



YOUTH
INSEARCH

TRIUMPH OVER TRAUMA

**IMPACT
REPORT
2023-2024**



OUR VISION

ALL YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A SAFE SPACE TO HEAL AND THRIVE.

WE BELIEVE

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE ARE BEST PLACED TO SUPPORT OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH AND LIFE CHALLENGES.

OUR MISSION

WE CREATE SAFE SPACES, WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO HEAL FROM TRAUMA, IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH, OVERCOME LIFE CHALLENGES AND LIVE A FULFILLING LIFE. IN DOING THIS WE BREAK NEGATIVE CYCLES, DEVELOP YOUNG LEADERS AND CREATE LASTING CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES.



Youth Insearch acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



Youth Insearch is committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.



Youth Insearch is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of its services. Youth Insearch welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

As Board Chair of Youth Insearch, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact our organisation has on young people, their families, and communities across Australia. I am proud to contribute to strengthening the positive outcomes we achieve.

I extend my gratitude to Alan Kuczynski for his leadership and dedication to Youth Insearch. His efforts have laid a solid foundation for Youth Insearch, and I appreciate his continued involvement.

Our peer-to-peer support model is a key strength, enabling young people to connect, share experiences, and support each other. This trust-based approach is central to our success. Additionally, our evidence-based programs deliver measurable results in reducing risky behaviours, improving mental health, and supporting youth re-engagement with education and the workforce.

I am committed to upholding the highest standards of governance and transparency, ensuring we continue to lead in creating lasting change for young Australians. Most importantly, I acknowledge the resilience and courage of the young people we work with, whose efforts drive our success and attract vital support, helping us make a real difference in their lives.

Shane Fitzsimmons, AO AFSM
Chair of the Board



OUR PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT MODEL IS A KEY STRENGTH, ENABLING YOUNG PEOPLE TO CONNECT, SHARE EXPERIENCES, AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the transformative journey our people have embarked upon.



OUR ORGANISATION HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN EMBEDDING AND EXPANDING OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE PEER WORKFORCE MODEL, SETTING US AT THE PRECIPICE OF BUILDING A LIVED EXPERIENCE PEER WORKFORCE ACROSS AUSTRALIA

Their combined contributions have enabled us to de-risk governments and demonstrate the efficacy of our new model of care. I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for their belief in our mission.

As we move forward, we remain dedicated to empowering young people, fostering resilience, and creating lasting change in communities across Australia. Together, we are building a brighter future for the next generation.

Stephen Lewin
Chief Executive Officer

Our organisation has made significant progress in embedding and expanding our lived experience peer workforce model, setting us at the precipice of building a lived experience peer workforce across Australia. While the journey has been challenging, our people have stayed the course and learned from these challenges, building a support model that has the potential to fill the gaping void in the support system for Australia's most vulnerable young people.

Lived experience is at the heart of our organisation. By leveraging the unique ability of young people with lived experience to reach their peers who have disengaged, we use their own experiences to support one another in finding hope and the agency to navigate their own path to recovery.

The success of our initiatives would not have been possible without the unwavering support and dedication of all our board, staff, volunteers, and our program and philanthropic partners.



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023-2024

REACH & PARTICIPATION

861 YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED

20 WEEKEND WORKSHOPS COMPLETED
717 WEEKEND WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

3,086 ATTENDED SUPPORT GROUPS

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT

33,391

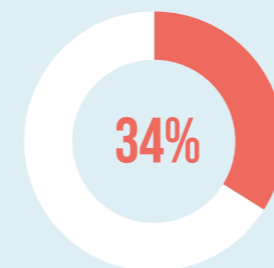
HOURS OF SUPPORT PROVIDED



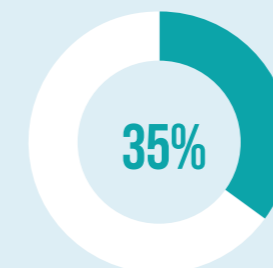
9,310 INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

18 NEW LEADERS COMMENCED TRAINING



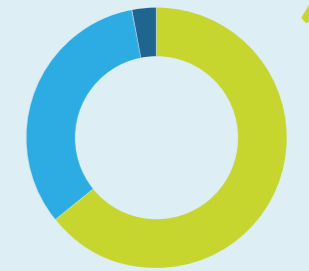
ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER



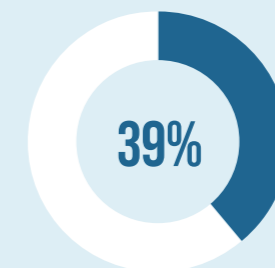
CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

