

# YOUR DONATIONS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



**2** We are grateful to our wonderful donors who have enabled the funding of additional resources making a difference to everyday life at Sunnyfield!

**1** Blacktown Community Services Hub busts out the beats with their new musical instruments.

**2** Learning and having fun! Clients at Tweed Heads Community Services Hub are thrilled with their new SMART Board

**3/4** Wow! We have been able to build a beautiful brand new 5 bedroom home on the Central Coast to support 5 ladies with disability thanks to the generosity of an amazing family member

March 2020

# Sunnyfield Matters



## Youth and children programs proving an exciting addition to Sunnyfield's range of services

Sunnyfield continues to broaden our service offerings for youth and children across NSW & the ACT. In 2020 we will see continued growth and more access to these services across all Sunnyfield Community Services locations for people with disability aged between 6 and 17.

Social groups and capacity building programs are now available in a number of Sunnyfield Community Service Hubs. These programs include: before and after school care; school holiday programs; weekend and weeknight social groups; and a suite of Skills-for-Life modules including road safety, numeracy, budgeting and cooking programs.

These new services are providing vital opportunities for younger people to meet new friends, build meaningful relationships, engage in skill and capacity building activities, build independence, and connect with their local communities.

"We've seen increased demand for children and youth disability services throughout all of our regions in the last 18 months. Sunnyfield's vision is to create meaningful programs and disability supports to fill these gaps in the market and address the unmet needs of children and youth. We've launched a number of successful programs that we will continue to expand across NSW & the ACT. The feedback from clients and families has been very positive, by the end of 2020 we aim to have all Sunnyfield regions offering a full suite of services catering to all age groups."

Caroline Cuddihy, Sunnyfield CEO.

### Feedback

We're not only in the business of improving lives, we also are in the business of improving the way we do it. So, if you have any feedback about the things we have done well, or the things we could do better, then please get in contact and send an email to our confidential email account at [feedback@sunnyfield.org.au](mailto:feedback@sunnyfield.org.au)

### Contact us

T 1300 588 688  
E [enquiries@sunnyfield.org.au](mailto:enquiries@sunnyfield.org.au)  
[www.sunnyfield.org.au](http://www.sunnyfield.org.au)



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## Message from the CEO and Chair

Dear clients, families, guardians and friends of Sunnyfield, We are really pleased to be writing to you all as we enter into autumn 2020. How does time continue to travel so fast?

We are excited about what autumn has to bring to Sunnyfield, our clients, families and guardians, and to those of you reading this note. We are also excited about what we hope will be a new season of even more positive interactions with the NDIS.

The NDIS is a wonderful initiative that Sunnyfield fully supports and continues to advocate for. While the destination is appealing, the journey to the NDIS for Sunnyfield and the people with disability we support has been challenging, particularly as we all negotiate the NDIA changing policies and processes as we go.

### Transport

A recent example of this, and an issue that has attracted widespread comment from across the sector, is funding of participant transport. From the outset of the NDIS, it has been widely accepted that participants are not funded adequately for transport. There have been legal challenges, the NDIA have trialled different alternatives, and providers have tried to deliver services as best they could without falling into financial duress.

The NDIA, for a few years, allowed participants to reallocate some of their core NDIS funding to pay for transport. However this subsequently meant those participants may not be able to afford all the support services they needed because the funds were being used to pay for the transport to get to the service. We were further concerned when, at the end of 2019, the NDIA issued a policy clarification; that the practice of reallocating a participant's core NDIS funding would no longer be allowed.

Anticipating the need for greater advocacy on behalf of our clients and their families and carers, Sunnyfield made a deliberate decision to ensure representation on our sector peak body National Disability Services (NDS) and through Alliance20. That investment has yielded some really positive results. Following approaches to government and the NDIA, in which Sunnyfield's CEO and Board were directly involved, in early February this year, the NDIA announced a revision to the transport policy. From 1 March 2020, our clients who are NDIS

participants will be able to reallocate their core funding to pay for transport. We are so very pleased with this outcome, as it will have a direct impact on a large number of those of you who are reading this update.

Clients who access support services from Sunnyfield have contributed to transport in a number of different ways, depending on the mode of transport and the service being accessed. While the details of the new NDIS policy are being finalised, the NDIA have suggested a standardised per kilometre rate. As details become clear, Sunnyfield will keep clients, families, carers and guardians informed of these changes. In the meantime please rest assured that Sunnyfield will continue to provide transport as per existing agreements.

In terms of statistics: NDIA data indicates that on average, across the almost 340,000 people with disability being supported by the NDIS, participants are only using 69% of their NDIS funding. The NDIA believe that by giving participants more flexibility to use their funding across their support needs, including transport, people with disability will achieve better outcomes without increasing the overall costs of the NDIS.

### Our ongoing support commitment

We hope you have a lived experience of the fact that Sunnyfield has been championing a move to increase flexibility of how participants can spend their NDIS funding. We will continue to assist and support clients, families, carers and guardians to understand how this specific change to accessing funding for transport will impact them.

We will continue to work closely with the Sunnyfield community, NDIA and all stakeholders to champion further NDIS and other improvements as we face future challenges, changes and opportunities.

We offer our ongoing, and heartfelt, thanks to the clients, guardians, families and friends who choose Sunnyfield as their provider and partner.

Best regards

**Karen Ingram** Sunnyfield Board Chair

**Caroline Cuddihy** Sunnyfield CEO

## South Sydney Hotshots School Holiday Program

Sunnyfield's South Sydney school holiday program 'Hotshots' offers a wide range of exciting school holiday activities for children aged 6-17 in-centre and in the community.

The program runs Monday to Friday during school holidays, with activities include horse-riding, basketball, arts and crafts, trips to the local fire station, cooking, music and much more. Sunnyfield South Sydney were one of the first regions to launch the program in 2015 and began with just four children; now four years later we welcome more than 60 children each school holiday period.

In a recent customer survey over 78% of parents with a child attending this service were either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the skills and experience of staff delivering the program and would attend Sunnyfield programs in the future.

Stay tuned for more exciting youth and children services across Sunnyfield in 2020.

To find out more about Hotshots School Holiday Programs contact our Customer Services Team on T 1300 588 688 or E [enquiries@sunnyfield.org.au](mailto:enquiries@sunnyfield.org.au)



Right  
Karen Ingram,  
Sunnyfield Board Chair  
(right) and Caroline  
Cuddihy, Sunnyfield  
CEO (left)



## Sunnyfield Celebrates 68 Years

17 March 2020 marks Sunnyfield's 68th Anniversary. As we look forward to welcome another year ahead, we pay respect to the legacy that was created by 18 founding families on Sydney's Northern Beaches. Sunnyfield's origins began in 1952, when a community came together to establish an organisation that would empower people with disability to have every opportunity to learn, work, make friends, have fun and access the supports they needed to live a life of their choosing.

We acknowledge the generosity of parents, guardians, subsequent family generations, businesses, community members and local public figures who have contributed over the past 68 years, and today still continue to show their dedication and support for Sunnyfield.

We thank the many clients, families, carers and guardians who trust in Sunnyfield each day to provide personalised disability supports. We sincerely thank the dedication and efforts of our staff who come together under the Vision, Mission and Values of Sunnyfield to create bright futures for people with disability.

Cheers to Sunnyfield's 68 years!