

# Althea Projects



## Annual Report

2017 – 2018

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## President's Report

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the Wulgurukaba and Bindal people. I pay my respects to past and present elders and emerging leaders.

It gives me great pleasure to present this report today at the 2018 Annual General Meeting. In her report to the AGM in 2017, the former chair of the Management Committee Deb Miles used the word "courage", to define the year for Althea Projects as an entire organisation.

This year, three words come to my mind, the first is consolidation, building on the growth of the programs developed in 2017, the acquisition and application of new skills to these programs, the recruitment and development of specialist staff, settling down into new roles, the acceptance of a broader focus all contributed to another busy and demanding year at Althea Projects.

The second word is commitment, to once again see the dedication of staff and supporters to an increasingly broad group of clients and to provide the best possible service to women, families and children in this town. To see successes such as a long term homeless person move into their own accommodation, children in the child safety system placed with carers who work hard to meet that child's complex needs, to see children stay out of the child safety system and reunite with parents following assistance from Wee Care, such achievement cannot be made without that commitment.

Excitement is my last word, excitement for the future of Althea Projects, excitement at the financial support this community has shown Althea Projects recently, the highly successful launch of Althea's Angels, the brainchild of Noemi Mintern. Excitement that as a result, Wee Care can now operate seven days a week and better meet the needs of children in crisis in Townsville. Excitement that Wee Care celebrated a significant birthday this year. Excitement at entering into new partnerships, a memorandum of understanding with Micah Projects to assist with staff at Lotus Place.

There is much more to be achieved but I am confident that Althea Projects stands in a good place to continue to assist disadvantaged families in crisis.

None of this is possible without the dedication of all our staff at Shared Family Care, Wee Care, the Drop In Centre and the Corporate Team, your commitment to the work you do every day is highly valued by your clients and by the service, the Management Committee acknowledges and thanks you for all that you do.

Althea Projects is fortunate to have at its helm a CEO of the highest calibre, Mandy Thompson. Mandy's vision, leadership and drive without ever losing sight of what we do is remarkable. Her commitment to Althea Projects is beyond doubt and she never misses an opportunity to advocate, to promote what we do and to ensure that those with the power and the money know that Althea Projects delivers on our commitments.

I have been both privileged and fortunate to have worked with the women who form part of the Management Committee. It has been a busy year for us all and I thank Deb, Ruth, Mary-Ann, Anne, Donna and lately Noemi for their dedication, support and wisdom throughout the year.

I thank you all for attending and look forward to another year of consolidation, commitment and excitement.

Thank you

***Mary Wallace***

## CEO Report

The 2017/18 year has been another busy one for us at Althea Projects – as is the case for most community organisations. Many things have changed over the past twelve months with staff movements, new programs and initiatives being implemented. Many things however, have also remained the same. Althea remains committed to our core focus of being able to respond to the changing needs of the Townsville community and to be there in times of need – as we have since 1974.

The AGM is a time to not only report on activities from within our organisation but to acknowledge our partners, without whom our work could not be done. We are fortunate to be financially supported by all three levels of government through:

- Queensland Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Townsville City Council.

We are very grateful to see continued support provided from philanthropic supporters. I refer you to the extensive list of supporters in this annual report to see how much support Althea receives from every part of the Townsville community. I make special acknowledgement of three supporters who have provided very important and significant financial support to us during 2017/18:

- Armi's IGA Supermarket and the associated annual "Armi's IGA Charity Golf Day"
- The staff of MYER Townsville and the MYER Community Foundation
- Zambrero Restaurants.

Our Program Reports show the extent of the work we are doing in our organisation across:

- Child protection
- Early intervention and prevention for families
- Emergency financial support
- Housing and homelessness
- Crisis accommodation for children
- Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Last year we reported on our move into the housing and homelessness sector with the acquisition of the Townsville Drop-in Centre to our organisation. I am pleased to say that we have been able to consolidate our work at the centre and demonstrate to the Queensland Government our ability to work sensitively and effectively with people who are experiencing the extremes of poverty, disadvantage, displacement and homelessness. We operated the Drop-in Centre literally on the smell of an oily rag over this past twelve months, however we have been successful in receiving increased funding across five years from the Department of Housing in June 2018.

Wee Care continues to provide care and support to children and families in crisis as they have done for the past 44 years. We are grateful for the support received from the Queensland Government for Wee Care through a new four year funding contract in September 2017. We continue to seek additional support for Wee Care so that we can increase the early intervention and prevention work that is done so effectively from this unique program. I refer to the staggering numbers of children in

out of home care in Queensland. Funding for Wee Care is a tangible way to stop families moving into the statutory child protection system. Our end goal for Wee Care remains to be able to re-open 24/7 and to upgrade the facilities so that the centre remains warm and welcoming for all visitors.

Shared Family Care continues to work closely with the Department of Child Safety and other Out of Home Care providers to be able to respond to the needs of children who have had to be removed from their parents due to abuse and neglect. We are desperately seeking increased Foster & Kinship Carers to support children in need. I use this AGM to put this request to supporters who may wish to consider providing this support to our children.

A very special thank you to all of the Foster & Kinship Carers that Shared Family Care have supported during 2017/18. The tension between all those involved in the child protection system is one that is not always easy; we are all committed to partnering and working towards improvements in the child protection system as the Queensland Government continues to implement their reform strategy.

Our Emergency Financial Relief program continues to be the measure of financial pressure the Townsville community finds itself in. Sadly, this program is always oversubscribed and we have had to turn away over 700 requests for service in this financial year. At the time of writing we are awaiting an outcome of a recent tender process to get this funding renewed. Our “ER” program is the largest in Townsville and is delivered through our valued partners: FEAT, Sera’s Women’s Shelter, the Townsville Women’s Centre, and the Upper Ross Collective.

There have been some minor disappointments throughout the year. Our organisation remains committed to developing a social enterprise. This much spoken of goal has eluded us again this year, purely due to lack of time as we have been focused on other more pressing matters.

Special thanks to President, Mary Wallace and the Management Committee who have supported our teams throughout the year. The Management Committee has provided me with the support required to ensure that the organisation is future focussed. We have seen investment in a new client management system, an intranet and additional short-term unfunded staffing contracts that will allow us to move to a more integrated service delivery platform; one that will allow us to be able to start to better analyse the quality and impact of our work. The committee, through our Treasurer Maryanne Hamilton, have also spent significant time this year reviewing our financial investment strategy to support our long term goals of increasing income that is not tied to government funding. I thank them for this forward thinking focus.

I wish to close with special acknowledgement of our Leadership Team. The work done by Lynne Josey, Teresa Smith, Peta Anderson, Kelli-Ann May, Carolyn Adams and Deb Barrett over the past twelve months has been nothing short of outstanding. We have taken on every challenge put before us with good humour (most of the time!), compassion and understanding.

Thank you to staff, volunteers and supporters of Althea and I look forward to the challenges of 2018/19.

Mandy Thompson

CEO

## Finance Manager's Report

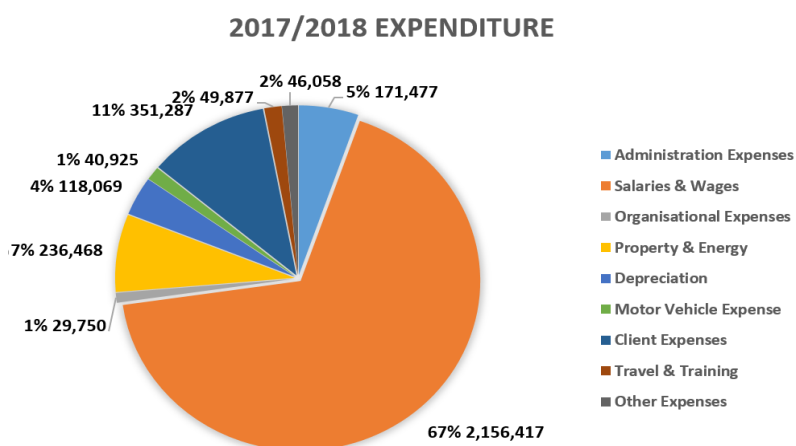
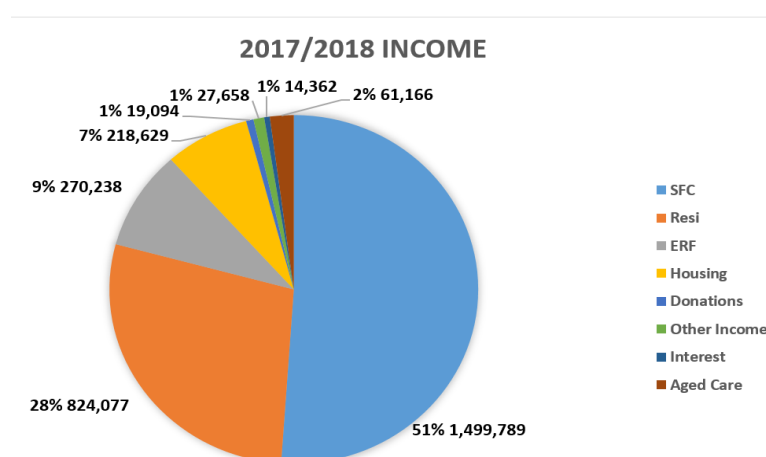
The 2017/2018 financial year has seen major investment in the development of an Intranet as well as commencing the process of developing a Client Information System. Ongoing repairs and maintenance with repairs to the cold room at the Drop-In Centre and the roof at Wee Care residential continue to place stress on Althea's cash reserves. Increases in Government funding, employee expenses and emergency relief reflect the addition of the Drop-In Centre to Althea's suite of programs. The IGA Charity Golf Day was not held within the financial year which has also impacted on the fundraising income for the year.

Looking forward to the year ahead we expect to see part of Althea's cash reserves invested into managed funds enabling the long term viability of the organization. Fundraising income is expected to increase with two IGA Charity Golf days expected to occur within the financial year.

I would like to thank Carolyn for all of her hard work making the transition between us so smooth. I look forward to working with everyone in future years.

Lesley Thorne

Finance & HR Manager



## Shared Family Care Program

### Program Manager's Annual Report

One of the privileges I have as the Shared Family Care Manager is putting together the Annual Report as it provides me with the opportunity to look back over the past year and celebrate all that has been achieved. In addition it is a time to acknowledge the challenges and reflect on the learnings, takeaways, smiles and memories.

The program is funded to provide 178 placements per night, and has provided 55,980 placements (individual bed nights) for children requiring a home during the last financial year. Over the past 12 months we have had a steady increase in our placement numbers and are currently sitting at approximately 88% capacity. Shared Family Care continues to support around 80 Carers. There has been an increase with the number of Kinship Carers we support but unfortunately we have had a slow decline in our General Carer numbers. We have also seen a 64% increase in the number of referrals received since last year. As a result one of the challenges over this year has been the pressure of placements on our existing General Carers.

Our *Carer Satisfaction Survey* showed that 100% of Carers were satisfied with their supervising Family Case Worker but only 50% of Carers were satisfied with the number of training opportunities offered in 2017. As a result Shared Family Care's Operational Plan concentrated on the emergent needs in an effort to improve the outcomes and respond to the increasing sector demands. These demands included carer recruitment, support and training.

Carer Recruitment and Marketing involved the continuation of the rotational billboard throughout Townsville, social media, newspaper, radio and TV stories. We also made improvements to the enquiry process and updated our information brochures and resources and have a dedicated staff member undertaking initial assessments.



Improvements to the way we provide support included the introduction of a central email system, regular newsletter, improvement to internal systems for Home Visits and other processes. These changes are also as a result of our commitment to continual improvement and the changes within the child protection sector and the statewide reforms. We have been able to provide additional wrap around support to ensure placement stability such as additional home visits, home cleaning, yard maintenance and transport. Other supports provided have included the first year FCQ Membership sponsorship and the availability to loan a 7 seater vehicle for short periods of time.

Approximately 49% of the children and young people within our program identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and we have a commitment to reconciliation. Over the year we have facilitated the following cultural events, SNAICC Children's Day, NAIDOC March, Deadly Day Out, and the Palm Island Spring Fair. Lena Watego our Identified Family Case Worker co-facilitates the Caring for Jarjum's



Culture Training with Evolve Therapeutic Services and the Department of Child Safety. In addition we have provided financial and in-kind assistance and support to the T2i Hope and Healing Camps.



We have celebrated Foster and Kinship Care Week alongside Carers in Townsville, Charters Towers and the Burdekin and recognised 3 carers supported by Shared Family Care for receiving the 20 + Years Carer Certificate. The Child Protection Week - Shine the Light Lunch and Symposium, Family Fun Day and soon to be held Christmas Party (co agency facilitated) have all been events to provide opportunities for carers to network and feel supported by their peers. The Kinship Carer Support Group is still in its infancy but Shared Family Care is committed to providing a peer support group specifically catering to Kinship Carers needs.

Another area of focus was Carer Training. We listened to the specific training being requested by Carers and where possible provided the opportunity and also offered babysitting, and after hours options. Some of the training provided by either ourselves, other agencies or as a joint agency response has included:

- Practice Meet's Theory (Hope Junction)
- Circle of Security (SFC)
- Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder (Sue Larkey)
- Sexualized Behaviours Workshop (Evolve)
- Caring for Jarjum's Culture (Evolve, Department and SFC)
- Quality Care – Pre-Service and Standard Training (joint agencies)
- Queensland Civil Administrative Tribunal (FCQ)
- NDIS (FCQ)
- Safety and Support Network (FCQ)
- Essential Elements of a Care Team (FCQ)
- Reunification (FCQ)
- Standards of Care (FCQ)

Shared Family Care was also able to sponsor a number of carers to attend the 2018 Foster and Kinship Carer Conference and the feedback was very positive from all who attended. When asked about the experience – one carer stated the following:

*“The keynote speakers were incredible and offered great practical advice, which we are already putting into practice. Richard Rose, Nathan Wallis, Kurt Fearnley; inspiring people, with down to earth attitudes and common sense solutions. The up to date information, supplied by Nathan, was mind blowing and Richard’s practical, no nonsense presentation, allowed me to see how trauma impacts and steps we can take to walk our young people through any minefields which may present over time. Every point made, was a “lightbulb” moment.”*



Shared Family Care strive to ensure that carers have the opportunity to attend such worthwhile conferences and training whenever possible and will continue to do so into the future.