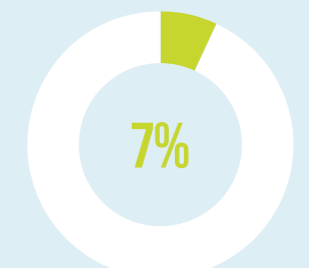
AVG. AGE **16** YEARS



33% MALE
 3% NON-IDENTIFIED
 65% FEMALE



LIVING WITH A DISABILITY



LGBTQIA+

YOUTH INSEARCH PROGRAM

148 VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED

39 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS SERVED

36 SCHOOLS REFERRED YOUTH
26 PLACE-BASED MODELS IMPLEMENTED



OUTCOME DATA



7/10 YOUNG PEOPLE REDUCE THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS FROM SEVERE TO MODERATE AFTER PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.



7/10 YOUNG PEOPLE AT SIGNIFICANT RISK OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR REDUCED THIS RISK, WITH SOME HAVING NO SIGNIFICANT RISK AFTER ATTENDING THE PROGRAM.

The Youth Insearch Program significantly impacts the lives of young people by fostering:



CONNECTION



BELONGINGNESS



IDENTITY

This holistic approach empowers young people to overcome adversity and thrive personally and socially.

A MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PROGRAM COUNCIL CHAIR

I am deeply honoured to have served as the Chair of the National Program Council during the past term.

This role has not only been a significant privilege but has also equipped me with invaluable skills that I have applied both in my personal life and as a volunteer Youth Leader. Among these skills are effective time management, team leadership, and the ability to build and maintain essential networks.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my tenure has been the opportunity to engage with diverse partners, stakeholders, and government representatives. Through attending key events and advocating for our mission, we have been able to emphasise the importance of lived experience, the value of a peer workforce, and the critical nature of our goal to end youth suicide across the nation.

Our efforts were highlighted in impactful campaigns such as End Youth Suicide Week and Brighter Day. Additionally, I was fortunate to contribute to our training program by joining the team during Stage 3 of Leaders Training, where I shared the knowledge and insights I've gained throughout my journey.

During my time as Chair, the National Program Council played a pivotal role in providing feedback and guidance for the redesign of our Leaders Training Program.

We focused on key areas such as implementing mentoring programs for Leaders, ensuring the emotional wellbeing and readiness of participants transitioning from participant to Leader, and optimising elements of our training through our new online Learner Management System. Our council also made critical decisions regarding the behaviour and development of both Leaders and participants, a responsibility we approached with the utmost care and diligence.

ONE OF MY PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENTS WAS LEADING THE DISCUSSIONS ON LEADER APPLICATIONS AND ACCREDITING THE LEADERS WHO GRADUATED AT ADMIRALTY HOUSE IN MAY 2024.

As I conclude my term, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my fellow council members. Your dedication and commitment to upholding the highest standards have been instrumental in making this year a success. I wish the incoming Chair of the National Program Council all the best and hope they find their role as rewarding as I have found mine.

Joshua Camilleri
May 2023 – May 2024



OUR NATIONAL PROGRAM COUNCIL

The National Program Council (NPC) is the youth voice that leads youth-related decisions at Youth Insearch.

It is a council of peer-elected representatives from every region we operate in. They provide advice and direction direct to our staff and CEO. The NPC is core to our commitment to be resolutely youth-led.

The NPC is made up of representatives from each State Program Council and works closely with each State Program council to help improve and maintain the high standard of the programs that Youth Insearch delivers – from a peer led perspective.

Each State Council is made up of five youth leaders, three adult leaders, and program staff who attend and assist with the logistics of the meetings. All youth on a Council have voting rights, and all adults have an advisory role.

The National Program Council is comprised of two youth and one adult representative from each State Program Council. For this reporting year, we had nine members on the National Program Council.

In addition, Stephen Lewin, CEO, and Chantelle Fogg, Peer Practice Lead, provide governance over meetings and provide advice if requested, however, they do not have voting rights.



IMPLEMENTATION OF A LIVED EXPERIENCE PEER WORKFORCE

Great progress was made in establishing and embedding our Lived Experience Workforce. Commencing the year with six Trainee Peer Worker roles funded under the National Suicide Prevention Leadership funding, we saw further investment into this with its expansion of an additional seven Peer Workers through funding secured as part of the Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant.

Further work was done around the learning and development of our Peer Workforce, with the development of an organisational Peer Practice Framework which guides how the disciplines of lived experience and social work, work together to provide the Youth Insearch model.

