



Women's Wellness Centre

Desert Blue

Women's

Low Cost & Bulk Billing

- Women's Health GP &...
- Nur...
- Cour...
- Social...
- Menta...
- Sexual...
- Contra...



Desert Blue Connect

Annual Report 2022-23

Acknowledgement of Country

Desert Blue Connect respectfully acknowledges the First Nations Australians and extends our acknowledgment to the Southern Yamatji Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land where our work is centred.

We acknowledge the enduring strength of both past and present Traditional Owners, as well as the vibrant spirit of our community's youth, who hold aspirations for an inclusive future for all.

We honour the continuous bond shared by the Southern Yamatji People with their homelands, waterways, and traditions.

Desert Blue Connect is committed to nurturing our ties with the Southern Yamatji Peoples by providing culturally safe and sensitive services and programs.



Contemporary Aboriginal painting titled 'Healing Journey' by Badimia artist Nikki Ziatos.

Representing her healing journey through all the sickness she has faced and not let beat her.





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→
Presentation as the
beneficiary of the 2022
Variety Midwest Ladies
Luncheon.



Our Impact

Women's Health Support

1,244

clinical appointments booked with a women's health doctor or nurse.

359

people supported by a women health doctor.

286

people supported by a women health nurse.

183

people supported by a women's health counsellor.

51

women supported by a counsellor for an unplanned pregnancy. 100% of the clients who used this service reported a greater understanding of their options directly after.

99%

of people reported improved health and wellbeing after using the women's health service.

Community Initiatives

684

attendances by children and young people across multiple sessions on respectful relationships, sexual violence prevention, and family violence prevention

78

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1,459

women have increased knowledge and skills to address health challenges from our support groups and education sessions.

156

women have improved health 6-12 months after attending our women's health community activities and events.

262

women feel more connected to support services through engaging with our women's health community activities and events.

14

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22

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Community, Respect & Equality

34

total CRE Agreement Signatories established in the Mid-West region.

4

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15

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71

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Mid-West school educators received family violence prevention and early years gender equality education within the Starick Services Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program Workshop.

Family & Domestic Violence Support

1,660

survivor victims supported by the domestic and family violence team – this number reflects support for 1501 women and 159 children.

62

Aboriginal women survivor-victims supported in the Barndimalgu Court.

Chrysalis House Women's Refuge

112 + 88

women and children escaping family violence accommodated at Chrysalis House.

2,023

beds were slept in.

44%

of the people who stay at Chrysalis House are children.

Sexual Assault Support

123

child abuse cases supported by a child sexual assault counsellor.

283

adult sexual assault cases supported by a sexual assault counsellor.

Men's Support

251

referrals received by the Men's Community Intervention Service.

79

men regularly supported by a men's intervention counsellor.

50

male prisoners received behaviour change information and counselling whilst incarcerated.

Rural Support

143

people supported by a rural based counsellor.

170

community members participated in the Community Connections Expo & Colour Run in Morawa.

28

women from rural areas attended the Women's Health Week event in Coorow.

19

attendances by women in rural areas for women's health sessions through the Rural Women's Social Groups

Who We Are

We are an independent, community-based not-for-profit organisation specialising in women's health and wellness, as well as family and domestic violence services across the Mid-West.

Our Purpose

To improve the health and wellbeing of women and families across the Mid-West.

Our Vision

Women and families in the Mid-West are safe and can thrive in their community.

From the Chair

It's been another productive year for the Desert Blue Connect Board. Firstly, on behalf of the board of Desert Blue Connect I would like to extend sincere thanks and appreciation to our CEO Russell Pratt. Over the past 12 months Russell as CEO has led the business with respect, integrity, courage, and passion. The core values of Desert Blue Connect.

The Board also acknowledges and greatly appreciates the hard work of all the staff at Desert Blue Connect. Desert Blue Connect is an independent, community based not for profit specialising in women's health and wellness, and family and domestic violence services across the Mid-West region of Western Australia. The work is complex, emotional, and of vital importance, and the team works tirelessly each day to make our community a better place. Desert Blue Connect also works with many partners across the region, and it is critical that this collaboration across service delivery continues. Particular appreciation to the Government of Western Australia Department of Communities, Department of Justice and Department of Health, the WA Police, Geraldton Family Violence Court – Barndimalgu, WACRH, SHINE, Geraldton Aboriginal Sporting Corporation, Mission Australia, Jean Hailes for Women's Health and HCR.

I would like to thank all current Directors – Anne Pekaar, Travis Bate, Sandra Carr, Karin Grima, Angie West, Jasmyn Williams, and Melissa Myers. I would also like to acknowledge Karen Chappel who stepped down from the Board after 3 years. Karen provided invaluable governance and leadership expertise during her tenure as a Director. Our Board of Directors are all voluntary, and I thank them for their commitment, wisdom, and expertise that they bring each month to the Board meetings. Desert Blue Connect continues to secure and diversify its funding streams to ensure the highest quality program delivery across our region. I would like to acknowledge the State Government of Western Australia and our Philanthropic partners that continue to support the critical work we do. There are also many generous donors around Geraldton who regularly provide valuable personal items and goods to the Desert Blue Connect team that can be provided to those in need. The Board again acknowledges this generosity and wonderful

community spirit across our region.

