



Desert Blue Connect

Annual Report 2023-24



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.

 National Reconciliation Week Walk.





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TOGETHER
WE SPEAK
OUT
AGAINST
VIOLENCE

It takes
courage
to speak out
against
abuse

“Was really empowering to be there with everyone today and for my baby son to participate aswell as we are survivors. Very proud of the women who spoke and told their story today. Was so hard to hear but their strength and resilience was amazing!”
WAVE Participant

WAVE
WALK AGAINST VIOLENCE
www.desertblueconnect.org.au

Our Impact

Women's Health Support

2,309

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

451

people supported by a women health doctor.

418

people supported by a women health nurse.

133

people supported by a women's health counsellor.

81

women supported by a counsellor for an unplanned pregnancy.

100%

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

Community Initiatives

691

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

90

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

1,276

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

509

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

343

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

Community, Respect & Equality

40

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

60

families participated in gender equality-promoting early parenting workshops across six sessions.

165

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

500

families reached through advocacy for gender equality, partnering with four national children's services and women's health campaigns.

30

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

1,499

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

79

Aboriginal women survivor-victims supported in the Barndimalgu Court.

Chrysalis House Women's Refuge

209

women and children escaping family violence accommodated at Chrysalis House.

1,580

beds were slept in.

52%

of the people who stay at Chrysalis House are children.

Sexual Assault Support

243

child abuse cases supported by a child sexual assault counsellor.

173

adult sexual assault cases supported by a sexual assault counsellor.

Men's Support

254

referrals received by the Men's Community Intervention Service.

61

male prisoners received behaviour change information and counselling whilst incarcerated.

Rural Support

122

people supported by a rural based counsellor.

789

community members participated in community events in Morawa.

136

attendances of mental health events in Morawa.

91

attendances by women in rural areas for women's health sessions.

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.

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.

From the Chair

Firstly, on behalf of the Board of Desert Blue Connect, I would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to CEO Russell Pratt and the staff, who demonstrate the core values of the organisation on a daily basis, delivering services for women and families with respect, integrity, courage, and passion. 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 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, prioritising inclusivity, collaboration, and quality care, with a dedication to proactive solutions for the community.

The important Desert Blue Connect programs and the work undertaken in collaboration with many partners across the region are critical to ensuring continued service delivery. I would like to extend particular appreciation to the Government of Western Australia, the Department of Communities, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health, the WA Police, Geraldton Family Violence Court – Barndimalgu, WACRH, SHINE, Geraldton Aboriginal Sporting Corporation, Mission Australia, Ngala, Jean Hailes for Women's Health, Child Focused Safety Services, and especially Health Communication Resources (HCR).

Over the past year, the Board has continued its focus on the strategic intent of Desert Blue Connect. Our Board of Directors are all voluntary, and the commitment, wisdom, and expertise they bring each month to the Board meetings are invaluable. I would like to thank all current Directors – Anne Pekaar, Travis Bate, and Angie West, and on behalf of the Board, welcome three new Directors: Lana Gill, Steph Essex, and Simon Keemink. The Board would like to acknowledge our great appreciation for the contributions, insight, and participation of Luke Bayley, Sandra Carr, Mel Myers, and Jasmyn Williams, who stepped down from the Board this year.

Desert Blue Connect continues to secure and diversify its funding streams to ensure the highest quality programme

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, as well as the many generous donors around Geraldton, who regularly provide valuable personal items and goods for those in need. The Board acknowledges the generosity and wonderful community spirit across the region.

The 2030 Strategic Plan continues to provide the focus and direction for all Desert Blue Connect activities under four strategic themes that guide the organisation to the 2030 overarching goal – to be an integral part of achieving improvements in health and wellbeing for women and families across the Mid-West. The Board is very proud of this strategy, and I encourage you to read it on our website.

Karin Grima, *Chairperson*.



From the CEO

Welcome to Desert Blue Connect's 2023-24 annual report. We hope that you are as encouraged reading this report as we were in preparing it. When forced to actually look back and see the progress that has been made over the past 12 months, you get an appreciation for the challenges that we have overcome and the benefit there is in overcoming them. I often feel that we do not celebrate our successes enough, instead concentrating on overcoming the next hurdle. As you will see as you continue reading those successes have been quite significant and makes overcoming the hurdles all the more worthwhile.

Desert Blue Connect's purpose and vision is to improve the health and wellbeing of women and families across the Mid-West. The works highlighted in this publication demonstrate the many diverse ways that we seek to achieve this, and highlight the progress that is being made, for individuals and for the region as a whole.