Throughout the year the staff have remained consistent with Ainslee being our newest staff member when she joined the team in February of this year. We have also enjoyed having Mikayla Johnstone a JCU student on placement with us for 3 months and wish her all the success into the future. I’m privileged to work alongside Justin Pascoe, Katisha Skeene, Jenny Spiers, Dallas Grant, Joel Semmens, Beverley Barry, Ainslee Tirendi, Lena Watego, Chris Sweet, Kelli-ann May and Vicki Crees who are all dedicated and committed to providing the best possible support to carers and children. Without this team of five Family Case Workers, two Senior Practitioners, our Administration Officer, Team Leader, Quality Manager and Project Worker all of which has been achieved over the past 12 months wouldn’t be possible.

Throughout the year staff have had the opportunity to participate in a number of conferences and training including the Foster and Kinship Care Conference, Early Years Conference and the Child Protection Symposium. Some other training and workshops attended include:

- Practice Meet’s Theory
- Mini Quest for Caring
- Practical Approaches to Managing Performance
- Family Contact Training
- Tough Conversations in Child Protection
- Senior First Aid/CPR
- Management of Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Children and Young People
- Various FCQ trainings

I would like to take the time to acknowledge Katisha Skeene a young Indigenous woman who early in the year completed her Business Administration Traineeship and also won the TORGAS Indigenous Trainee of the Year Award. Katisha is a joy to work with and a highly valued member of the team.



Chris Sweet has been in a Project Worker position since February of this year and has been responsible for working on the implementation of the organisations new client management system. Chris has been instrumental in keeping the project moving forward and completing all the necessary communication and work required to ensure the new system will be both user friendly and meet all our compliance obligations. In addition Shared Family Care has recently undertaken its Licencing Inspection with no reported non-compliances. I would like to acknowledge the effort by Kelli-ann May our Quality Manager and all the other team members for the continual hard work to ensure we meet the stringent compliance requirements.

I would especially like to thank Mandy Thompson (CEO) for the consistent leadership, direction and support she provides across the organisation and to me personally. I would also like to acknowledge my appreciation for the other members of the Leadership Team – Lynne, Lesley, Kelli-ann, Peta and Deb who I’m also privileged to work alongside.

The team at Shared Family Care would also like to thank the many individuals, carers, stakeholders, partners and community for their support and assistance over the past year. We look forward to another exciting year ahead and working together to achieve great outcomes for children and young people.

Thanks again

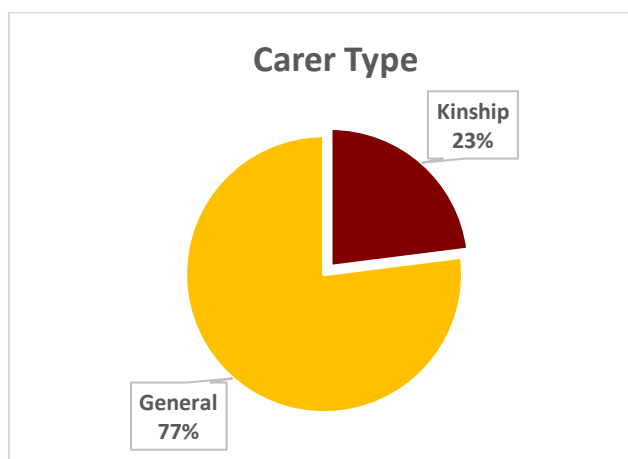
***Teresa Smith***

***Program Manager***

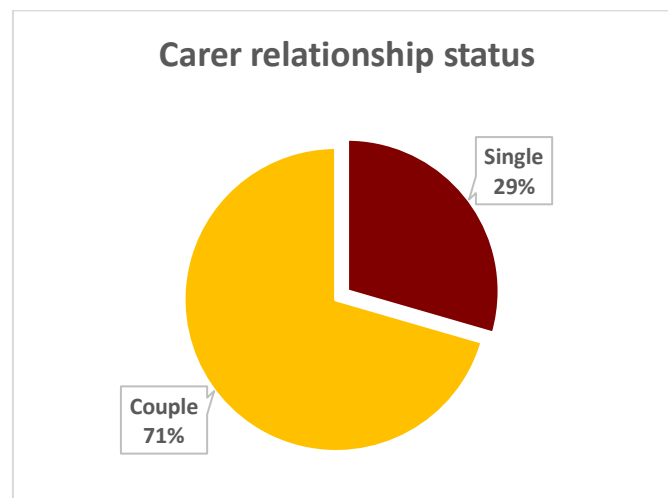
## Shared Family Care’s Annual Data

### Carer Demographics

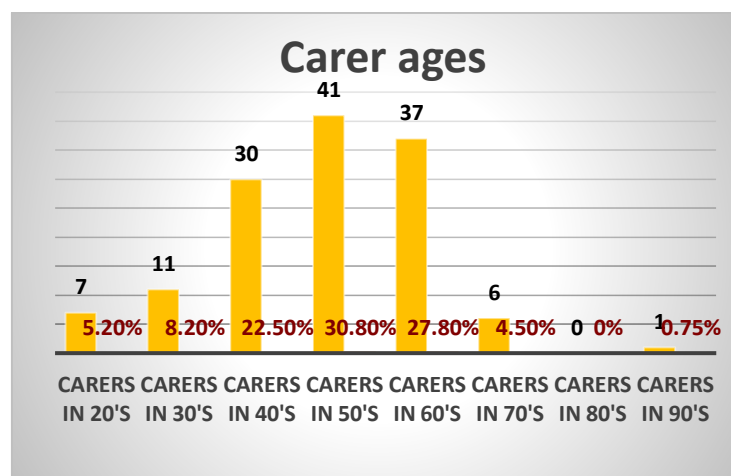
At the time of this data analysis Shared Family Care was supporting a total of 78 carer entities. Of these 78 carers, 60 were General Carers and 18 were Kinship Carers.



Fifty-five (or 71%) of these 78 carers were in a partnerships while 23 (or 29%) were found to be single.



The 78 carer households are made up of 133 individual carers. The average (or mean) age of the carers was found to be 53 years of age.



The concentration in age range of individual carers sat between 49 to 64 years of age. A total of 108 (or 81%) of carers were found to be in their 40's to 60's. Specifically,

- 30 carers were in their 40's,
- 41 in their 50's, and
- 37 were in their 60's.

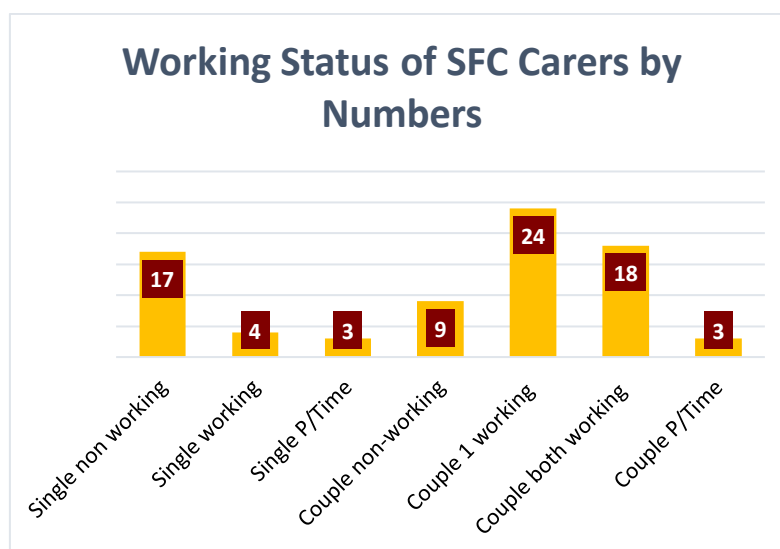
Only 18 individual carers (or 13.5%) were identified to be in their 20's and 30's. The oldest carer was found to be 90. His partner is 74 years of age. They have been carers for 12 years having started as kinship carers before becoming general carers.

With regard to the cultural background of the carers, 83% were found to be from a Caucasian background, 8% Indigenous background and 7% other backgrounds such as Italian, English, Fijian or Belgian.

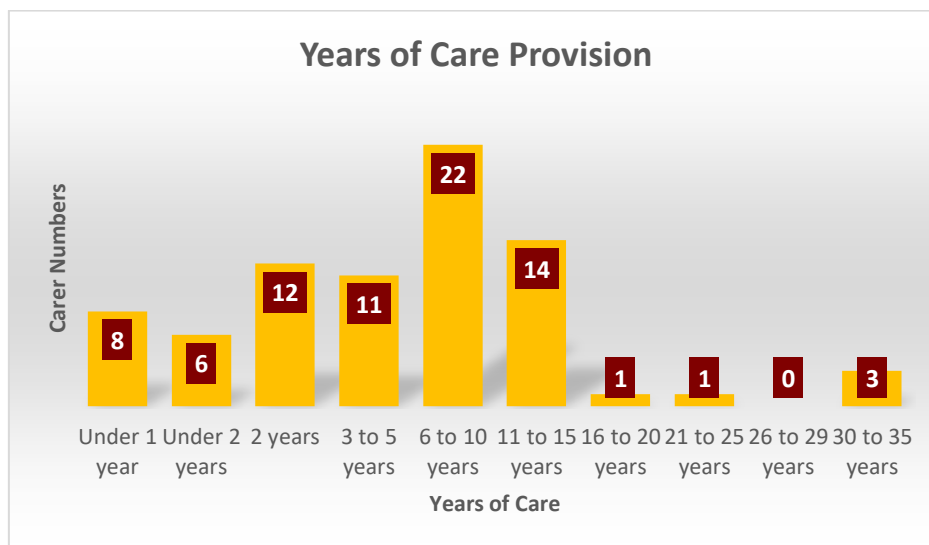


In examining the working status of the 78 carer households, the following was identified;

- A total of 26 carer households were non-working (33%)
- A total of 22 carers households were fully working (28%)
- A total of 24 partnered carer households had 1 person working full time, and (30%)
- The remaining 6 carer households participated in part time work. (7%)

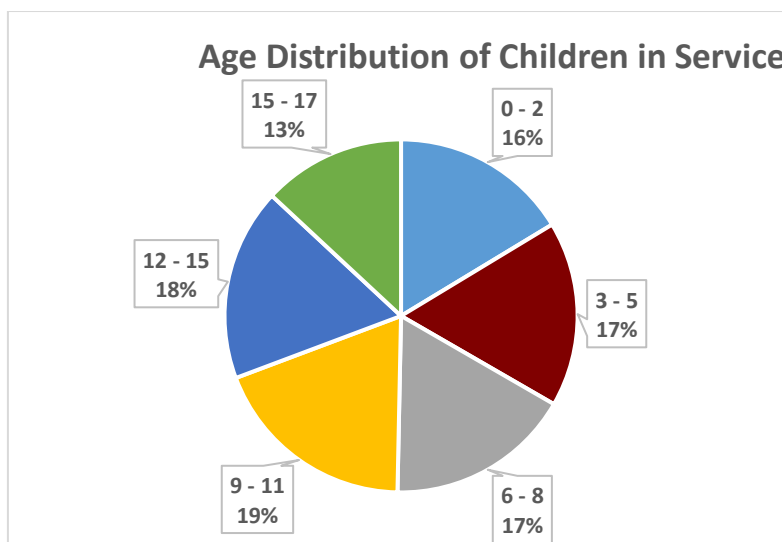


The average length of time carers had been providing care for was found to be between 6 to 10 years (25%). There then appears to be a significant dropout towards the 15 year mark. There were 3 carer households found to be still providing care after 30 years, while 26 of the carer households (or 29.5%) had been caring for 2 years or less.