In March this year the Board opened the Desert Blue Connect Women's Wellness Centre, this facility has been an aspiration for many Directors and staff past and present. The opening of this center was a milestone for the organisation and has taken decades of effort. This center provides a holistic health hub and provides a range of low cost and bulk billing services to women and girls, for the prevention, treatment, and management of women's health related issues.

This financial year, the Board also developed and endorsed our 2030 Strategic Plan. The Board worked hard to develop an ambitious and relevant strategy that focused on four strategic themes: women-centric services and programs that positively impact health and wellbeing, providing platforms and collaborating to drive systemic change for women and families, agile and multi-disciplinary teams, and a professionalised organisation. The Board is proud of this strategy, and I encourage you to read it on our website.

The organisation is in a sound financial position with strong governance and broad-based community and Government partners that ensure we are able to continue offering and developing high-quality services to the community.

Finally, this is my last year on the Board of Desert Blue Connect as I have moved to the South Coast Region of WA. I have appreciated being a part of Desert Blue Connect and I look forward to seeing Desert Blue Connect continue to thrive into the future and undertake its work with passion, integrity, respect and courage to help make our world a better place for those in times of need.

Luke Bayley, *Chairperson.*



From the CEO

Welcome to the 2023 annual report for Desert Blue Connect. This year, each team and project was particularly keen and excited to present different aspects of their work. It is very rewarding and motivating for our hardworking staff to see that their activities, completed on a day-to-day basis and then week-to-week, translate into a significant impact for our clients. We sometimes need to take stock and celebrate our successes before rushing to complete the next task before a deadline. Urgent and important are not always the same thing, and I am constantly having to remind myself to not let the urgent overshadow the important.

This was particularly relevant this year as Desert Blue Connect completed a strategy review process. While it was great to project into the future and to envision what success could look like for us as an organisation, it was equally affirming to realise that our goals, purpose, and values still held. Desert Blue Connect exists to improve the health and wellbeing of women and families across the Mid-West. We will continue to do this with respect, integrity, courage, and passion. What we try to achieve doesn't change, how we achieve it constantly changes as we adapt to different operating environments and circumstances. We are always looking for new and innovative ways to generate a bigger impact with fewer resources. A challenge for most organisations but an ever-present for NFPs.

Within our region, the tyranny of distance poses constant challenges for support agencies. As such, we were particularly excited to expand our team in the Northern Midlands and provide additional health and counselling services into that region. Similarly, we are starting to provide additional family and domestic violence support and services to Mullewa, Meekatharra, and the communities in between. Desert Blue Connect has been fortunate this past year to work with a large number of like-minded organisations and individuals. We are always grateful to our stakeholders who assist us in any number of ways, from finances to time, donating goods, or delivering support packs to vulnerable people. Impacting as many lives as

we do takes the efforts of a lot of people. I hope as you read through this report you get a sense of the impact that Desert Blue Connect has on individuals and the community as a whole.

I also hope that over the next few weeks and months you all are able to both reflect on the last 12 months and to refresh and recharge for the challenges that I am sure the next 12 months will provide. We look forward to working with you all to take the words from our strategy and turn them into an operating reality.

Russell Pratt, CEO.



Our Values

Respect

We treat each other with respect regardless of status, gender, culture, and ability.

Integrity

We do what is right, not what is expected.

Courage

We have strength and determination to challenge, initiate, educate, and prevent.

Passion

We use our energy, passion, enthusiasm to drive our purpose and make a difference in the community.

Women's Health Support

Desert Blue Connect is dedicated to enhancing the health and wellbeing of women in our community, with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable and at-risk women. We are committed to ensuring that every woman has access to comprehensive medical and mental health services.

This year, we marked a significant milestone by opening the new Women's Wellness Centre at 26 Durlacher Street, Geraldton. This achievement, years in the making, underscores our dedication to women's wellbeing and our commitment to accessible healthcare for women. The Women's Wellness Centre serves as a holistic hub for women's health, offering low-cost and bulk billing health services to prevent, treat, and manage women's health-related issues. Our team at the Women's Wellness Centre includes women's health doctors, nurses and counsellors.

Highlights & Achievements

Women's Wellness Centre Opening

We successfully launched the Women's Wellness Centre on International Women's Day, the 8th of March 2023, with a well-attended opening night.

Bulk Billing Doctor Service

This year, we introduced a new bulk billing doctor and GP service for women, focusing on women's health-related concerns. This has significantly enhanced healthcare accessibility for women in our local community and is now one of the key offerings at the Women's Wellness Centre.

Sexual Health Nurse and Sexologist

We introduced a new sexual health nurse and sexologist service at our Women's Wellness Centre who provides STI screenings, cervical screenings, women's health advice, and counselling for women around intimacy and sex issues.

Looking After Mums Program

We have seen a continued increase in demand for our support services for new and expectant mothers in Geraldton, especially those diagnosed with or at risk of encountering mental health challenges during pregnancy and the early postpartum period.