A significant highlight was the Women's Wellness Centre winning the Mental Health and Wellbeing Award at the Community Achievement Awards, celebrating the regional communities. It was a fantastic achievement for the team and one that they richly deserved, particularly given that the Centre has not been open for very long.

Also receiving public acknowledgement was the Mid-West Early Years Gender Equality project. This aims to reduce gender stereotypes in young children and reduce gender inequality. We were further encouraged to see that this project has now also been funded for a further two years. Demonstrating the range and diversity of our activities we also launched a book in September 2024, aimed at young children, and utilising Geraldton and Mullewa landmarks to initially engage with them. This project was undertaken in partnership with Child Focused Safety Services.

Desert Blue Connect engages with a large number of partners and stakeholders throughout the region. We are always grateful for the assistance and support that we receive in so many different ways. This support augments

and magnifies the work that we do and is appreciated also by the individuals within the community who benefit.

Over the past 12 months our team has grown as we seek to provide more and better services to the region. We are very conscious to continue adding skills to our team, either with new personnel or providing professional development to the existing members. Desert Blue Connect is also strategically trialling some innovative technologies and ideas that will enhance the work that we do. Our work will always be "people" centred but if we can utilise technology to keep people safer we will do so. If we can find different ways to engage and motivate people, we will also do so. We are not sure what challenges the next 12 months will set for us, but we are as prepared as we can be to meet them.

I hope that as you read the next few pages that you will be as encouraged as we are when contemplating both the past 12 months and the next 12 months.

Thanks so much for your support.

Russell Pratt, CEO.



Our Strategy

Our Ambition 2030

By 2030, we are integral to achieving improvements in health and wellbeing for women and families across the Mid West.

This means:

- We are highly valued and trusted by women and families, government and partners in our region, supported by our collaborative approach to achieving shared goals.
- We adopt a strong women's focus including when delivering men's services across primary, secondary and tertiary services.
- We are inclusive and collaborative in our approach with indigenous communities in the Mid West region.
- We value regional, rural and remote communities in all that we do.
- We deliver quality, relevant and meaningful health and wellbeing services for women and families in inclusive, safe and comfortable environments.
- We build community awareness of the systemic challenges associated with domestic and family violence in our communities.
- We are financially sustainable and digitally-enabled.
- We are future-focused and proactive in addressing complex sector and societal challenges and priorities.

Women's Health Support

Desert Blue Connect is dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of women in our community, especially those who are vulnerable or at risk. We strive to ensure every woman has access to comprehensive medical and mental health services.

Our Women's Wellness Centre, which opened in March 2023, is a specialised hub exclusively for women's health. We offer low-cost and bulk-billing services specifically focused on preventing, treating, and managing women's health issues. Our team consists of doctors, nurses, and counsellors, all specialising in women's health.

Highlights & Achievements

Mental Health & Wellbeing Award

A key highlight was the Women's Wellness Centre winning the Mental Health and Wellbeing Award at the Western Australian Community Achievement Awards. This recognition was a fantastic achievement for the team.

Bulk Billing Doctor Service

We continue to offer a bulk-billing doctor service specifically for women's health-related concerns in the Midwest. This specialised service significantly improves healthcare access for women in our community and is a central feature of the Women's Wellness Centre. Our clinic is highly sought-after, with a typical wait time of around two weeks for appointments. The service is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Sexual Health Nurse and Sexologist

At the Women's Wellness Centre, our sexual health nurse and sexologist provide targeted services including STI screenings, cervical screenings, unplanned pregnancy counselling, and advice on intimacy and sexual health issues.

Looking After Mums Program

We have seen a growing demand for our support service for new and expectant mothers in Geraldton, particularly those facing mental health challenges during pregnancy and the early postpartum period. Our Child Health Nurse provides essential support tailored to these needs.

Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling

We continue to provide free, non-directive counselling and evidence-based information on all options for unplanned pregnancies, including abortion, adoption, and parenting. Our pro-choice, woman-centred approach empowers women with the information and support needed to make the best decision for themselves. Following recent legislative changes, we have introduced Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) using MS-2Step medication for eligible clients.

2,309

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133

people supported by a women's health counsellor.

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women supported by a counsellor for an unplanned pregnancy.

100%

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



"I love coming to the Women's Wellness Centre because I feel very safe and my voice is heard. I get the help I need, and my questions are answered."
 Anonymous Client



"This is the best female service that I have ever been to."
 Anonymous Client



- Mum's Wellbeing Expo.
- Shine Students Sexual Health Talk and Women's Wellness Centre Tour.
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Community Initiatives

Desert Blue Connect works to create a healthier, safer community by delivering initiatives that promote women's health and prevent family violence. Our Community Initiatives team focuses on education, support, and advocacy to make a lasting impact.

