



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR HISTORY

Fr Thomas Dunlea OBE, founded Australia's Original Boys' Town in 1939 after being inspired by the youth work of Fr Flanagan in Omaha, Nebraska.

It has continued to evolve over the years in order to remain relevant to the changing needs of adolescents and families. This ability to adapt was reflected in 2010 with the introduction of girls into the current programs.

This necessitated a name change and Dunlea Centre was adopted in honour of its founder. The Salesian charism still underpins the work at Dunlea Centre today, although it has an interdenominational charter.



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CHAIR'S REPORT

“Together, we have shared in individual challenges, disappointment, confusion, frustration, anxiety and worry experienced by all members of our community.”

It is my pleasure to present the annual report for 2021.

And what a year emerged!

We started the year as if we were getting on top of Covid and beginning to live a more normal life again.

Instead, 2021 turned out to be an incredibly challenging year for everyone. It seemed like the inequities that made our world a difficult place to live for the disadvantaged were amplified a thousand-fold as the pandemic continued to spread globally.

The last two years have been extremely challenging - we have experienced two lockdowns and two virtual online learning episodes that amounted to months of learning online.

Staff have continued to do everything in their power to ensure students have been well supported both emotionally and academically. Together, we have shared in individual challenges, disappointment, confusion, frustration, anxiety and worry experienced by all members of our community.

Thank you to our teachers, counsellors and support staff for the dedication shown throughout the year, both on site and out and about, especially during lockdown.

Thank you to all our parents for supporting their sons and daughters, both at Dunlea and at home, especially during the extended time of online learning.

We thank our wonderful board members for their continued support and advice. We especially thank Christopher Lonergan, who is retiring as director, having served on the board since 2004. In truth, Chris has been supporting Dunlea, and previously Boys' Town since 1984. He has been a dedicated and valuable advisor and will be missed.

Finally, we look forward to the year ahead and continue to make a commitment to promote tolerance, respect and equality. Together, let us harness the power of the words and actions of Father Dunlea to build a more welcoming, just and inclusive community for all.



Geraldine Gray
Chair



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

“We look forward optimistically to the new year when we anticipate the borders will eventually be reopened to international visitors and guests.”

After nearly a decade at Dunlea Centre I can safely say that 2021 presented the agency with extraordinary challenges never experienced in its history. The year commenced with the Covid variant mutating again and creating a high level risk to our daily lives with increasing infection rates and growing hospitalisations. The eventual full lockdowns that followed were particularly challenging and confining to the population at large.

However, the ability of the staff to stay involved with the young people and families was astounding. The restrictions that were a requirement of the lockdowns, required a tenacity and resourcefulness from the Dunlea community. The staff responded admirably to ensure young people felt supported and connected whilst still helping them maintain focus on their educational objectives. The wellbeing of our young people and families remained a priority throughout these difficult periods. The leadership team were heavily involved assisting the staff to meet these needs whilst also supporting staff wellbeing.

We were once again disappointed University placements from Sweden and Northern Ireland were unable to gain entry to Australia. Similarly, our consultants and researchers from Nebraska, were also unable to travel and work with the agency. Fortunately, the virtual platforms have become a way of life for maintaining contact and connection with all our friends. We look forward optimistically to the new year when we anticipate the borders will eventually be reopened to international visitors and guests.

Dunlea Centre will continue to strive to make a difference in the lives of young people. Our goal is to support and guide them in making behaviour changes and in turn achieving gains in their educational experience. Fundamentally, it is to break down and remove any barriers they have encountered and equip them with positive social skills and resilience that will allow them to participate fully in society as “good citizens”; one of Don Bosco's favourite expressions.

I look forward to 2022 being a positive year for the Dunlea community.



Paul Mastronadi
Executive Director



SUMMARY OF OUR PROGRAM

In today's society increasing pressures are placed on families socially, financially and emotionally. Add the pressures and temptations that young people are exposed to in society and the media and it makes for a dangerous mix.

It can be difficult for parents to know where to seek assistance when their child is in trouble. Problems such as truanting, fighting, conflict with peers, constant arguments, anger and violence can have compounding effects on already strained family dynamics. The ever changing and developing social media platform is putting immense pressure on young people too.

A young person's behaviour spiraling out of control can have a negative impact on the whole family. If the behaviours are not addressed in a supportive and appropriate manner, they can quickly lead to family distress and eventual breakdown. These young people generally cannot cope within a mainstream school setting. They are at risk of falling through the 'educational cracks'. Difficulties with basic reading, writing and maths are common. Frequently, our young people have diagnosed mental health issues in addition to poor social skills.

Dunlea Centre's program addresses these issues in a positive and proactive manner. We unite in a partnership with families. Our program enables young people to re-engage with learning, whilst simultaneously building their self-esteem and in turn, instilling hope for a brighter future. This is underpinned by the provision of therapeutic, educational and independent living skills and the teaching of social skills. The ultimate objective is to reduce disruption in the home and school setting, leading to improvement in family engagement.

Dunlea Centre has 3 residential houses for boys (Bosco, Ciantar and Power) and 1 residential house for girls (Maria). Each house has a maximum capacity of 8. Young people remain in the program for an approximate period of 12-18 months, although at times some may stay longer. On completion of the program young people may transition to alternative educational settings or into the workforce. There is also an option of transferring into one of our two day programs, Savio or Hamilton.

From Enquiry to Admission

Dunlea Centre is a voluntary program that centres on behavioural change and educational gain. Referrals come from a wide range of educational, welfare and health professionals, as well as from parents and carers. Interested families are invited to attend a Family Talk which outlines the nature of the program and application packs are given to young people who wish to join the program.

Once the enrolment forms are completed and returned, a Family Assessment process begins. Interviews are held to determine suitability and establish goals the young

person and their parents or carers wish to target while in the program.

A Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) is then developed for each young person who enrolls. This PLP is informed by the initial goals, which are adapted and extended over time in order to assist the young person and their family to achieve all stated goals while in the program.

This family preservation focus allows young people and their families to target a range of issues including truancy, conflict, anger, risk taking behaviours, general welfare and safety.

Some young people are at risk of entering the Out-of-Home-Care or Youth Justice system. The hope is that Dunlea Centre's program will have the potential to be an intervention for these young people.

Enrolment Policies

A link to a summary of the enrolment process is available on Dunlea Centre's website: www.dunleacentre.org.au/eligibility-and-enrolment

A link to our enrolment policy and procedure in full, which is titled Initial Access, Assessment, Placement and Referral, can also be found on our website at: www.dunleacentre.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Initial-Access-Assessment-Placement-Referral-3a.pdf and is available in hard copy from the Administration Area.

Policy Development

Dunlea Centre has developed a policy framework consistent with the standards of the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au

Dunlea Centre abides by its policies and procedures in all aspects of its operations. Changes and updates are made to policies and procedures regularly in order to keep pace with current events and requirements. In 2019 such changes were made to the following policies and procedures: Behaviour Management, Child Protection, Student Wellbeing, Grievance Resolution and Complaints.

A number of policies, including those relating to student welfare, anti-bullying, discipline and complaints are publicly available on Dunlea Centre's website: www.dunleacentre.org.au/policies-and-procedures Hard copies are displayed and available in the Administration Area and on request.



A PLACE FOR CHANGE

Dunlea Centre's residential program for young people operates from 9am Monday morning until 12pm Friday each week of the school term. Young people return to their family home for weekends and school holiday periods.

