

A

year

in

review



Advocating with young  
people and helping them  
feel better.

2023/2024



**REACHOUT**

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This report covers the period 1 October 2023 – 30 September 2024.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present. We recognise connection to Country as integral to health and wellbeing.

We also acknowledge people with living-and lived-experience of mental ill-health and recovery, along with their carers, families, and supporters. We value the courage of those who share their unique perspectives for the purpose of learning and growing together to achieve better outcomes for all. We recognise their vital contribution to the sector and to the development of ReachOut's service.





# A message from the Chair and CEO

The last few years have been marked by significant change, not only for ReachOut but the young people we exist to support. We've witnessed uncertain economic conditions (both for young people and the not for profits that serve them), shifts in the social, cultural and political landscape and the rapid advancement of technology, all of which intersect to shape the futures of young people in Australia.

Amidst this change, one thing remains constant: the need for accessible mental health support. Young people continue to face an unprecedented set of challenges, unlike any other generation before them.



Against this backdrop, we have simplified our strategy and leaned in even further in our use of new technology (with safety and impact front of mind).



We've doubled down on our core services: We've grown our **PeerChat team** from 3 peer workers in 2022, to 20 in 2024.



We've revamped our **Parents Coaching Service** (and brought our out-of-hours Online Community operation in-house).



We've continued our commitment to the mental health of **First Nations young people** by sharing our social and emotional wellbeing resources with First Nations-led organisations and communities.



We've stayed at the forefront of technology by launching the first, Australian, **AI-driven tool**, which allows young people to express their mental health needs in their own words, ultimately simplifying pathways to support.

We know that young people want always-on, non-clinical channels of support that deliver immediate relief in a safe, non-judgemental and stigma-free online space – 76 per cent of PeerChat's users have told us the support they received from a peer worker helped them feel better. With this in mind, we are evolving the platform so that a wider audience can access our services.

This meaningful and sustained focus on our core services has deepened our impact. **In the last 12 months, 2.5 million people turned to our services for mental health and wellbeing support.** We know that of these people, many of them truly need our support, with more than two in five (43%) young people who have used our services in the past 12 months fitting the criteria for having a 'probable mental illness'. Additionally, 60 per cent of young people using our services have told us they can't afford to get professional help, even if they wanted to.

Alongside these core services, over the last 12 months we have also identified and pursued a second critical goal – to explore new service delivery models, projects and programs that help us better support young people.

For more than 25 years, we've been supporting young people with their mental health and wellbeing. A key part of our work involves sharing our expertise, research and the lived experiences of young people with policy makers to shape mental health policies. This year, we launched our first ever Youth Advocacy Program. The program has been designed to support young people to have a seat at the table to help shape the mental health services and policies that impact their lives. In 2024, ReachOut's Youth Advocates have taken research and policy recommendations to Canberra on issues such as cost of living and young people's demands for improved safety on social media.



We also know that young people's expectations of services and the platforms they use are constantly evolving. Technologies like AI are creating hyper-personalised experiences and these changes are reshaping how young people interact with products, services and the world around them. To continue meeting young people where they are and deliver support that meets their expectations, we've worked in collaboration with young people to prototype new service delivery models.

This is an area we're really excited to scale in the coming years. As technology evolves, and with it young people's expectations, it's critical for the sector to keep evolving too. And while there are inherent risks in leveraging new technologies, with safety top-of-mind we believe these tools have the power to help us meet a crucial need.

This year has been marked by milestones. We scaled up existing services, launched new programs and identified new opportunities for future growth to help us support more young people across Australia.

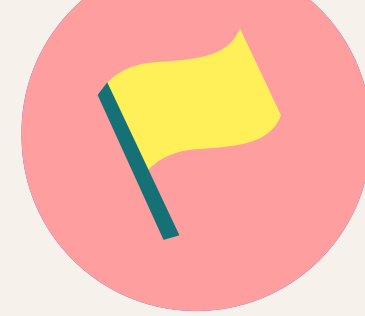
As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with a sense of accomplishment and excitement for what is to come. We would like to thank all those who have supported ReachOut over the past year. A special thank you to our former CEO, Ashley de Silva, and board members, Emma Hogan and Brendan Thomas who played such an important role in ReachOut's history and did so much to set us up for this next stage in our journey. To our Youth Ambassadors and Advocates, volunteers, partners, board members and our team, a big thank you. Mental health is complex and no role is too small in this collective effort to drive change. Your contributions are invaluable to the work we do.