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

We continue to provide free, non-directive counselling, and evidence-based information regarding all unplanned pregnancy choices, including abortion, adoption, and parenting. Our approach is pro-choice and woman-centred, empowering women with the tools and support to make the best decision for themselves.

1,244

clinical appointments booked with a women's health doctor or nurse.

359

people supported by a women health doctor.

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people supported by a women's health counsellor.

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women supported by a counsellor for an unplanned pregnancy. 100% of the clients who used this service reported a greater understanding of their options directly after.

99%

of people reported improved health and wellbeing after using the women's health service.



“Geraldton is so very lucky to have this incredible service.”
Anonymous Client

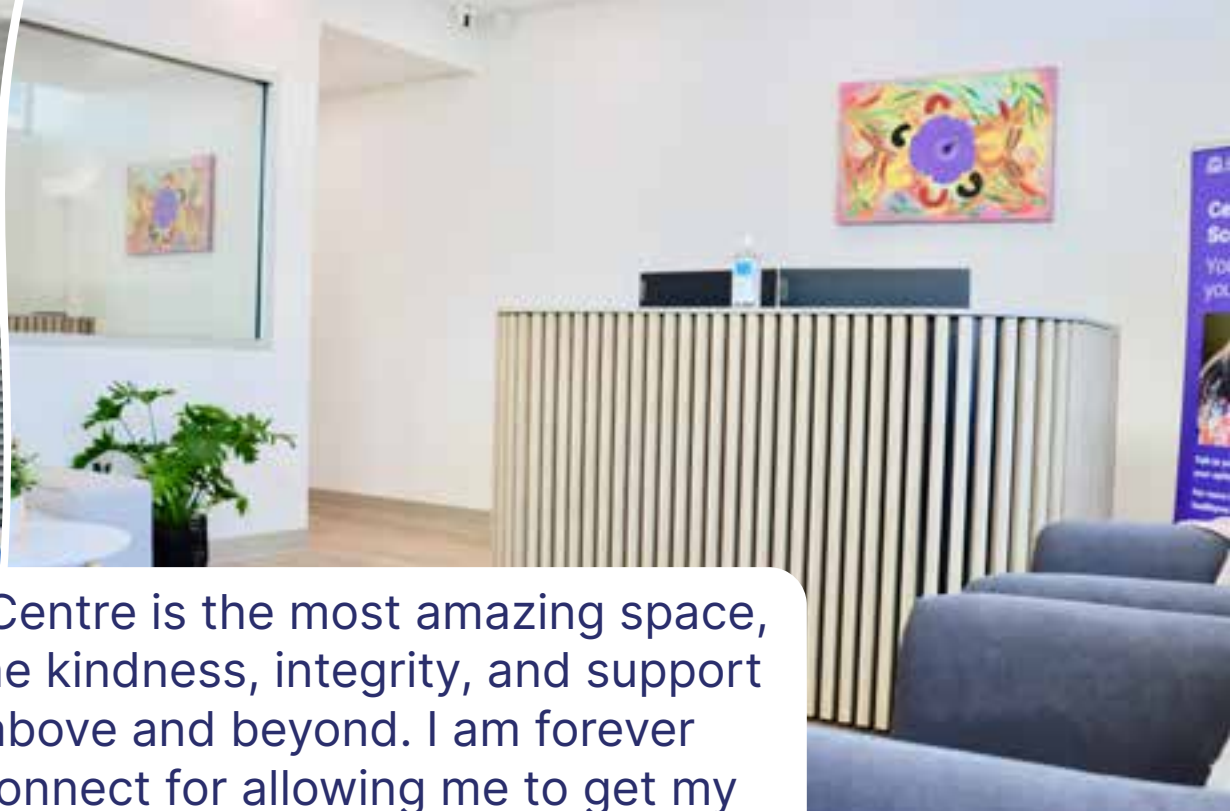
“I am forever grateful to Desert Blue Connect for allowing me to get my life back on track. And for making it a smooth journey.”
Anonymous Client

- New Dignity Vending Machine installed in the Women's Wellness Centre.
- Our Women's Health Nurse attending Wandina Playgroup.
- Opening of the Women's Wellness Centre.



**The Women's Wellness Centre
formally opened on International
Women's Day, 2023.**





“The Women’s Wellness Centre is the most amazing space, with so much to offer. The kindness, integrity, and support given to all clients goes above and beyond. I am forever grateful to Desert Blue Connect for allowing me to get my life back on track. And for making it a smooth journey.”

Anonymous Client



Community Initiatives

Desert Blue Connect is dedicated to fostering a healthier and safer community through impactful community initiatives focused on promoting women's health, preventing family violence, and empowering women. Our team's collective efforts this year, along with strong collaborations with stakeholders, have resulted in significant milestones driving positive community change.

Highlights and Achievements

Family Violence Prevention

Respectful Relationships Education

We provided educational sessions on respectful relationships, and the prevention of sexual and family violence for local school-age children, equipping them with essential tools for building healthy relationships and preventing abuse.

Walk Against Violence (WAVe) Event

Our annual WAVe event commemorated lives lost to family violence in WA, uniting our community to stand together and take action against violence.