Throughout the week young people attend classes and focus on developing academic, social and life skills whilst at school. All staff are trained in a model of care that has an emphasis on teaching social skills and our qualified teachers have embedded this into their daily teaching practice. Youth Workers support the young people in the classroom, playground and during afternoon activities. All staff look for opportunities to praise and reinforce positive and prosocial behaviours, with replacement behaviours being taught when the need for correction is observed.

Dunlea Centre's Residential Youth Workers focus upon developing each young person's social skills through a variety of real life learning experiences in order to prepare them for positive re-engagement in their home environment. Some of these involve completing household chores such as kitchen tasks, laundry duties, grocery shopping and interactions during recreational activities. These are just a few examples of the numerous opportunities that arise in a 24-hour period and enable the teaching of prosocial behaviours in our program.

Each day Adolescent and Family Clinicians engage as required with young people and their families. This includes providing services such as individual counselling, case planning, family therapy and parenting classes. In addition the clinical team reinforces the teaching of social skills that occurs at all levels of our program and also instructs parents and carers in this.

This inclusive approach ensures that the method of teaching social skills throughout the agency maintains a consistently strong emphasis on praise and correction across all environments.

Transition and Program Completion

A transition plan is steadily developed for each young person as their program approaches completion, which is generally after 12-18 months. The aim is to either return the young person to their former school or a more suitable

educational setting, or possibly commence employment. The clinicians have a strong focus on after-care during this phase of transition, enabling the changeover to progress smoothly.

A step-by-step process is developed to make the transition as seamless as possible. A concerted effort goes into consolidating the work with families during this phase to enable the successful re-integration of each young person into their family household on a permanent basis.

Likewise, significant importance is placed upon ensuring the smooth transition to a new educational environment or work setting. This is supported by the development of appropriate structures to increase the opportunities for a successful outcome in this setting as well.

Tools to Assist Young People Academically and Emotionally

The academic tools used to assist a young person during their placement at Dunlea Centre include NAPLAN (Years 7 and 9), VALID (Years 8 and 10), ACER's Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) in Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, and Spelling; MultiLit Programs and other literacy and numeracy diagnostic tools.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Self-Report Inventory (SDQ) and Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents are instruments that assist staff in capturing the perspective of young people, their parents or carers and teachers over time. Measures cover emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity-inattention, peer problems and pro social behaviour. The Beck Youth Inventory, DASS21 and JUTZ Climate Scale are other instruments that are also utilised in the agency's work.





SENIOR BEHAVIOURAL INTERVENTIONIST

The position of Senior Behavioural Interventionist (SBI) is a newly established role at Dunlea. It is a leadership position that primarily oversees a team of Behavioural Interventionists (BI's). The role of the BI is basically, to work directly with the young people and assist them with behaviour change.

My name is Kellee Purcell. As I grew up locally and attended school at Bosco Primary and later, Bosco College, I was acutely aware of the existence of Dunlea Centre. From a very young age I devoted my spare time to playing netball, basketball and touch football.

This passion for sport led me into a career involving personal training with a particular focus on empowering women. I utilised movement to help women build their confidence, strength and resilience, both physically and mentally. Before commencing at Dunlea Centre, I worked with young girls at Kincoppal running an after school gym program for the residential students.

I commenced at Dunlea Centre in 2015 and have undertaken a number of different positions over time. One of these roles included a Life Skills Social Educator in the Maria House, which lasted for 3 years. The implementation of the Teaching Family Model (TFM) in 2019 meant youth workers were now assisting in different classes across the entire agency. This led to the creation of the SBI, designed to lead and assist BI's and I feel most fortunate to have been offered this lively commission.

The SBI ensures the BI's provide instructional and behavioural support. Young people often present with challenging behaviours and assisting them to acquire the appropriate social skills is crucial. The delivery of the Teaching Family Model (TFM) of care has produced incredible success for our young people with outstanding results overall.

I truly believe in the mission at Dunlea Centre, *Australia's Original Boys' Town*. Assisting young people reach their full potential is my daily inspiration.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a professional netball player or a teacher.

Favourite TV Show?

I have loved Home & Away since I was little but more recently Survivor & SAS Australia are also favourites.

Favourite Breakfast?

Avocado, tomato and eggs on toast.

What is next on your travel bucket list?

Italy



Kellee Purcell
Senior Behaviour Interventionist



PARLIAMENTARY MEDAL

Dunlea's student of the year received the prestigious Parliamentary Medal and certificate in recognition of his continued application to self-development. We congratulate Noah on this outstanding achievement.

An enormously challenging year has concluded. Many great accomplishments were realised in 2021 and we are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and determination displayed by Dunlea students.

Mr Lee Evans MP presented the Parliamentary Medal to Noah and said:

"Fantastic morning at Dunlea Centre recognising Noah, recipient of the Heathcote Parliamentary Award 2021!"

Noah is extremely deserving of this recognition. He is dedicated to his education, displays strong leadership as Captain and is always supportive of his peers.

Noah is a lovely young man with a bright future and I wish him all the best! Congratulations Noah!."





R U OK? DAY

The 2021 message was: "Are they *really* OK? Ask them today."

Dunlea Centre participated in a range of initiatives to celebrate and acknowledge R U OK? Day. It was a reminder that it is important for us all to stay connected and to start this very important conversation.

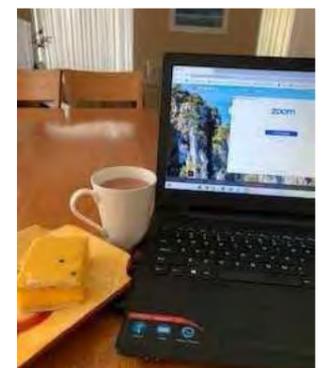
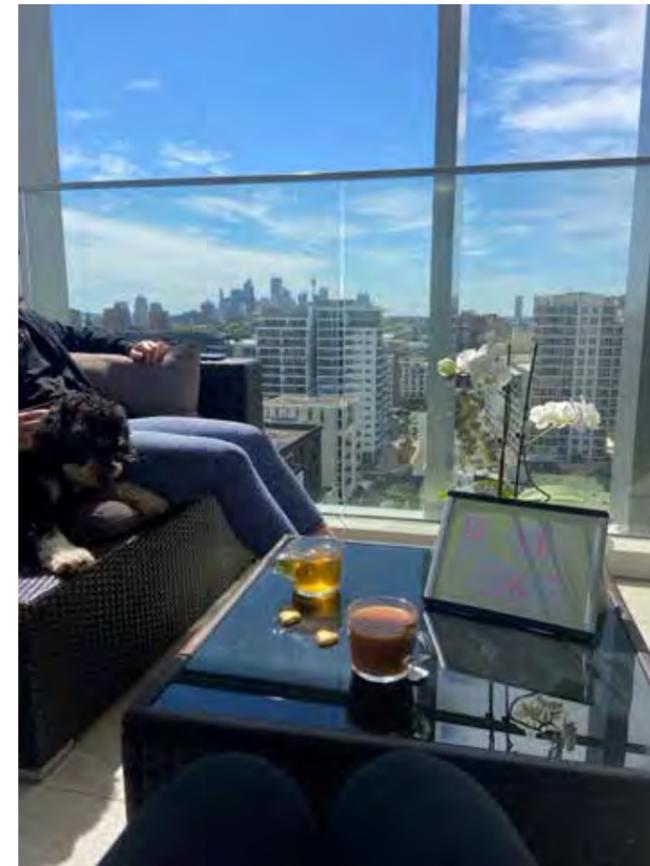
We know that adolescents are most likely to talk to their friends or family first if they are struggling. That's why it is vital that we support our young people with the necessary skills to ask for help or know how to support somebody else in need.