Highlights and Achievements

Women's Health Week

In partnership with Jean Hailes and supported by WA Cervical Cancer Prevention Program funding, we hosted our first Women's Wellbeing Expo. The event brought together 20 local businesses and services, along with expert speakers, to engage 240 attendees under the national Women's Health Week theme, Grow Your Knowledge.

WAVE

Our annual Walk Against Violence event (WAVE) coincides each year with the 16 Days in WA campaign to end violence against women. This powerful event invites the community to come together to remember the lives lost to family violence, hear the stories of survivors, raise awareness of the devastating impact of violence, and walk together to show that, as a community, we say no to violence.

Mum's Expo

Aligned with Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia (PANDA) Week, our Mum's Expo continued to champion maternal wellbeing. The event highlighted our women's health and support programs and showcased services for mothers, carers, and early childhood development.

International Women's Day Quiz Night

We celebrated International Women's Day by hosting a sold-out Quiz Night, featuring games, raffles, guest speakers, and silent auctions. The event honoured women's achievements throughout history and across the globe, while raising funds to support the essential services we offer to women in our community.

Social Groups

We host two women's social groups each week, providing safe and supportive spaces for women to connect. Our Mum's Group focuses on postnatal wellbeing, with weekly guest speakers offering valuable insights. Our Women's Social Group helps to build stronger social connections and enhance emotional wellness through a range of interactive activities.

Protective Behaviours Education

Our team delivered child protection and abuse prevention programs, including specialised sessions for early education providers like Turtle Cove Early Learning Centres. We also offered professional development for TAFE students and staff and provided workshops for parents and carers through our partnership with Ngala Midwest and Gascoyne.

1,276

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

509

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

343

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



"Love coming every Thursday. Ladies are all lovely and lots of different activities."

Women's Social Group Participant

↑
Women's Social Group Activity.

↗
International Women's Day Quiz Night.

→
Women's Wellbeing Expo Women's Health Week.

→
Protective Behaviours Session.



"Definitely have made some amazing friends."

Mum's Group Participant



Justice and Community Network Committee

We continued to celebrate local Aboriginal culture and strengthen community partnerships through our active role in the Justice and Community Network. We proudly collaborate to coordinate the annual National Reconciliation Week Walk and community NAIDOC events each year.

Respectful Relationships Education

We continued to provide essential primary prevention initiatives and promote healthy relationships among young people through local partnerships with Shine, Start the Dream, Stars Foundation, Future Pathways, PCYC Safe Sisters and the Flexible Learning Centre.

Year 6 Forum

In collaboration with the Midwest Local Drug Action Group, our team presented 14 Respectful Relationships workshops to 355 students over three days, preparing them for their transition to high school with a focus on wellbeing and safety.

691

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

90

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



"It was a safe environment to ask questions."
Anonymous Participant



↑
Year 6 Forum.

→
Justice and Community
Network Committee,
Community NAIDOC Event.

Community, Respect & Equality

Desert Blue Connect continues to lead the Community, Respect & Equality (CRE) Initiative, a community project aimed at preventing violence against women and their children across the Midwest region. Our focus remains on integrating gender equality and primary prevention initiatives into every aspect of community life—whether that’s where people live, learn, work, or socialise.

Highlights & Achievements

Workplace Agreement

Forty organisations have signed on to the CRE Workplace Agreement, committing to integrate agreed values and codes of behaviour into their workplaces to eliminate attitudes that support family violence. We have continued to support these organisations by providing essential tools and guidance to implement effective primary prevention strategies across their workplaces, organisations, and businesses.

Midwest Early Years Gender Equality Project (MEYGE)

MEYGE has been recognised as one of the earliest age-based primary prevention initiatives in WA—supporting schools, early childhood services, parents, and caregivers in breaking down gender stereotypes to address gender inequality, a key driver of family and domestic violence.

In the project’s pilot year, both MEYGE and the Project Officer received Midwest Early Years Network Community Achievement Awards for their significant contributions to young children and families in the Midwest.

CRE Communications Working Group

We contribute to leading the CRE Communications Working Group. This group consists of dedicated staff from various CRE partner organisations and meets monthly to develop primary prevention communications strategies for both workplaces and the broader community.

Systemic Change Mapping Project

Supported by HCR, CRE facilitated a Wicked Labs Systemic Change mapping project to gain a comprehensive understanding of the various initiatives operating under the CRE initiative. This project has deepened our holistic understanding of the system, highlighting opportunities to strengthen and enhance the primary prevention capabilities of the initiative.

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families reached through advocacy for gender equality, partnering with four national children's services and women's health campaigns.

30

Mid-West school educators received family violence prevention and early years gender equality education.



