

2024/2025 ANNUAL REPORT



COWRA INFORMATION &
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE INC

2024/2025 ANNUAL REPORT

ABN 37 152 608 106

AGENDA

Friday 17th October 2025 at 10am

Cowra Information & Neighbourhood Centre

15 Vaux Street, Cowra, NSW 2794

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Confirm minutes of previous years AGM
4. Presentation of Chairpersons Report
5. Report from Treasurer
6. Board Elections
7. Welcome to the new Board
8. Appointment of Auditor and Accountant
9. Appointment of Public Officer
10. Presentation of CEO report
11. Thank you and closing

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

2024 - 2025



Nikki Kiss OAM

Chairperson
Secretary



Alicia Ball

Vice Chairperson



Steve Moriarty

Treasurer



Marc Grant

Board Member



Esther Cutmore

Board Member



Cheryl Speechley

Board Member



Henry Downing

Board Member

STAFF

2024 - 2025



Fran Stead
Chief Executive Officer



Abby Slattery
Community Engagement
Trainee



Alison Cooper
Administrative Support



Bronwyn Sainsbury
Administration Officer



Danny Jackett
Team Leader Home
Modifications & Maintenance



Donnah Chown
Client Services Worker
Family Support



Isabelle Doorey
Community Engagement
Trainee



Hellen Horton
Youth Worker



Jaeme Bird
Disability Support Worker



Jessica Bateson
Receptionist



Jess McLeish
Community Engagement



Karen Pearson
Compliance Officer



Kaitlin Hoskins
Disability Support Worker



Maddie Brooks
Disability Support Worker



Madelyn Stead
Community Engagement



Marion Speechley
Team Leader
Community Engagement
& Disability Services

STAFF

2024 - 2025



Monique Gillespie
Receptionist



Natalie Rush
Key Worker



Nicollette Regan
Disability Support Worker



Peter Dawson
Home Modifications and
Maintenance



Peter Van Dartel
Disability Support Worker



Rebecca Bartle
Community Engagement Assistant
& Disability Support Worker



Sandra Conway
Community Support



Sarah Taylor
Disability Support
Worker



William Ingram
Aboriginal Community
Engagement Officer



Cowra Information &
Neighbourhood Centre

OUR VISION

" Locals Supporting Locals "

OUR MISSION

To empower people and our community to grow and celebrate diversity, to be safe and connected.
To provide services, information, advocacy and referral to all our communities, focusing on the people who are vulnerable, isolated or at risk.

CINC MEMBERS

2024 - 2025

The Board of Management and Staff would like to thank all of our wonderful members for their ongoing support of our projects within the Cowra Community.

Ball, Alicia Maree	Maloney, Greg
Beale, Lewis	McAllister, Shirley
Beer, Lynette	Mewburn, Karen
Bridge, Rosemary	Mewburn, Robert John
Budge, Chris Ronald	Moriarty, Judith Mary
Budge, Kay	Moriarty, Stephen John
Close, Vicki Ann	Nichols, Rosalie
Cole, Paul	O'Brien, Lynette Jane
Cook, Diana	Pancik Elaine
Cutmore, Esther Phyllis	Petty, Brian Geoffrey
Delphin, Christopher George	Pullen, Denise
Delphin, Theresa Joy	Russell, Terence
Downing, Henry	Ryan, Nakeya
Edwards, Kim	Singh, Padmi wati
Feltham, Coral	Smith, Janet
Ford, Marjorie	Speechley, Cheryl
Gorringe, Jules	Steen, Leona Maxine
Grant, Marc	Stone, Robert Bernard
Grout, Dorothy	Terelinck, Diane
Gruber, Robin	Toohey, Jodie-lee
Kirkwood, Douglas Dempster	Vale, Lucy
Kiss, David	Vial, Kerry Ann
Kiss, Nicole Maree	Widdows, Kaylene
Langfield, Wendy	Willding, Pamela
	Williams, Michael James

Why do we need members?

By having a strong membership we are able to actively display that we are supported by all sections of the Cowra Community. Being a member is a great way to keep in touch with what is happening in our community.

Interested in becoming a member?

Please contact Admin on (02) 6340 1100.

CINC VOLUNTEERS

Roll of Honour

2024 - 2025

The Board of Management and Staff would like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers for their ongoing support of our projects within the Cowra Community.

Ball, Alicia Maree
Beale, Lewis
Beer, Lyn
Bryant, Leticia
Burton, Kasey
Cutmore, Esther
Downing, Henry
Grant, Marc
Hackney, Valerie
Kiss, Nicole OAM
Kirkwood, Douglas
Moriarty, Stephen
Smith, Janet
Speechley, Cheryl
Steen, Leona
Stone, Rob
Toohey, Jodie-Lee
Vial, Kerry
Widdows, Kaylene

Why do we need volunteers?

By having volunteers, we are able to actively display that we are supported by all sections of the Cowra Community. Being a volunteer is a great way to give a helping hand in our community.

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

Please contact Admin on (02) 6340 1100.



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It is a challenge to begin writing an Annual Report for CINC's Board of Management. There has been so much happening that it is difficult to know where to begin! But it is a worthwhile challenge to have, and I am grateful for the opportunity to attempt it.

I'm going to start by thanking my fellow Board of Management members for their dedication and contributions throughout the year. Alicia Ball has stepped up as Vice Chair, Steve Moriarty is our vigilant Treasurer, and Cheryl Speechley has proven to be invaluable as our Secretary. Our board members Marc Grant and Esther Cutmore continue to share their knowledge and wisdom. Our diversity and teamwork highlight our commitment to ensuring that our community is well-represented. These individuals are some of the unsung heroes behind CINC's existence. They share their time and expertise for the greater good, not expecting any accolade, just with the knowledge that they are contributing to community betterment.