Our Peer Workforce were supported with commencing a Certificate IV in Mental Health and Peer Work, in addition to Open Dialogue Foundation Course. Building from the lessons of year one of the Peer Worker model, we have commenced looking at a blended model of Peer Workers, to include existing Youth Insearch Leaders, and also include experienced Peer Workers that have worked in the sector, with a lived experience of trauma, psychosocial disability, and suicide.



LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Youth Insearch Leadership Development program is designed to help young people develop their skills as a leader, while further extending their self-awareness and personal development skills.

The program builds on communication and problem-solving skills including public speaking and presentation, conflict resolution, and breaking negative habits. It facilitates strategies for resilience and managing triggers, and it incorporates learning from professional community leaders and mentors.

The 12-month course consists of three stages of three-day residential workshops and an ongoing 12-month practical training and assessment program. The application process involves assessment from both the State and National Program Councils. Each participant makes life-long impactful learning and connections and embarks on a successful journey delivering Youth Insearch Weekend Workshops, supported by expert adults.

Each year there are some days on the calendar that trainees, staff and supporters look forward to. The Celebration Dinner is a key highlight. The final stage of the program saw Team Conquerors join together to host their celebration dinner in September 2023. This dinner celebrates their hard work over the last twelve months, and recognises the many skills they have learned.

Thank you to our training partners for your continued commitment to our program and our young people. Special mention to Alan Kuczynski, Kathy Morrison, Greg and Vera Meyer, Tactician, and Talent International, for imparting your knowledge in communication, handling difficult situations, understanding mental health, public speaking, and personal presentation skills.

Graduation is the pinnacle of the Leaders Training, signifying they have completed their training and been accepted by their peers through both the State and National Program Councils, as Accredited Leaders. This was hosted by our patron His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) at Admiralty House in May 2024.

TEDDIE'S STORY

My life before Youth Insearch was dark. I was always stuck inside my own four walls, too afraid of the outside world to face it. I found comfort in being inside – in being online. The online world was my escape. I thought if I stayed inside, nothing could hurt me, no one could hurt my mother, no one could hurt our family as we'd been hurt before. But soon enough I realise – it wasn't worth it.



YOUTH INSEARCH GAVE ME OUTSTANDING POSSIBILITIES – THE ABILITY TO LOVE, TO CONNECT, TO FEEL. AND HELL, EVEN JUST TO GET AWAY FOR A WEEKEND.

I realised I had been stuck in the same spot for almost all of my life – and I wanted out of it. I decided one day, I wanted to travel the world. Make friends, take opportunities, and have better relationships than the ones that were destroying me from inside and out. Through my mother's support worker, I found my way to alternative school. Less workloads, less days, less bullying. Through the friends I had made there, I found, my true home, Youth Insearch.

Youth Insearch gave me outstanding possibilities – the ability to love, to connect, to feel. And Hell, even just to get away for a weekend. Being able to get out of my house, to go meet a tonne of new people, and get to talk about all of the things inside of our "s**t bucket", I realised that, I'm not so alone. With the help of Youth Insearch, I have gained life-long friends – no, family members, who support me day to day with even just getting out of bed in the morning.

Rather than staying in those decrepit four walls, I have a reason to get out of bed every morning. I go to school, I have a job, I have incredible people all around me who inspire me to do better. And for once, I feel free.