"It's a long job, but it is worthwhile."
Anonymous Participant



"Being involved with the CRE allows us to create and promote a safe, equal, and respectful workplace. We can all work towards preventing family violence by challenging the social norms and attitudes that drive it."
Ngala



"My eyes have been opened to how our society creates and maintains these stereotypes. Making changes to our language gives us something to focus on at the start. I am stoked to be part of this!"
Anonymous Participant

- Midwest Early Years Network Community Achievement Award Winner.
- Children Gender Equality Play Kits.
- ➔ MEYGE Play Session, Children's Week.
- ➔ Colours Are For Everybody Activity.

Family & Domestic Violence Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we're committed to supporting individuals impacted by family and domestic violence. Our mission is to offer guidance, advocacy, and practical help to those affected by abuse from a partner or family member. The safety and well-being of every survivor is our top priority, empowering them as they move towards recovery.

Highlights & Achievements

Midwest Family Violence Alliance Meetings

We proudly chair the Midwest Family Violence Alliance, bringing together regional agencies and stakeholders for bimonthly meetings to share updates and coordinate efforts.

Student Placement

In partnership with WACRH, we hosted a third-year social work student for her first placement. She gained hands-on experience in trauma-informed, client-led services for survivors of domestic violence.

StandByU Shield Pilot Program

We partnered with the StandByU Foundation to pilot the StandByU Shield, a wearable safety device. When activated, it connects clients with their chosen safety responders, allowing them to listen in, share locations, and intervene during unsafe situations.

Outreach Extension

Our team has expanded services to the historically underserved areas of Meekatharra, Mount Magnet, Cue, and Yalgoo. Through monthly trips, we provide safety, support, and education on family and domestic violence, while building stronger connections with local communities and stakeholders.

Barndimalgu Court Support

We support women referred to the Barndimalgu Court, the only Indigenous family violence court of its kind in Australia. Our

role includes helping victims with victim impact statements, managing complex cases involving housing, legal issues, child protection, counselling, and safety planning.

Support for Pets

In collaboration with the Animal Rescue Collective and The Pet Barn Foundation, we provide essential resources like food, blankets, and treatments for the pets of survivors. Pets offer comfort and connection during times of crisis, helping reduce feelings of isolation and distress.

Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing Consultation

As a specialist family and domestic violence agency, we participated in consultations with WA's Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing, contributing to the development of a statewide Code of Practice for family and domestic violence services.

Donations & Community Support

We work with several organisations to provide essential items to our clients, including:

- Share the Dignity: Dignity bags with toiletries and sanitary products for those escaping violence.
- Little Things for Tiny Tots: Newborn care packages for clients who may not have had the safety or resources to prepare for their baby.
- Operation Sunshine: Wellness packs with clothing and self-care items for women and children.
- Street Smart: Bed linens and towels for clients re-establishing themselves in safe homes.
- Thread Together: Wardrobe collections with new clothing and sleepwear for women, children and men.

1,499

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

79

Aboriginal women survivor-victims supported in the Barndimalgu Court.

↑
Donation from Carnamah Knit-A-Thon.

➔
Trip to Yulga Jinna Community.

➔
Trip to Magnet.

➔
Christmas Hampers.



"Thank you for giving me courage and for letting me trust you."

Anonymous Client



"Thank you so, so much for yesterday and for being my support person. I definitely wouldn't have been able to do it alone."

Anonymous Client



Chrysalis House Women's Refuge

At Desert Blue Connect, Chrysalis House offers crisis accommodation for women and children facing Family and Domestic Violence or homelessness due to crisis. Our focus is on empowering survivors by providing a safe space and professional services to help break the cycle of violence. We strive to create a safe, yet homely environment, ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of everyone during these challenging times.

In partnership with a local estate agent, we also offer two adjacent units for medium-term, transitional housing. These units support clients moving on from the refuge, who may face difficulties securing long-term accommodation and still need ongoing support. A local estate agent assists with managing these units.

Highlights & Achievements

Dignity and Care

Operation Sunshine continues to provide Sunshine Packs for adults and Courage Packs for children. The Allannah and Madeline Foundation donates Buddy Bags, the Betty Cares Foundation provides Betty Cares packs, and Share the Dignity has contributed toiletry and nappy bags. The Mother's Union also regularly donates toiletry bags, making a significant difference in offering new clothing and essentials to our clients.

Containers for Change

Chrysalis House staff participate in the Containers for Change recycling program to fund Mindfulness Packs for clients. These packs include colouring books, affirmations, calming techniques, and local resources. Additional craft supplies, such as canvases for painting and diamond art, have also been purchased, providing great comfort to anxious and traumatised clients.