I would like to also thank Henry Downing for his contributions to the CINC Board of Management during 2024-25. We were saddened to accept Henry's resignation earlier this year and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

This has been a year of strengthening relations with our funding bodies and fitting our infrastructure for the future. We continue to grow steadily, but with quality at the heart of every decision.

CINC continues to pride itself on providing 'something for everyone'. Its services are holistic, catering for the youngest to our most senior, supporting individuals and families, promoting the vision of a thriving inclusive community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our funding partners, local businesses, and community members who have supported us throughout the year. Your generosity and belief in our mission inspire us to keep striving for a better future for all.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Management, I would like to say Thank You to CINC's most valuable asset - CEO Fran Stead and her team of staff – for another hugely successful year. As individuals, each of you are amazing people. As a collective, you are a respected, formidable force with an unwavering commitment to make a difference.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected Cowra. Thank you for being part of our journey.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I am deeply honoured to present my Annual Report for 2025.

First and foremost, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our incredible board and staff. Your unwavering dedication, resilience, and compassion have been the cornerstone of everything we've achieved this year. In what has been a demanding and transformative period, each of you has gone above and beyond. Whether quietly working behind the scenes or stepping forward in times of need, you've shown unparalleled teamwork and commitment. You make complex tasks look effortless—and for that, I am endlessly grateful.

This year brought significant financial hardship to our community, deeply affecting families and individuals alike. In response, we've amplified our advocacy efforts, speaking out more strongly than ever against injustice and inequality. Our mission remains rooted in compassion, dignity, and action. We stand as a voice for those who feel unheard, a hand for those who feel unseen. We remain committed to being present, being empathetic, and being relentless in our pursuit of support and equity.

I was honoured to serve on the LCSA Board of Management this year, proudly representing Cowra and our wider regional areas. It's essential that rural and regional voices are heard at the table—and I continue to champion this representation with everything I've got. Alongside this, I also took part in a parliamentary enquiry into loneliness—an issue that affects more people than we often realise. Being involved allowed me to share the experiences we hear every day at CINC and advocate for solutions that support real connection and community.

Each day, we welcome new faces through our doors—individuals ready to share their stories, their struggles, and their hopes. To each person who trusts us enough to seek help or simply share a coffee and a conversation: your courage drives our purpose. Trust is the most profound gift we receive, and it's what fuels every decision we make and every program we deliver.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

One of our proudest developments this year has been the growth of our school-based programs. With generous support from Cowra Rotary, we've extended our reach to younger students, planting seeds of resilience and kindness in the next generation. These partnerships are helping create stronger, more inclusive environments for children across our region.

On a personal note, it's also been a landmark year of study. I'm nearly at the finish line of my master's degree—a goal I've been chasing with passion and perseverance. I keep reminding myself: "You're almost there!" And once I get there... well, I'll have to rediscover what spare time feels like!

I want to express special thanks to my husband—my rock—who has supported me through long nights, early mornings, and everything in between. He's never asked for the spotlight, but his unwavering support has allowed me to pour myself into both CINC and UNI. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

This year, I've found myself asking some deep questions—questions that remind me why we do what we do. My answer is simple: we each have a purpose. And part of mine is to make a meaningful difference. Our world is shifting, and we cannot stand still. We must work for change, push for equality, and lead with love.

Team CINC will continue to evolve, to listen, and to serve. We do this not just because it's our job—but because it's our home. And when you love your community, you show up for it.

With big love and even bigger hopes for the future.

Fran xx

Fran Stead
Chief Executive Officer

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Naidoc celebrations started at Squire Park with flag raising and despite the rain and cold weather we had a great turnout for the NAIDOC March. Our family fun day at the Cowra PCYC was a huge success. The amazing Rapid Relief team catered again and despite the weather had big smiles on their faces. The Cowra Youth Council helped us with hairspray, tattoos and face painting and Enablement Services manned the jumping castle.

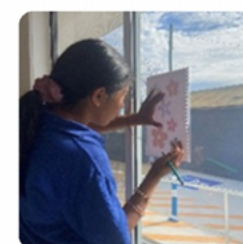
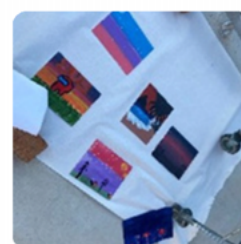
The hall was filled with Service Providers who had put all their time and effort in to ensure it was a great day for the whole community. We held dance workshops and performance with Dinawan Connections.



Lots of wonderful workshops during the school holidays. We held inclusive cultural and artefact talks, story telling and hands on preparation and painting of boomerangs, coolamon and shield. The children have enjoyed movies at the Cowra Civic Centre, activity days with board games, diamond art, craft and lego activities.



Our Youth Engagement Program held workshops with cooking, diamond art, gardening and painting. The children have had an amazing time together, learning new recipes, getting creative and building new friendships.



Women's Health Week was held at Club Cowra. Guest speaker Nikki Kiss shared her amazing story. We enjoyed games of bingo with our MC Jen Shady and all things women's health. A great crowd young and old, gaining knowledge, asking questions and learning the importance of looking after ourselves at all ages.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CINC's supported playgroups are held every Wednesday and Thursday during school terms. Each week there are lots of fun activities and social interaction for the children and parents/carers. An opportunity to explore different sensory, creative, imaginative, fine and gross motor activities. Playgroup provides the opportunity for children to play, learn, participate and enjoy new activities. Parent/carers form friendships and can support each other with sharing ideas.



Children's week was celebrated with family and friends at PCYC. Everyone enjoyed the Bluey party with jumping castle, face painting, tattoos, playdough, cookie decorating and a lunch together.

The theme was "Children Have The Right To A Clean And Safe Environment."



International Day of People with Disability was celebrated with a Fun Day at Cowra PCYC. A great day with lots of fun activities for the children and adults alike. A great opportunity to connect with friends while enjoying a BBQ lunch. Wonderful to be joined by other service providers ensuring everybody had an enjoyable day.