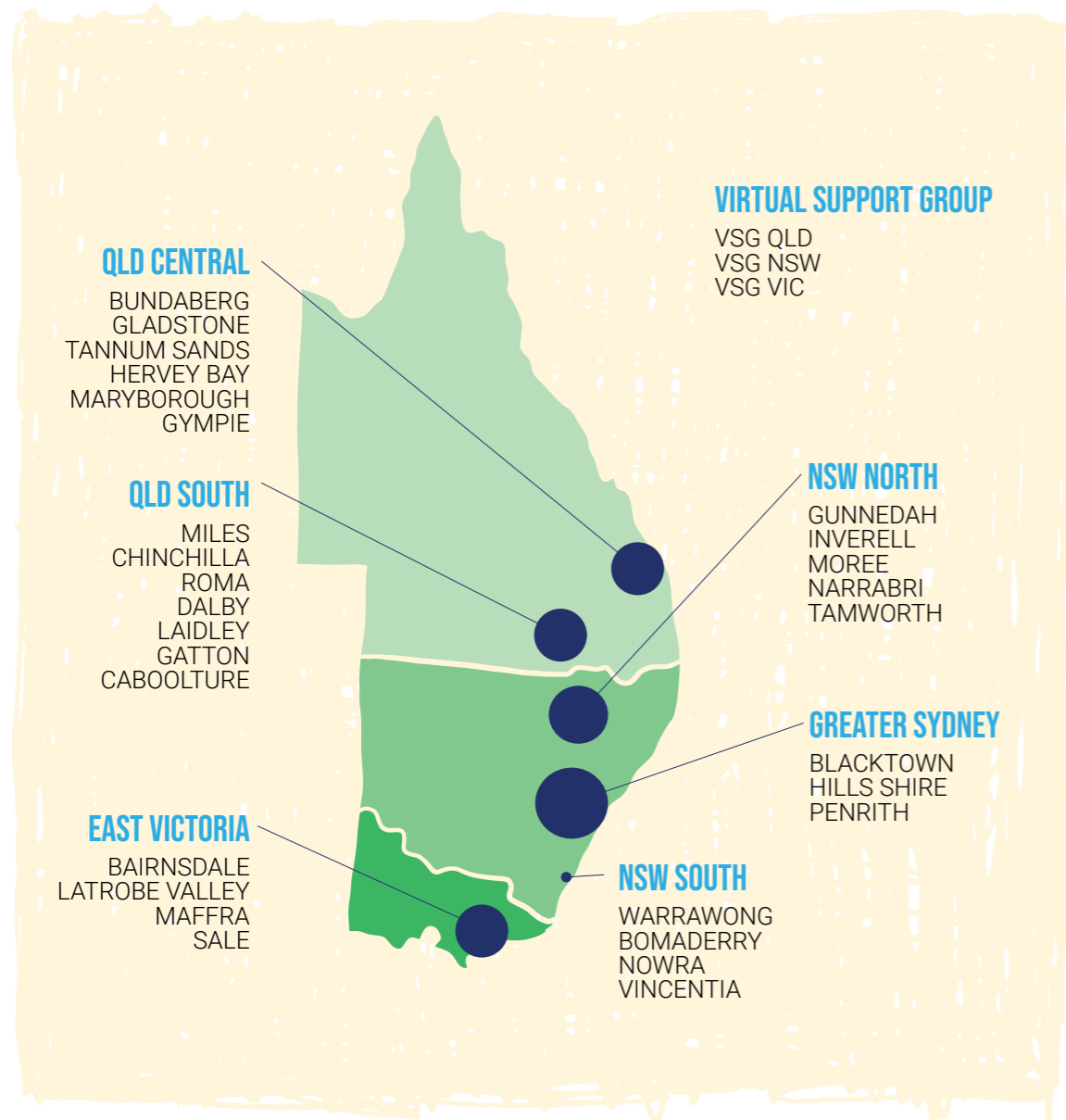
Without Youth Insearch, I don't think I would be here. I thought that by age 18 – I would be gone. Without Youth Insearch, I would still be in a horrible, manipulative relationship that my friends from Youth Insearch originally talked me out of. Without Youth Insearch I wouldn't be wanting to go outside, to bother going to school, to bother trying anymore, because why would I? I didn't think I had anything to look forward to anymore. I didn't get to think about how I'd be travelling down to Sydney next week – I didn't get to think how'd I'd simply get to just see my friends on Monday. I would just be stuck, inside, and frustrated with myself and the world. In four months I will be turning 18. And that is scary.

But, I have my supports with me, my loved ones with me, and I'm excelling more than ever because of it. I achieved one of my goals, making my first big investment of simply buying a scooter to allow me transportation to and from my job, and to allow me to have money to help my mother and my brother get by life. It even allows me to pursue my dream of getting to travel, to not only see the world, but to see someone who truly and deeply cares about me, just by the end of this year! And I couldn't be more thankful. Without Youth Insearch, I wouldn't be here. With Youth Insearch I can really make my dreams come true.

Teddie, Accredited Leader and past program participant.



WHERE WE WORK



Youth Insearch employ 3 Regional Managers who oversee operations across Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. They manage partnerships, programs, and support our work in these regions. Our team also includes 33 staff and 5 peer workers, all focused on connecting with and supporting young people in their local communities through our Place-based model.

We've built strong relationships with schools and service providers across Australia, and we're working to expand our model into more communities. By bringing together Social Workers, Youth Workers, and Peer Worker Trainees, we provide flexible, specialised support that creates clear pathways to our programs and other services available to young people.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUNG PEOPLE



RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Building on the foundations put in place to the year before across research and evaluation, strong progress was made to bed down our routine monitoring tools to enable us to track a young persons impact over time in relation to outcome impact, and health cost benefit.

Improvements were made to our governance systems to track administration of these tools, compliance and quality resulting increased data collection that have formed the early building blocks to further understand the Youth Insearch's model and impact.