Protective Behaviours

Collaborating with Ngala, we facilitated sessions for parents and services providers, providing protective behaviours education and guidance for supporting children.

Variety Midwest Ladies Luncheon

We were chosen as the beneficiary of the Variety Midwest Ladies Luncheon, where their generous donations provided essential support for our primary prevention and therapeutic programs focused on children.

First Nations Women

Desert Rose First Nations Women's Resilience Program

Our Desert Rose program continued to empower First Nations women to reconnect to their culture, embrace their cultural identity, and find strength in healing. This year, we expanded its reach by introducing the program to women at Greenough Regional Prison and created a school-based version of the program, named Everlastings.

Desert Rose Support Group

We established a support group exclusively for graduates of our Desert Rose program, ensuring ongoing support after completion of the program.

Community NAIDOC Event

As part of the Justice and Community Network Committee, we helped facilitate a community NAIDOC event, celebrating the vibrant history, culture, and accomplishments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our community.

684

attendances by children and young people across multiple sessions on respectful relationships, sexual violence prevention, and family violence prevention

78

respectful relationships, sexual violence, and family violence prevention education sessions delivered.

14

women participated in the Desert Rose First Nations Women's Resilience Program.

22

girls participated in the Everlastings First Nations Girls Resilience Program.



“I really love coming to these sessions, the activities we do are fun. I feel really comfortable being able to talk about anything and feel really welcomed.”

Anonymous Participant

↑
Women's Social Group.

➤
Respectful relationships session with Shine.

➔
GRAMS URITE Day.

➔
Yarning circle set up for the Desert Rose program.



Women's Health

Mum's Wellbeing Expo

In partnership with PANDA – Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia – we hosted the Mum's Wellbeing Expo, connecting new and expectant mothers with local services and businesses supporting perinatal mental health and overall well-being.

Women's Health Week Events

Partnering with Jean Hailes for Women's Health, we presented impactful events, including a menopause and pelvic health session in Geraldton and a mind and physical health morning tea in Coorow. These events provided vital information and support for women to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.

Women's Health Morning Tea

A dedicated event for women living with disabilities, caregivers, and service providers, fostering a supportive space to acquire women's health knowledge about important health checks.

Cervical Cancer Prevention

We actively promoted cervical cancer prevention and developed informative messages about the newly available self-collection cervical screening tests. These messages were carefully tailored across various platforms to resonate with a range of diverse minority groups of women.

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women have increased knowledge and skills to address health challenges from our support groups and education sessions.

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women have improved health 6-12 months after attending our women's health community activities and events.

262

women feel more connected to support services through engaging with our women's health community activities and events.



“Was very well explained, in a way that everyone can understand. Very understanding presenter.”
Anonymous Participant

“It was a safe environment to ask questions.”
Anonymous Participant



↑
Pelvic health and menopause event in Geraldton as part of Jean Hailes Women's Health Week.

→
Desert Blue Connect Mum's Group. Yoga Session.

Community, Respect & Equality

Desert Blue Connect plays a crucial role in coordinating the Community, Respect & Equality (CRE) Initiative, a project aimed at fostering a community-wide commitment to preventing violence against women. In this capacity, we provided participants in the CRE Initiative with the essential tools and guidance to implement primary prevention strategies within their workplaces, organisations, and businesses. A significant expansion of the project this year was the launch of the Mid-West Early Years Gender Equality Project (MEYGE). MEYGE focuses on shaping equal gender roles and dismantling harmful stereotypes that contribute to family violence, especially during the critical early years when these values take shape.

Highlights & Achievements

Strategic Development

Initiated the development of a new CRE strategic direction and implementation plans in partnership with Health Communication Resources Inc (HCR), informed by national and international evidence to ensure future alignment and effectiveness.

Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program

Presented at the Starick Services Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program Workshop for Mid-West schools, offering family and domestic violence prevention education and raising awareness of CRE and MEYGE.

Leading Lights Communication Group

Our continued leadership in The Leading Lights Communication group played a pivotal role in crafting and distributing locally tailored primary prevention key messages. These messages were conveyed within the workplaces of CRE participants, reaching employees and extending through their individual communication networks to the wider community.

Radio MAMA Segment

Introduced a monthly Radio MAMA segment into the overall CRE Communications Plan, further spreading awareness and fostering community discussions on family violence prevention and gender equality.

Launch of the Mid-West Early Years Gender Equality Project

Initiated networking with early years' service providers to raise awareness about gender equality concepts for family violence prevention, emphasising the vital role of early years services in promoting gender equity.

Gender Equality Play Group Session

Partnered with several local playgroups to deliver interactive and fun play sessions focusing on gender equality concepts, educating children during their early years.

Development of Gender Equality Resources

Created local, culturally sensitive gender equality resources in consultation with community groups. These resources are now freely accessible for the local community and organisations to promote gender equality.

34

total CRE Agreement Signatories established in the Mid-West region.

4

new CRE Agreements signed this year.

15

service providers introduced to the Mid-West Early Year's Gender Equality project within the Midwest Early Year Network

71

families participated in gender equality-promoting play sessions for young children.