We love Christmas at CINC. It's such a beautiful time of year for people to come together. We held a community luncheon at Club Cowra. It was lovely to have our local schools, retirement village and community members come together chatting, laughing and connecting while enjoying a lovely meal. We had our winter wonderland at the Cowra Christmas Festival at Squire Park with Santa photos and lots of activities and fun for all the family. And lastly we celebrated with our playgroups and Stewart Street families.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

International Women's Day was celebrated amidst a blackout with 50 amazing women. Ella and Kim from Designed to Bloom put together a dried flower workshop. The ladies created beautiful floral arrangements by candlelight and lanterns. A fantastic afternoon of patience, understanding, company, laughter and friendship.



Neighbourhood Centre week and Reconciliation week was celebrated together as both themes flow into each other. Neighbourhood Centre week theme "Ripples of Change" and Reconciliation week "Bridging Now to Next". Cowra Public School choir performed for us and CINC staff gave a presentation on the amazing programs and work being carried out at the centre.



Our wonderful seniors enjoyed a lovely High Tea with friends, great food, laughter and tunes by Graeme Hutchinson. The room was full of friendship, chatter and smiling faces.



CINC love Harmony Day and its theme of 'Everyone Belongs' something that we promote every day. Harmony Day is about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. A luncheon was held to celebrate and recognise Australia's diversity bringing people together from different backgrounds.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We celebrated family diversity & connection with a superhero themed party Families Week event held at the Cowra PCYC with our incredible community. Our friends from Cowra Public School entertained us with their eisteddfod item. A great day for people young and old to come together and celebrate all families and connect with our community.



CINC have celebrated many events at our Community Morning Teas and in our Community including: Biggest Morning Tea, Jeans for Genes, Wear it Purple, Pink Ribbon and RU OK.

It is wonderful to continue our relationship with Cowra Public School, students continuing their fortnightly visits to perform and connect with our community.

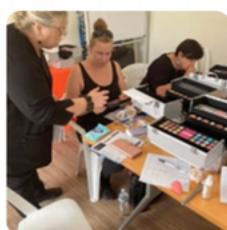


Our regular weekly and fortnightly Art Group, Chances Clothing Project and Knitting Group are a great creative experience for people but also a fantastic social network. These groups are attracting lots of new people young and old. Social connection and creativity is so important for health and wellbeing.



CINC held two Makeup Workshops for adults with Kelly Thurtell from Absolute Beauty. The groups learnt different techniques for applying makeup, colour matching and skin care preparation before application.

Everyone who attended enjoyed their time, going home with new skills and makeup goodies.



Marion Speechley
Team Leader
Community Engagement & Disability Service

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT

Justice Reinvestment (JR) has had a steady and busy year so far. We are over 12 months into our Initiative and have made some valuable connections and relationships throughout different parts of the Community.

A focus on Early Intervention with primary schools has shown good results as there have been less incidents at school with behavior which has resulted in fewer suspensions. Help with well-being and emotional regulation through weekly group and individual sessions with students.

Three Schools have regular engagements including Mulyan Public, Cowra Public and Holmwood Public Schools. Also building a stronger rapport with staff and students throughout this period. St Raphaels school has also welcomed JR and continues to have an open understanding with engagements.



Continuous engagement within Community, ranging from service providers, community volunteer groups, local junior and senior sporting clubs, speaking on a wide range of community issues and how they relate to JR. Also attending many events to build relationships on different levels.

Having a strong partnership with PCYC has proven invaluable, working with kids and volunteers through the Fit 4 Life program as well as possible and probable drop-in days which have been a point of discussion for some time. Building strong bonds with Youth Command officers and ACLO's for the Chifley area.



I have attended two separate JR Forums in Sydney, meeting with other sites, key stakeholders such as DCJ and AGD. Both of which have been a huge learning curve and continue to be a great source of reflection and determination to strive to get better outcomes for the community.



Individual support for families is ongoing and will continue to be as long as needed. It has been a long process with many interventions as well as meetings with intensive family support agencies such as Benevolent Society and DCJ. Support ranges from transport to emotional support and advocacy when dealing with medical and family environment assessments.



This has been the most intense support relationship as he is a father with a disability and limited support and resources. Trying to keep his family together.

Meeting with Police for PACC meetings quarterly to discuss Aboriginal Community issues and trying to address issues and build a more positive relationship through these meetings. Discussing strategies to improve these is also imperative to JR success.

William Ingram
Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer

COMMUNITY & FAMILIES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre – Family Support is dedicated to equipping families and young individuals with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of family life, fostering growth, wellbeing and active participation in the Community.

Throughout the financial year 2024 – 2025 we extended our service to 99 families, with ongoing support and engagement to 40 families.

We provide advice and referral, home visiting, linking families to appropriate services, parenting and support groups, programs to assist with their knowledge and growth, community activities and events.

We assisted Families in Cowra, Canowindra, Grenfell and the surrounding areas.

CINC Family Support assists Families. Families who require Family Group Conferences – FGC, Families who are Carers of Children, Grand Children, Foster Children as well as Foster Carers, Children Court Clinician Assessments/appointments

We extend our heartfelt thanks to SecondBite Coles and Woolworths for their unwavering support to our Community and Families, their contributions have significantly lessened the financial burden on families and the community, we are deeply grateful for their generosity.

Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre - Family Support offered the following Programs for Families/Carers and Children in 2024-2025.

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is a comprehensive approach to family intervention designed for parents and caregivers. It aims to foster positive and nurturing relationships between parents and their children, equip parents with effective strategies to manage various child behaviour issues and developmental challenges.

Group Triple P is scientifically validated and implemented worldwide, has been shown to enhance parental confidence, reduce stress, anger, and depression levels.

Triple P Programs available are Group Triple P Children aged 2-12 years, Stepping Stones Primary, Children with Disabilities, Stepping Stones Seminars, Children with Disabilities, Teen Triple P.

Group Triple P 2024 – 2025 we had 18 Families Complete the Program.