STRONG PROGRESS WAS MADE TO BED DOWN OUR ROUTINE MONITORING TOOLS TO ENABLE US TO TRACK A YOUNG PERSONS IMPACT OVER TIME

TWO IMPORTANT RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUED WHICH INCLUDED:

L < TITUDE NETWORK

Latitude Network (Avoided Cost Modelling) with the development and implementation of an avoided cost survey tool into the routine monitoring tools, in which we have collected self-reported information from young people in relation to their service usage across the sector in the 6-months prior, at commencement, 6-months and 12-months post commencement of support with Youth Insearch. Latitude Network has commenced analysing the preliminary data supporting us to understand the impact of the Youth Insearch model, and then quantifying the changes in service usage of a young person based on their engagement with Youth Insearch in relation to health cost savings to the sector.



University of Technology Sydney
Raising the Bar from University of Technology of Sydney trained a team of young people in skills for lived experience research. Raising the Bar supported this team to work with The University of Sydney to co-design a participatory action research study, to understand the impact of the Youth Insearch lived experience peer work model on youth mental health and suicide prevention.



University of Sydney (Participatory Action Research) undertaking research into the effectiveness of the Youth Insearch model and the experiences of Peer Workers and the young people they work with. The research is inquiring into the effectiveness of peer worker and social worker teams to engage young people who ordinarily would not engage in mainstream supports, who are most at risk of acute mental health and suicide. The project completion expected by the end of 2024, with the final report release expected in early 2025.



FAREWELL

We express our deep gratitude to our esteemed Patron, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC CVO DSC (Retd), who retired in June 2024 as Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Your unwavering support over the years has been instrumental in raising awareness and garnering assistance for our mission to empower young individuals and strengthen families and communities. Your dedication has played a vital role in making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. Thank you, for your invaluable support and commitment to our cause.

FUNDER HIGHLIGHT

Hand Heart Pocket is a philanthropic foundation established by the Freemasons of Queensland, with a history of helping the community for more than 115 years.

Our purpose is to partner for change for people in need, and our goal is by 2030, to support 10,000 of Queensland's young people to thrive now and in adult life.

To do this, we work with strategic partners across Queensland and Papua New Guinea, like Youth Insearch, to support programs and services that address the impacts of disadvantage and inequity experienced by children and young people.

Our partnership with Youth Insearch began in 2020, and today backs the delivery of their program in seven regional communities across Queensland including Bundaberg, Chinchilla, Dalby, Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Miles, and Roma.

Youth Insearch's organisational values and service delivery model align strongly with what we look for in a partner.

Their approach is grounded in community, strengths-based and delivered by young people themselves, many with lived experience. This integrated and trauma-informed model is unique, and the outcomes that the program achieves alongside its participants are backed by a compelling evidence base.

As well as supporting on-the-ground program delivery for organisations like Youth Insearch, Hand Heart Pocket also works across the child and family system to create help to long-term system change, so that future generations of young people can live with access to opportunity, safety, and stability, no matter where they live. A critical part of achieving this long-term change is supporting organisations like Youth Insearch to develop and expand their evidence base about what actually works in supporting young people to thrive, and assisting them to connect with others in the system to share learnings and advocate for change.



THIS IS ME: BRIANNA MORONEY

Bri is a resilient young woman from Western Sydney whose life was transformed by the support she found through Youth Insearch. Her journey began when her mother's counsellor recommended the program, recognizing Bri's need for a safe space to confront her childhood traumas.

Bri faced numerous challenges growing up. Her parents divorced when she was five months old, and she struggled to connect with her stepmother. At age 12, she was sexually assaulted, which left her feeling isolated and distrustful.

Despite grappling with suicidal thoughts, she believed her pain was less valid than that of others until she discovered Youth Insearch.

At Youth Insearch, Bri found the support she needed to navigate her emotions and begin healing. The program helped her reconnect with herself and rebuild strained relationships. "Youth Insearch means everything to me. It's my family. Without it, I honestly don't think I'd be here," she shares. She learned she was stronger than she ever imagined and gained the tools to move forward with hope.

Today, Bri is a peer worker for Youth Insearch, committed to supporting others as she was supported. Last year, the program helped over 860 young people across NSW, QLD, and VIC, demonstrating its remarkable impact in transforming lives and offering hope to those in need.

Brianna Moroney,
Peer Worker and past
program participant



YOUTH INSEARCH MEANS EVERYTHING TO ME. IT'S MY FAMILY. WITHOUT IT, I HONESTLY DON'T THINK I'D BE HERE



OPEN DIALOGUE TRAINING

Youth Insearch, with the support of the Grant Family Foundation, has teamed up with Open Dialogue Centre, which is assisting us in incorporating dialogical practice into our program. Staff and leaders are undergoing training to enhance their skills and confidence in utilising open dialogue strategies during workshops and support groups.