The challenges we have all faced in recent times have undoubtedly pushed us to acknowledge the importance of social connection and to think about how we maintain strong social and emotional bonds with those closest to us, even during those times we are physically distanced.

Like many educational institutions, organisations and services, Dunlea Centre adjusted their service delivery throughout 2021. The driving question was (and always will be), how can we remain connected to our young people and families?

Dunlea Centre ensured all enrolled young people and their families were supported during physical distancing and we maintained regular contact in creative and purposeful ways. Fortnightly remote group parenting support sessions were also provided for parents/carers that helped create a space of belonging, connection and validation.

R U OK? Day is a national day of action dedicated to empowering and encouraging everyone to have a meaningful conversation and lend support to those having a difficult time. It's a reminder that every day is the day to ask, "Are you okay?" It's about recognising warning signs when someone might be struggling and having the confidence to start a conversation. That conversation could be life changing.





EDUCATIONAL REPORT

2021, a year to forget, yet we will always remember. It was the third year of the implementation of TFM, (Boys' Town Omaha Teaching Family Model). From a staff perspective, it has proven to be a most effective model for improving student academic outcomes and developing social skills.

Although the year had its challenges, especially in Term 3, it didn't deter the Dunlea young people who quite impressively, remained engaged and committed to their specific programs. They adapted well to remote learning and with the quick-thinking and naturally supportive nature of all the Dunlea staff, there was little disruption to their academic progress. The Agency opted for work from home packs, with zoom check-ins throughout the day, as it was acknowledged there was a natural struggle with teens using computers. It was decided that the 'old school' paper-approach would reduce pressure on families in managing device-usage at home.

In addition to the plethora of challenges of 2021, it was Dunlea Centre's inaugural year of delivering the Stage 6 program. Dunlea has opted for a compressed curriculum approach to Prelim/HSC for students in year 11 and 12. The program encountered uncertainty around the HSC actually occurring, due to several lockdowns and further restrictions as a result of the escalating COVID infections. Nonetheless, once again, the young people of Dunlea showed great resilience through adversity and if anything, solidified their resolve as they advantageously utilised the additional weeks provided to their studies.

Three subjects were covered in the first year, Work Studies, English Standard and PDHPE. Pleasingly, there were several positive reports from supervising employers in the Work Studies area. Dunlea young people achieved great marks in English Standard with the majority of the group scoring Band 3 and 4 in the HSC markings. Correspondingly, there were great results in PDHPE with a similar spread of marks.

As always, Dunlea is delighted with the achievements of the young people and even more so when considering the challenges of 2021.



RESIDENTIAL REPORT

2021 in the residential arena was a year full of challenges, resilience and wins. The year commenced with a residential program full of ambitious young people and energetic staff. As all houses grew with new young people, so did the sense of community, which embraced a strong focus on building and maintaining positive cultures.

The residential team continued to build on the quarterly review process for the young people. This has empowered them to reflect and take ownership of their programs. Dunlea young people were diligent in the preparation and participation in these reviews. Many parents were visibly proud of their children's involvement in this process.

The first recognition ceremony of 2021 took place at the end of Term 1. New young people were officially welcomed to the residential program and several existing young people's progress levels in the motivation system were acknowledged. Families enjoyed visiting residential houses and the Easter morning tea activities that transpired.

At the outset of Term 2, a sense of confidence permeated through the residential environment. Although Covid-19 was still lurking in the background, the residential staff forged ahead with enthusiasm and positivity. They busily taught to the individual goals and target skills of each young person, incorporating team building and ice breaker activities into the weekly routines. This had the pleasing effect of improving their peer relational skills.

In June, COVID lockdown was announced for schools in NSW. The residential team worked tirelessly to plan creative ways to engage the young people remotely. They scheduled regular evening phone calls and building zoom skills sessions. Maintaining activities in the virtual form kept the young people engaged with one another. The residential young people focused on skills they were already using at home and explored ways to further assist in the restrictive COVID situation. The residential team kept their teaching skills fresh to maximize student engagement.

Eagerly, staff and young people awaited the return to school, face to face, at the commencement of Term 4. Although this was slightly delayed, 93% of residential young people returned on the first official day back. A big effort was made by everyone to regain a sense of normality and structure, which had been lost because of the lockdowns. The majority of young people transitioned well with only a few experiencing minor setbacks. The residential staff worked closely with the families in reestablishing routines and expectations.

As the year drew to a close, the final recognition ceremony was able to go ahead on a bright sunny Friday morning. Nonetheless, by the time the ceremony commenced, the heavens decided to open wide and furiously and a wild storm ensued. It did not dampen festivities though, as the hard work and commitment displayed by Dunlea young people throughout the year, was acknowledged and witnessed by proud parents, carers and staff.

We wish the graduates of 2021 every success and look forward to 2022 and what's to come!





2021 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Stage 6 compressed curriculum is launched for the first time at Dunlea Centre
- Senior Behavioural Interventionist (SBI) appointed – Kellee Purcell
- Successful implementation of Tier 1 meetings for classroom behaviour
- Common Sense Parenting (CSP) recommenced in February
- Father John Briffa, SDB, OAM, former Boys Town Teacher & Parish Priest - turns 93
- Engagement & membership with the Teaching Family Association (TFA) in 2021
- Tom Bowerman (Berry St) & Executive Director meet in Melbourne
- R U OK? Day - September 9th with Lee Evans MP linked in with the Executive Director
- Flexible & creative engagement continues with young people during the lockdown period
- Salesian Provincial, Fr Will Matthews visit to Dunlea - Nov 9th
- APSPA - virtual meetings continued throughout the year without face to face events
- NESAs registration approval for Years. 7-10- 2025, Years 11-12- 2022 (12-month review).
- ACSSES - virtual meetings also continued throughout the year
- End of Year ceremony to mark the first seniors and the first aftercare graduates
- Fr John Papworth appointed the Rector and Chaplain - 2022



Dunlea Centre Leadership Team with Mr Lee Evans MP.



STAFF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A diverse range of qualified and experienced staff are employed at Dunlea Centre across a variety of positions brought together in a multidisciplinary framework.

These qualifications incorporate the areas of teaching, special education, psychology and psychological sciences, counselling, social work, business administration, financial management, governance, youth work, community services, trades, ministry and residential care.

Currently, there are 9 qualified and registered teachers with a range of focus KLA's across the curriculum. Additionally, there are 5 Behavioural Interventionists, 8 Residential Youth Workers and Clinical support team of 4 psychologists and a social worker. These direct care roles are supported by the Leadership Team, Administration personnel and Facilities department.

Eight staff members hold post-graduate qualifications, fifteen are graduates with a further thirteen holding TAFE or equivalent qualifications related to their positions. Several staff members are currently undertaking further study in special education, forensic mental health, MBA and counselling.

The average attendance rate of staff in 2021 was above 97%.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact face-to-face training and professional development courses. The majority of learning moved to an online platform and the staff displayed dedication to upskilling and increasing knowledge to assist young people and families. Training courses in all formats in 2021 included:

Boys' Town Intervention and Assessment, Common Sense Parenting, Anaphylaxis, Child Protection, Reportable Conduct, Work Health and Safety, Governance, Fire Safety, Bronze Medallion, First Aid, CPR, Disability Standards,

Professional Boundaries, Data Gathering, Finance, Risk Management, IT, Education Law, Infectious Disease Control and various mental health courses.