Out of the Dark is designed for women who have faced domestic and family violence/abuse across various forms, including emotional, financial, sexual, social, and physical, as well as religious abuse, Out of the Dark offers a supportive environment.

This program empowers women to make informed decisions, understand domestic violence, regain control over their lives, and explore the available options and support networks.

Participants gain insights into the different types of family violence, the cycle of abuse, misconceptions and truths about domestic violence, the dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships, and strategies for safety planning.

Between 2024 - 2025, 4 individuals completed the Out of the Dark program.

COMMUNITY & FAMILIES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

Black Box is tailored for parents who have encountered family violence and/or other traumatic experiences. Each session provides an opportunity for parents and caregivers to reflect on their interactions with their children in a supportive, non-blaming manner.

This program is designed to help parents understand how past experiences, including trauma, may influence their parenting today. It covers topics such as the impact of trauma on the brain, the role of play in repairing attachment bonds, common parenting strategies, and the importance of a strong foundation of attachment in all relationships.

Black Box Parenting is focused on deepening understanding of how past experiences affect family dynamics today, particularly how trauma can influence parenting today. It aims to help families develop effective strategies and maintain unity.

Black Box Parenting is Five-session group program with individual phone sessions. Between 2024 - 2025, Seven families successfully completed the Black Box Parenting program.

Shark Cage program is an eight-week evidence-based initiative that delves into the various forms of abuse women face and how these abuses intersect with human rights violations.

This program is particularly suited for women who have encountered multiple instances of abuse and may have started to internalise societal attitudes that blame victims.

The Shark Cage program serves as a tool for both preventing and understanding violence against women and girls. It employs powerful metaphors and utilises a variety of psychological approaches to work effectively with trauma survivors, aiming to empower women and girls.

The program is structured into five key steps: Introducing the Shark Cage Metaphor, Renovating the Shark Cage, Fixing the Shark Cage Alarm, Defending the Shark Cage, and Recognising Sharks and Dolphins.

The goals of the program include enhancing understanding of both healthy and unhealthy relationships, improving the ability to set boundaries, fostering assertive communication skills, increasing awareness of the effects of abuse, promoting self-care and kindness, strengthening emotional connection, boosting self-esteem, improving body awareness, advocating for the right to human rights, and reducing feelings of self-blame for abuse. This program spans eight weeks.

In the 2024-2025 period, Four women successfully completed the Shark Cage program.

Professional Development is vital to Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre – Family Support this ensures we are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills to best support our Families and Youth.

This year we have engaged in training through Teams, Webinars and online training.

Committees and Groups are something we participate in the Cowra Domestic and Family Violence Committee.

COMMUNITY & FAMILIES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

Family Support Canowindra

Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre – Family Support is dedicated to empowering families and young individuals with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of family life, fostering growth, wellbeing and active participation in the Community.

We provide advice and referral, home visiting, linking families to appropriate services, parenting and support groups, programs to assist with knowledge and growth.

As a part of the Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre, Family Support, we also encourage families/parents/carers to attend Group Programs, if they are unable to attend we try to support individual programs to support the Families/Parents/Carers.

In 2024 – 2025 we assisted Five families in Canowindra.

Family Support Koorawatha

Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre – Family Support is dedicated to empowering families and young people in Koorawatha with the necessary skills to overcome family life changes, promote growth, wellbeing.

We offer guidance, support and connect families to services and programs, we can do home visits to provide face to face support.

In 2024 – 2025 we assisted Three families in Koorawatha.

Family Support Grenfell

Cowra Information and Neighbourhood – Family Support is committed to equipping families and young people in Grenfell with the skill to tackle the day to day challenges of family life, we encourage growth, wellbeing and active community engagement.

We encourage Families to attend Parenting Programs and Community Programs that are offered during the year.

In 2024 – 2025 we assisted Four Families in Grenfell.

Partnerships

As a frontline service for children and families in need we work closely with other service providers to ensure positive outcomes for our families. We would like to thank Department of Communities and Justice – Family and Community Services NSW - Housing NSW, Cowra Public School, Mulyan Public School, Holmwood Public School, Holman Place, Cowra Early Childhood Services, Yalbillunga Boori Day Care Centre, Good Start Early Learning, Nurture One, Cowra Mobile Preschool, Housing Plus, Mission Australia, Cowra Social Workers, Psychologist and Doctors Surgeries, Salvation Army, St Vincent DePaul, Community Chest, Westnet safe connections - Phone , Headspace, Regional Outreach Clinic Program (ROCP) solicitors, Legal Aid, Cowra Court House, Cowra Police, Wesley Centre Food Hall, Canowindra Community Health, Canowindra High School, Cowra High School, St Raphael's Catholic School, Henry Lawson High School Grenfell, Cowra Mental Health, Cowra Community Health, Community Transport, Relationships Australia – Mediation, NDIS – Social Futures, Barnardos, NILS loans, CentreCare Specialists – Homelessness, Staying Home Leaving Violence, Barnardos, Cowra Community Enterprises, RDA Shop.

Donnah Chown

Family Support Worker

With the help of Cowra Rotary we were able to extend the programs we are able to offer.

Friends Resilience Program assists individuals of every age in developing resilience, confidence, and emotional well-being, which in turn enhances educational and social results within schools, families, and workplaces.

Friends Resilience provides four distinct programs: Fun Friends (for ages 4-7, focusing on positive social development), Friends for Life (for ages 8-11, aimed at inspiring confidence and emotional strength), My Friends Youth (for ages 12-15, focused on building positive relationships with peers), and Adults Resilience (for individuals aged 16-18, offering resilience programs for adults).

These programs have been conducted at Cowra Public School, Grenfell Public School, St. Raphael's Catholic School, and Mulyan Public School. Additionally, the program offers one-on-one sessions for children and young adults. Partnerships As a primary service provider for children and families in need, we collaborate closely with various service providers to ensure positive outcomes for our families.