40

Mid-West school educators received family violence prevention and early years gender equality education within the Starick Services Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program Workshop.



"I feel this is so important, but will take time to make change, especially in small towns like Geraldton."
Anonymous Participant



"Keep doing what you're doing."
Anonymous Participant



"[The presenter] was very informative and very lovely, 100% recommend."
Anonymous Participant

➤ Celebrating the completion of the Community, Respect & Equality Level 1 Accreditation.

➤ Colours are for everybody activity as part of MEYGE.

➤ MEYGE play session in Dongara.

➤ Presenting 'What Riley Wore' a gender equality-promoting book for young children.

Family & Domestic Violence Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we are dedicated to assisting individuals affected by family and domestic violence. Our goal is to provide support, advice, and advocacy to those who have experienced abuse from an intimate partner or family member. Ensuring the safety and well-being of each survivor is our utmost priority, empowering them to navigate their journey to recovery.

Highlights & Achievements

New Mobile Outreach Initiative

Our new mobile outreach initiative provided ongoing support to women who have engaged with our crisis accommodation at Chrysalis House Women's Refuge. This ongoing assistance ensures that individuals continue to receive safety and support even after leaving the refuge.

Barndimalgu Court Support

We supported women who experienced family violence from their partners or ex-partners and were referred to the Barndimalgu Court, the only Indigenous family violence court of its kind in Australia. Our support extended both within and outside the court, focusing on providing culturally appropriate and safe assistance to our clients.

Support for Animals

Our team, in collaboration with the Animal Rescue Collective and The Pet Barn Foundation, has provided essential pet resources, including food, blankets, bowls, and treatments, to survivors of family or domestic violence. This support directly addresses the increased risk of animal cruelty faced by survivors who often worry about their pets' safety when leaving an abusive relationship.

16 Days in WA Morning Tea at Barndimalgu Court

During the '16 Days in WA' campaign, we organized a morning tea event at the Barndimalgu Court for key stakeholders. This event fostered essential conversations about unity and community safety.

Women's Safety and Wellbeing Consultation Event

Desert Blue Connect hosted the Centre for Women's Wellbeing and Safety consultation in Geraldton, for the development of The Code of Practice. This event was open to all front-line staff, team leaders, and service managers of specialist family and domestic violence services, including counselling and legal services.

Strategic Advocacy

We participated in national and state-level consultations on coercive control, aiming to establish a shared understanding of this issue and how to respond effectively. Furthermore, at the No to Violence Conference 2022, we delivered a presentation on the topic 'Victim Advocacy in the Barndimalgu Court: Challenging Victim Blaming and Misidentification'. Additionally, at the 6th Asia Pacific Safe & Together™ Model Conference, we presented on the topic 'Post-Separation Coercion, Testimonial Injustice, and the Weaponization of Victim Survivors' Traumatic Experiences'.

1,660

survivor victims supported by the domestic and family violence team – this number reflects support for 1501 women and 159 children.

62

Aboriginal women survivor-victims supported in the Barndimalgu Court.

↑
Delivering a Variety Sunshine Pack and Sunshine Courage Kit to a client.

↗
Beautiful handmade rugs donated to Desert Blue Connect for our clients.

↗
Presenting at the 6th Asia Pacific Safe & Together™ Model Conference.

→
Beautiful handmade rugs donated to Desert Blue Connect for our clients.

→
Delivering a Sunshine Courage Kit to a client.



"I appreciate every single thing you did for me, you really helped so so much."
Anonymous Client



"I felt heard, seen, safe and everything thoroughly explained. Support from [worker] has been a HUGE HELP, giving me hope to continue speaking up against abuse. Thank you."
Anonymous Client



Chrysalis House Women's Refuge

Chrysalis House, Desert Blue Connect's women's refuge, provides secure temporary shelter for women and children who are fleeing family violence or facing homelessness due to crises. Our top priority is to empower survivors by offering them a secure place to stay, along with access to professional services to break free from the cycle of violence. Our dedicated team works passionately to create a safe and homelike environment, ensuring the safety and holistic wellbeing of those facing these challenging circumstances.

Highlights & Achievements

Refuge Improvements

Over the past year we've implemented substantial security upgrades at our refuge, including the installation of additional security cameras and heavy-duty security screening for our doors. We've also prioritised client comfort by introducing new mattresses and hospital-grade protectors for improved hygiene and easier maintenance.

Dignity & Care

We now provide our clients with Sunshine Bags from the Variety Club, containing new pyjamas, clothing, underwear, toiletries, and activities. Additionally, we've introduced Buddy Bags from the Allanah and Madeline Foundation and Betty Cares packs from the Betty Cares Foundation. These initiatives have replaced our reliance on second-hand donations and have significantly enhanced our clients' sense of dignity, especially during times of emotional distress.

Donations

We received a number of generous donations from local businesses, organisations, and individuals, all of which have contributed to supporting the well-being and safety of women and children at Chrysalis House. We sincerely thank all donors.

112 + 88

women and children escaping family violence accommodated at Chrysalis House.

2,023

beds were slept in.

44%

of the people who stay at Chrysalis House are children.