Mid West Ports Authority Donation

Thanks to a generous \$15,000 donation from the Mid West Port Authority, we installed reverse cycle air-conditioning in the

transitional units and repaired air-conditioning at Chrysalis House. We also purchased new duvets, pillows, an air fryer, and cleaning appliances, improving the comfort and care we can provide.

Community Donations

We received a monetary donation from Spalding Golf Club during their ladies' day event. Additionally, the local Rotary Club made a monetary contribution just in time for Christmas. This allowed us to create hampers with gifts and food vouchers, as well as provide a Christmas lunch for families. An anonymous donor also contributes food for the lunch each year. Gifts for women and children are gratefully received throughout December, and donations come in from businesses, charities, and the public across the Midwest year-round.

Staff have actively sought support, securing items like a blackboard from Bunnings, a Kmart voucher through GIVIT, and weekly fresh produce donations from Woolworths Seacrest. Their enthusiasm is great to see.

These donations significantly boost our clients' confidence, self-esteem, and overall wellbeing. We are deeply grateful to all donors for their generosity throughout the year.

209

women and children escaping family violence accommodated at Chrysalis House.

1,580

beds were slept in.

52%

of the people who stay at Chrysalis House are children.



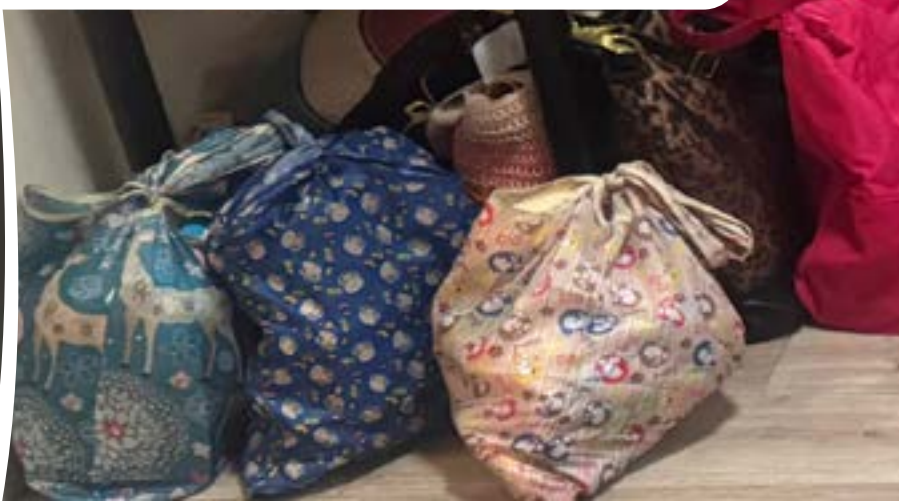
“Very, very supportive. What you’re doing here and the service you provide is amazing. Each staff member I have met has been supportive and made my son and I feel safe and at ease. Thank you for all that you do to help others in need. I am very humbled and grateful.”

Anonymous Client



“I felt supported. Got to talk with no judgement. Felt safe and got a lot of help. I feel like my goals are more focused now and I feel more secure in my mind and happier. Without the help I feel like I would not have found the more peaceful happier me again. I am so grateful for this opportunity to find myself again.”

Anonymous Client



↑
Donation From Operation
Sunshine WA.

➤
\$15, 000 Donation From Mid
West Ports Authority.

➤
Christmas Hampers For
Clients.

➤
Share The Dignity
Toiletry Bags.

Sexual Assault Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we provide essential support and counselling to survivors of sexual assault or abuse. We understand the lasting impact these experiences can have, and our services are built on a trauma-informed care approach. Our Sexual Assault Counsellors continue to support both adults and children over the age of three.

Highlights & Achievements

Counselling for Survivors

We continue to offer tailored counselling for survivors of sexual assault, creating a secure environment for their healing journey. Our approach recognises that each survivor's path is unique, and we provide customised support to help them recover at their own pace. Counselling offers survivors the opportunity to process their experiences, develop coping strategies, and rebuild their sense of self. It also fosters emotional resilience and helps individuals regain control over their lives, contributing to overall wellbeing and recover

Child-Centred Therapies

For our younger clients, we continue to provide specialised support through integrative child-centred play therapy. This approach uses play to encourage healing, growth, and positive behaviour changes. Our sessions incorporate art therapy, mindfulness, relaxation, and trauma-focused techniques, giving children a safe space to express themselves and process their experiences. These therapies can help children who may struggle with verbal communication, build self-regulation skills, and develop confidence and empowerment.