RAGE Program (Re-Navigating Angry and Guilty Emotions) - The Anger Management Group Program, RAGE, is specifically designed for young people who struggle to control their emotions, in particular Anger. The program's objective is to help students identify their feelings of anger, understand what triggers them, and explore alternate strategies to cope with frustration. RAGE is aligned with PDHPE K-10 outcomes, which focus on building resilience, respectful relationships, and developing self-management skills to enable students to reflect and respond positively to challenges. The program is structured to run for six weeks, with one-hour sessions each week, and is designed to accommodate between six to eight students. A person-centered approach is used to ensure that the individual needs of each student are met.

In 2024-2025 we reached out to 145 kids, from St Raphael's, Cowra Public, Grenfell Public, Mulyan and Holmwood Public.

LOVEBiTES is a Respectful Relationships Education Program designed for young individuals aged 12-17. It is structured around two interactive workshops: one focusing on Relationship Violence and another on Sex and Relationships, followed by creative workshops.

The primary objective of Love Bites overall is to create a safe space for young people to explore, discuss, and learn about respectful relationships.

Each Love Bites program adopts a strength-based approach, viewing young people as active participants capable of making their own decisions and choices within their relationships, supported by information and opportunities for skill-building.

The overarching goals of the program are to equip young people with the necessary knowledge to foster respectful relationships, encourage and develop critical thinking skills, and assist in problem-solving and effective communication. By gaining these skills, NAPCAN and Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre believe young people will be better equipped to make informed decisions for themselves and their relationships, ensuring they are free from violence and abuse.

During 2024 - 2025, Love BiTES was conducted at Cowra High, Canowindra High, Henry Lawson High School Grenfell, St. Raphael's Cowra, collectively reaching out to 516 students in the area.

YOUTH CONNECT

Youth Connect has had another brilliantly busy year full of wonderful young people and really great partnerships to create a safe and multifaceted network. This is a very important part of what we do – teamwork makes dream work!

We have maintained our working relationships and client groups with Cowra High, St Raphaels, Henry Lawson High School (Grenfell) and Canowindra High. These connections are now a decade in play and they still have been getting stronger each year. The continued representation of CINC as a safe space and safe place makes these school connections often act as a soft entry to allow young people and their families to access the many services that CINC bring to the table. Often we are asked to attend school functions to celebrate the young people and we could not be more flattered at the invitations.

The Fit for Life Program is still going strong after 9 years. The young people and the supervisors change but the spirit very much stays the same. Bringing young people to the PCYC on the bus, using physical activity to close divides and give knowledge about fit body and fit mind, followed by a good breakfast and a lift to school. The current supervisors are Chels (PCYC), Senior Constable Logan Harris (Youth Command) Percy Ravenau (Bathurst ACLO), Lewy Beale (Mulyan School) and Hell Horton and Will Ingram (CINC). YC feels truly blessed to have been to all except one session of Fit For Life since its inception.

Youth Connect have been a part of the team presenting LoveBites in the local schools with the other brilliant CINC staff Madelyn and Jess. This program touches on the importance of healthy & respectful relationships and what to do if you need supports in that area. This program is very sought after by the schools and it is a pleasure to be able to co-facilitate with such wonderful and passionate presenters. Senior Constable Jane Heffernan, Senior Constable Logan Harris and Rhee Ryan (Barnardos) often join us to co-facilitate and it always works so well. We also have the capacity to facilitate the RAGE program but this has been adapted for the outcomes of Youth Justice Conferences with Juvenile Justice referrals.

Youth Connect has had a big presence in the partnership with Juvenile Justice, Community Justice, the judicial system and Youth Justice Conferences. In all above settings Youth Connect has been asked to be present and brings a sense of calm and advocacy for the young people involved. There is so much positive action that comes out of a well-supported youth in this process and it is a blessing that this program and its staff are asked for by name to support.

On a personal note, CINC has employed me for 10 years, and I cannot feel more blessed to still be in this role and work with such an amazing team in all the different programs. Walking with these young people at a time where they need trust and familiarity is an honour. They may need us for a moment or a stretch in time, but the fact that they want us by their side, there are no words to express the gratitude.

I thank you,



Hellen Horton
Youth Worker

The Cowra Home Modifications & Maintenance Service has seen some changes in the 2024/2025 period with an increase in client services provided, staff changes and preparing for the upcoming introduction of the Aged Care Act 2024 and Support at Home.

Staff

Danny Jackett commenced some much-earned extended leave in early March 2025, and we look forward to his return in November 2025.

Whilst Dan is away, we welcomed Peter Dawson's part-time assistance and with his builders background he has quickly become a great asset to the HMM service.

Home & Yard Maintenance

With additional funding under the Home Maintenance banner, this has allowed us to continue to provide services to newly referred clients. These are consistently being received via the My Aged Care portal. With this funding we have been able to introduce yard maintenance services to Grenfell clients, which has been a welcome addition of service to this township. We have engaged four new yard maintenance contractors and two new home maintenance contractors to support the increase in client demand over the past 12 months.

For the 2024/2025 period the following was achieved for home & yard maintenance:

Supported 190 CHSP clients with 1146 jobs for total of 3664 hours.

Supported 39 Full Cost recovery clients on behalf of NDIS, Insurance & Home Care packages with 356 jobs for a total of 1068 hours.

Home Modifications

We are experiencing requests for home modification works continue to be received at a steady pace with all modifications being directed by recommendations from Occupational Therapists to assist in keeping people stay at home safely. These modifications can be as simple as a grab rail in the shower recess to a more complex ramp to access the home.

The Occupational Therapists that work with the HMM service report facing challenges with increasing demand for their services that have seen long wait times for assessments and reports.

