, mixed with her warm and caring attitude I left my first session feeling heard, understood, respected and hopeful for the first time in years.

Lisa listened to me, without judgement, and she doesn't take a generic text book approach. She spends the time learning about me and my individual situation before coming up with goals and strategies to get me to where I wanted to be. From my experience, this is a rare quality and one that has helped me get out of bed and learn to live with my past in a healthy way.

I have had the privilege to participate in Journeys, art workshops and the Dirty Laundry project. Journeys was my highlight and an activity that showed how much I have progressed within myself. I had become a very reserved person. I don't follow through with plans, tend to avoid social situations, and don't like to speak about my

feelings or history in front of others so getting to the first group session took a lot of personal persuasion.

I am so grateful that I did go as it gave me the opportunity to meet others in similar situations when I thought (as many women in DV relationships do) that I was all alone. The group was interactive but not invasive. It focused on what we were going through now as well as prepared us for future relationships. I feel more aware of other people's actions instead of focusing on what I need to change about myself, and how to avoid the red flags and warning signs early on. After these group sessions I felt less shame about my story and more confident in speaking up. I am better prepared for the future and more knowledgeable about keeping myself safe.

Each activity I have been a part of has allowed me to express myself creatively, feel like part of a group and meet some beautiful people with great advice and all while feeling safe and not judged.

I am extremely grateful to have found Lisa and the NC team, and all the opportunities I have been given. The level of support, information and assistance that has been given to me by someone who actually listens, understands and cares about domestic violence survivors after having some terrible experiences along my journey, has completely restored my faith in humanity.

FINANCIAL REPORT

I have great pleasure in submitting the Audited Financial Report for Northside Connect for the year ending 30th June 2020. Our auditor, Arabon Audit & Assurance, has prepared the Incorporation's Financials for 2020 and in the opinion of the auditors, the Financials are a true and correct record of Northside Connect's performance and they comply with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) obligations.

I note for the interest of our members of Northside Connect income for the 2019/20 year consisted of the following:

- Department of Justice & Attorney General Funding: \$268,659
- Department of Communities, Disability Service & Seniors Funding: \$267,255
- Room Hire: \$10,391
- Donations & Fundraising: \$12,979
- Other Grants & Miscellaneous Income: \$78,092

As at 30th June 2020, the total income for the year amounted to \$637,376, with expenses amounting to \$581,031 resulting in an overall profit for the organisation of \$56,345. The bulk of this profit is non-operational income of subsidies from ATO in relation to Job Seeker and COVID stimulus packages of \$44,820.

The final months of the financial year had its challenges, but we were able to maintain budget and have a solid cashflow start for the new financial year.

Whilst COVID restrictions reduced our day to day running expenses of the centre, our work from home status stretched our workplace health & safety, technology and communications budgets. We were grateful to have received a digital grant from Legal Services which provided a new computer server in September 2019. This enabled a stable IT environment but also the smoother transition for the team to work from home.

During the year we spent \$13,000 on furniture, & IT equipment. The purchase of flip tables and stacking chairs has enabled us to provide further facilities for our clients and extend our potential room hire viability and income.

To keep the doors open we spent \$42,000 in utilities, water, rates, insurance, administrative software and office supplies

Our self-funded income has come from brokerage of our Journeys Program. Our fundraising events have been restricted due to the pandemic and COVID restrictions. Our usual Fundraising events such as the Long Table Dinner, Nundah Festival and

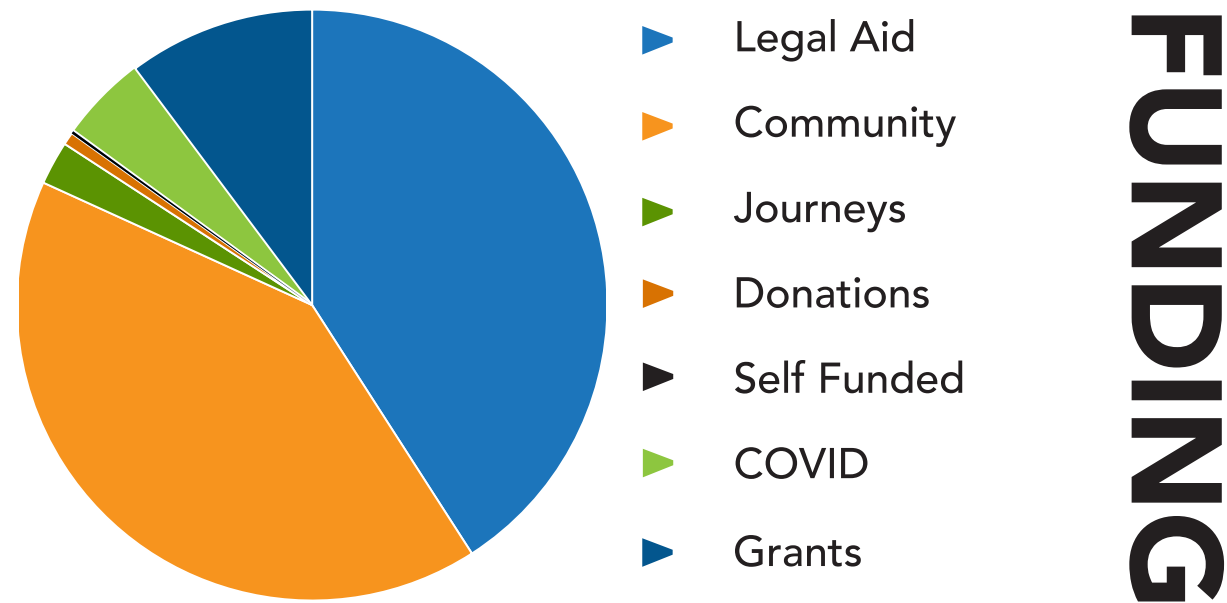
Bubbles & Brands have been unable to go ahead.