Midwest Sexual Assault Crisis Line

We continue to offer the Midwest Sexual Assault Crisis Line, a 24/7 toll-free service providing immediate support to survivors of recent or historic sexual assault. This lifeline ensures survivors can access help and counselling during their most vulnerable moments.

243

child abuse cases supported by a child sexual assault counsellor.

173

adult sexual assault cases supported by a sexual assault counsellor.

“Gratitude for all the support. I have grown to become a stronger person, regardless of what I’ve been through.”

Anonymous Client



“For a long time, I managed my mental health one crisis at a time. Now I’ve found my normal groove again.”

Anonymous Client

“Since my child began counselling, she’s become less anxious, developed greater self-esteem, and improved her ability to regulate her emotions.”

Anonymous Client



➔
Mental Health Week
Colour Run.

➔
Child Art Therapy Session.

Men's Support

At Desert Blue Connect, we are committed to driving real change in men who have perpetrated violence against women and children. Our Men's Community Intervention Service is an early intervention program designed to address family violence, with a strong focus on accountability. We offer long-term counselling and trauma therapy to men who are genuinely committed to transforming their lives.

Our team also supports men dealing with historical sexual assault and abuse, working closely with community referrals to guide them on their journey towards positive change, both individually and with their families. This service creates a ripple effect, benefiting not only the individual but also women, children, and the broader community.

Highlights & Achievements

Counselling for Transformation

We provide a safe, supportive environment where men can explore and change harmful behaviours. Our therapeutic counselling focuses on addressing and examining deeply ingrained self-beliefs, core beliefs around violence, masculinity, coercive control, accountability and personal responsibility. With continued commitment from clients, real transformation begins. With continued commitment from clients, real transformation begins. One client, after engaging in our counselling, secured a mature-aged apprenticeship, found full-time work, and reunited with his family. He remains in regular contact with his counsellor, demonstrating the lasting impact of the support we provide.

Reduction in Violence

Many clients have self-reported significant reductions in violent behaviour, shifting from physical to verbal aggression or eliminating violence altogether after engaging with our service. Partners of clients have also shared positive feedback, noting that they feel more respected and genuinely heard.

Caring Dads Program

We completed one 17-week Caring Dads group program and initiated two individual Caring Dads sessions. This program equips fathers with the skills to build healthier relationships with their children and partners, while ending abusive or neglectful behaviours. Participants have highlighted how the program has positively impacted their family dynamics and co-parenting.

Midwest Young Men's Service

Until its funding ended in June 2023, we ran a specialised service for young men aged 25 and under. This initiative provided counselling and education on healthy relationships for young perpetrators of family and domestic violence. Despite no longer being funded, we received 47 referrals in this age group, with 30% still actively engaged in our services.

Greenough Regional Prison

Our team continues to support prisoners at Greenough Regional Prison, where 61 inmates accessed our services over the past year. This support is available to those on remand and preparing for parole.

254

referrals received by the Men's Community Intervention Service.

61

male prisoners received behaviour change information and counselling whilst incarcerated.

→
Setting Up Our Pop-Up
Op Shop for Clients.

“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

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

Anonymous Client



Rural Support

Desert Blue Connect's Rural Support Service addresses the unique challenges faced by individuals in rural and remote communities. Based in Morawa, our team delivers essential services across the North Midlands, including tailored counselling, critical incident debriefing, advocacy for court and service referrals, and community health initiatives. Our Rural Support Service is vital for promoting mental wellness and recovery, offering tailored and accessible support to everyone in the region.

Highlights & Achievements

Rural Counselling Service

We continue to offer free counselling services for men and women in the North Midlands region. Our extensive services cover a wide range of issues, including mental health, trauma, parenting, domestic violence, and substance abuse. Our aim is to help clients maintain independence and achieve a balanced life physically, cognitively, behaviourally, and emotionally.

Addressing Rural Family & Domestic Violence

In Morawa, family and domestic violence assaults have increased by 30% over the past two years. Our team works closely with law enforcement to ensure the safety of women and children. While we recognise the ongoing challenges, we also see progress in male involvement in addressing controlling behaviours and seeking help for substance abuse. We offer comprehensive support to help individuals escape abuse and provide trauma counselling and therapy for anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress.

Rural Children Counselling Service

This year, we expanded our new rural youth counselling service, which supports children aged 6 and above across the North Midlands region. We're now providing personalised support to more rural children, focusing on their safety, emotional wellbeing, and essential abuse prevention education.

International Women's Day Movie Night

We celebrated International Women's Day with a movie night in Morawa, featuring Hidden Figures. This event, held in partnership with the Community Resource Centre and the Shire of Morawa, helped build meaningful connections among local women.