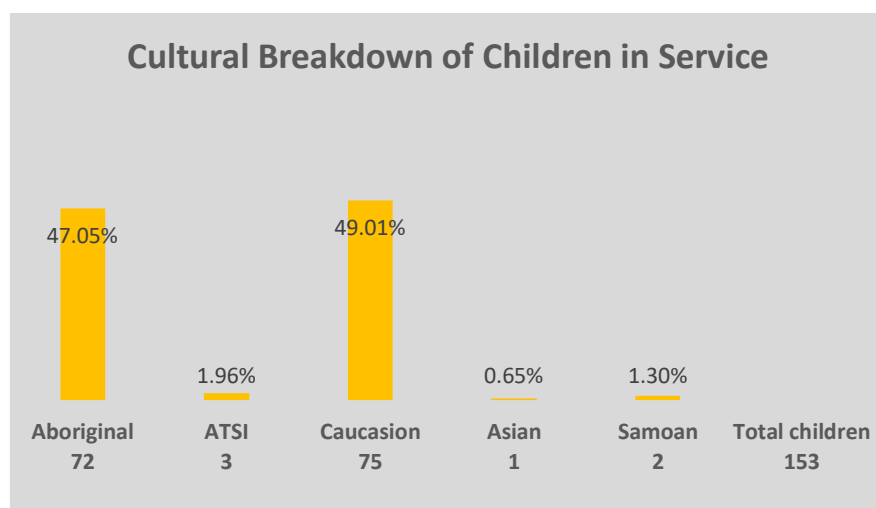


### Children's Demographics

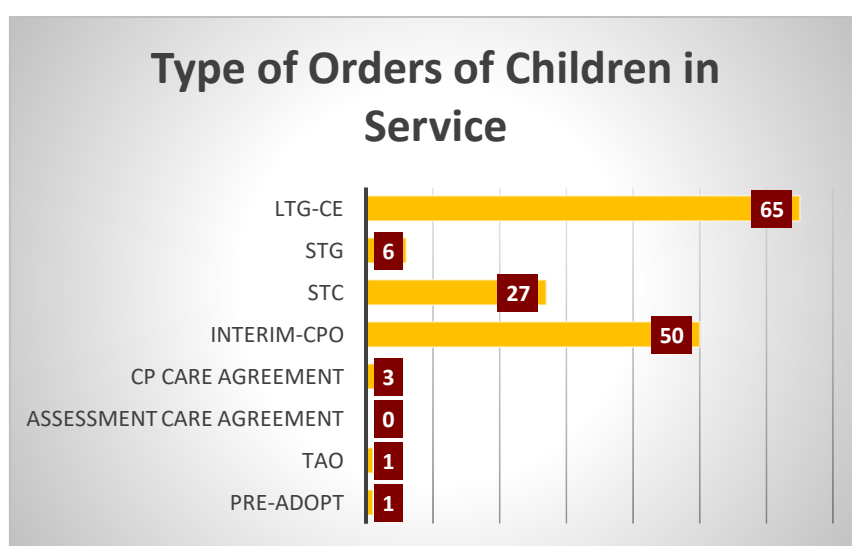
At the time of this analysis there were 153 children placed in the Shared Family Care program. With regard to the age composition of the children in service there was a fairly even spread amongst the age groups but with a slight dip from the average with regard to 15 to 17 year olds.



The cultural background of the children in service demonstrated there to be equal numbers of children from a Caucasian background as there were children with an Indigenous background (Aboriginal, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, both sitting at 49%. There were no children listed as being of only Torres Strait Islander background.

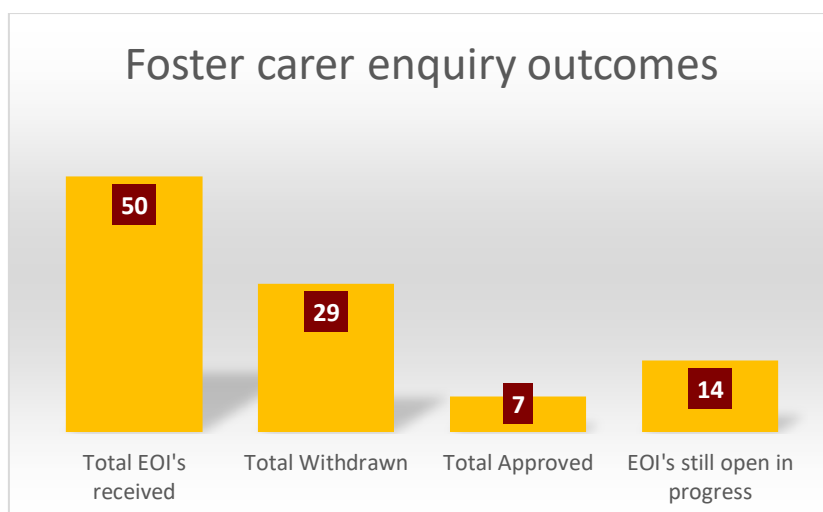


Of the 153 children in service 65 (or 42%) were identified to be on long term orders, 27 on short term orders and 50 were on interim orders.



#### Carer Enquires & Approvals

Shared Family Care received a total of 50 foster carer enquiries in this reporting period. Of the 50 enquiries (EOI's) received, 29 of these were withdrawn or closed, 7 went on to become approved carers and 14 are still in progress.

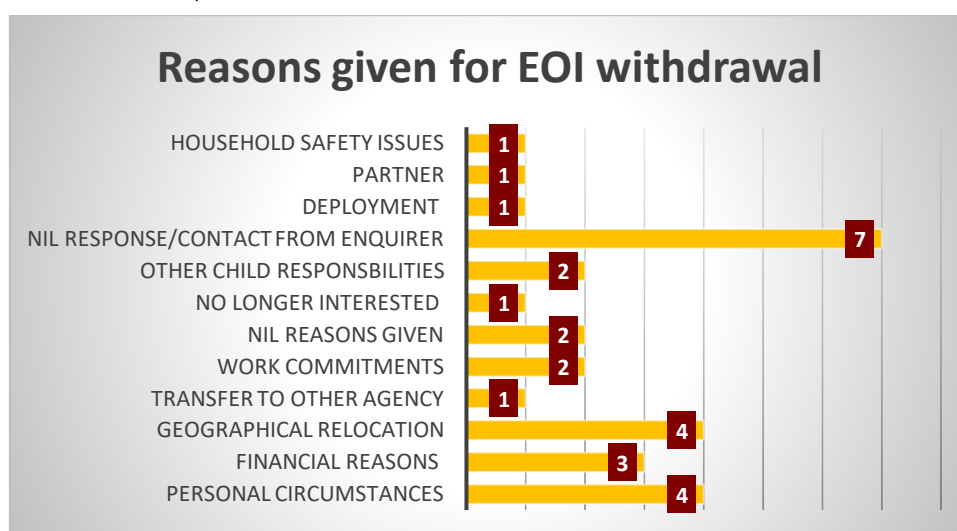


The enquiry withdrawal rate was 58% at the time of reporting with the end figure being unable to be determined until a conclusion is reached on the 14 still open EOI's from that period.

There are 3 broad categories for why an EOI is withdrawn or closed. These categories are;

1. **Departmental reasons** – the request is withdrawn as it is no longer required ie a kinship assessment, or the assessment is concluded and submitted but the Department did not approve it.
2. **Applicant reasons** – family, work, health reasons, pregnancy, applicant chose to go to another service, failing to respond to service follow up to progress enquiry etc
3. **Fostering Service reasons** ie household safety issues identified or other early suitability issues noted such as applicants not in support of reunification, mental health concerns.

Of the 29 EOI's withdrawn or closed, 21 were withdrawn by the enquirer themselves. The following outlines the reasons cited;



Predominately it was identified that an enquirer withdraws their interest due to some change in their personal circumstances. Of the 8 EOI's closed by Shared Family Care this was due to;

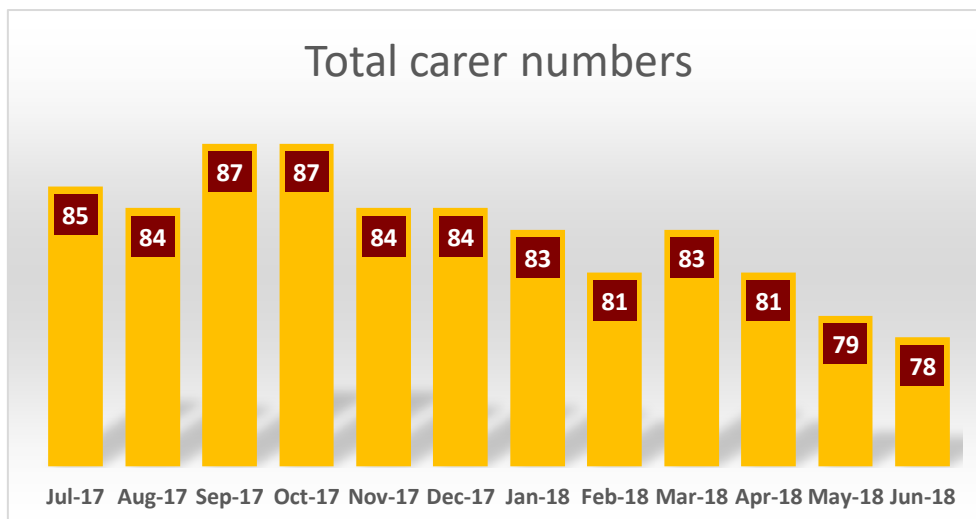
- The applicants home not meeting household safety requirements as it was within a state of major renovation and not safely habitable, and
- The applicants becoming non-responsive to follow up on their enquiry.



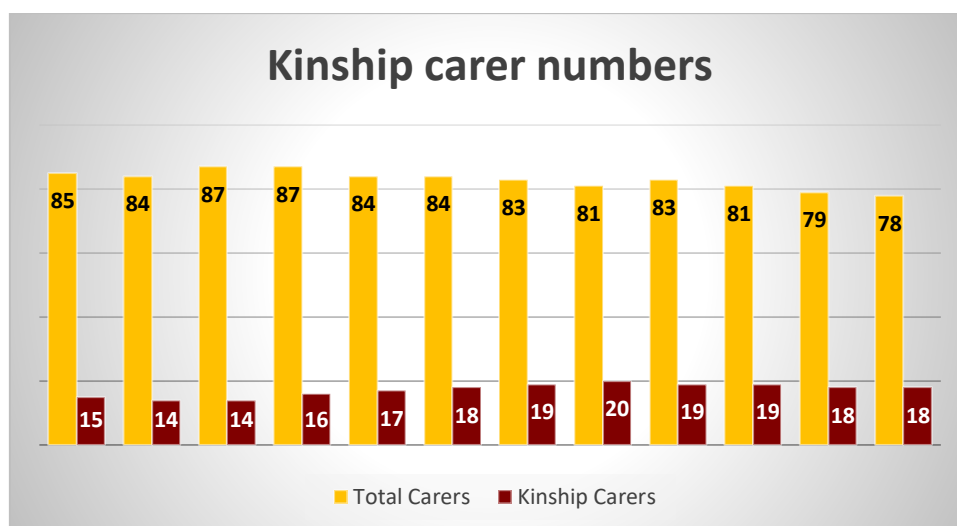
Of the 7 enquiries that went on to become approved carers in this reporting period the average length of time it took from EOI, to training to assessment to approval was 8 months.

### Carer Numbers & Exits

Carer numbers are not static and fluctuate from week to week, month to month and year to year as carers transfer, resign and new carers are approved. The highest number of carers Shared Family Care supported during the reporting period was 87 with the lowest being 78, (and the average for the year being 83).



Of the total carer numbers outlined above, the below graph then demonstrates which number of these were kinship carers, caring for relative children only.

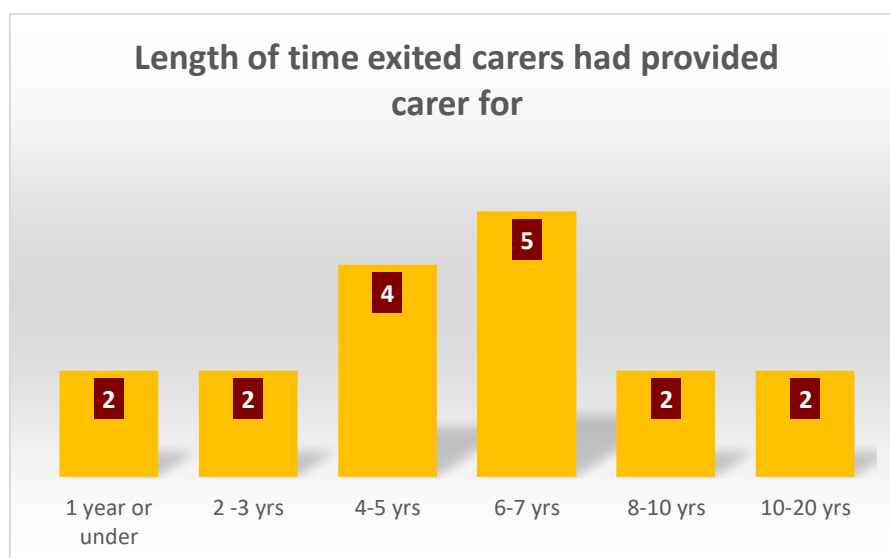


Shared Family Care had a total of 17 carers exit during the reporting period. The average number of carers in this time period was 83. On these figures this means the program experienced around a 20% loss of its carer pool, however recouped a little less than half of this loss in the 7 new approved carers in this same period. The reasons for the exits were as follows;



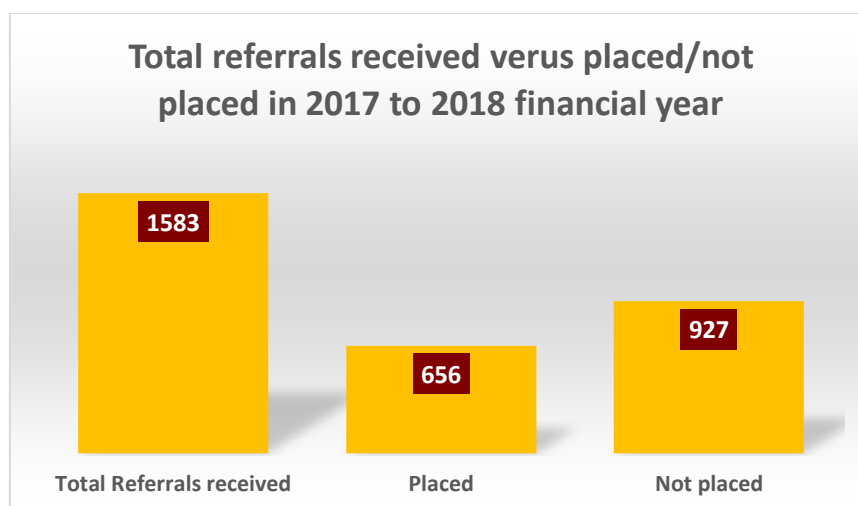
The predominate reasons for most exits can be seen to be due to a change in the carers circumstances either relationship, death, work or family commitments or having to relocate.

The years of care provided by these exited carers is outlined below. The highest concentration of years for a carer exiting appeared to be between 4 and 7 years of providing care. The 6<sup>th</sup> year was the most reoccurring timeframe found for a carer to exit.



