



UNITED WAY AUSTRALIA

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR VISION

is that every Australian community thrives.

OUR PURPOSE

is to unite community, business, philanthropy, government, and social purpose organisations in collaborative action to improve education, employment, health and housing outcomes in communities experiencing disadvantage.

WE BELIEVE

the postcode people are born in should not determine their destiny, that the causes of entrenched community disadvantage in Australia are complex and that no single organisation can solve these issues alone.

We need to work together to achieve change.



WELCOME TO OUR 2019 ANNUAL REPORT!

Stronger communities, deeper partnerships, and greater impact.

In 2019 United Way Australia focused on our core work ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive. 'It takes a village to raise a child', and UWA plays a principal role in bringing stakeholders together in a partnership to strengthen the network of support around children as they grow and develop through their early years and into school. Community partnerships, and focusing on improving outcomes for children, ultimately leads to positive outcomes for families, early educators and the community as children experience better support through their early years.

Our collective impact initiative, The Hive (Mount Druitt NSW) plays a pivotal role in connecting local families with early education opportunities, developing the pedagogical capabilities of the Mt Druitt early educators, and identifying the 'system' drivers of intergenerational disadvantage. Fundamental to its success is the focus on collaborative grassroots leadership; with the premise that strong local buy-in and governance will drive authentic engagement and solutions for addressing the shared concerns of the community. The Hive also acts as an incubator for system gap identification and trialling new community-based solutions.

Reading is considered the gateway to future success – in school and in life. Parents and carers play a critical role, particularly in the first five years. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has been recognised as a game-changer for building vital literacy and communication skills at both local and state level. The program has expanded significantly in 2019.

Our business community has continued to thrive, with our flagship Macquarie Park Business Community Partnership leading the way. Diverse businesses are working together and multiplying their impact through early learning and youth mentoring initiatives, whilst engaging many of the local community groups.

Stories of change keep flooding into our office and are the result of the incredible impact our generous partners and supporters – like you – have made possible.

Thanks again for another year of your commitment and generosity.

Clayton Noble, Chief Executive Officer

Liz Dibbs, Board Chair



A YEAR IN REVIEW

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT LEARNING

Early childhood experiences play an essential role in positive life outcomes. **The key to making a difference is collaboration.** United Way Australia supports evidence based early childhood literacy approaches which aim to break the cycle of poverty. Research highlights that providing books and reading to young children is one of the most important activities to build lasting literacy skills. By working collaboratively with local businesses, politicians, community groups, libraries, local government and parent groups, we aim to fill the gaps and empower families to develop literacy skills with their children.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Australia

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) ensures that all children can have access to books at home. By signing them up to receive a free, age appropriate book, chosen by experts, along with parent resources and tip sheets every month, from birth until their fifth birthday, they are more likely to be ready for school. We have continued to foster rich home-learning environments through the monthly gift of a book in the home. With over 100 communities, comprising of 8000 families and carers across Australia, the program has helped build strong family bonds whilst boosting a child's love of reading and school preparedness



OUR 2019 IMPACT AT A GLANCE:

- 57,600 books delivered to families across Australia
- 8,031 children provided with the gift of a book each month. An investment of \$540 per child.
- Continued monthly interaction with families and actively target communities to provide evidence based, early years literacy programs to boost child success.

The Hive

One third of children in Mt Druitt are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in their first year of school. Less than 60% of children attend preschool. Our collective impact approach aims for all children in postcode 2770 to start school well. This holistic approach spans child, family, community and system factors and includes over 50 community partners and local schools working together.

OUR 2019 IMPACT AT A GLANCE:

- 100 children placed in quality early learning, as a result of the families receiving 1:1 support in order to enrol in preschool.
- Led advocacy work to remove bonds and create an enrolment process that is equitable and accessible for vulnerable families from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- Facilitated quality training of 25 centres and ongoing professional development to local educators including a mentoring program.
- Coordinated developmental health screening for 65 children leading 59 referrals for clinical or therapeutic care.



**STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITIES TOGETHER**

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Whilst our primary goal is to ensure children enter school ready to learn, we also ensure that young people leave school ready to succeed. That's why United Way is supporting students to dream big while providing the practical skills, training and opportunities they'll need to successfully transition from school to work or further study. Together with schools, parents, students and local businesses, we're helping students prepare for work, and connecting them with business leaders and professional role models to learn about a range of career pathways.

OUR 2019 IMPACT AT A GLANCE:

- 5 schools partnered with to improve transition to work outcomes for students.
- 1265 students supported to build their career skills, confidence and connections.
- 21 events including industry tours, mock interviews, resume writing workshops and career days.



"This experience is so useful, it has been life changing for me. I've learnt to be more open to my opportunities for a career or job choice."

– Student, Marsden High School, NSW

In 2019, nearly 50 leading businesses committed to create positive change in their community. From supporting early literacy events, rolling up their sleeves to work on community spaces, to battling it out on the soccer field to raise vital funds, these partners in change have played an invaluable role in achieving impact across Australia.

Macquarie Park Business Community Partnership

In the Sydney suburb of Ryde, United Way facilitates a Business Community Partnership. This collaboration provides leading businesses the chance to give back locally by helping address their community's most pressing needs through United Way's Early Years and Transition to Work initiatives.

The Macquarie Park Business Community Walkathon is an annual highlight in the Macquarie Park calendar. It provides rare networking opportunities and employment engagement for local businesses. This year's Walkathon included over 800 participants and volunteers raising more than \$45,000 and supporting more than 600 children access quality books in the local community.

The Walkathon brings out the best of business and community and allows employees to be a part of something bigger than themselves.



“Most people support charities near where they live, yet rarely near where they work. The Macquarie Park Business Community Partnership allows employees to make a difference near where they work.”
Reggie Cabal, CEO Orix Australia @ New Zealand

Our first **United Way Community Cup** was a knock out soccer tournament with Macquarie Park businesses competing to raise an incredible \$22,000 all in support of local literacy initiatives. The Community Cup offered staff a fun way to connect with other local businesses and the community while helping raise vital funds.

2019 Gala Dinner

United Way Australia raised funds to support 1200 families around Australia to participate in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library as a result of the generosity of our 380 guests and corporate sponsors, as well as our major sponsor PAYCE Foundation. A magical night like this is not possible without the generous support of many. Thank you to our volunteers and supporters for your commitment to children's literacy.

We are extremely grateful for the continued and passionate support from all of our partners. Their understanding and dedication, helps increase the impact on our communities. At United Way Australia we truly believe in Strengthening Communities Together and are thankful that our corporate partners believe that too.

We look forward to another great year of positive team building events in 2020, thank you!