Professional networks and relationships provide further opportunities for Dunlea Centre to engage with industry specialists and experts thus improving service delivery. COVID-19 restrictions continued to affect face-to-face, relationships were successfully maintained with other NGO's and associated agencies through online connections. These include the Association of Independent Schools (AIS), John Berne Lewisham, Catholic Social Services (CSS), Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) and numerous schools and education services from the State, Catholic and Independent sectors. Despite the inability to engage in student placements, the Leadership Team continue to maintain professional links with Lund University Sweden, Ulster University Belfast, St Patricks School Malta and various Australian Universities. In 2021 Dunlea Centre was fortunate to become involved with the Teaching Family Association (TFA) who oversee the quality implementation of the Teaching Family Model in agencies on an international level, with members from many different countries. Dunlea Centre is seeking to become accredited with TFA over the next 2 years.

Boys' Town Omaha based in Nebraska, USA have been generously supporting Dunlea Centre over the last several years. Changes in their internal systems has resulted in direct support being reduced but highly experienced and dedicated practitioner Lori Scharff continues to work on a consultancy basis to provide ongoing practical assistance currently through online platforms due to COVID-19.





COMMON SENSE PARENTING®

In 2021, Dunlea Centre continued to facilitate Boys Town's Common Sense Parenting® (CSP) program. Common Sense Parenting® is a group-based class for parents/carers comprised of 6 weekly, 2-hour sessions led by the Adolescent and Family Clinicians (accredited trainers).

The program teaches practical skills to increase children's positive behaviour, decrease negative behaviour, and model appropriate alternative behaviours. The program aims to equip parents with valuable skills to help build healthy family relationships, communicate effectively and overall develop a positive approach to parenting.

The course components are organised in the following way:

Session 1 - Parents are Teachers

- Effective Discipline
- Describing Behaviour
- Using Consequences to Change Behaviour

Session 2 - Encouraging Positive Behaviour

- Giving Kids Reasons
- Using Effective Praise to Increase Positive Behaviours

Session 3 - Preventing Problems

- Teaching Social Skills
- Using Preventive Teaching to Set Children up for Success

Session 4 - Correcting Problem Behaviour

- Staying Calm
- Using Corrective Teaching to Stop Problem Behaviours and Teach Alternate Behaviours

Session 5 - Teaching Self-Control

- Developing a Safe Home Plan
- Using Teaching Self-Control when Children are not Cooperating or having an Emotional Outburst

Session 6 - Putting it all Together

- Family Meetings
- Establishing Family Routines and Traditions
- Developing a Parenting Plan for using all of the Common Sense Parenting® Skills

As represented in Figure 1, a total of 25 parents/carers completed Common Sense Parenting® in 2021. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, CSP was unable to be facilitated in Term 3.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, each parent participating in the course were asked to complete two questionnaires at the commencement and completion of the group. These were the Parenting Children and Adolescents (PARCA) Scale and the Parental Stress Scale (PSS). Workshop evaluations were also completed, providing an opportunity for parents to share any feedback with the facilitators.

As reflected in Figure 2, 88% of parents achieved an improvement in their overall scores on the PARCA Scale and 88% of parents saw an overall reduction in their stress levels, as reflected by the PSS.

Another important element of the Common Sense Parenting® group, is the creation of an environment that is welcoming, non-judgemental and informative. Below is some of the feedback we received from parents:

"It changed my whole view of parenting. I realised that my job is to teach and to support them. I learnt how to hold my ground, stick by my decisions and remain calm. I also learnt to praise 4:1 which has had a major impact on my children's behaviour (for the better)."

"Comfortable setting, leaders are very warm and engaging, and they make you feel very comfortable sharing experiences."

"Meeting people in similar situations. Working through it together. The leaders were outstanding."

"It was good to be surrounded by other parents facing similar challenges."

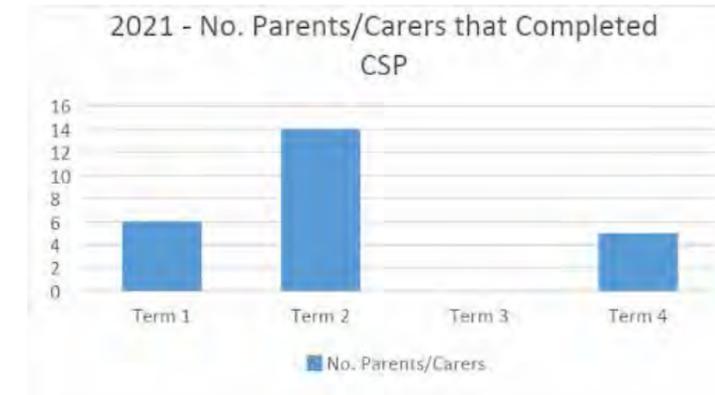


Figure 1 - Number of parents that completed CSP each term across 2021

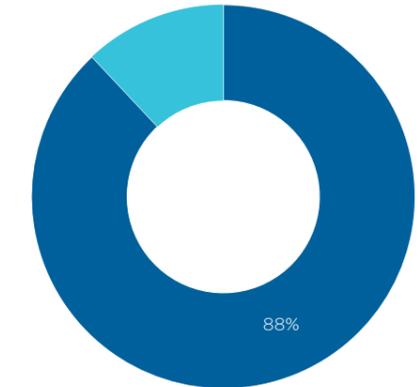


Figure 2 - Percentage of parents that reported increase in scores on PARCA and improvement in scores on PSS





DUNLEA PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

Dunlea Centre is privileged to have the continued support and assistance of researcher and residential expert Dr Frank Ainsworth, (Senior Principal Research Fellow (Adjunct) James Cook University), in addition to the magnanimous Dr Jonathan Huefner, Research Scientist, Boys Town, Omaha. Their continued benevolence enables Dunlea Centre's strategic direction to be data-driven.

In 2019, Dunlea Centre commenced implementing the Boys Town Model of Care imported from Omaha, USA. The BTO model is well established with over 50 years of research and collated data (Fixsen and Blase, 2018). It is the most researched residential program anywhere in the world. This model is heavily focused on the development of positive social skills.

Additionally, in November 2010, Dunlea Centre was accepted into the TFA (Teaching Family Association) as a developing site. The TFA is an international network of providers committed to best practices for persons and families served in a comprehensive continuum of environments including family homes, shelters, emergency settings, schools, small group settings, community care, transitional living, foster homes and other individualised settings. Membership with the TFA will ensure that Dunlea Centre maintains program fidelity and conformity through the established accreditation and certification standards it sets.

Highlights at the conclusion of 2021 are set out below:

Graduates

Graduate success - **9/10 (90%) of 2021 leavers graduated**, which means that the agency's objective in achieving a consistent minimum benchmark of 75% for graduates or better has been achieved, with a 15% increase in the number of graduates from last year. Current data indicates that student graduates spend an average of 16 months in the program, while the average for non-graduates is 9 months.

Demographics

In 2021, the ratio of enrolments by gender was 75% males and 25% females. The 13-14 year age bracket was the dominant age where 30% were 13 year old males and 25% were 14 year old males. The data also revealed:

- 75% of young people who enrolled in 2021 have a mental health diagnosis, most commonly ADHD/depression and/or anxiety and ASD combination.
- 10% males and 5% females had prior involvement with drugs and alcohol
- 30% of families were known to DCJ
- The largest source of referrals came from Self 40% and Schools 35%
- On average, the number of schools previously attended by 2021 enrolments was two or more

Outcomes

Education: These statistics demonstrate overall mental health improvements in 2021 throughout the 2021 academic year in Mathematics, Spelling & Reading. The Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) was utilised and 67% of all residential students made an improvement.