We look forward to working with you to grow ReachOut's impact in 2025.

**Gary Groves**  
CEO, ReachOut Australia

**Michael Gonski**  
Chair, ReachOut Australia

A message  
from Layla,  
a ReachOut Youth  
Advocate



Young people today face a multitude of challenges.

As a young person, I understand firsthand how navigating these challenges can impact your wellbeing. One in four young people are experiencing a mental health issue, yet many are not seeking support.

The need for youth mental health services is more crucial than ever. But unfortunately, support services are under-resourced and don't always meet the unique needs of young people like myself.

There is a growing need to involve young people in decision-making to ensure that policies and services meet our needs. For far too long, policies that directly impact our mental health and wellbeing have been developed about us and without us, despite our generation facing issues that differ significantly from those of the past. ReachOut, however, is working to break down these barriers.

Over the past year, I have witnessed ReachOut's commitment to giving young people a say in decision-making processes through the organisation's newly established Youth Advocacy Program.

In November 2023, I had the immense pleasure of being appointed a Youth Advocate, alongside other passionate young people from across the country. The ReachOut Youth Advocates come from diverse backgrounds and all walks of life, bringing a variety of perspectives, lived experiences and unique insights to the group.

ReachOut's Youth Advocacy Program has been designed to support young people in having their say in shaping the mental health services and policies that impact our lives.





Working as a group, we focused our efforts on three key priority areas: the rising cost of living, social media, and access to mental health support. Together, we collaborated on government submissions that advocated for better policy solutions, took our message to the media to raise awareness about young people's needs, and participated in sector and industry-based events at Parliament House.

Through this program, I have met a range of people, from politicians and mental health experts, to other young people passionate about youth mental health and policy reform. What I have learned during this time is that there are individuals who want to listen to young people, and that our voices do have value and can incite change.

I am grateful to ReachOut for the opportunity to share my perspectives and am thankful to ReachOut's donors, supporters, and the broader community for standing alongside us.

I am incredibly proud of all we've achieved this year, understanding that there's always more to be done.

I look forward to continuing my work with the advocacy team in the coming year to broaden our perspectives and particularly address the concern regarding access to mental health support.

ReachOut's Youth Advocates play a key role. We provide a voice for young people in the political sphere to ensure that support services reflect our unique needs in the current environment. As a team, we can and

will continue to prioritise the voices of young people across Australia and be a catalyst for change.

Young people are more than the future, we are the present.

**Layla Wang**  
**Youth Advocate, ReachOut Australia**

# 2023/2024 Year in review

## We helped young people feel better.

- Our site and social media content delivered important mental health literacy and self-help information to young people.
  - 8 in 10 young people told us that ReachOut's social media posts contain good advice about wellbeing and dealing with mental health challenges.
  - Almost 7 in 10 (68%) told us it helped them get a better idea of where to get mental health support.
- 3 in 4 young people using our Online Community told us it helped them feel less alone in their experience.
- We also published ReachOut's first Social Impact Report 2022–23 to demonstrate the value of our services to young people, and those who support them.



## We reached young people, parents and carers, and secondary schools across Australia. Our tools and support gave young people effective self-help strategies that helped improve their mental health, reduce suicide risk and increase help-seeking behaviour.

- 2,169,911 unique Australian visitors to ReachOut's service for young people
- 456,584 unique Australian visitors to ReachOut Parents
- 101,939 unique Australian visitors to ReachOut Schools.

### Our PeerChat team expanded to support even more young people.

- We grew the PeerChat team from 3 peer workers in 2022 to 20 in 2024, across two teams with two team leaders.
- We delivered 2035 sessions, with 76% of young people letting us know they felt better after their chat with a peer worker.

We also embarked on an evaluation of our PeerChat service to better understand the difference ReachOut makes to service users and help develop the service into the future.



### Young people, and parents and carers, were able to chat anonymously and help one another.

- Our Online Community was a safe space for 311,677 young people to connect with and support each other.
- We connected more than 217,000 parents and carers to others in similar situations for solutions and support.
- We worked with The Benevolent Society to provide 769 personalised coaching sessions to parents and carers of teens going through mental health and life challenges. Users reported they felt more confident about parenting, and had improved understanding of, and communication with their teen.