“Absolutely fantastic support and assistance by all staff. Very empathetic. Would really like to acknowledge the staff for their guidance and support with preparing my support plan and encouraging me.”

Anonymous Client



“I was treated with respect and made to feel safe. I thank the ladies who work here for your support.”

Anonymous Client



↑
Donation from Operation Sunshine WA of Variety Sunshine Packs and Sunshine Courage Kits to give to women and children impacted by family and domestic violence.

↗
Donation of warm jackets from Total Uniforms passed onto clients staying with us at Chrysalis House.

→
Donation from St Lawrence's Primary School for the children staying at Chrysalis House over Easter-time.

→
Donation from Shark Bay Resources of new towels, blankets, robes and slippers for Chrysalis House.

Sexual Assault Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we provide support and counselling to survivors of sexual assault or abuse. We recognise the profound impact that these experiences can have on individuals, and our approach is rooted in trauma-informed care. This service serves to support both adults and children over the age of three.

Highlights & Achievements

Counselling for Survivors

We continued to provide counselling services for survivors of sexual assault, creating a safe and supportive environment for individuals on their healing journey. Our approach acknowledges the uniqueness of each survivor's path to recovery, providing tailored support and resources.

Child-Centred Play Therapy

For our younger clients, we provided specialised support through child-centred play therapy, a therapeutic approach that engages children in play sessions to facilitate positive changes in behaviour, foster healing, stimulate growth, and promote overall development.

Midwest Sexual Assault Crisis Line

We continued to offer the Midwest Sexual Assault Crisis Line, a 24/7 toll-free support service. This vital resource ensures that survivors of recent or historic sexual assaults have immediate access to assistance and counselling during times of crisis.

Health & Wellbeing Tips

We initiated a new program delivering regular 'Health and Wellbeing Tips' to our clients of this service. These regular messages aim to inspire simple, healthy lifestyle habits, empowering survivors to take control of their health through manageable changes.

Aboriginal Services Listings Resource

We developed a new comprehensive Aboriginal Services Listings resource for the Geraldton area. This resource has been shared with our clients and local organisations, to better support our local Aboriginal community.

123

child abuse cases supported by a child sexual assault counsellor.

283

adult sexual assault cases supported by a sexual assault counsellor.

"It's made me a stronger person."

Anonymous Client

"I feel I have found the right fit and the support has been an integral part of my progress. I am so thankful."

Anonymous Client

"Thank you for helping me and coming to the school to see me."

Anonymous Client

"I am grateful for the support and skills you have given me during a difficult time."

Anonymous Client



→
Our Counsellors.

→
Children's Play Therapy Room
at Desert Blue Connect.

Men's Support

Desert Blue Connect is dedicated to fostering transformative change in men who have perpetrated violence against women and children. Our Men's Community Intervention Service (MCIS) is a specialised early engagement program for family violence intervention, incorporating strong accountability measures. We offer long-term counselling and trauma therapy for individuals genuinely committed to transformation. The impact of this service extends beyond the individual, delivering significant benefits to women, children, and the wider community.

Highlights & Achievements

Counselling for Transformation

We continued to provide counselling, creating a safe and supportive environment for men to explore and modify their behaviour, fostering lasting change. Through regular counselling, we focused on examining and addressing deeply ingrained beliefs about violence, masculinity, control, and personal responsibility.

Reduction in Violence

Numerous clients self-reported a substantial reduction in their use of violence, transitioning from physical to verbal aggression, or even eliminating their violent behaviour entirely following engagement with our service. Additionally, feedback from the partners of our clients highlights positive changes in the way they are spoken to – they experience more respect and feel genuinely heard.

Caring Dads Program

We delivered the Caring Dads Program, a 17-week commitment that equips fathers with essential skills to strengthen their relationships with their children and partners. Participants have reported the program's effectiveness in promoting healthier fatherhood and fostering improved family dynamics.

Behaviour Change Group

We facilitated a Behaviour Change Group that delved into crucial topics such as drug and alcohol abuse, exploring the impact of relationships with fathers and mother figures on participants' lives and their current partnerships.

Midwest Young Men's Service

We introduced a specialised youth service tailored for young men and boys aged 25 and under. This program's funding finished in June 2023. This initiative provided a safe space for young perpetrators of family and domestic violence to receive counselling and education on healthy relationships.

"It is noted that several of the prisoners who are engaged with MCIS have shown behavioural changes. This is something I have noticed as I engage with them regularly. The Senior Prison Management staff and our Prison Counsellor (who also refers prisoners) consider MCIS a very valuable service which helps and supports prisoners struggling with working through change regarding being a domestic violence perpetrator."

Geraldton Regional Prison

251

referrals received by the Men's Community Intervention Service.

79

men regularly supported by a men's intervention counsellor.

50

male prisoners received behaviour change information and counselling whilst incarcerated.



→
WAVE – Walk Against Violence
event.

“MCIS is an outstanding service that has helped me make some dramatic changes in my behaviour and aggression.”

Anonymous Client

“Just finished the Caring Dads program, it was challenging but rewarding. I was able to rediscover myself and reconnect in a child centred way. The staff were brilliant!”