Behaviour: These statistics demonstrate overall mental health improvements in 2021 through the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), which showed 67% of all residential students made an improvement.

These scores were influenced by COVID lockdown and our young people working from home for approx. 3 months

Follow-up surveys The results from follow-up surveys at 24 months post discharge for students who exited the program in 2019 showed 67% of young people were still living at home, 44% still in school or Tafe and 33% working either full-time or part-time.

Common Sense Parenting

This is a six week course aimed to assist parents with their skills in their interactions with their young people. Outcomes are also used to measure family engagement. In 2021, 27 families successfully completed the program.

Quotes from parents/carers that completed the CSP program:

"The links that were made to real life situations instead of an unrealistic situation. You made me feel like I was normal. I feel heaps more confident, especially now that I know I can leave the big stuff and come back to it later".

"The delivery of the content from the presenters was exceptional. Their passion for the content was really obvious and it was clear that they have a very deep knowledge of what they are teaching. They also have a great energy working together. Their input made the course so beneficial. The course was really worthwhile and we got a lot out of it."

"We learnt the skills as taught at DC so that we can be consistent at home. All parents here are in the same boat so no judgement. All skills are relevant to us."

"It changed my whole view of parenting. I realised that my job is to teach and to support them. I learnt how to hold my ground, stick by my decisions and remain calm. I also learned to praise 4:1 which has had a major impact on my child's behaviour (for the better)."

"Exceptional course. Outstanding leaders. Thank you for giving me skills and tools to improve my parenting skills. It got me thinking and trying new approaches. Loved the group setting."

Attendance

Overall attendance rates across the agency for 2021 were 93%. The breakdown was:

- Year 7 - 98.2%
- Year 8 - 94.8%
- Year 9 - 91%
- Year 10 - 87.2%
- Year 11 (or Stage 6) - 93.3%



Left Image: Dunlea Centre Leadership Team.

Top Right Image: Paul Mastronardi & Dr Frank Ainsworth.

Bottom Right Image: Dr Jonathan Huefner, Research Scientist, Boys Town Omaha.



MENTAL HEALTH MONTH, OCTOBER 2021 – “TUNE IN”

For over 80 years, WayAhead – Mental Health Association NSW, has been integral in coordinating annual campaigns educating the community in mental health issues and promoting positive mental wellbeing. Since 2010, October has marked NSW Mental Health Month.

Throughout the years, a different theme and slogan is chosen to represent varying aspects of mental health and key emerging issues. The theme of “Tune In” was continued for 2021, highlighting the importance of being present and being aware of what is happening within yourself and the world around you. The benefits of mindfulness-based activities are well-documented, including improved mood, reduced stress, better physical health and stronger relationships.

Considering the significant challenges many people faced throughout the year, in the context of lockdown and COVID, it was even more vital to take the opportunity to celebrate Mental Health Month and come together as a community. Dunlea Centre prioritises mental health matters, continuing to support our young people with understanding mental health, the importance of reaching out and the role we each have in reducing stigma.

A number of activities were organised for our young people and staff, including opportunities to normalise conversations about mental health, increase empathy and show how we are connected to our community, and the chance to slow down and be present in the moment.

Mental wellness is fundamental for living a meaningful life, fulfilling one’s potential, connecting with others and developing a positive sense of self. Dunlea Centre looks forward to continuing the conversations around positive mental health and looks forward to celebrating Mental Health Month into the future.



DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOUR THERAPY FOR ADOLESCENTS

In 2021, the Adolescent and Family Clinicians facilitated a 16-week Dialectical Behaviour Therapy for Adolescents (DBT-A) group.

Marsha M. Linehan originally developed Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). DBT is an evidenced-based treatment that supports participants to develop skills for understanding and regulating their emotions, to make positive decisions, and to build healthy relationships with others. Jill Rathus and Alec Miller designed DBT-A, a manualised adaptation of DBT, specifically supporting adolescents with learning fundamental skills for positively managing emotions and behaviours, and improving relationships with friends and family. Five modules are covered in DBT-A, including Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness and Walking the Middle Path.

Four young people participated in the 16-week group. Each young person completed a pre and post-DBT questionnaire to measure the effectiveness of the group and improvement in their skill level. The questionnaire domains directly correlate with the DBT modules. As seen in Figure 1, all four young people completed the group with an increase on their post-evaluation scores. An increase in scores demonstrate an improvement in their overall skill acquisition.

The young people who participated in the group demonstrated incredible support of one another, creating a safe place of sharing and learning. They displayed considerable effort and enthusiasm throughout the 16 weeks, learning valuable skills to support them across many areas in their life.

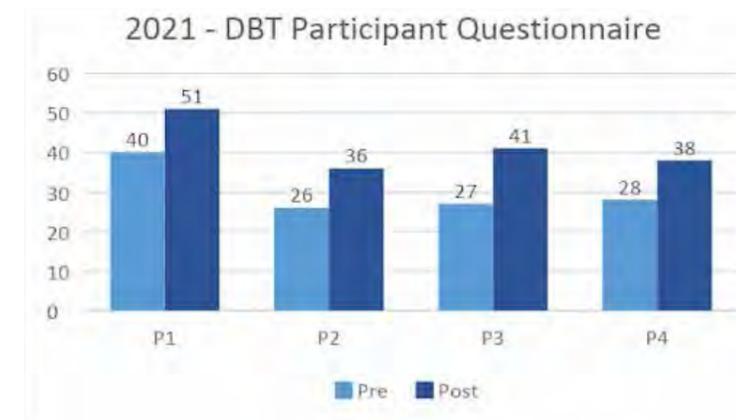


Figure 1 – 2021 DBT Pre and Post-Questionnaire Results





QUOTES FROM DUNLEA PARENTS

“Not even COVID could stop the team at Dunlea. My son was challenged, supported and encouraged to be his best. Thank you Dunlea for the innovative ways you kept him engaged”

“My child was failing in the education system. Since coming to Dunlea she has improved and caught up with her studies. She is now looking to Stage 6 and then hoping to go to uni.”



QUOTES FROM DUNLEA STUDENTS

“Dunlea Centre is undeniably unique. Every person that works here is great, like nowhere else.”

“I’m so grateful for all the help from Dunlea teachers. They care and really want me to succeed. They believe in me.”





THE WAY FORWARD® - DUNLEA CENTRE'S AFTER-CARE PROGRAM

Dunlea Centre officially launched 'The Way Forward®' in 2020. The Way Forward® is a structured after-care program, supporting young people and parents/carers for 12 months following their transition from Dunlea Centre.

Whilst in the program, young people develop and improve their academic capabilities and social skills. These attributes promote their social and emotional growth and will benefit them throughout their lives. The Way Forward® is an after-care service for youth and families to support their transition from Dunlea Centre back to the family home. We understand this is a crucial and vulnerable time for families. During this transition, young people and parents are provided with regular and consistent support to assist with overcoming any challenges. Maintaining behavioural changes and academic gains that young people have achieved in the program is critical to their success and is the focus of The Way Forward® service.