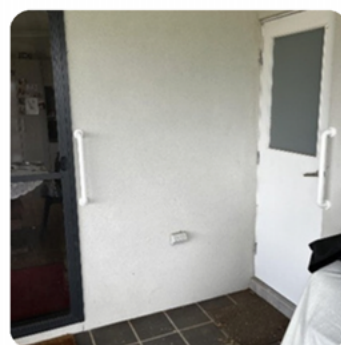
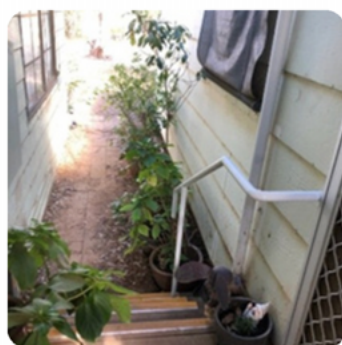
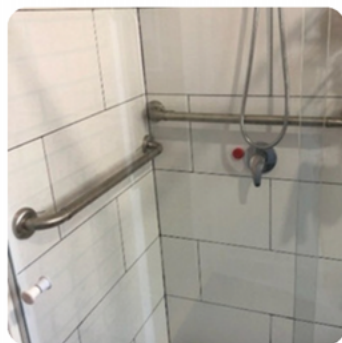
Home modifications jobs completed for the 2024/2025 period:

45 CHSP jobs, value of \$32678

31 Full Cost Recovery jobs on behalf of Home Care packages, value of \$24310

HOME MODIFICATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Photos Below of completed work.



Other

Preparing for the upcoming Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Stage 1 reforms have kept HMM staff on a continual learning curve to ensure that all areas of the reform changes are captured and actioned on. These changes have necessitated an upgrade to our Client Management System (CMS) program to accommodate the additional government department reporting requirements as well as a review of all clients serviced under this program to ensure they have the correct My Aged Care assessment and referral for the service they are receiving. This has all been happening in the background whilst continual services to clients are being met.

Thank you to all those that support the Cowra HMM in providing services to our clients we would not be able to provide this service without you.

Alison Cooper

Home Modifications & Maintenance

CAPACITY BUILDING EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE

Over the past 12 months, CINC's early intervention and therapy assistant program has continued to grow and adapt in response to community needs, NDIS reforms, and ongoing workforce shortages across the allied health sector.

We currently support 26 children and their families, with a model built around strong, trusting relationships, close collaboration with allied health professionals, and a commitment to trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and strengths-based practice.

This work is only possible thanks to the continued partnership and collaboration of our allied health colleagues. We extend our sincere thanks to:

- Karen Trengrove – Learn2Communicate, Speech Pathology
- Amy Hoitink – The Orange Spot, Speech Pathology
- Rachel Dewhurst & Mikaela Dunn – Canobolas Kids Health, Occupational Therapy
- UMBO – Online Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology
- All Seasons Allied Health – Clinical Psychology
- Whole Child Specialist – Clinical Psychology
- Brigitte Sloane - Little Gems – Occupational Therapy

Each of you plays an integral role in supporting the delivery of relevant, consistent, and evidence-based therapy for our children and families. Thank you for sharing your expertise and your time so generously.

CINC's therapy assistant program continues to grow and adapt in response to the evolving needs of our community. Every child is supported with an individualised plan, developed collaboratively with their family and tailored to their unique strengths and challenges. These plans are formally reviewed each year and updated as needed to reflect the child's development, ensuring a consistent and coordinated approach across home, school, and therapy environments.

Ongoing supervision and partnerships have remained a priority, with joint planning, reflective practice, and online collaboration across disciplines. Supervision has not only strengthened service quality but also allowed for more responsive, child-centred approaches. Alongside this, we have provided consistent advocacy and navigation support for families as they navigate funding transitions, short-notice reviews, and the increasingly complex NDIS system. Throughout, trauma-informed practice has remained central to everything we do, supported by significant professional development in the areas of trauma, attachment, and neurodiversity.

Professional learning has been a highlight. Training included trauma-sensitive practice with Kim Barthel, a powerful webinar with Dr Gabor Maté, and several online sessions on school readiness, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, and ADHD in children and adolescents with disability. I also participated in training alongside Cowra Early Childhood Services in the Circle of Security for relationship-based classrooms.

One standout opportunity this year was the chance to co-lead a trauma-informed professional development day alongside SEED Paediatric OT and CECS. Bringing educators together to understand the "why" behind behaviour, and the importance of relational safety in every setting, was an incredibly meaningful experience.

CAPACITY BUILDING EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE

Another proud moment was the launch of the SEEN Parenting Program in partnership with ParentTV and Sam Jockel. Following my attendance at the Sydney premiere of the SEEN Film, I reached out to ParentTV to ask how we could make the accompanying program accessible for our families. The result was a powerful pilot program, delivered with four families, who completed eight supported sessions together. The impact has been profound—three of the parents are now engaging with mental health support for the first time in their lives, and all participants have shown growth in emotional literacy and understanding of themselves and their children. We are honoured to have been the first community service to pilot this model and are proud to support its future rollout.

The year has not been without challenges. The resignation of two allied health professionals working with our families has reduced available services in the region and highlighted once again the fragility of rural access to care. New NDIS policies, including shorter funding periods of just three months, have placed additional pressure on families—many of whom already juggle high stress, limited income, and complex needs. Without strong planning and coordination, families risk exhausting funds early and facing service gaps.

Transport funding changes have also impacted delivery. CINC made the difficult decision to cease travel beyond Cowra due to these changes. While families have chosen to continue accessing services by coming into Cowra, the additional financial and time demands placed on them are significant, and we are watching closely to understand the long-term impacts. At a broader level, we are already seeing services withdraw from delivery in our region, which only reinforces the importance of our work.

In the face of all these changes, our commitment to being a consistent, reliable, and relational support remains strong. Looking ahead, we will continue to strengthen partnerships with therapists, invest in professional development, and support families to better understand and manage their child's plan and supports.

Above all, we'll continue walking alongside families with compassion, trust, and genuine connection—because it's through strong relationships that real support becomes possible.