Our social workers and peer workers received the amazing opportunity to undergo Open Dialogue training where they got to experience a person-centred, recovery orientated approach to mental health care.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the cornerstone of our initiatives at Youth Insearch, and their indispensable contributions are vital to our mission.

We deeply appreciate all those who lend their support. Our engagement with volunteers encompasses a diverse range of individuals, from youth and adult leaders to community advocates and pro bono experts from corporate partners and individuals. Volunteers provide support in various capacities.

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR INITIATIVES AT YOUTH INSEARCH, AND THEIR INDISPENSABLE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE VITAL TO OUR MISSION.

Our trained adult and youth leaders facilitate program sessions, while community support adults serve as positive role models and advocates for our participants. Additionally, material support from corporate entities and individuals enhances our ability to connect with young people effectively.

This diverse support includes mentoring, crafting love wraps, and much more. We extend our sincere gratitude to all our valued volunteers. Your ommitment makes our mission achievable, and together, we are spreading hope, one blue heart at a time.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT: CALLUM ANDERSON

Callum's life changed when he sought help, feeling isolated and overwhelmed. Two Youth Insearch supporters, Mal and Guy, visited him in hospital, showing him, he wasn't alone in his struggles. Their encouragement gave Callum the strength to open up about his challenges and the lack of support he felt at home.

Realising the importance of a positive environment, Callum made the lifechanging decision to move in with his father, Peter. This fresh start gave him stability, hope, and the chance to focus on his future.

Now, Callum is thriving. He's in Stage 3 of the Youth Insearch Leadership program, studying nursing at TAFE, and dreams of becoming a Youth Insearch peer worker to help others facing similar challenges. His journey shows the power of support, connection, and believing in a brighter future.



CALLUM'S STORY HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND COMPASSIONATE MENTORSHIP IN FOSTERING HOPE AND HEALING.

ADULT LEADER STORY: TRACEY HAYES

One of the standout features of Youth Insearch is the incredible volunteers who join us, many of whom are inspired to advance through our Leadership pathways.

We offer several pathways, including our Leadership Training program for our Participants, and we also welcome Guests and Support Adults who initially engage with us by bringing young people to our programs or attending as visitors to learn more about what we do.

A prime example of this is Tracey Hayes, who first joined us in 2005 as a Support Person, bringing young people from a Drug and Alcohol agency where she was employed at the time. Nine years later, Tracey has participated in over 40 programs and completed her Leaders Training in 2017 at Elanora Heights, NSW. She graduated as a fully accredited Leader in 2018 at Government House NSW.

Tracey contributes not only her cultural expertise but also a wealth of lived experience from her extensive career in the industry. Her passion for family and culture shines brightly, and as a mother and nan, she has much to offer future generations.

When asked why she remains dedicated to our organisation after all these years, Tracey says "That's easy. I am passionate about the organisation and have seen the positive results it creates for young people. It not only benefits them but has also helped me on my own journey. I love working with our Young Leaders and participants and sharing the wealth of knowledge we all bring. I've built respectful, loving relationships with them and have watched them grow into adulthood. Seeing their sense of pride and knowing I've played a small part in their development is incredibly fulfilling and gives me a great sense of pride."

I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT THE ORGANISATION AND HAVE SEEN THE POSITIVE RESULTS IT CREATES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. IT NOT ONLY BENEFITS THEM BUT HAS ALSO HELPED ME ON MY OWN JOURNEY.





MEET JAMAAL

Jamaal, an inspiring young Indigenous man, was born and raised in Brisbane in a culturally rich and respectful environment.

From an early age, he felt disconnected from his parents due to their demanding work schedules. At 13, Jamaal moved with his family to Hervey Bay, where he began struggling with mental health issues stemming from childhood traumas, which led to drug and alcohol addiction.

At 17, through a less-than-positive friendship, Jamaal found a glimmer of hope when he was introduced to Youth Insearch. A shy and reserved teenager, Jamaal initially found it difficult to engage or speak up at the camps due to his lack of confidence and sense of belonging.

However, with the support of Youth Insearch and a dedicated team of mental health professionals, Jamaal began to invest in himself and work towards becoming the person he aspired to be. The program helped Jamaal find his voice and build his confidence.

Encouraged by the team at Youth Insearch and fellow participants, he applied for a Leadership

YOUTH INSEARCH IS A FAMILY AND A TEAM. WE ALL CAME HERE FOR SUPPORT AND LOVE, SOMETHING I ALWAYS WANTED AS A KID, AND NOW I WANT TO PROVIDE THAT TO OTHERS.

position. Driven by his desire to inspire others and demonstrate that change, growth, and aspirations are attainable, Jamaal stepped into this new role.