The key goal areas of The Way Forward® are:

- Young person maintains full-time engagement in education or vocational setting.
- Young person refrains from criminal and/or anti-social behaviour.
- Parents/carers demonstrate support and care of their young person in the home environment by establishing age-appropriate routines in the areas of education/vocation, sleep, technology, hygiene, diet, exercise and social interactions.
- Aligned with the principles of Common Sense Parenting®, parents continue to utilise strategies that promote positive family relationships.
- Young person and/or carers are connected with community supports if required.

The Way Forward® is a proactive, outreach support service, which may include home visits, school visits, regular phone/email check-in and any other contact that may be required. Quarterly reviews of target areas are completed to ensure young people and parents/carers are meeting their goals and successfully transitioning from Dunlea Centre.

After 12 months and the conclusion of The Way Forward®, young people and parents are contacted bi-annually for another 12 months to ensure ongoing maintenance of positive outcomes. This data collection also informs program effectiveness and evaluation. Dunlea Centre is committed to ensuring young people and families succeed following transition from the on-site program, and families feel supported to take on the next part of their journey.

Across 2021, a total of 17 young people engaged in The Way Forward®. Figure 1 demonstrates their outcomes, 12 months after leaving Dunlea Centre.

Many of the young people and their families that completed The Way Forward® attended the end of year 2021 Recognition Ceremony to be acknowledged for their incredible achievements since leaving Dunlea Centre. Below is an excerpt from one young person's speech at the recognition ceremony, sharing his reflections and insights. We are so proud of what every young person achieves at Dunlea Centre.

"I attended Dunlea for 2 years from 2019-2020 and graduated the program. Dunlea can suck sometimes. In fact for me I wanted to leave MANY times. But Dunlea can also be the greatest place. I know for me looking back on it now those positives outweigh the negatives any day of the week. Dunlea is a place for change and it definitely changed me for the better.

Before coming to Dunlea I was small, unhealthy and unmotivated. My mental health was at an all-time low and my behaviour wasn't that great either, resulting in self-harm and lashing out on others. I could not cope in a mainstream setting and my education was falling as a result of that. Before coming to Dunlea my reading writing and spelling were all at year 4 levels. After leaving Dunlea I was back up to year level in all three areas.

Coming to Dunlea I learnt so much and have taken away so much from this incredible program. For me personally I didn't take away the big things the most. Although completely changing my mental landscape on life, the life lessons I have taken away from Dunlea are the small things - changing a doona cover, learning how to write a resume and stress management through DBT.

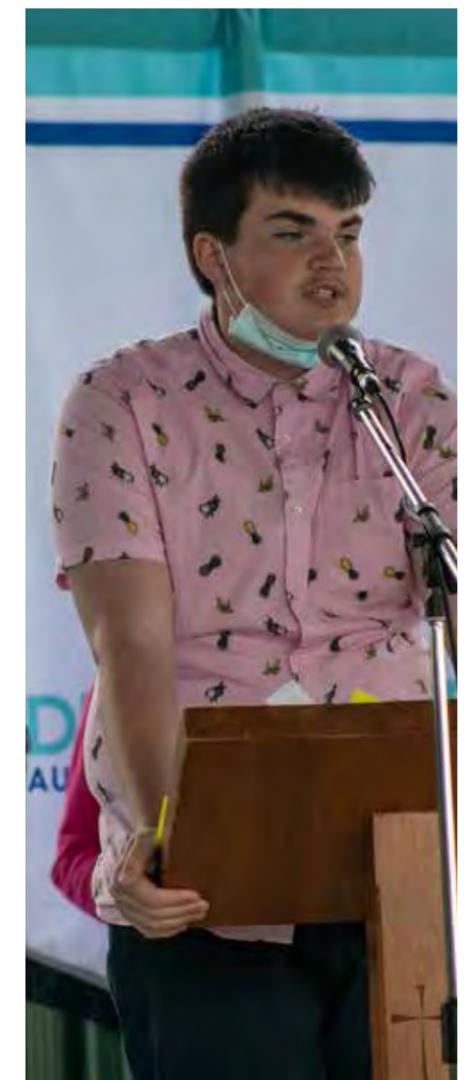
Dunlea can push you to your limits both physically and mentally but if I had to sum up my Dunlea experience in one word it would be perseverance. It does get difficult but it's all about persevering. Being able to sit back and say I did it after 2 and a bit years was the best moment for myself.

Now I stand where I am today successfully transitioned back into a mainstream setting and also was nominated and elected for the Year 11 Student Representative Council at my current mainstream school. I have something that many people might not believe but I have friends. I know right, CRAZY? I haven't had a detention yet nor have I been in major trouble so I'm doing pretty well.

Current Students, I cannot stress enough how much gratitude I have for this place and although it might be tough if you can stick it through and believe in yourself anything is possible. Trust me, the skills I learnt throughout my 2 years here definitely are needed in mainstream and I don't think I would have managed as well as I have in mainstream without them."



Figure 1 - Outcomes 12 months post leaving Dunlea Centre





JOB READY PROGRAM

Each year Dunlea Centre assists young people with job readiness through education in resume writing, job specific research tasks, work experience and job interview skills.

Stage 6 students participate in work experience placements enabling them to have authentic experiences in the work place. This work experience is often the first contact our students have with the world of work.

As part of Dunlea Centre's Job Ready Program, a Mock Interview Day was held. This Interview Day afforded our young people an opportunity to prepare for job interviews and practise the skills required to achieve a successful outcome from an interview. The aim of the day was to help relieve some of the stress our young people experience when attending job interviews and therefore gain some confidence when applying for jobs. The concept was based around each young person being interviewed for their dream job. All Dunlea students participate in the job ready program.

The interview panel consisted of our Executive Director, Paul Mastronardi; Educational Services Manager, Joel Hamill and Youth & Family Program Manager, Samantha Dennis. The young people prepared for the day by researching their dream job. They then each wrote a resume and cover letter for their specific job, which they presented to the panel at the interview.

On the day, the young people dressed neatly for their interview, spoke clearly and appropriately and made good use of this opportunity to be interviewed in a familiar environment. The interviewers asked various questions and assessed each individual using criteria that would be typical in a real interview situation. This included appearance, greeting skills, body language, the quality of responses to questions and communication in general.

Overall the young people took on the character of the job they were 'applying for' with much enthusiasm and strived to be successful in their interviews. The panel were able to give positive suggestions and encouragement to each young person, who took on the feedback in a sensible and mature manner.

The staff were pleased to be able to give these young people the opportunity to practise their interview skills and answer relevant questions utilising both existing and new found knowledge of their dream jobs. The day was deemed a great success and plans are underway to conduct Mock Interview Day again next year.



Sara, Samantha Dennis, Youth & Family Program Manager, Paul Mastronardi, Executive Director & Joel Hamill, Educational Services Manager.



OUR CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The names of the directors in office during the financial period and at the date of the report were:

Ms Geraldine Gray (The Chair)
Mr Peter McGuinn (Deputy Chair)
Mr Ian Baker
Fr Peter Carroll SDB
Ms Mironne Golan
Fr Peter Hoang SDB

Mr Christopher Lonergan
Mr Andrew McCallum AM
Ms Cynthia McCammon
Mr Gregory McKay
Fr John Papworth SDB
Mr Andrew Watson

DUNLEA CENTRE MISSION

To empower adolescents and families at risk to change their lives and restore relationships through the provision of quality therapeutic and educational services.