Great start to the 2020/21 financial year with further COVID related funds received which bolstered our cashflow allowing us to upgrade IT, security and phone systems, which will improve service delivery and extend our reach to clients unable to access the Centre.

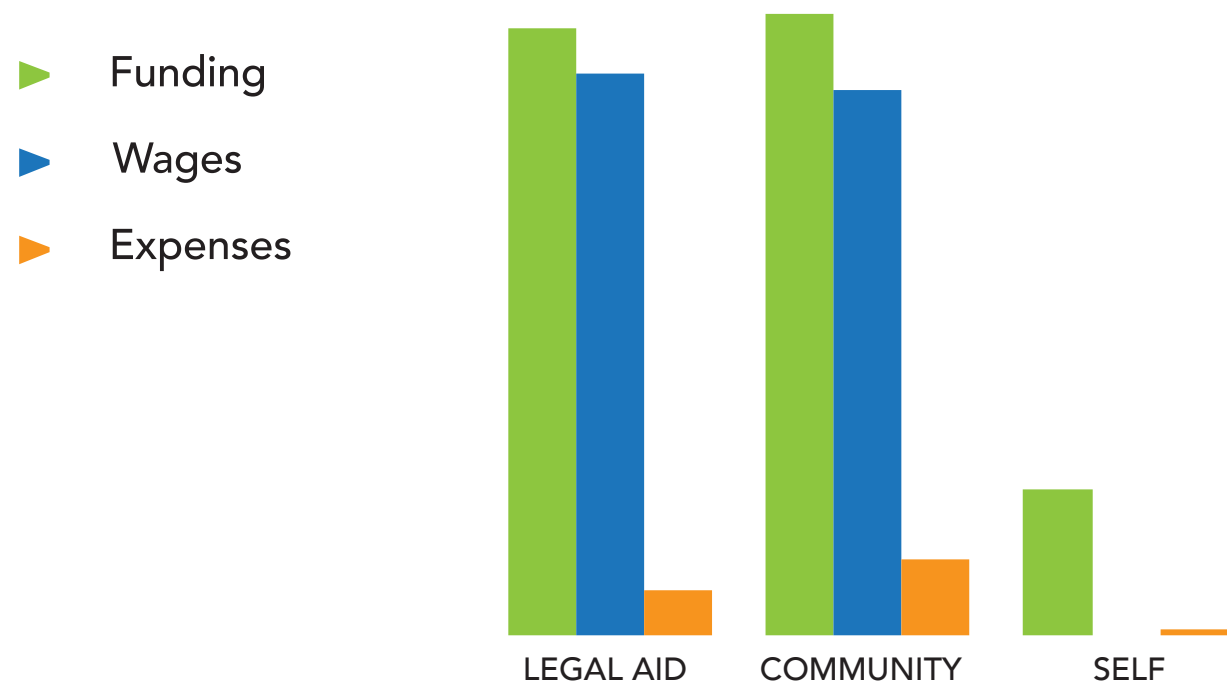
I believe that the organisation has and will continue to have a strong financial platform from which it can operate to provide the essential services required by our community.

I would like finish by acknowledging the staff and volunteers at the Northside Connect for all their hard work and continued dedication.

Wendy Clark
Treasurer



INCOME VS EXPENSES



Nundah Neighbourhood Centre

Real **Impact**. Real **Value**.



NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE FUNDING

\$253,713

EMERGENCY RELIEF VALUE:

Food & groceries: **\$240, 600**

SERVICE VALUE:

- Computer/Internet usage: **\$4,320**
- Auspicng other organisations: **\$637**
- Community lunch, frozen or other meals: **\$21,000**

Note: Hosting of visiting services is not included in these calculations. There is significant additional value to these services, costs of just providing a room: **\$15,625**

EMPLOYMENT VALUE:

3.61 FTE JOBS

Including 2.5 direct and 1.1 indirect fulltime equivalent positions.



VALUE

\$961,178

THIS FIGURE INCLUDES THE VALUE OF:

- Improved quality of life through social connection: **\$426, 363**
- Volunteer contributions: **\$268,258**
- Emergency relief provided: **\$240,600**
- Services Provided: **\$25, 957**

THIS COMMUNITY VALUE EQUATES TO:

- \$3.76** for every \$1 of Neighbourhood Centre funding.
- Over **\$282.70** for every hour the Neighbourhood Centre is in use

These calculations were conducted by Queensland Families and Communities Association in partnership with Neighbourhood Centres Victoria and only values activities where an independently determined valuation method exists.



Supporting our members to build Community
Queensland Families & Communities Association

57



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF OUR



- Act for Kids
- Boomerang Bags
- Brisbane City Council
- Councillor Adam Allan Northgate Ward
- Federal Member for Lilley Anika Wells
- K Mart Toombul
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust
- Loving Nundah
- Micah Projects
- Mozmo Creative
- Norris Motor Group
- Nundah Now Inc.
- Oz Harvest
- Second Bite
- State Member for Nudgee Leanne Linard
- Synergy Constructions
- The Brisbane Airport Corporation
- The Department of Communities, Disability & Seniors
- The Department of Housing & Works
- The Department of Justice & Attorney-General
- The Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust
- Federal Attorney-General Department



SPONSORS, DONORS & SUPPORTERS