Reflecting on his journey, Jamaal says, "Youth Insearch is a family and a team. We all came here for support and love, something I always wanted as a kid, and now I want to provide that to others."

Excited about the next stage of his Leadership journey, Jamaal has learned to express himself openly, honestly, and authentically. Currently, Jamaal facilitates support sessions in Hervey Bay and is eager to apply the skills he has acquired from his Leadership training to benefit his community. He also works as an Indigenous support worker, furthering his commitment to helping others.

Jamaal's story is a testament to his resilience and the transformative power of support and self-investment.



LARITA ACADEMY

In 2023, we were excited to announce our partnership with Larita Academy for the 2024 program. Larita Academy offers intensive curricula focused on enhancing entrepreneurship, generating job opportunities, and fostering positive social connections.

LARITA ACADEMY OFFERS INTENSIVE CURRICULA FOCUSED ON ENHANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP, GENERATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOSTERING POSITIVE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS.



This exceptional event, organised by Larry, Anita, and the dedicated Larita team, alongside our partner organisations, celebrated the empowerment of youth and the establishment of transformative opportunities for young Australians. The evening was remarkable, fostering meaningful connections, laughter, and a wealth of inspiration. Attendees engaged in networking, sharing stories, and discussing future initiatives aimed at creating a brighter future for the nation's youth.

The launch reinforced our collective commitment to empowering and uplifting the next generation. The palpable support and dedication from all participants set the groundwork for ongoing collaboration and success. As we look forward, we are energized by the shared vision and steadfast support of our community. Together, we are effecting tangible change in the lives of young Australians, equipping them with the resources and opportunities necessary for their success.

Chantelle Fogg, our Peer Practice Lead, provided valuable insights into the significant impact the three-day program had on our participating leaders.

"The Larita Academy was a great opportunity for some of our leaders to gain insight into how the business world works. Many of them walking away with new perspectives and new goals on where they would like to be in life. Being part of the Support Crew was a great experience for me, getting to witness the passion and dedication to mentoring and guiding young people from everyone involved was truly admirable. I felt that Larry and Anita were truly committed to showing every young person involved that anything is possible with hard work and determination. Our group felt very connected to the presentation from David and Yuge Bromley who gave great perspective on how people with a mental health diagnosis can still be successful in life."



SHOW UP, SHOW OUT BRIGHTER DAY CAMPAIGN

Our year was anything but dull, marked by the launch of our Brighter Day Campaign, which culminated on 23 February 2024, during End Youth Suicide Week.

This campaign united communities with a powerful purpose: to turn a blue day bright. It was a chance to stand up for vulnerable young Australians and send a clear message: We see you.

Through the collective efforts of many, we inspired hundreds to take meaningful action, amplifying our message far and wide and reaching over 1.4 million people across social media.

To everyone who participated in Brighter Day—thank you. Your dedication and passion played a vital role in raising awareness and funds to support the transformative work of the Youth Insearch program.



246
INDIVIDUALS ENLISTED

1,437,830
SOCIAL MEDIA REACH



THANK YOU



The past year was extraordinary for Youth Insearch, and we are deeply grateful to our supporters who helped us achieve so much.

We positively impacted the lives of more than 850 young people, reaching over 39 communities across Eastern Australia. In 2023-2024, we welcomed 376 new donors, bringing our total to 502 supporters throughout the year. We hosted an array of events, including an Insight into Youth Insearch, graciously hosted by our ambassador Garry Rothwell and his wife Susan.

We also showcased our work at events like those at Government House, Admiralty House and 1 Denison. Our incredible community heroes fundraised tirelessly, including initiatives like Run for the Hills with Castle Hill Rotary Club, the Ride Safe Charity Day with Twist It Moto, and Tamworth Rotary Club's Christmas event, where we were honoured as the beneficiaries.



NARLA'S STORY

It was difficult to trust people because I had had my trust broken many times. I was getting in fights with people I didn't even know, at school and outside of school.

I had the police starting to see me and ask what was going on. I would always tell them to go away and leave me alone, I remember one time threatening to stab a police officer, which then led to me being arrested and looking at charging me and so I was left in the cell all night as mum said I had to learn the hard way. It was 10am the next morning before I got out. It made me think, what am I doing and do I want to be this person?