Anonymous Participant

Rural Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we understand the unique challenges faced by individuals living in rural communities, which is why our rural support team remains committed to providing essential services to those residing across the North Midlands shires. Our Morawa office serves as the central hub for our team, who travel across the region to offer counselling and advocacy as well as health, wellbeing, prevention initiatives tailored to meet the specific needs of our rural community members.

Highlights & Achievements

Rural Counselling Services

We have maintained our commitment to providing free counselling services for both men and women in the North Midlands region. This service is comprehensive and not limited in scope – providing support for a wide array of issues, including but not limited to mental health, trauma, parenting, domestic violence and substance abuse.

New Rural Children's Counselling Service

This year, we proudly introduced a new youth counselling service specifically designed for children aged 6 and above in the North Midlands region. This service offers crucial personalised support to young individuals, with a focus on promoting their safety, emotional wellbeing, and providing education on abuse prevention. It incorporates various therapeutic approaches, including play therapy and art therapy, to facilitate healing and recovery.

Women's Health Week Event

As part of Jean Hailes Women's Health Week, we organised a Mind and Body Wellness event in Coorow. This event featured a mental wellbeing presentation and a talk about ways to stay physically active, promoting holistic wellbeing among women.

Community Connections Expo & Colour Run

In partnership with the Shire of Morawa, we held a Community Connections Expo and Colour Run event in Morawa. This event helped connect the community in with essential community services such as Desert Blue Connect, Red Cross, St John's Ambulance, the Fire Department, and other local volunteer services.

Rural Women's Social Groups

We started facilitating Women's Social Groups across the North Midlands region. These new social groups help support connection, emotional health, and holistic wellness, providing a vital support network for rural women.

Paint & Sip Sessions

Our series of Paint and Sip sessions delivered in partnership with the Shire of Morawa offered an opportunity for social connection while engaging in creative expression.

Tandem Diversity & Inclusion Group

Desert Blue Connect actively contributed to the Tandem Diversity and Inclusion Group, working to attract and support migrants who have chosen to live and work in Morawa. Our commitment to inclusivity ensures that newcomers to our region are welcomed and supported.

143

people supported by a rural based counsellor.

170

community members participated in the Community Connections Expo & Colour Run in Morawa.

28

women from rural areas attended the Women's Health Week event in Coorow.

19

attendances by women in rural areas for women's health sessions through the Rural Women's Social Groups.



"I was very isolated and away from my support networks earlier this year and had a mental health crisis. Not only did I find a support system which got me through a tough time, it was one that helped me to this day."

Anonymous Client

"It was a great session, I loved it."

Anonymous Participant

"[Counsellor] made me feel listened to and was very flexible with my sessions. Many of them were done when I was talking on the phone from a tractor."

Anonymous Client



- ↑
Paint & Sip event
in Morawa.
- ➔
Morawa Women's
Social Group.
- ➔
Morawa Community
Connections Expo.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2023

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and Equivalents.....	\$1,280,863
Trade and Other Receivables.....	\$109,584
Total Current Assets.....	\$1,390,447

Non-Current Assets

Property, Plant and Equipment	\$954,859
Intangible Assets	\$485,237
Total Non-Current Assets.....	\$1,440,096

Total Assets **\$2,830,543**

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Trade and Other Payables	\$768,856
Provisions	\$523,199
Tax Liabilities	\$39,509
Borrowings	\$105,376
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,436,940

Current Liabilities

Borrowings	\$393,439
Total Non-Current Liabilities	\$393,439

Total Liabilities **\$1,830,379**

Net Assets **\$1,000,164**

Equity

Retained Earnings.....	\$900,131
Reserves.....	\$100,033

Total Equity **\$1,000,164**

Statement of Profit and Loss

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Income

Donations Received	\$115,573
Events/Fundraising	\$1,145
Grants Received	\$4,271,186
Interest Received	\$15,478
Medicare Income	\$23,483
Other Income	\$70,811
Sponsorship Income	\$2,405
Transfer to/from Provisions	(\$280,579)

Total Income **\$4,219,502**

Expenses

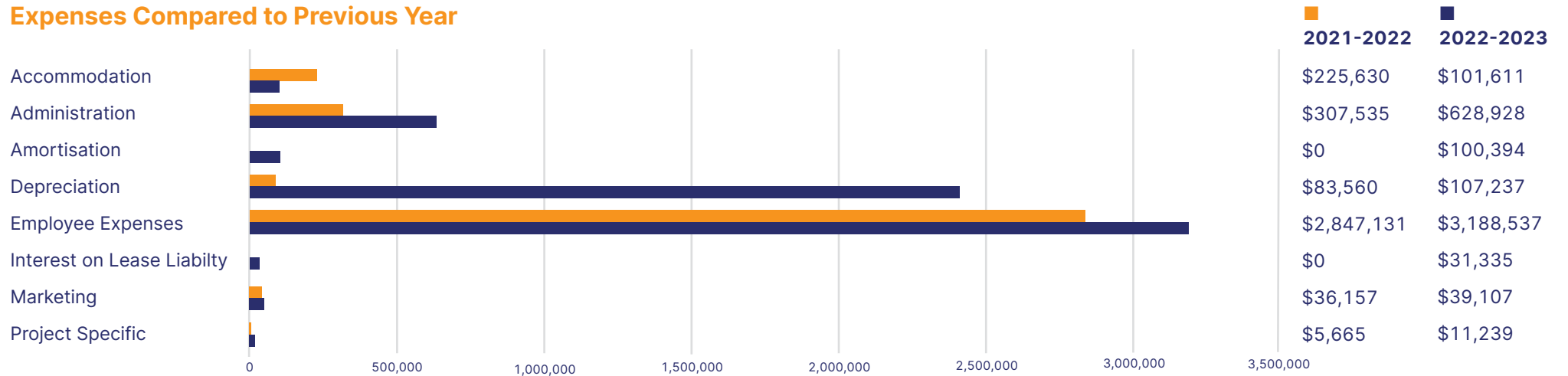
Accommodation	\$101,611
Administration	\$628,928
Amortisation	\$100,394
Depreciation	\$107,237
Employee Expenses	\$3,188,537
Interest on lease liability	\$31,335
Marketing	\$39,107
Project Specific	\$11,239
Transfer to Sinking Fund	\$6,000