### Placement Referrals Requests

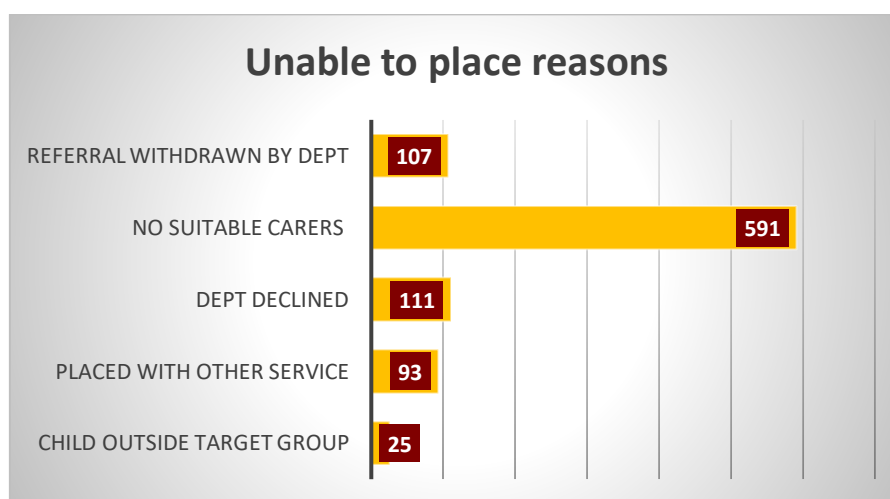
During the reporting period the program received a total of 1583 distinct placement referral requests. Of these Shared Family Care was able to fulfil 656 of these placement referral requests, 41% of the total requests made. This was a combination of both primary and respite requests.



There are different reasons why placement referrals may not lead to a placement being made but overall the reasons generally fall within the following two broad categories;

- **Departmental reasons** – referral withdrawn, department declined the placement offered, placed in other service by department, and
- **Service Reasons** – no suitable carers identified for referral or referral type is outside funding group (is complex or extreme)
- 

Of those placements not made the following were the reasons;



These reasons equated to the following percentages;

- 3% due to the referral being outside SFC's service agreement
- 10% placed with another service by the department
- 12% placement offer was declined by the department
- 64% were due to the service not being able to identify a suitable carer
- 11% of the referrals were withdrawn by the department

It was identified that Shared Family Care experienced a 64% increase in referral numbers in this reporting period, which is an additional 566 referrals than on the previous year's reporting period.

## Wee Care Residential

### Program Manager's Annual Report

I would like to welcome you all to Althea Projects 2018 AGM and I am happy to report another busy and successful year. I must say that the years seem to roll by faster each time – no doubt a factor of getting old but also a sign of how smoothly our organisation is being managed. This year Althea Projects celebrates forty four years supporting Townsville's Families and Children.



The community spirit, friendly atmosphere, Management team and dedicated staff and committed volunteers continue to make it a delight to come to work every day. This is my 14<sup>th</sup> AGM at Althea Projects and as another year comes to a close I must admit I am not sure where 2018 has actually gone. Wee Care continues to be a caring and reputable home away from home program supporting Townsville families just as it has been for the last forty four years. Unfortunately we do continue to see families struggling and requiring support from services such as ourselves and hopefully we will continue to support Townsville Families for many more years to come.

**Playgroup and Child Care:** Play group is held every Thursday morning except during school holidays and endures to remain steady. Participation levels fluctuated during the early part of the year and increased over the second half. We currently have seven families who attend. The Children have enjoyed a varied program of activities provided by our dedicated staff who plan a range of activities based on the individual interests of the Children, level of development, indoor/outdoor, special days/celebrations and cultural diversity. It has been wonderful to see so many families making new friends throughout the year. We have also seen three Grandparents with their Grandchildren attending on a weekly basis.



**Our Staff:** As always I commend our terrific group of hard working woman on their commitment to providing ongoing quality care to the Children who utilise our service and the strong relationship's that they build with each other and our families. Recruitment and retention remains stable which is a credit to all involved. We have two new members who have joined our team, welcome Charmaine and Toni.

- Staff continue to be committed to professional and personal development and ongoing learning
- Maintain a commitment to treating all people with dignity and respect
- Provide a professional standard of service that is inclusive and culturally appropriate
- Maintain organisational integrity and accountability

### Some of the wonderful work we all do together at Wee Care:

- We provide emergency and respite child care for Children aged up to 11 years of age.
- We support Grandparents and offer regular respite to these families.
- We provide transport to and from school and day care for Children.
- We provide nutritious meals and desserts.
- We offer support and refer families to other agencies and advocate on behalf of the family.
- We provide financial assistance (ERF).
- We can assist with clothing and school uniforms/school supplies where budget permits.
- We provide age appropriate activities for Children during their stay.
- We take Children on outings and activities such as a visit to Billabong Sanctuary.
- We support Children with homework.
- We hold weekly Play Group sessions for Carer's/Parent's and Children under five years of age and plan, design and deliver activities that will meet the needs of all service users.
- We provide emergency Child Care to children when parents/siblings are admitted to hospital.
- First Steps Program (28 day stay at Wee Care for Mum and new Bub).

**Professional Development:** Professional development has continued to be a priority over the last twelve months with staff attending various Workshops and Conferences. Some of these included: Acel Early Childhood Conference in Sydney, Child Protection Symposium, NAIDOC Week celebrations and the SNAICC National Conference, Senior First Aid and CPR, Medication training, Intranet training, Medication training, Fire Safety training and Cultural training. RAP meetings are held approximately six weekly and staff attend these where they are able too. We continue to visit other NGO services and share information. All employees participate in supervision and monthly staff meetings.

### Recognition of Continuous Service

20 YEARS +  RHONDA	10 YEARS +  BARBIE LYNNE	5 YEARS +  MARG, SUZY TINA, LLIAN ANN-MARIE	2 YEARS +  TRISH JACKIE SIMONE	2 YEARS -  JULIE-ANN, KRISTY, TONI, CHARMAIN E
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"Teamwork is how everyday people achieve remarkable goals."

**Special events held during 2018:** Wee Care celebrated Grandparents day with a playgroup session dedicated to all Grandparents who are helping raise their grandchildren. In May we also held a Community family day for National Families Week in conjunction with Mother's Day. We celebrated Naidoc Week Under the theme, "*Because of her, we can!*" from **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July** through to **Sunday 15 July**. Staff also held an event to raise money for Breast cancer research by holding a morning tea for "Australia's Biggest Morning Tea". Staff also participated in other events where they held information stalls such as attending JCU Medical teaching Session.

**Referrals from other organisations we work with:** We work closely with a number of other organisations and services to ensure that if a parent/carers is unable to look after their Children in the immediate term and there is no other close family available to offer this support, then Wee Care will

be available. Families are also able to self- refer to Wee Care. Some referrals received during 2018 originated from: The Townsville Hospital, Act for Kids, Sera's Shelter, FEAT, TAIHS, Townsville Police and Child Protection Unit, Maria House, Uniting Care, PSU, The Woman's Centre. TMSG, Carer's QLD, Child & Parent Connect, Save the Children, Centacare, QYS - Young Parents Group.

### *Photos from 2018*



TAPPA Highland Dancers celebrating National Families Day at Wee Care



Staff celebrating Australia's biggest morning tea



Santa visiting playgroup breakup



Llian, Mary and Noemi

**Our Volunteers:** A special thank you to all of our volunteers. This year we have seen Beatrice retire and move to Brisbane. Thank you Beatrice for all you have done for us over the years. Lorraine continues prepare and cook healthy meals for the Children whenever she has free time available to drop in. Amandeep has joined us and helps out caring for the Children. We have also welcomed Mick who attends on Wednesday mornings and does all those little handy man jobs that would otherwise cost money to repair. We appreciate all the work you all do which is often unsaid however noticed such as Mac keeping our shrubs at the front entrance trimmed. Thank you to all of you, you do a splendid job and we sincerely appreciate you.

**Our Donors:** As I often say, our work would not be possible without the support of our caring friends in the community and their ongoing kindness. All at Althea Projects appreciates every bit of assistance we receive. Wee Care has just updated the Children's playroom with new painting throughout and purchased a new lounge, curtains and cushions, which was all owing to others kindness. Some of the donations we receive are Children's clothing, baby items, beautiful quilts and knitted toys and rugs. A big thank you to Tubby from Townsville Tidy bags for collecting our green waste monthly without any payment in return. Toby and team from N.Q. Food relief, we really appreciate you dropping of our food boxes. I would like to express my gratitude to all of Althea's donors for the compassion you show to the people we support. We all know how stressful it can be for families who find themselves in need of the services we provide, and your actions go a long way toward helping them keep these families feel valued and respected. Your thoughtfulness never goes unnoticed.

As always I continue to enjoy my time working with all at Althea Projects and appreciate the support I have received from Mandy and the Leadership team over the last twelve months and look forward to working with you again in 2019. Have a wonderful Christmas break and see you again in the New Year!

Kind regards

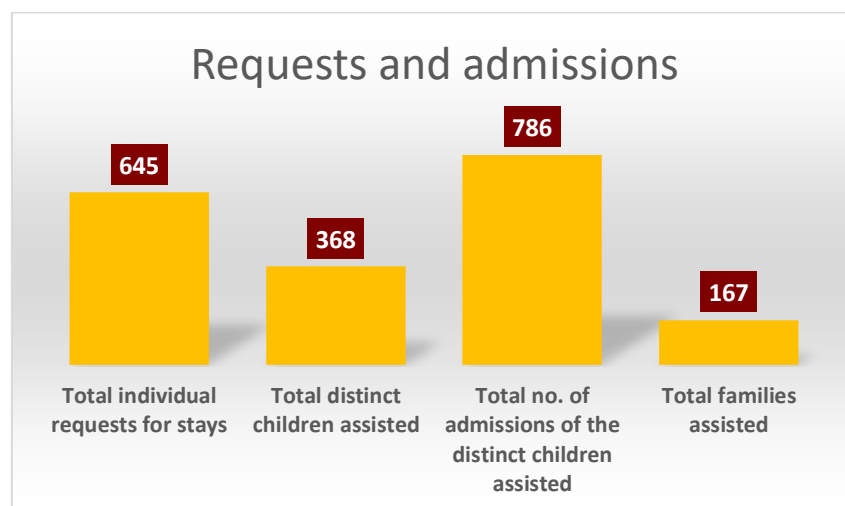
**Lynne Josey**

**Program Manager**

## Wee Care Program's Annual Data

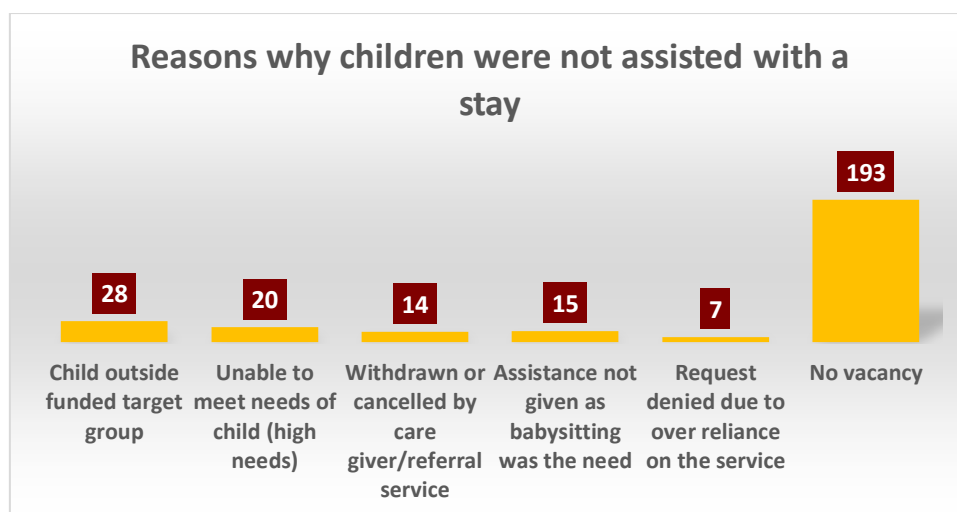
### Requests and Admissions

During this reporting period Wee Care received a total of 645 requests for children to stay at the residential. Of these requests there were a total of 786 actual admissions of 368 distinct children of 167 families.

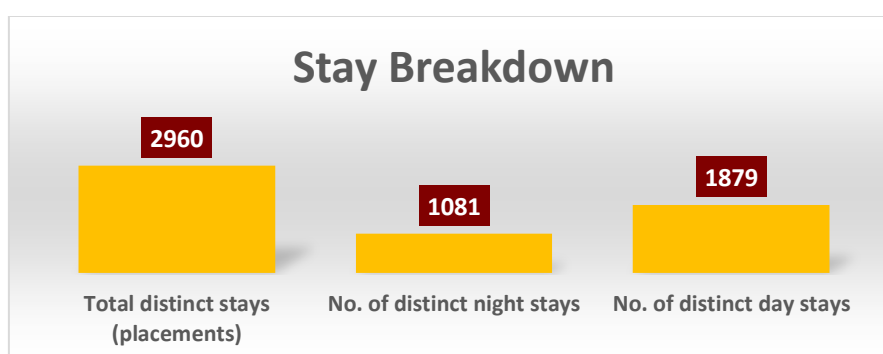


A distinct child can have multiple admissions

A total of 277 distinct children were unable to be provided with a stay at the residential. It was identified that 70% of this total was unable to be provided with a stay due to there being no vacancy at the time of the request or referral.