Natalie Rush
Early Intervention Key Worker

AFTERNOON GROUPS FOR YOUTH ACCESSING NDIS SUPPORTS

The Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre provides After School Group Activities from their Stewart Street residence for school aged participants 7 to 18 years of age. These groups support individuals accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with a supported, safe and engaging environment to develop various skills, including social and emotional, communication, motor skills, independence and community participation.

Through the Afternoon Group Program participants are empowered and supported to practice daily living skills, develop healthy relationships and social skills, increase emotional regulation and stress management strategies and explore their world through multi-model activities and experiences. Participants are supported to develop skills for increased community participation and develop their sense of well-being within a small group setting.

Strategies to support participants to work toward their individual NDIS goals are implemented by Support Workers within the program allowing practice of skills through the use of modelling, individual practice and coaching and embedding activities within real world games/activities/play in a fun, supportive and understanding environment. Strategies and information to support participants is sourced from initial interviews with families/care givers, therapists, assessments, and the individuals themselves.

CAPACITY BUILDING for parents/carers is also nurtured as information and support and is provided outside of the Afternoon Group Program in the form of:

- Information regarding local and tele-health therapeutic services is sourced and provided to ensure choice and control and best fit for our participants and their families/carers
- Information regarding community organisations and activities is provided on-going to foster connection to community and develop community engagement
- We have a fully functioning tele-health room located within the building for participants to access with a Support Worker to oversee and implement strategies within their natural environments.
- Access to support for family members through the Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre's various programs ensures a holistic approach for the whole family.

SUPPORT WORKER INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT – Tele-Health Support Due to limited Therapy Services in Cowra and its surrounds we have had to look for alternate ways to support our families and participants to access the therapy supports they require while waiting for face-to-face services. We have been fortunate enough to link some of our participants with a tele-health service and our dedicated and experienced support workers are supporting families and participants with this service. We have a fully functioning Tele-health room set up at our Stewart St residence and we are currently supporting three participants via our Stewart St residence to access this service.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT- All our Support Workers are highly skilled and trained with a commitment to on-going Personal Development. Support Workers hold a Certificate III or higher in Individual Support and have completed their NDIS Worker Orientation Certificate. Upcoming training includes Report and Document Writing.

AFTERNOON GROUPS FOR YOUTH ACCESSING NDIS SUPPORTS

Our afternoon groups have been working on their NDIS goals each week. Lasting friendships have been made. Our participants continue to work hard on their social and communication skills. It is wonderful watching their confidence grow, show empathy for their peers and managing emotions.

Our activities each afternoon incorporate fine and gross motors skills, sensory activities, imaginative play, exercise while having fun, problem solving, responsibly, patience and so much more.

We are constantly amazed and proud by the growth we are seeing in every one of our participants.



Marion Speechley
Team Leader
Community Engagement & Disability Service

DAY PROGRAM FOR NDIS PARTICIPANTS

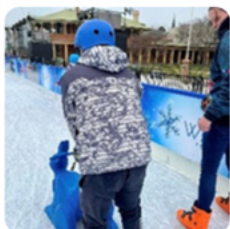
Another fantastic year for the Stewart Street Gang Day Program participants setting and achieving their goals, learning new skills to build independence and experiencing new things. We have welcomed some new participants this year who have settled in well and are valued members of the group.

Goal setting is an important factor in our disability service. Participants are continuing to work on their independent living skills. The gang have been learning the public bus timetable and stopping points, catching the bus to town.

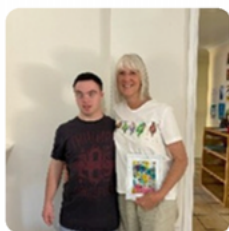
The gang do everyday chores like shopping, cooking, laundry, washing up, vacuuming, sweeping, cleaning the pool and helping in the garden. Participants are independently, and with support cooking meals for their families and as a group are choosing a nutritious recipe, writing a shopping list, shopping, preparing, cooking and cleaning up while working together as a group.

The group have worked hard on their social and communication skills to build strong relationships and friendships at CINC and in the community. Participants attend lots of events including Families Week, Children's Week, Biggest Morning Tea, Naidoc, International Day of People With Disability, Christmas parties and community morning teas to name a few.

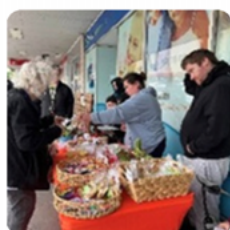
The gang attended the Bathurst Winter Festival. Participants stepping out of their comfort zone hitting the ice some with skates and some riding on the Kangas and enjoying the fast rides.



The group held a special High Tea for Mother's Day. The group planning, cooking and setting up for a beautiful afternoon with loved ones.



We are so proud of our participants who had worked together to create and make lots of different items including candles, keyrings, pens and potted succulents to sell at a street stall. The group took ownership of the stall on the day and raised \$400 towards an activity of their choice.



DAY PROGRAM FOR NDIS PARTICIPANTS

The gang enjoy being involved in our local community walking and exercising daily, playing tennis and outdoor games at the basketball courts. We love Cowra and attend local movies, picnics at our beautiful parks and visits to the local library and art gallery. The gang enjoyed cultural workshops. We were fortunate to have two visits on the Wyangala Houseboat which is always a great day out. We visit nearby towns looking at museums, art galleries, bowling, parks and places of interest. Some highlights were a visit to Aruma Aussie Biscuits in Forbes and performing at the Cowra Eisteddfod and Cowra Retirement Village.

Some of our participants have enjoyed weekends away at Canberra and Tumut visiting Questacon, mini golf, movies and enjoying the outdoors.



Marion Speechley
Team Leader
Community Engagement & Disability Service

GRENFELL OUTREACH

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Grenfell playgroup continues to run every second Tuesday. We have welcomed lovely new families this year. Our Grenfell families enjoy playgroup indoors at the Grenfell Hub and occasionally at a local park. The playgroup is a great opportunity for the children to play and learn. Parents/carers have the chance to play with and interact with their children whilst meeting other parents/carers sharing experiences and forming lasting friendships.