Women's Health Week

In collaboration with Jean Hailes Women's Health, we hosted a Women's Health Week event covering nutritional needs, the importance of a balanced diet, essential nutrients, and their impact on mental health.

A Blokes Night

With funding from Mitsui E&P we were able to host A Bloke's Night featuring a guest speaker from the Regional Men's Health Initiative. The event, well-attended by a diverse group of men, aimed to inspire hope and raise awareness about men's mental health.

NAIDOC

Our team participates annually in the NAIDOC events in Morawa and Yalgoo, using culturally inspired activities to educate students, parents, and teachers about mental health services, demonstrating our commitment to quality mental health support and community partnerships.

122

people supported by a rural based counsellor.

789

community members participated in community events in Morawa.

136

attendances of mental health events in Morawa.

91

attendances by women in rural areas for women's health sessions.



“She makes me feel better about myself and more confident in handling and dealing with my problems.”
Anonymous Client



“[My counsellor] has been the right person for me at this time of challenge and change. She’s challenged me when I’ve needed it and re-directed my focus. It’s been important that she lives in this region. She has empathy
Anonymous Client



↑
International Women's Day
Movie Night in Morawa.

➔
Our rural support team Naomi
Francis and Serina Ablett.

➔
A Blokes Night event in
Morawa.

Senior's Events

During Seniors Week, our rural support counsellor gave a keynote speech on improving mental wellness in aging. We also engage with senior residents through bi-monthly morning teas in Yalgoo and Morawa, strengthening our community ties and setting the stage for future collaboration.

Support for Ageing and Disability Services

Rural WA has a higher ageing population compared to metropolitan areas, and Midwest towns often have limited services for older adults and people living with disabilities. Our team provides advocacy assistance for individuals with NDIS funding who lack additional services.

Partnerships

We regularly attend Stronger Together meetings, Yalgoo Interagency Meetings, and other stakeholder gatherings to collaborate with other agencies, addressing specific community needs and contributing to community growth.

Community Events

Our team is actively involved in various community events across the North Midlands, including winter sports, community markets, expos, college open days, mental health forums, Christmas festivals, and more. This engagement helps us understand and address the unique needs of each community, deeply embedding our organisation into the regions we serve.

↑
NAIDOC.

↗
Eneabba School Mental
Health Forum.

→
Women's Health Week,
Food For Thought Event.

→
Perenjori Show.



"Very helpful."
Anonymous Client



“She’s better than anyone I’ve ever seen!”
Anonymous Client



Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2024

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and Equivalents.....	\$1,071,385
Trade and Other Receivables.....	\$90,754
Other Assets.....	\$96,585
Total Current Assets.....	\$1,258,724

Non-Current Assets

Property, Plant and Equipment.....	\$836,566
Intangible Assets.....	\$384,843
Total Non-Current Assets.....	\$1,221,409

Total Assets	\$2,480,133
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Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Trade and Other Payables.....	\$732,522
Provisions.....	\$323,744
Tax Liabilities.....	\$31,599
Borrowings.....	\$97,541
Total Current Liabilities.....	\$1,185,406

Current Liabilities

Borrowings.....	\$309,323
Total Non-Current Liabilities.....	\$309,323

Total Liabilities	\$1,494,729
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Net Assets	\$985,405
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Equity

Retained Earnings.....	\$901,372
Reserves.....	\$84,033

Total Equity	\$985,405
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Statement of Profit and Loss

For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Income

Donations Received	\$137,868
Events/Fundraising	\$15,399
Grants Received	\$4,062,292
Interest Received	\$20,065
Medicare Income	\$68,618
Other Income	\$39,434
Transfer to/from Provisions	(\$100,656)