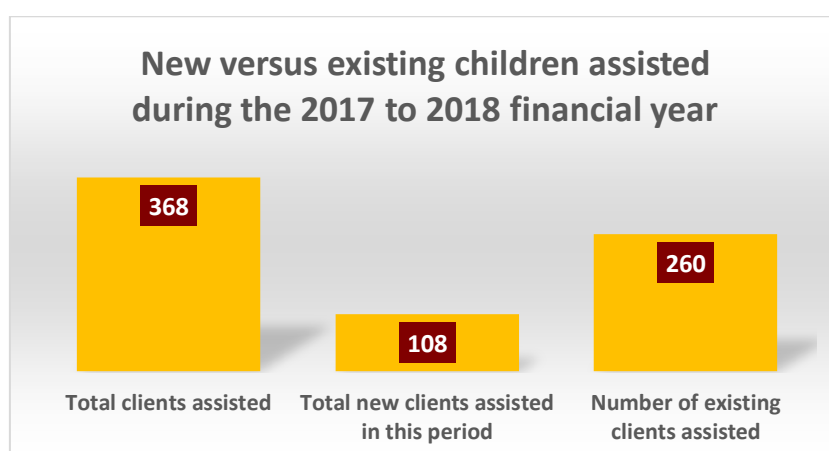


There were a total of 2960 stays during the 2017 to 2018 financial year from the 786 admissions of children into the residential. Of these total stays, 1879 were distinct day stays while 1081 were distinct night stays.



Stays are counted by days and nights, a child who has a day stay may not stay at night.

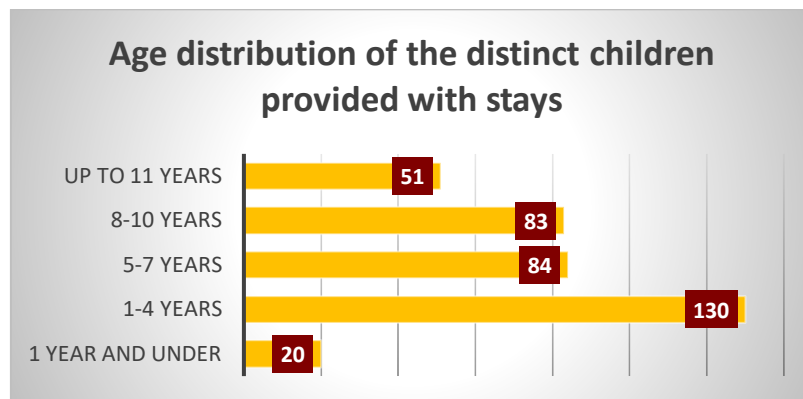
Of the 368 distinct children admitted into the residential during this period 260 were existing clients already known to the service while 108 were new clients to the service.



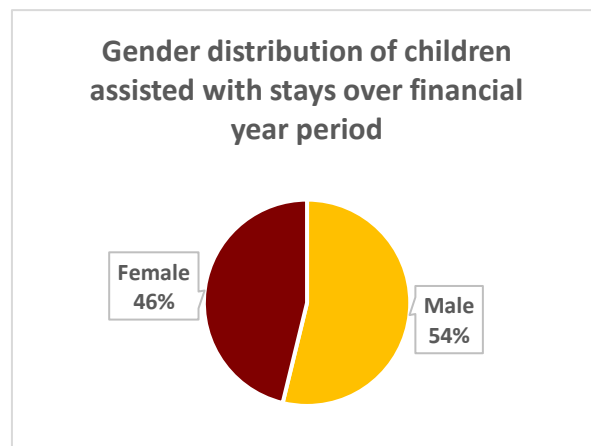
On average the service took approximately two admissions per day, 15 per week, or 65 per month.



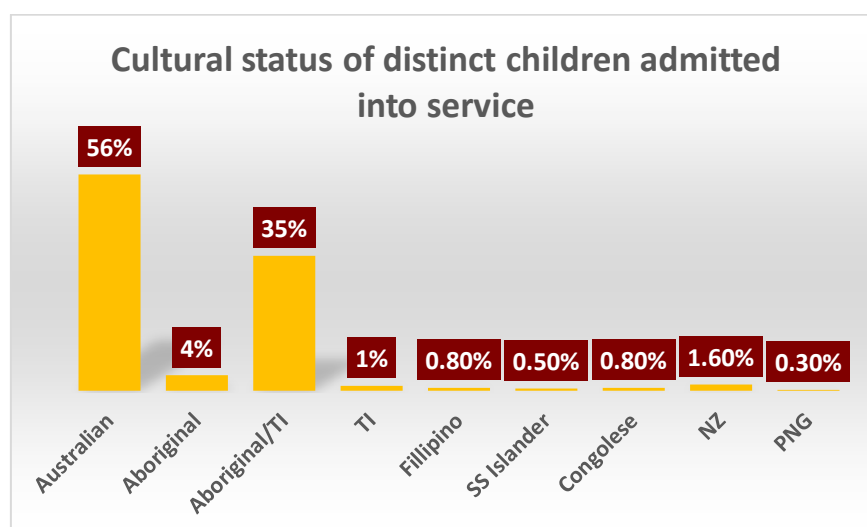
With regard to the age distribution of the children admitted into the residential, the most common age group was found to be the 1 to 4 year olds.



In relation to gender, 54% were found to be male with 46% female.

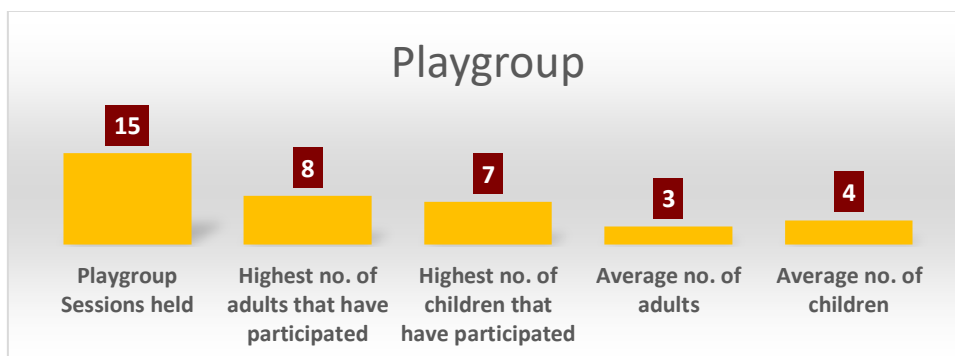


The cultural status of the children admitted into the residential during the reporting period demonstrated that 56% were Australian, while 40.5% were indigenous.



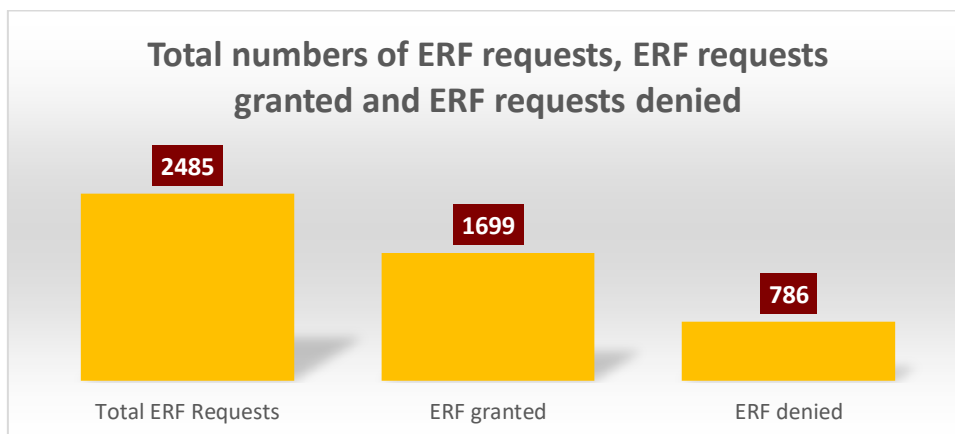
## Playgroup

Wee Care held 15 playgroup sessions in this reporting year. Of these, the average attendance of adults was found to be 3 and the average attendance of children was found to be 4.



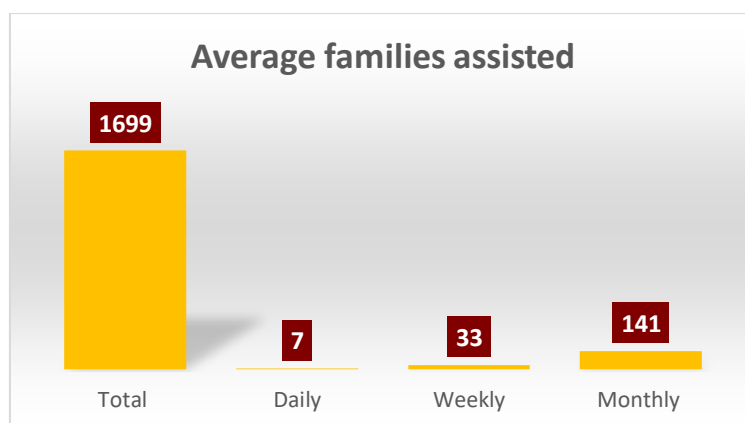
## Emergency Relief (Federal)

Althea Projects federally funded ERF program is administered through Wee Care. In this annual reporting period Althea Projects received a total of 2485 individual requests for ERF assistance.



Of the total requests made, this equated to nearly 10 requests a day, based upon the 252 working days during this period of time. From a percentage perspective the figures demonstrate that 68% of all ERF requests were granted.

In total 1699 local families and 4944 dependent children received some form of ERF assistance. The average requests granted (or families provided with ERF assistance) was found to be 7 per day, 33 per week or 141 per month.



Of the 1699 ERF requests granted 58% were for food vouchers while 39% were for food boxes. These two items represented 97% of the total ERF requests granted. The remaining 3% of items represented all other request types that were granted. Within this group of requests the highest items requested was assistance with rent payments and assistance with the purchasing of school uniforms. With regard to the 'other' category this was found most often to be assistance with prescription medication costs.

## The Townsville Drop in Centre

### Centre Manager's Annual Report

The past 12 months has been an exciting time for the Drop In Centre. 2018 was the first full year with Althea Projects. This year has seen the centre build trust within the community both with our funding partners, services, colleagues and clients. At the commencement of this reporting period the Drop In Centre was an access point that provided information and referral to people who were experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.

As well as offering advice and referral; the centre offers a safe place for some of Townsville's most vulnerable to access food, showering facilities, breakfast and lunch. We would like to thank NQ Food relief, Second Bite (Coles Thuringowa), Ignatius Park College and Cathedral School for their very generous donations that have assisted in reducing the cost of our food service, as reflected in the above numbers these donations go a long way towards feeding the Centre users.

The year was spent building partnerships with Government and Non- Government Organisations within the community to best meet the needs of the clients who access the centre. This has resulted in activities and services at the centre where people feel comfortable. I would like to say thank-you to NQ Womens Legal Service, AA, QIFVLS, ATSILS, Centrelink, Lives Lived Well, North Ward Health and Wellbeing, and Anglicare.

One of the many highlights for 2018 was a visit from Brisbane's Birth, Deaths and Marriages who spent the day at the Drop In Centre and in conjunction with Centrelink and issued 82 Birth Certificates for clients.

Our Centre projects have kept people busy with around 1600 jobs given out to service users. This has enabled many to earn up to \$60 per week without the income affecting their Centrelink entitlements. Recently we have changed the rostering system for projects so service users are able to spend either the morning or afternoons cleaning.



The 4 computers at the Centre remain in constant use. The computers are booked in hourly blocks with all seven sessions being booked continuously. Centrelink closed their city office at the end of the financial year which saw a rise in new clients to the centre for telephone and computer access.



Staff at the Centre have celebrated with our clients many events, such as birthdays, Christmas lunch, Melbourne Cup, Easter. In July 2018 we hosted a NAIDOC event at the centre in collaboration with Anglicare and Red Cross, these events strengthen our relationships with clients and helps to link them in with mainstream services that can assist them into the future beyond our funded programs.



The outputs for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme have remained steady for most of this year, with most services being outsourced due to staffing. There is now a dedicated worker for this program with a view to grow from the 4 clients participating when the Centre amalgamated Althea Projects Incorporated.

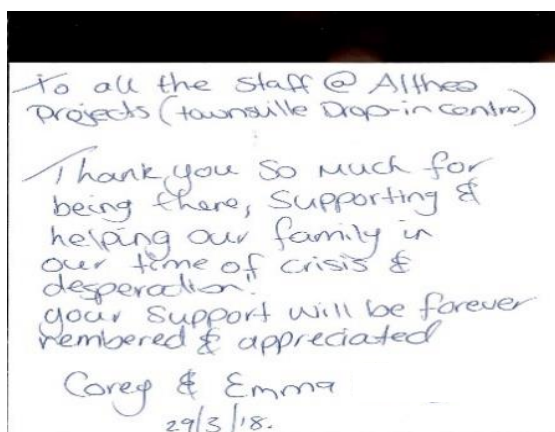
The Drop In Centre administers a state Emergency Relief Fund that was expended for the previous financial year with us well on our way to exhausting this fund once again. Types of assistance provided were food vouchers, rent assistance, vehicle registrations, electricity and utility bills, medications and accommodation to name a few.

Over the previous 12 months there has been 503 requests for assistance within the Homelessness program, during this reporting period we have assisted 11 long term homeless people into stable secure housing. While compiling this report I was trying to decide which one of these stories to include as a “good news” story when a gentleman called and asked to speak with myself or Dan. This gentleman had been living on the Strand for a long time with his two dogs. He was a regular user of the Drop In Centre and participated in projects to fill his time during the day until he returned to his camp at night, we were lucky enough to get him housed along with his dogs. He called today to thank us for the help he received from the centre as today marked the first anniversary in his home.

Our excitement rose when it was announced that the Department of Housing refunded our program with additional money and a completely new way of working with clients. From July 2018 this funding has allowed us to take on a more intense case management approach with our clients and in the first quarter of the new contract we have housed 4 people.