Total Expenses **\$4,214,388**

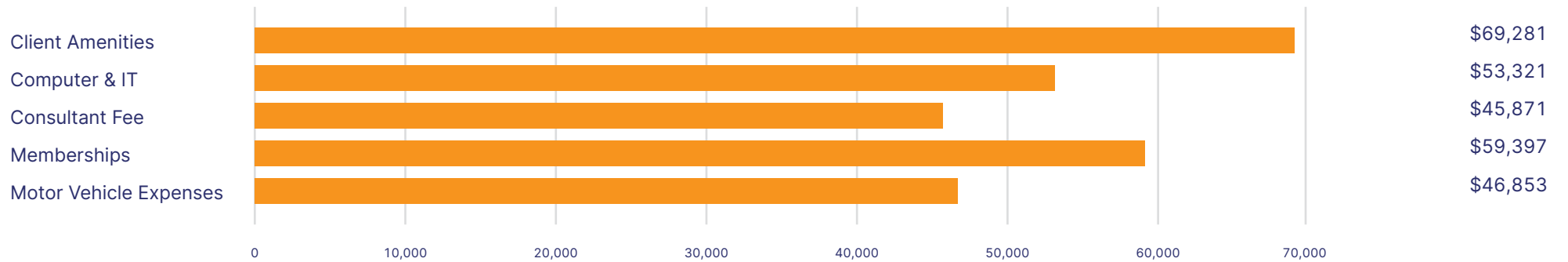
Total Comprehensive Income **\$5,114**

Main Expenses

Expenses Compared to Previous Year



Expenses Excluding Personnel and Premises

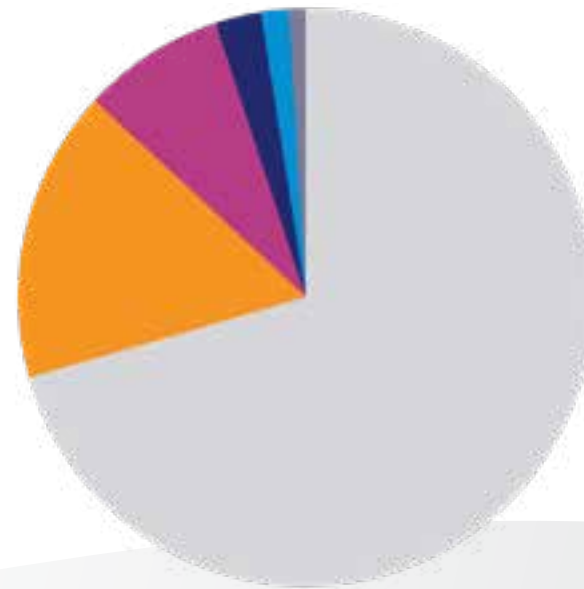


Funding by Source

Source Categories

Department of Communities Grants	\$3,172,673	70.50%
Department of Health Grants	\$738,791	16.42%
Department of Justice Grants	\$359,722	7.99%
Donations	\$115,573	2.57%
Other	\$70,811	1.57%
Medicare Income	\$23,483	0.52%
Interest	\$15,478	0.34%
Sponsorship Income	\$2,405	0.05%
Events/Fundraising	\$1,145	0.03%

Total Funding \$4,500,081



↓
National Reconciliation
Week Walk 2023.



Geraldton Head Office

Location: 25 Chapman Road, Geraldton WA
Phone: (08) 9964 2742

Women's Wellness Centre

Location: 26 Durlacher Street, Geraldton WA 6530
Phone: (08) 9964 2173

Chrysalis House Women's Refuge

Phone: (08) 9964 2173

Men's Community Intervention Service

Location: 98a Chapman Road, Geraldton WA
Phone: (08) 9937 9188

Rural Support Service

Location: Based in Morawa at 68 Gill Street
(Travels across the Mid-West for clients in other Shires).
Mobile: 0419 348 006



Lara Dalton MLA and Sandra Carr MLC cut the ribbon at the Women's Wellness Centre formal opening.