Total Income **\$4,444,332**

Expenses

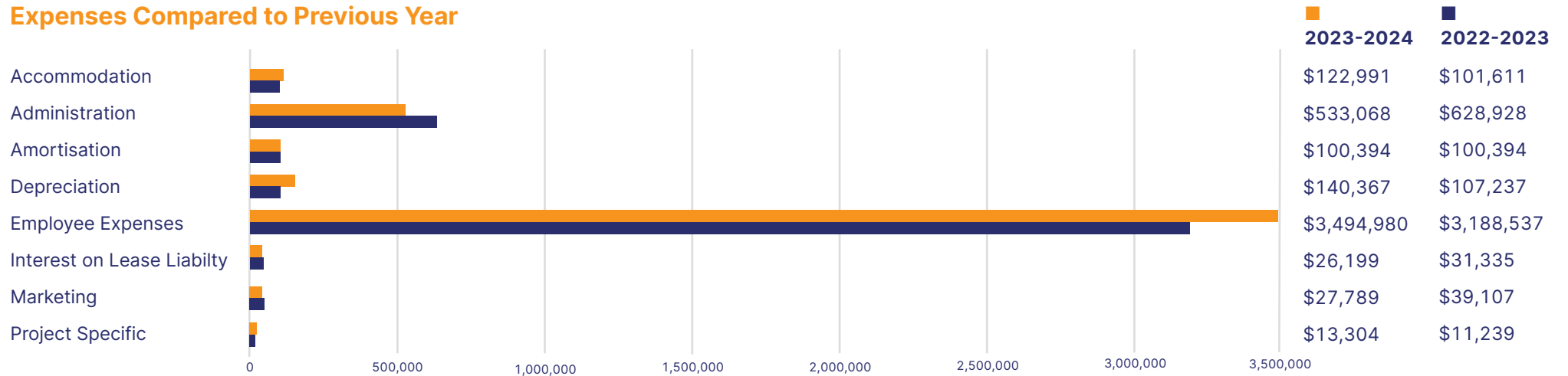
Accommodation.....	\$122,991
Administration.....	\$533,068
Amortisation.....	\$100,394
Depreciation.....	\$140,367
Employee Expenses	\$3,494,980
Interest on lease liability	\$26,199
Marketing	\$27,789
Project Specific.....	\$13,304
Transfer to Sinking Fund.....	-\$16,000

Total Expenses **\$4,443,091**

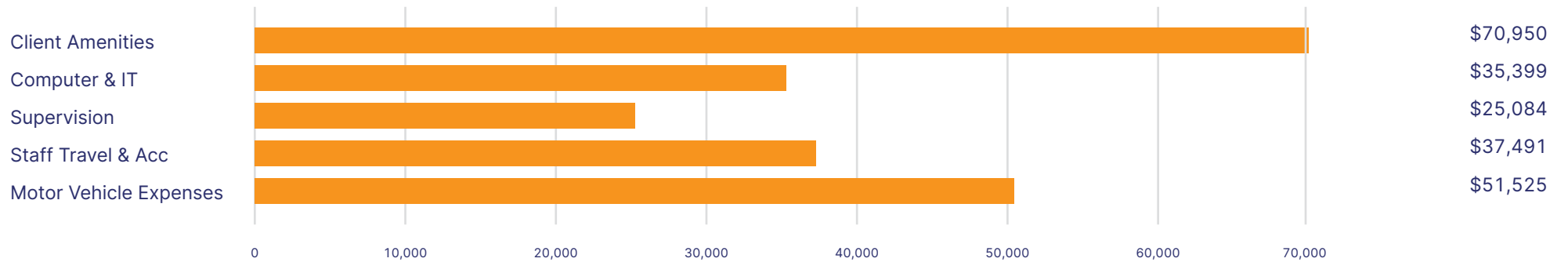
Total Comprehensive Income **\$1,241**

Main Expenses

Expenses Compared to Previous Year



Expenses Excluding Personnel and Premises

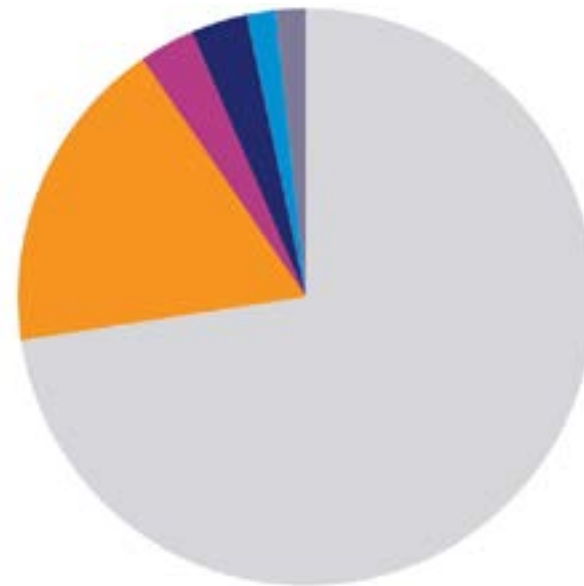


Funding by Source

Source Categories

■ Department of Communities Grants	\$3,152,313	70.93%
■ Department of Health Grants	\$772,110	17.37%
■ Donations	\$137,868	3.10%
■ Department of Justice Grants	\$135,135	3.04%
■ Medicare Income	\$68,617	1.54%
■ Other	\$39,434	0.89%
■ Interest	\$20,064	0.45%
■ Event/Fundraising	\$15,398	0.35%

Total Funding \$4,444,332



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



Winners of the Awards Australia Charitable Foundation Mental Health and Wellbeing Award at the 2023 Western Australian Community Achievement Awards.