There are 4 part time staff at the centre with 3 having worked at Althea Projects for over a year and a new Community Care Worker who will work in the Aged Care Program.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at the Drop In Centre especially Dan and Veronica who have shown strength, determination and tenacity and stuck by the clients and Althea Projects through changes and the uncertainty of not knowing if contracts will be extended past the end of the financial year. Their efforts and ability to deal with challenges has not gone unnoticed.



Finally, I want to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who plays a role in supporting the Townsville Drop In Centre. In my position I have unique opportunities to witness vulnerable, often marginalised human beings getting to enjoy some success and get treated with the dignity that everyone deserves. I also get to witness countless acts of kindness that make those successes possible. Thank you to the Management Committee, Leadership Team and our CEO Mandy for your support and guidance throughout the year. I look forward to the next 12 months to see where this journey will lead.

**Peta Anderson**

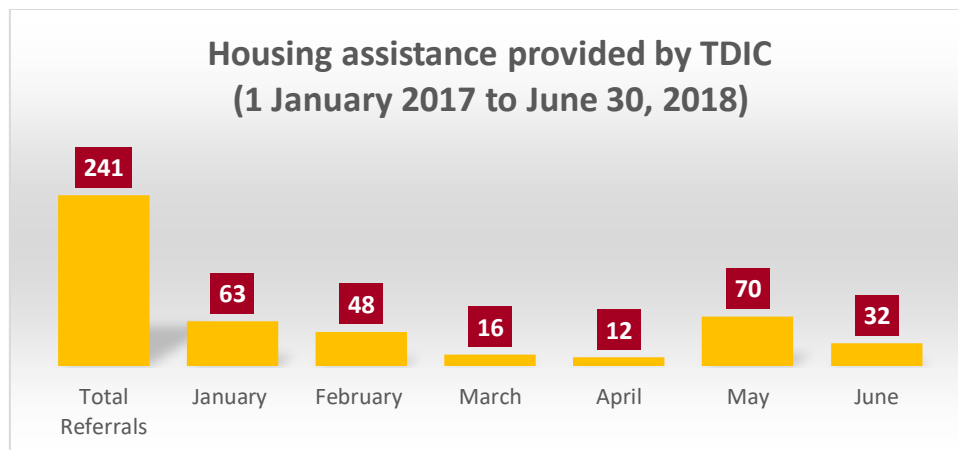
**Program Manager**

## Townsville Drop-in Centre's Annual Data

The data outlined below for the Drop In Centre can only be provided for the second half of the financial year (January 1 to July 30 of 2018) given it was identified that there were some data gaps within the first 6 months data due to the amalgamation process of the Drop In Centre with Althea Projects occurring during that time. One exception to this is the ERF data which is for the full 12 month financial year period.

### Housing Referrals & Assistance

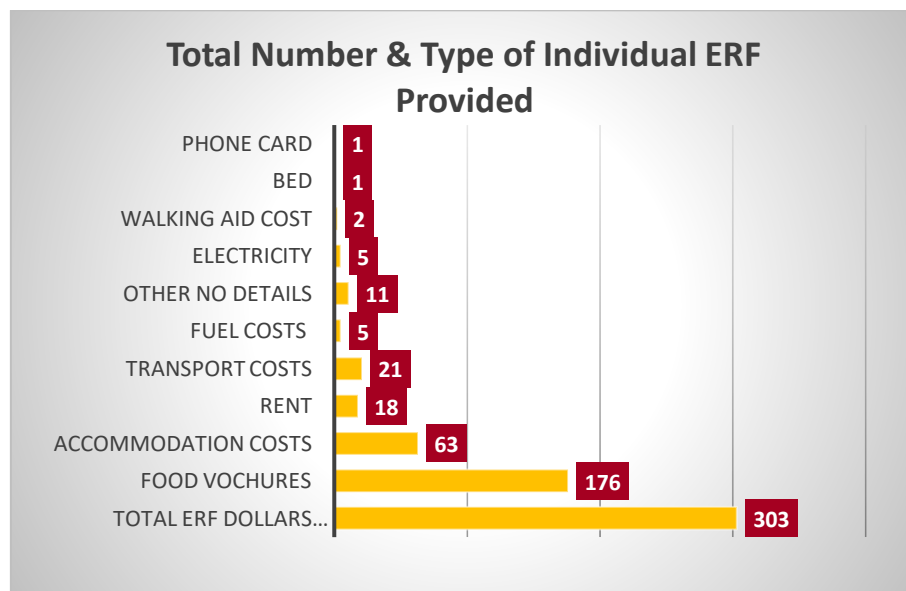
In the period of January 1 to 30 June 2018 the Drop-in Centre assisted approximately 241 individuals with housing assistance.



The service provided housing assistance to around 40 people per month, or 2 per day on average.

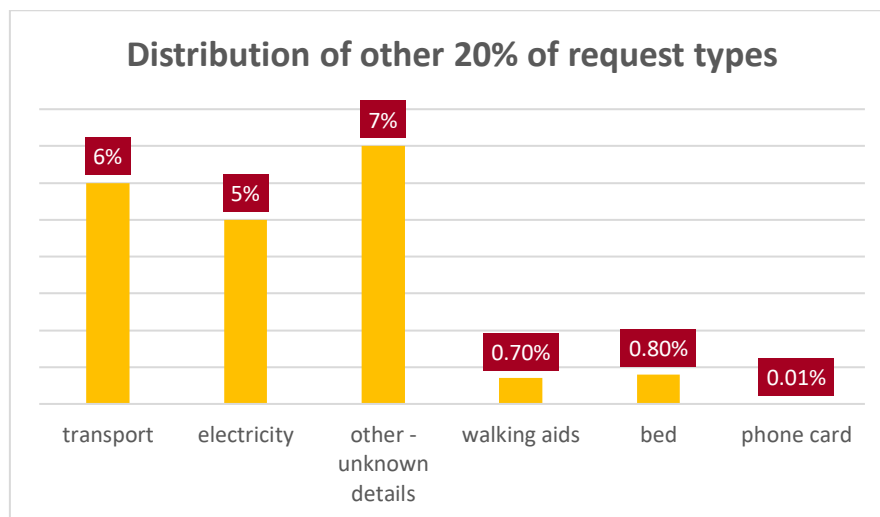
### ERF Program (State)

ERF assistance was provided through the Centre a total of 303 times during this twelve months.

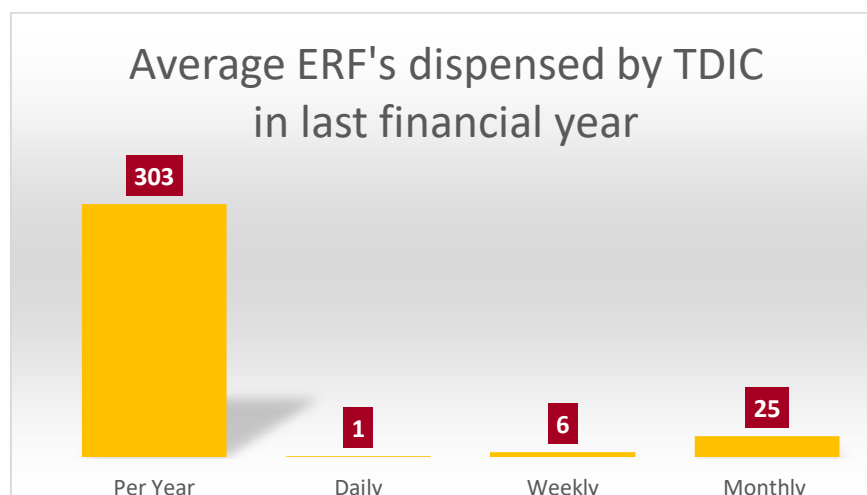


The most common ERF assistance requested and provided was found to be food vouchers, accommodation costs and rent. These 3 request types represented 80% of the total ERF requests provided by the Drop-in Centre to clients in need. Of this 80%, 43% percent of the ERF costs went to accommodation assistance, 19% to food vouchers and 18% to assistance with rent.

With regard to the remaining 20% of the ERF funds spent, the following demonstrates those infrequent request types.



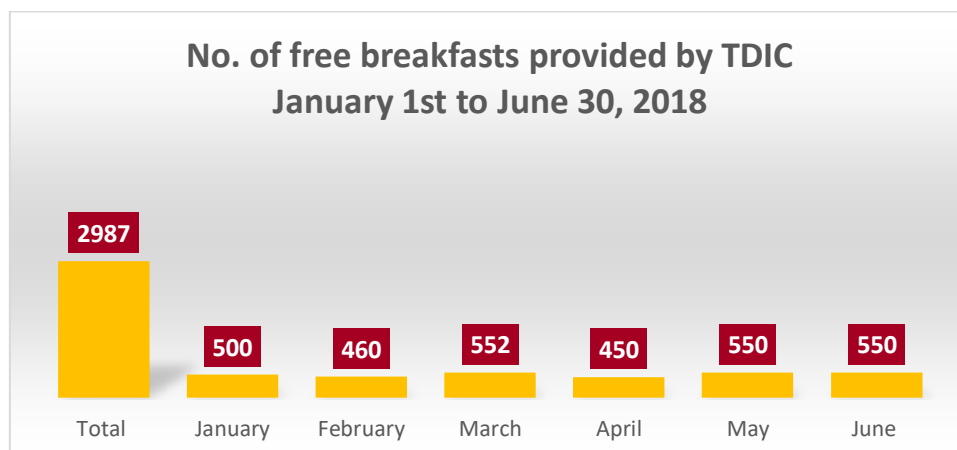
In looking at the overall State ERF assistance provided to clients over the recent financial year, data recorded indicates that the Drop-in Centre assisted on average 1 person per day, 6 people per week or 25 people per month with ERF.



## Centre based services and programs

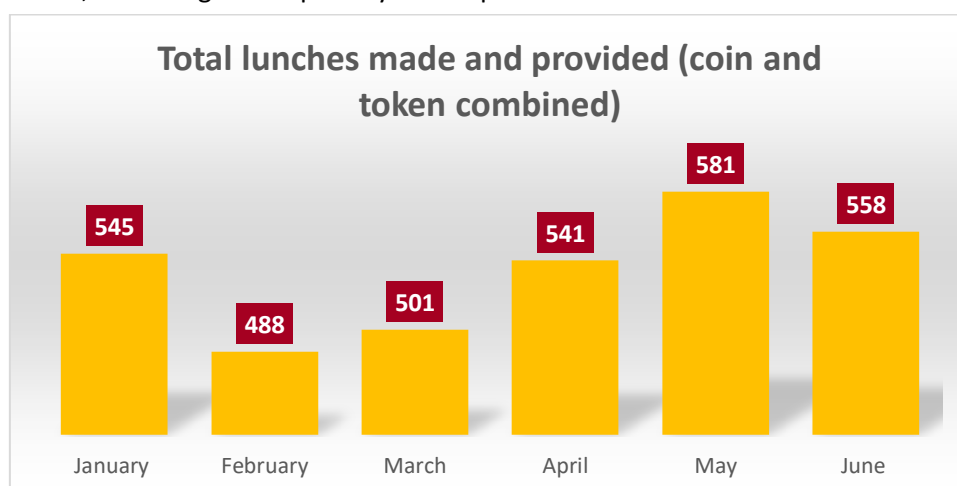
### Breakfasts Provided

For the first 6 months of 2018, TDIC produced and provided approximately 2987 free breakfasts to those in need. These figures indicate that on average 24 people per day or 498 per month are provided with a free breakfast.

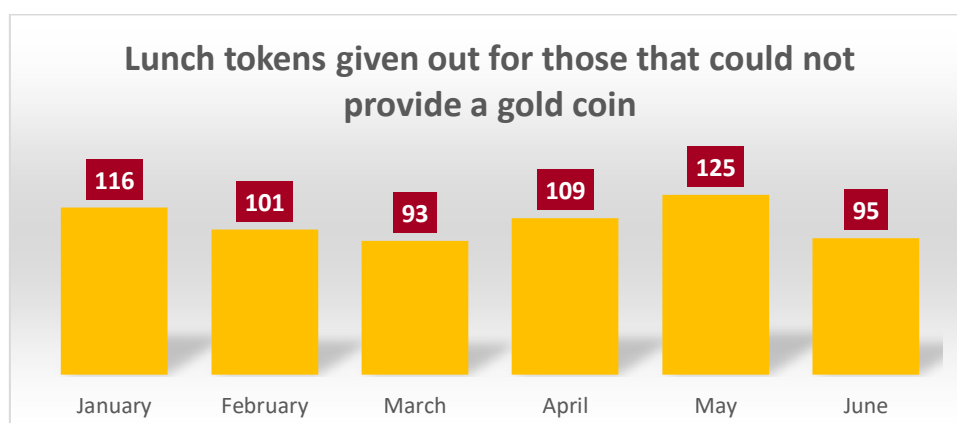


### Lunches Provided

For this 6 month reporting period the Drop-in Centre produced and provided a total of 3214 lunches to those in need, an average of 25 per day or 536 per month.



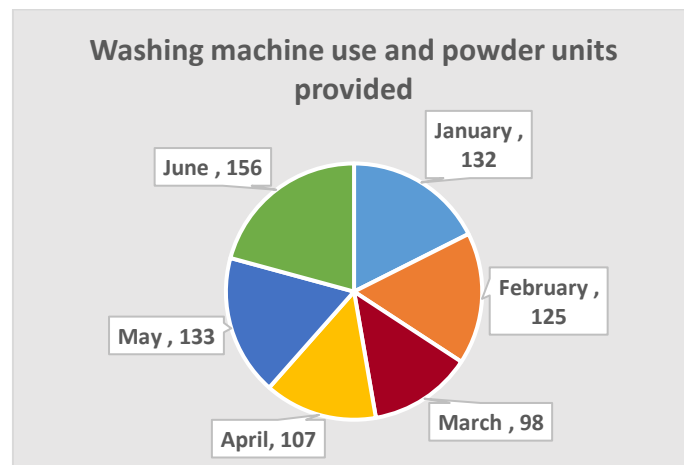
For those clients who cannot provide a gold coin donation, they are provided with an opportunity to earn a lunch token to use in lieu of a coin. The following represents the number of tokens given out to those in need.