It was not long after that that I got referred to Youth Insearch from my Quantum worker. At first I thought, "who are these people, and what are we doing?". I decided to come anyway and then I met Kaara, one of the Peer Workers, she was pretty cool and started to help me see that I could make better choices. At my first camp I wasn't talking to anyone, I was staying to myself, but listening to the others, I was upset and thinking, "I don't want to be here", but I stayed and listened and realised they were going through the same as me. I was getting more from the camps I had been to, and then I went to NSW for a bit to other family to get away from everyone, which is where I stopped using the drugs and alcohol. This helped break the ties with the people I was hanging around.

I decided to come back to Victoria and realised everything was better off the drugs and alcohol, and I reconnected with my good mates, who were so happy that I was off all the drugs and alcohol, and I realised that they were my real friends. Now, having just completed my third camp, I'm feeling better, and proud of myself, especially looking back over my story now I can see how far I have come.

I AM NOW LOOKING AT WANTING TO BE ONE OF THOSE LEADERS THAT INSPIRED ME, AND I AM GOING TO KEEP WORKING ON MYSELF THIS YEAR SO THAT I CAN APPLY NEXT YEAR AND HELP SUPPORT OTHERS LIKE THEY DID ME.



I am now looking at wanting to be one of those leaders that inspired me, and I am going to keep working on myself this year so that I can apply next year and help support others like they did me. At my first camp I wasn't talking to anyone, I was staying to myself, but listening to the others, I was upset and thinking, "I don't want to be here", but I stayed and if you asked me about Youth Insearch I'd say "This program works, it saves peoples' lives. I was in hospital twice from trying to take my own life, and now the future looks brighter ahead, thanks to the support of Youth Insearch and the mates I've made at Youth Insearch".

SUPPORTERS

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FEDERAL

Department of Health and Aged Care
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources

STATE

Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Department of Regional NSW
NSW Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade
QLD Department of Justice and Attorney

LOCAL

Shoalhaven City Council

PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS

Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network
Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network

COMMUNITY CLUBS AND SERVICES

Castle Hill RSL Club
Inner Wheel Australia Club of Tamworth
Lions District Q3
Lions District Q4
Rotary Australia District 9660
Rotary Club of Castle Hill
Rotary Club of Inverell
Rotary Club of Tamworth
Rotary Club of Tamworth First Light
Rotary Manilla NSW
Rotary Club of Tamworth West
Rotary Club of Tamworth Sunrise
St Marys Band Club
Windsor RSL
Zonta Club of Bundaberg

CORPORATE

Colin Biggers & Paisley
Commercial Credit Services
Gladstone Ports Corporation
Joblink Plus
Trenton International
Walker Corporation
Winten Property Group

COMMUNITY IN-KIND SUPPORT

Armidale Youth Booth
BCR Sanctuary Point
Beyond Empathy
Briagolong Community House
Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre
Chinchilla Community Centre
East Creek Community Centre
Firefly Bay and Basin
Gladstone Mindcare
Gippsland Youth Spaces Inc
Gunida Gonyah Aboriginal Corporation
Gympie Youth Hub
Gympie Neighbourhood Centre
Headspace Bundaberg
MADCOTA Community Hub
Murila Community Centre
Myall Youth Community Centre
North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health
PCYC Shoalhaven
QCWA Tannum Sands

SCHOOLS

Barwon Learning Centre
Bomaderry High School
Bundaberg North State High
Bundaberg State High
Caboolture State High
Chinchilla State High
Dalby State High School
Gunnedah High School
Gladstone State High
Gympie Flexi Learning Centre
Inverell High School
Laidley State High
Lockyer District State High
Macksville High School

Maffra Secondary College
Maryborough State High
Moree High School
Miles State High School
Narrabri High School
Nowra High School
Roma State College
Sale College
Tannum Sands State High
The Village School Gold Coast
Vincentia High School
Wee Waa High School

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

Band Family Foundation
Brinsmead Hill Family Foundation
Grant Family Charitable Trust
Hand Heart Pocket The Charity of Freemasons Queensland
People First Bank Foundation (Formerly known as Heritage Bank Foundation)
The Benevolent Society (Westpac Safer Children, Safer Communities)
The Howarth Foundation
The Lionel and Yvonne Spencer Trust (Perpetual)
The Lewis Foundation
Matana Foundation for Young People
Tenix Foundation
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SUPPORTERS

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS



COMMUNITY CLUBS AND SERVICES



CORPORATE

Colin Biggers & Paisley



In Memory of Lang Walker.

We remember the incredible Lang Walker, a beacon of generosity and support for Youth Insearch.

Lang, a major donor to our foundation, embodied the spirit of compassion and commitment to making a positive impact. Lang's dedication and contributions have been instrumental in our mission, impacting countless young lives. We are forever grateful for his kindness.

Rest in peace, Lang. Your legacy of compassion lives on.

TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS



TRAINING PARTNERS





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