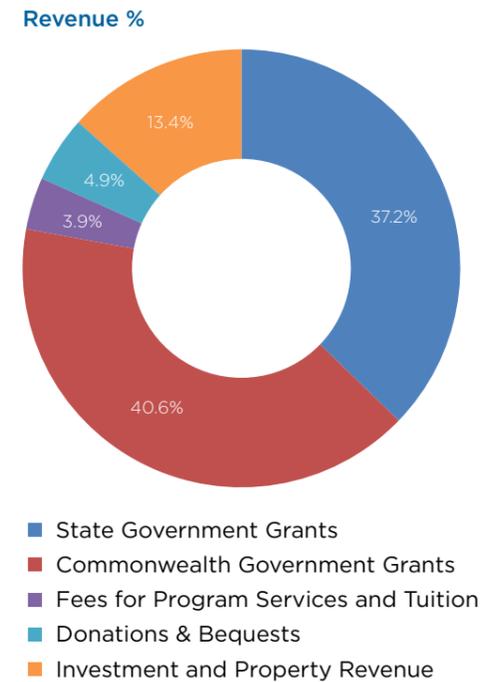




FINANCIALS

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2021

REVENUE	2021	2020
State Government Grants	\$2,215,951	\$1,900,309
Commonwealth Government Grants	\$2,418,692	\$2,145,024
Local Government Grants	\$-	\$11,453
Fees for Program Services and Tuition	\$229,150	\$254,526
Donations and Bequests	\$291,246	\$203,005
Investment, Property & Other	\$796,320	\$646,822
\$5,951,359	\$5,161,139	
EXPENDITURE		
Program Expenses	\$2,577,514	\$2,384,409
Admin & Finance Expenses	\$299,049	\$311,621
Building & Maintenance	\$445,766	\$534,730
Utilities, Property & IT	\$183,429	\$214,226
Wages & Salaries	\$1,574,047	\$1,538,808
Staff Employment	\$302,543	\$382,686
\$5,382,348	\$5,366,480	
NET OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$569,011	\$(205,341)



Principal Activity

Boys' Town Engadine is a public company limited by guarantee that is incorporated and domiciled in New South Wales, Australia. The registered office is at 35A Waratah Road, Engadine NSW 2233.

The principal activities of the company are the management and administration of the benevolent activities and welfare services of Dunlea Centre (the trading name of Boys' Town Engadine) and of the special assistance school Dunlea Centre, Australia's Original Boys' Town. The company commenced operations on 1 January 2006 upon receiving the gifting and disposition of the assets of The Salesian Society Incorporated as Trustee of Boys' Town Engadine.

In the opinion of the Directors of Boys' Town Engadine:

- The financial statements and notes are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, and
 - comply with Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the company; and
 - give a true and fair view of the financial position of the entity as at 31 December, 2021 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- There are reasonable grounds to believe that Boys' Town Engadine will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

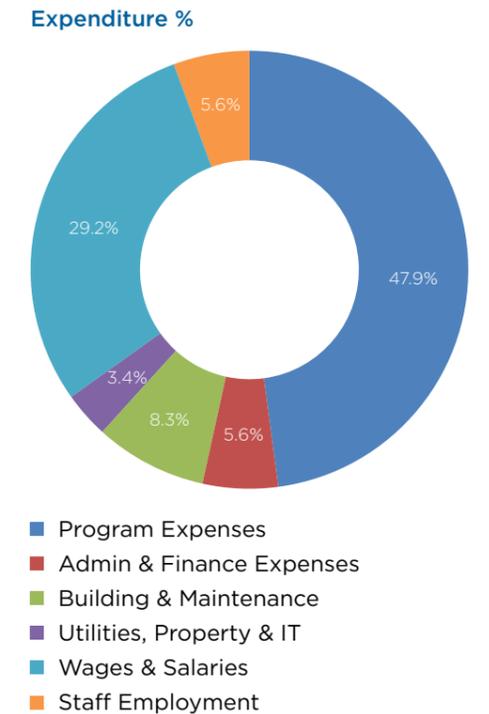
Signed in accordance with a resolution of the board of directors by Ms. Geraldine Gray on 6th of April, 2022.



FINANCIALS

Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2021

ASSETS	2021	2020
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$3,237,456	\$2,285,857
Receivables	\$197,955	\$275,862
Financial Assets at Fair Value	\$3,552,459	\$2,905,949
Total Current Assets	\$6,987,870	\$5,467,668
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
Property Plant and Equipment	\$8,864,073	\$9,171,045
Total Non-Current Assets	\$8,864,073	\$9,171,045
TOTAL ASSETS	\$15,851,943	\$14,638,713
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Borrowings	\$922,262	\$815,335
Provisions	\$712,875	\$553,987
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,635,137	\$1,369,322
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Borrowings	\$-	\$-
Provisions	\$260,779	\$307,049
Total Non-Current Liabilities	\$260,779	\$307,049
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$1,895,916	\$1,676,371
NET ASSETS	\$13,956,027	\$12,962,342
EQUITY		
Gift and Disposition of Assets	\$2,654,368	\$2,654,368
Retained Earnings	\$11,301,659	\$10,307,974
TOTAL EQUITY	\$13,956,027	\$12,962,342



Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion the financial report of Boys' Town Engadine, trading as Dunlea Centre has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 including;

- giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 31 December 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Signed on 25th March, 2022 by Kevin F Jones, FCA



THANK YOU

Dunlea Centre would like to express immense thanks for the ongoing support it receives from the community. Only with your continued support can our work continue.

Also many thanks to:

Commonwealth Bank, Montessori Academy, NSW Community Building Partnership, Schools Plus & Sutherland Shire Council Community Grants.

S. Angelides, A. Clifford, C. Downy, V. Feeney, J. Fitzpatrick, C. Hayes, C. Hellouli, W. Henning, G. LaMela, P. & M. MacCaffrey, P. Mastronardi, J. McLaren, G. Nilon, R. Pidgeon, A. Rice, G. Rowley, T. Wright & D. Young.

Beswick Family Fund, Dawn Rose Cordony Estate, Patricia Lorna Markham Estate, Edmund Resch Estate & Timothy Nicholas Whitelum Estate.

Amazon, Australian Sport, Bosco Menshed, Budget Direct, Catholic Church Insurance, Civic Disability Services, Club Grants - Engadine Bowling Club, COG Branding, Engadine Rotary Club, GIVIT, Harold Mitchell Foundation, Miranda Musical Society, Neptune Blankets, One Wellbeing, PayPal Giving Fund, R G Photography, Salesian Sisters, Terri Mackay Realty, The Awesome Foundation & UK Online Giving.