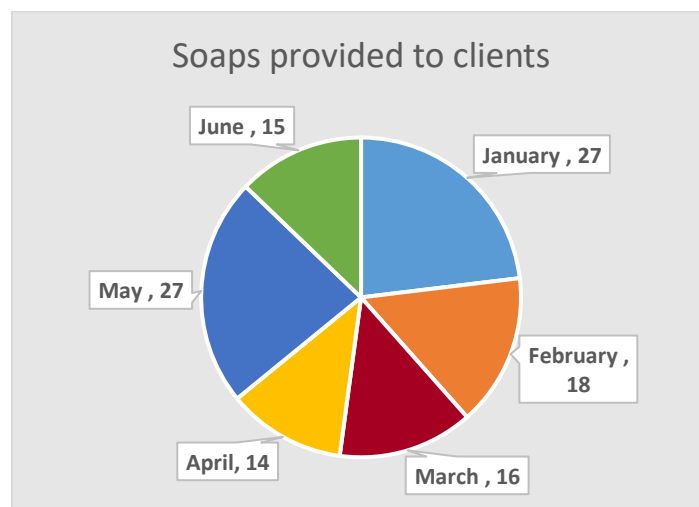
### Clothes Washing Facility

The Drop-in Centre provides the use of free washing facilities with access to free washing powder. A total of 751 washing loads are recorded to have been completed in the last 6 months of the financial year. This was calculated upon the units of washing powder provided to clients. This represents an average of 6 loads per day, or 125 per month.



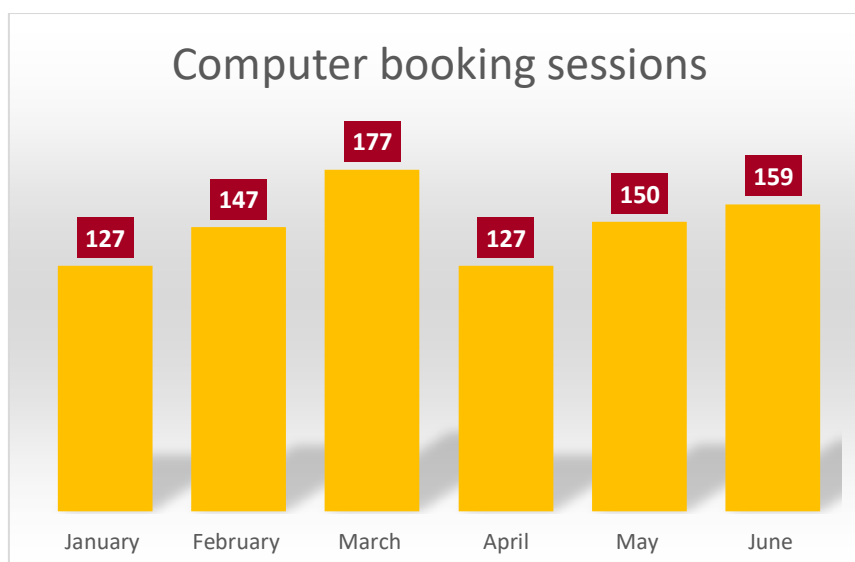
### Shower Facilities

A total of 117 bars of soap was provided to clients to use within the program's free shower facilities.



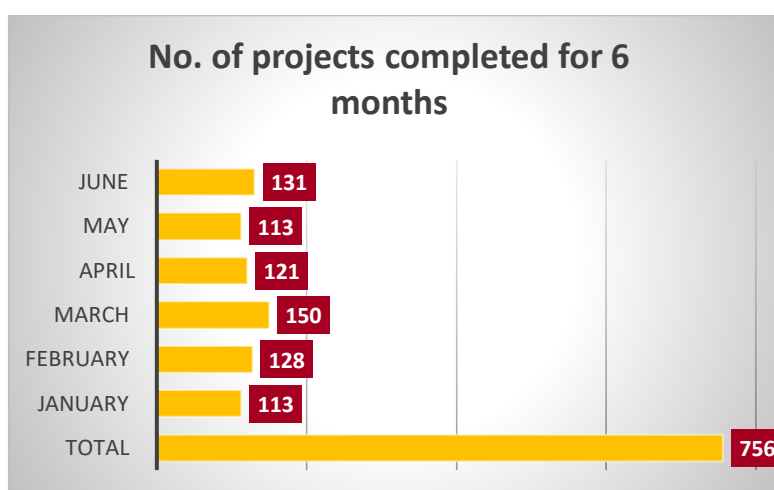
### Computer Use Bookings

The Drop-in Centre has free computer facilities for use by clients. A total of 887 computer sessions were booked by centre clients. This calculates to 7 individual computer sessions or people using this Centre facility per day. This is approximately 148 computer sessions per month.

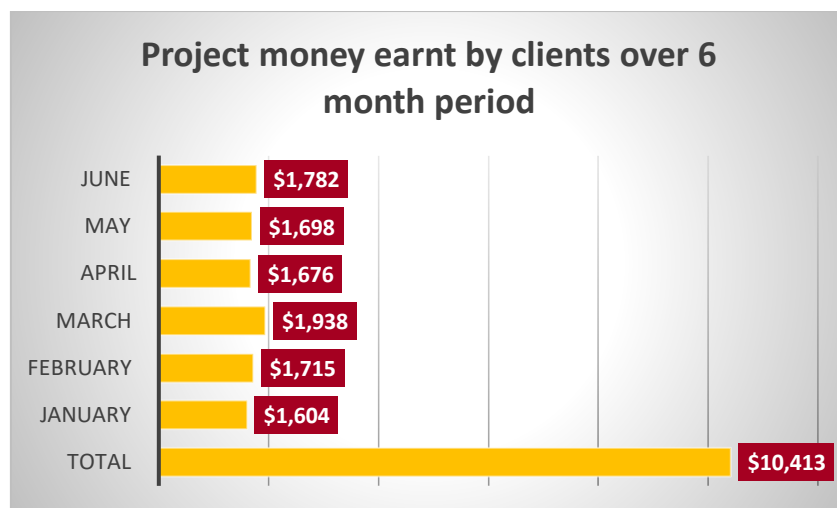


#### Projects & Project Payments

A total of 756 projects were completed by clients in the first 6 months of 2018. This is an average of 6 people completing projects per day.

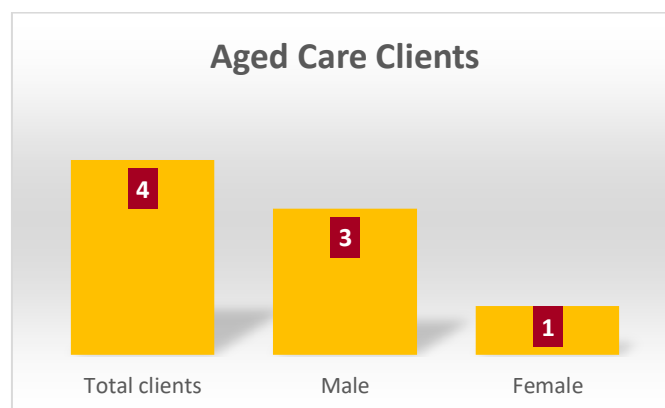


The total projects costs for the first 6 months of the year was \$10, 413, or \$83 dollars per day. This equated to approximately \$14 earned per person per project completed. A client wanting to earn the total amount allowable by Centrelink of \$60 per week could complete approximately 3 projects per week.

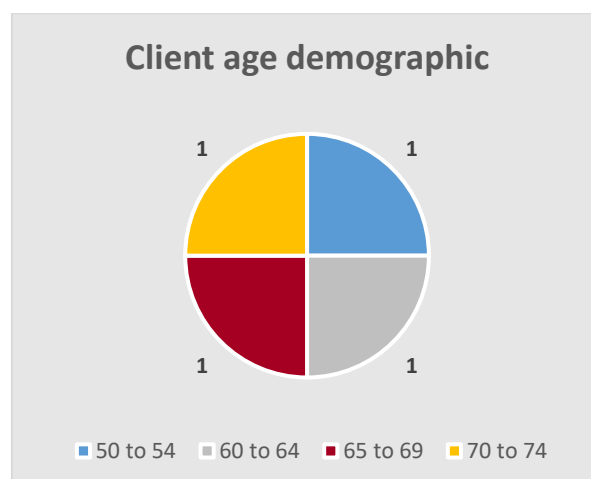


#### Aged Care Services – Commonwealth Home Support Programme

The Drop-in Centre assisted a total of 4 aged care clients for the first 6 months of 2018. Three of these clients are male and 1 was female.



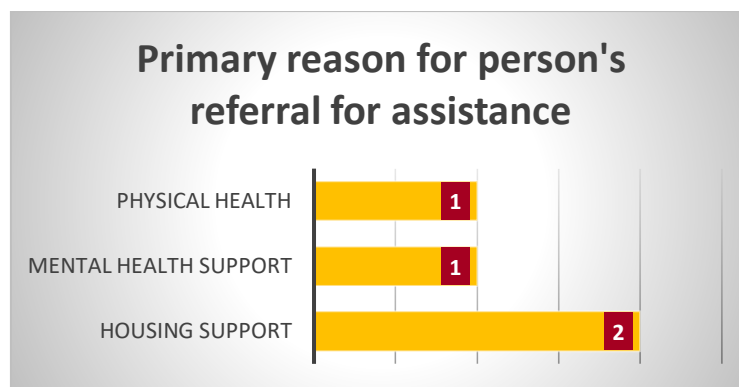
The clients aged in range from 50 years to 74 years of age.



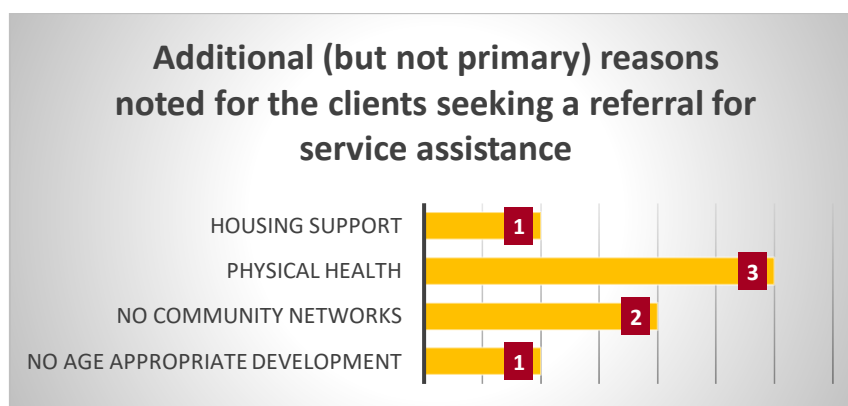
With regard to additional demographics the following was identified;

- No clients were from a CALD background.
- 1 client was born in England while 3 were born in Australia.
- 1 client identified as Torres Strait Islander, 2 as non-indigenous and 1 client's cultural status was not stated.

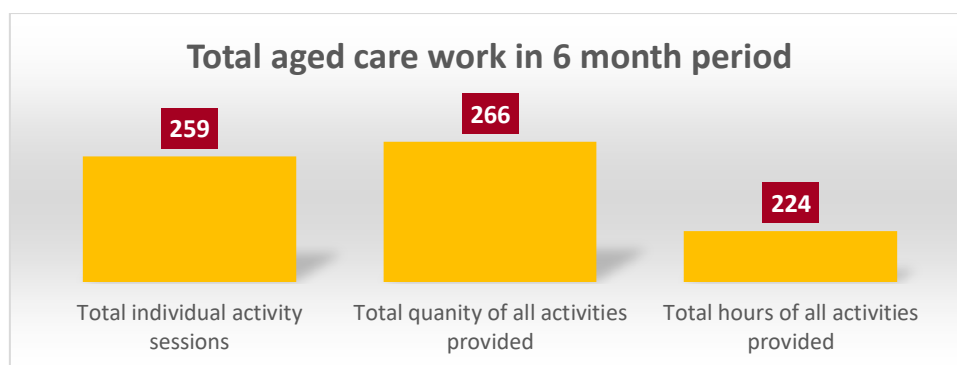
In looking at the reason for referral to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme services provided by the Drop-in Centre it was noted that the primary reasons for referral were for housing support, mental health support or physical health support.



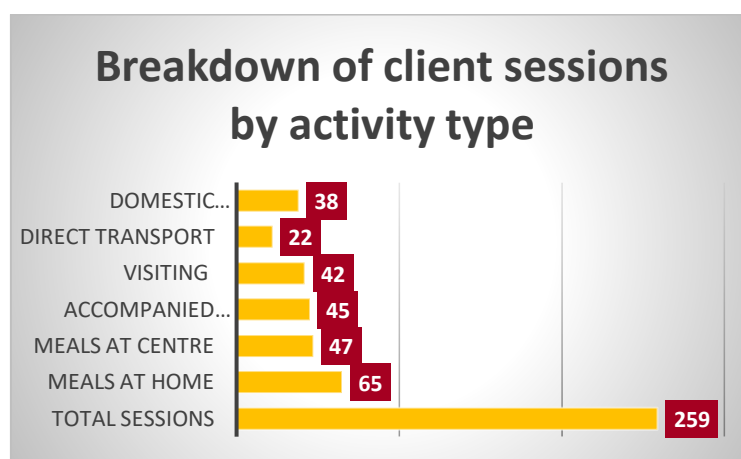
Secondary or additional reasons recorded for referring the clients were noted to be housing support, physical health, no community networks, and due to having no age appropriate development.