We held events for Christmas, our Bluey themed Families Week and Superhero Children's Week. Such a lovely time to celebrate with our families.



During each school holidays in Grenfell we held workshops with lots of lego, arts and crafts, jewellery making and games. A great fun way to catchup and meet new friends. So many beautiful kids enjoying a morning of activities.



CINC joined Grenfell again for their Naidoc celebrations with tattoos, facepainting, sensory play and goodies to take home. It was such a pleasure to be part of such a wonderful day full of community spirit.



Marion Speechley
Team Leader
Community Engagement & Disability Service

CINC COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COWRA VIOLENCE PROTECTION NETWORK

The Cowra Violence Prevention Network Committee convenes monthly at the Cowra Information & Neighbourhood Centre, the primary goal is to educate the community and schools about Family and Domestic Violence, including its effects on families, children, and the broader community.

We do this by Facilitating the LOVE BiTES Program, this is designed as a Respectful Relationship Program, adhering to the highest standards for educational programs as suggested by the Federal Government funded Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House and other leading academics in the field of violence against women.

LOVE BiTES is primarily for young people aged 11 to 17, delivered during school hours with teachers or social workers in attendance to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the program, allowing them to support students throughout the year to make informed choices regarding healthy relationships.

In 2025, the LOVE BiTES Program expanded to include Years 7, 8, 9, including the Senior LOVE BiTES Program. Along with other service providers, we assist with running the LOVE BiTES Program at Cowra High School, St Raphael's Catholic School Cowra, and Henry Lawson High School at Grenfell.

We extend our gratitude to all facilitators for their contributions to the LOVE BiTES Program.

We eagerly anticipate the upcoming financial year, which promises significant updates regarding Coercive Control.

The Cowra Violence Prevention Network boasts a dedicated committee focused on fostering a healthier and safer Community

Cowra Violence Prevention Network



CINC COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CHANCE'S CLOTHES PROJECT

2024/25 has been a big year for Chance's Clothes Project (CCP)

We are evolving.

Stillbirth in Australia continues to occur in alarming numbers. And although research continues, there are still many instances for which there is no known explanation. Equally, miscarriage remains as much of a mystery as it did when CCP began in 2012.

Our CCP Crafters continue to be devoted to their pursuit to dress every angel baby with love and dignity in preparation from their final rest. Throughout the year, 765 individual Baby Bereavement Packs were distributed to Australian hospitals, bringing the total number of packs distributed since commencement to 7709. CCP now holds a ready supply of Baby Bereavement Packs for 234 hospitals.

ABC radio requested a radio interview in late 2024 as a follow-up to one we'd provided many years ago. It was broadcast far and wide and even resulted in us receiving a 50-year-old wedding gown from a generous lady in Victoria with the request that it be reconstructed into sweet little burial gowns. Stillbirth touches hearts. There is an inexplicable bond between parents sharing grief, no matter how long ago it occurred.

CCP's heart will always be first and foremost filled with creating and distributing burial clothing for precious miscarried and stillborn babies. However, as mentioned earlier, we are evolving. This is because our volunteer taskforce is so great that we became significantly overstocked with bereavement packs and were at risk of continuing with this trend. We needed to find alternative crafting projects for our ladies to work on. And what a success it has been! We have multiple social-good projects now operating at the one time – Blankets and Beanies for the homeless, those in refuges and rehab units, and for those who are just in need of extra warmth; Fish n Chip gowns and hats for babies in Uganda; and Trauma Teddies for the Red Cross. I am always so very grateful for the dedication of our crafters. You will not find better people on this earth. I would also like to take a moment to thank everyone who has been assisting with the distribution of these 'extra' projects, as its success relies solely on caring individuals who are willing to travel.

Our final thanks of endless gratitude are to CINC for allowing us to work under your auspice. Without you all of this would not be possible. You are our home.

Nikki Kiss OAM
CCP Founder



CINC COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS MARY MACKILLOP TODAY FINANCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAM NILS

We have now worked in the Cowra Community for 23 years; I would like to send a big thanks to everyone at CINC for their continuing support, for Mary MacKillop Today and the work we do in the local community.

Our new computer database has improved the management of our enquiries. With also an on-line enquiry form which gives client's another option to commence an application with Mary MacKillop Today NILS.

In this financial year the Mary MacKillop team provided 692 NILS loans for essential household items while continuing to grow our NILS for Vehicles programs where we provide no interest loans for cars and other essential transport for low-income earners across the state of NSW and the ACT. There was 68 enquiries with a conversion rate of 62% from the Cowra area

Mary MacKillop Today continues to provide:

- NILS (now up to \$2000 for essential household items/expenses)
- NILS for Vehicles (Up to \$5000 for essential transport with up to 4 year loan term)
- Financial Counselling for low-income earners
- Work and Development Order Financial Education activities
- Financial capability and capacity building to build financial resilience and self-advocacy
- Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA)
- Referral linkages to better support all people in need

Mary MacKillop Today continue to offer services in Cowra on Tuesdays and Thursdays from our office at CINC

Anita Van Dartel
Mary MacKillop Today

MARY MACKILLOP
today

CINC COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to make special mention of a number of local businesses who have displayed such amazing community spirit this year. They are true examples of "Locals Supporting Locals" and their staff are an absolute credit to them.

To the team at Woolworths Cowra - you guys are amazing! Your daily donations of bread, produce and groceries are very much appreciated and goes such a long way to help so many in our community.



To Coles Cowra, in partnership with Second Bite - your daily donations of bread and produce is greatly appreciated and goes a long way to helping those in our community.



To Cowra Rotary club for there such generous donations towards programs targeted towards younger students.





Cowra Information &
Neighbourhood Centre