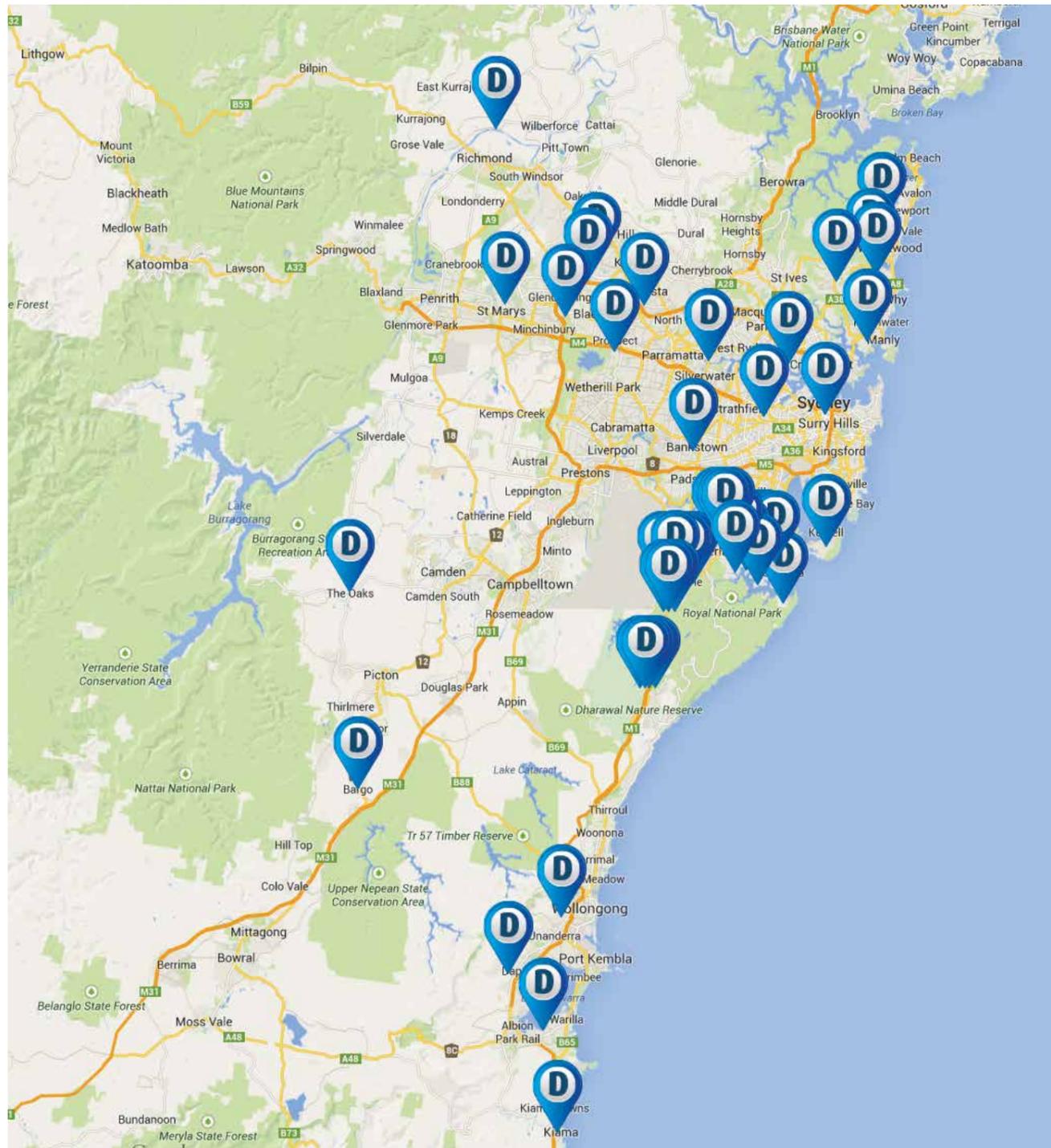
Patrician Brothers' College, Salesian College Chadstone, Salesian of Don Bosco Province Centre, St John Bosco College, St Joseph's College & Sydney Catholic Schools.

Mr Lee Evans MP, State Member for Heathcote & Cr Carmelo Pesce, Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council.



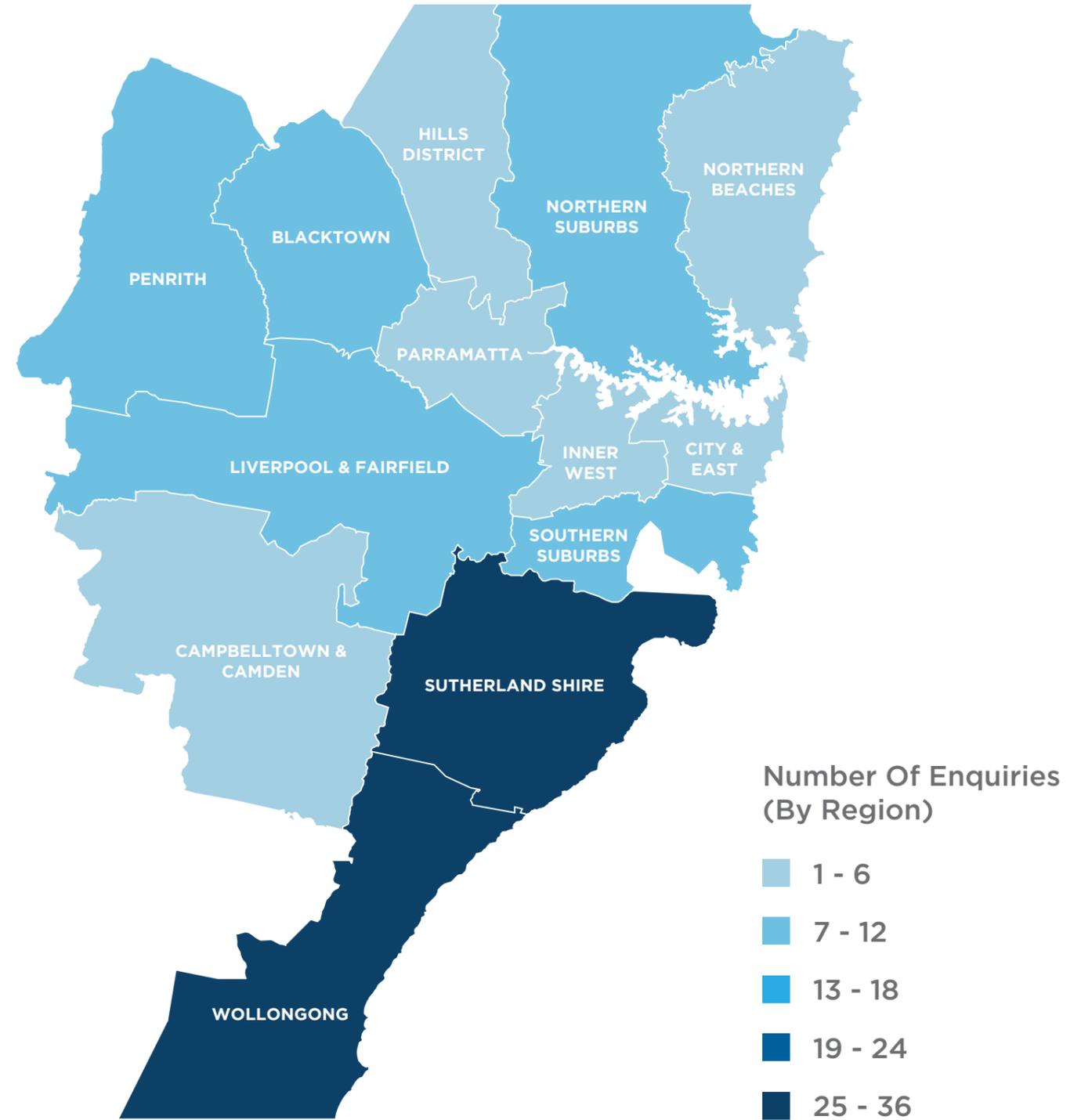


WHERE DUNLEA CENTRE ATTENDEES CAME FROM IN 2021



WHERE DUNLEA CENTRE ENQUIRIES CAME FROM IN 2021

121 enquiries received in 2021





OUR VISION

Dunlea Centre aspires to be a welcoming community where lives are changed and right relationships are restored.





www.dunleacentre.org.au
Phone: 02 8508 3900
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Engadine NSW 2233