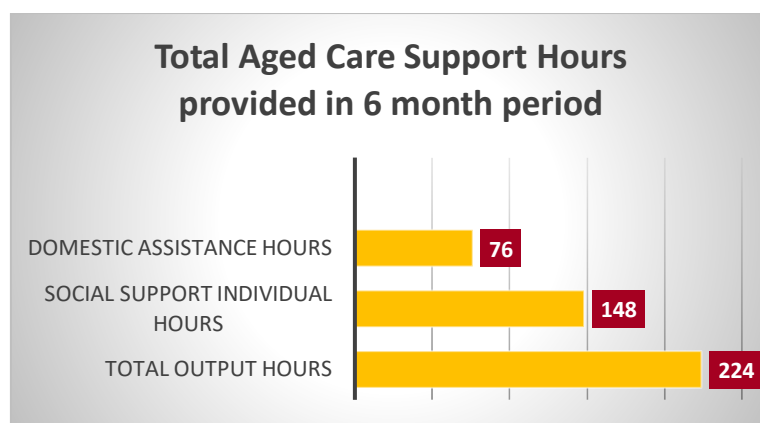
The Drop-in Centre completed a total of 259 individual activity sessions with or for their aged care clients. This totalled 266 activities to a total of 224 hours.



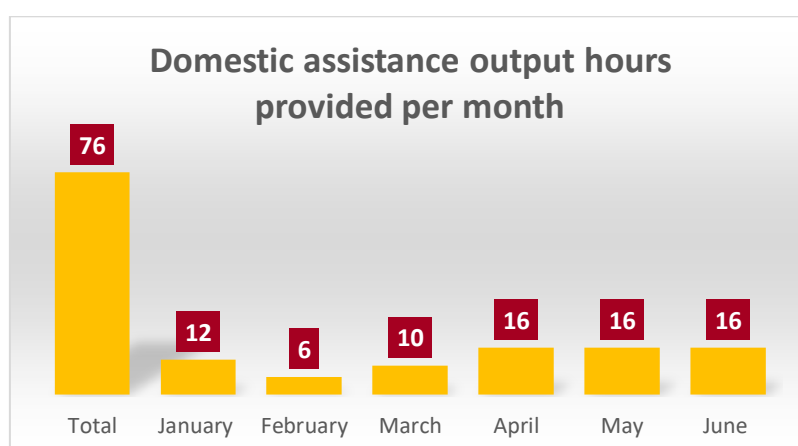
Of the 259 total activity sessions that occurred the following is a breakdown of the specific activity types by session numbers.



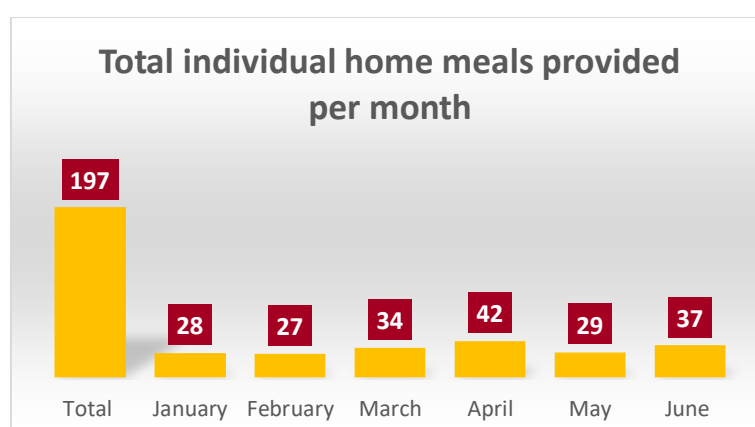
The hours of work are counted within two broad categories, domestic assistance or social support individual hours. The social support hours encompass such activities as visiting, phone contact and accompanied activities. These hours are;



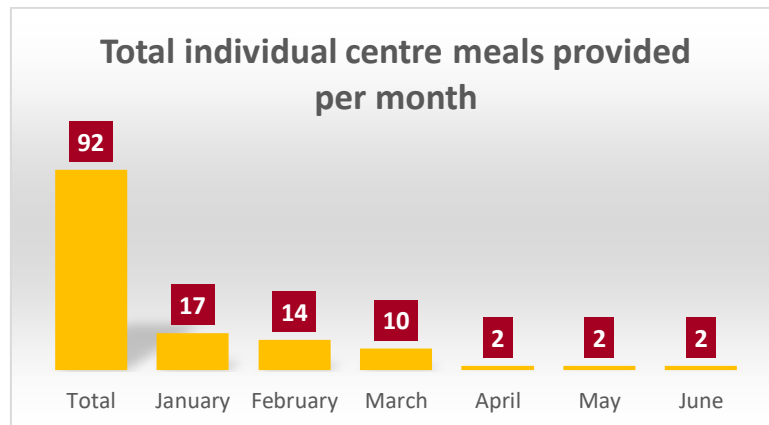
With regard to the domestic assistance provided, output hours for the six month period were;



Home meal support totalled 197 individual meals being provided to the client's home.



With regard to centre based meals provided to aged care clients, a total of 92 centre based meals were provided in the 6 month period.



## Althea Projects Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Report

This year has seen Althea take part in many different events in honor of our RAP, NAIDOC and many other significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural days. With over 37% of Althea Projects clients identifying as either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, it was crucial that Althea supported them appropriately by having our RAP as a guiding tool, as well as our Indigenous staff's input.

### Wee Care NAIDOC

In celebration of NAIDOC Week our workers and the children at Wee Care created some beautiful artwork.



### The Drop IN Centre's NAIDOC



### Lena's Award for NAIDOC

During Althea's NAIDOC celebrations, Lena Watego from Shared Family Care received a NAIDOC Award from Life Without Barriers for her continuous hard work on the Transition to Independence Hope & Healing Camps. In the photo with Lena is Anne, Fred, Belinda and Trudy. All the fabulous people involved in the camps. Congratulations to all.



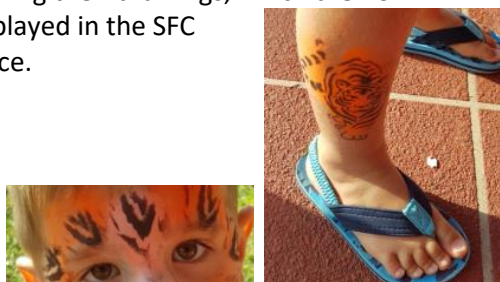
The Townsville Drop-in Centre, with assistance from Angela, Eddie Albert and Family, the Anglicare team and the Althea crew, put together a NAIDOC Celebration that included traditional foods, artwork on display, and some live singing. It was a great success.





### SNAICC Children's Day

Shared Family Case celebrated the SNAICC Children's day at Rossiter Park, Aitkenvale this year which was a lovely afternoon. Carers attended with their children and participated in the activities SFC provided. These included feeding the ducks, turtles and other wildlife from the platoon, participating in getting their faces, arms and legs painted by Sue from Amusements Plus, followed by showing Katisha and Lena their artistic abilities by etching their drawings, which are now displayed in the SFC office.



### Palm Island Spring Festival

Three of our Shared Family Care staff had the opportunity to attend the Palm Island Spring Festival with a total of twenty-five children and a couple of carers. The ferry ride over saw just how excited the children were to be able to be back on country for a special event, being that it was also the 100 years anniversary of the Festival. The Centenary program consisted of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dancers, Cook Island Dancing, singing, a comedian, a slideshow presentation and a number of speeches.



### Family Fun Day NAIDOC

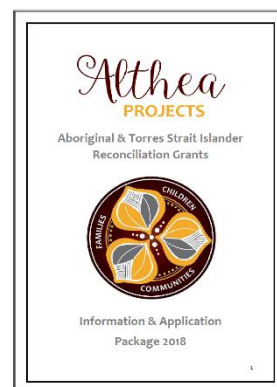
The Shared Family team attended the NAIDOC Family Fun Day at Riverway. There was a stall which provided all information about the programs, as well as a face painter that had children lined up for a turn. The day provided the mass crowd with traditional food, dancing, and a bunch of activities that all the families got to enjoy.



### Reconciliation Grant

This year Althea launched its first ever Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Grants. Set at \$10,000 per year, Althea put in place two rounds where applications are open. Open to any age, being that the applicants identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, Althea's aim was to provide assistance with items like;

- Text Books for University
- Sporting Cost
- Uniforms or equipment required for traineeships
- School Activities and etc.



## Partnerships & Supporters

4TO FM  
Aboriginal Women's Shelter - Flora House  
Adspeak Marketing  
Aitkenvale Seventh Day Adventist Church Youth Group  
Alannah and Madeline Foundation  
Anglicare  
Annandale Christian School  
APEX  
Aurizon  
Australian Government-Dept of Social Services  
Australian Government-Dept of Health & Ageing  
Backpacks 4 Aussie Kids Inc  
B-Fitt  
Baia da  
Bendigo Bank  
Bid Food  
Billabong Sanctuary  
BWS Willows  
Café Bambini Fairfield Waters  
Café 1939, Townsville Airport  
Captains Lounge Café, Townsville Airport  
Carmichael Ford  
Cathedral School of St Anne & St James  
CBC Staff  
Centacare Townsville  
Centrelink (Townville Cyclones Social Club)  
Child and Mental Health Services  
Chunky Pies  
Churches of Christ Pathways Fostering Service  
Click Clack Knitting Group  
Coast 2 Country Housing Company  
Coke  
Core Developments  
Crowe Horwath  
CWA Country Women's Association  
Daily Grindz  
Danielle Josey  
Drug Arm Australasia  
Emanate Legal  
Families of Townsville  
Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville  
Fat Dogz Coffee  
Fibres & Fabrics  
Food Relief NQ  
Food Rescue  
Fortel Communication Pty Ltd  
Foster Care Queensland  
Townsville Bulletin Castle Club  
Fresh Selections  
Get Branded  
Grant Broadcasters  
Grill'd Restaurant, Townsville  
Harro's Fuel Services  
IAC Wholesalers  
IGA Magnetic Island & Bushland Beach  
IGA Tully & Clermont  
IGA Domain  
IGA Charity Golf Day Partners  
Ignatius Park College  
Inner Wheel Club of TSV  
Intersport Warehouse  
James Cook University  
JJ Richards  
Life Without Barriers  
Lions Club City of Townsville  
Lotsa Printing Pty Ltd  
Mercedes Benz Townsville  
Mercy Family & Child Connect  
MYER  
Nth Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service  
Pickering's Motors Townsville  
Pyjama Foundation  
QCWA Tsv Branch  
Qld Dept of Communities, Disability Services & Seniors  
Qld Dept of Child Safety, Youth & Women  
Qld Housing & Public Works  
Qld Youth Services  
Quota International  
Red Cross  
Reef HQ  
Relationships Australia  
Richard Kelly Automotive  
Seaview Hotel  
Second Bite  
Sera's Women's Shelter  
Share the Dignity  
Sharp Solutions  
Sk8way  
Southside Milk Supplies  
Steve Price  
Strand Café, Townsville Airport  
Sun City Trees  
The Alannah and Madeline Foundation  
The Balcony Restaurant  
The Townsville Hospital  
TORGAS  
TSV Aboriginal & Islanders Health Services

Townsville City Council  
 Townsville Drop-In Centre  
 Townsville Smark Centre, Centrelink  
 Townsville State High School  
 Townsville Tidy Bags  
 Tropical Ice  
 Undees for Kids  
 VARIETY—The Children’s Charity  
 Vicki Sim  
 Wellspring Chiropractic

Zambrero Stores  
 Cannon Park  
 Willows Shopping Centre  
 Castletown  
 Thuringowa  
 Domain Central  
 Flinders Street  
 Stockland Centre – Aitkenvale  
 Townsville City  
 Medilink

## Management Committee

President	Mary Wallace
Secretary	Ann Campbell
Treasurer	Maryanne Hamilton
Member	Debra Miles
Member	Donna Jackson
Member	Ruth Stainbrook

## Staff

### Corporate Team

CEO	Mandy Thompson
Program Manager	Lynne Josey
Program Manager	Teresa Smith
Centre Manager	Peta Anderson
Quality Manager	Kelli-ann May
Finance & HR Manager	Lesley Thorne
Executive Assistant	Deborah Barrett
Contract Fundraising Coordinator	Noemi Mintern

### Shared Family Care Team

Team Leader	Justin Pascoe
Aboriginal & Torres Strait	Lena Watego
Islander Case Worker	
Senior Practitioner	Jenny Spiers
Family Case Worker	vacant
Family Case Worker	Ainslee Tirendi
Family Case Worker	Beverly Barry
Family Case Worker	Christopher Sweet
Family Case Worker	Vicki Cress
Family Case Worker	vacant
Administration	Katisha Skeene

#### Wee Care Residential Team

Direct Care Worker	Suzanne Clayden
Direct Care Worker	Barbara Lippett
Direct Care Worker	Rhonda Hood
Direct Care Worker	Margaret Forrest
Direct Care Worker	Ann Marie Dawson
Direct Care Worker	Simone Kossendey
Direct Care Worker	Patricia Steep
Direct Care Worker	Angela Colyer
Direct Care Worker	Julie-Ann Gordy
Direct Care Worker	Kristy Livock
Direct Care Worker	Tina Stankovich
Direct Care Worker	Charmaine Blyth
Direct Care Worker	Toni Irish
Administration	Llian Flynn
Volunteer	Lorraine Price
Volunteer	Michael Muhling
Volunteer	Amandeep Kaur

#### Townsville Drop In Centre Team

Community Worker	Daniel Hegarty
Community Worker	Ronald Shirley
Community Worker	Veronica Van Mierlo

#### Students

Mikayla Johnstone