*'I was at a really low point and it felt amazing knowing at any time I could chat to someone... he understood and made it easy for me. We need more programs like [PeerChat]. Thank you for getting me through a hard time. I'm still in it, but you guys made a difference and to think you help others like myself is even more amazing.'*

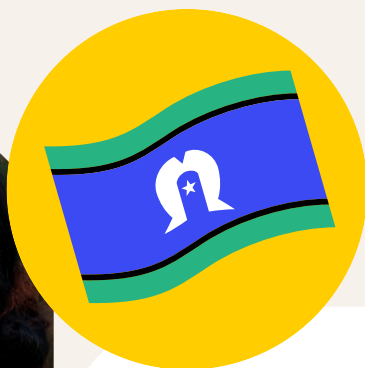
*'The sessions have allowed us both as parents to be on the same page and be able to support each other. We feel like more of a team, and our teen has seen and appreciates this. The sessions have helped us to understand our daughter better and have changed our perspective on what is going on for her.'*

**Parent and Carers Coaching users, Sept 2023**

*'Thank you so so much for the encouragement, sympathy and kind words on my last post, this is genuinely the best community I've been in and have never felt so safe.'*

**Youth Online Community member, May 2024**





### Social and Emotional Wellbeing support for First Nations communities.

- This year we continued to build our relationship with First Nations content creators and agency Studio Gilay. We produced eight new content pieces to help relieve study stress for both First Nations young people, and their parents and carers. This involved collaborating with three First Nations young people to share their stories about how they managed their stress during the transition from school to higher education or work.
- We promoted our Social and Emotional Wellbeing work this year by attending national mental health conferences. This enabled us to connect with services like The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and the Deputy Commissioner Office of the National Rural Health Commission.



*'Mental health is a topic close to my heart and life as a proud Koori. Our communities are not just fighting for a future, but making sure our young people have the support to get to enjoy that future. Working with ReachOut in the last year has given me the opportunity to speak to my passion and create accessible resources. I feel that ReachOut values the culture and lived experience of collaborators, leading to even more dynamic and relevant content that prioritises the wellbeing of our communities.'*

**Phoebe McIlwraith, Bundjalung and Worimi woman, creative writer and journalist**

**We focused on the topics and issues that are having the biggest impact on young people.**

- We heard from more than 3000 young people on topics such as social media, study stress and the current cost of living crisis. This research helped to amplify the voice of young people in Parliamentary submissions and broader public debates.
- We worked with over 30 young people in designing and reviewing our content.
- We created new content around romantic relationships in response to insights from PeerChat that saw a large portion of users come to the service for support on that topic.
- We produced social-first content to respond to global events around collective distress.

We refreshed our entire suite of exam and study stress content, focusing on practical tips to help young people cope when school gets overwhelming.

**We advocated for better outcomes for young people. This included three government submissions:**

- Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Social Media and Australian Society by ReachOut's Youth Advocates (August 2024)
- Inquiry into Social Media Impacts on Australian society. Collaborative submission from ReachOut, Beyond Blue and Black Dog Institute (July 2024)
- Submission to the Select Committee on Cost of Living by ReachOut's Youth Advocates (March 2024)
- We also launched a new Youth Advocacy Program which included:
  - ten ReachOut Youth Advocates onboarded
  - one in-person workshop
  - two trips to Canberra to meet with MPs and Senators
  - two Youth Advocate submissions to federal policy processes
  - five media opportunities across the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC Radio Canberra, 6 News Australia, The Briefing Podcast and community radio interviews.





**We were recognised for our work and spoke at several events to build our reputation.**

- Finalist in the Fundraising Excellence of the Year category at the Third Sector Awards for Laps for Life.
- Highly Commended in the Mental Health Promotion or Mental Illness Prevention category at TheMHS Awards for PeerChat.
- Runner-up in the 'Innovation in Social Impact Measurement' category at the SIMNA Awards for our Social Impact Framework (2023).
- Indigenous Wellbeing Conference 2023
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference 2024
- National Suicide Prevention Conference 2024
- The 7th Annual Social and Emotional Wellbeing Forum 2024
- TheMHS Conference 2024
- eMHIC's Digital Mental Health International Congress 2024
- Digital Childhoods Summit 2024

**We supported our users when they needed us most.**

- On ReachOut.com, our 'Urgent Help' page was viewed almost 24,000 times and over 3700 users engaged with 'How to make a [suicide] safety plan'.
- We responded to 1158 duty-of-care instances across our services to ensure that users were safe, and to connect them with urgent support when needed.

*'I feel hopeful and supported. I feel I have a safe place to confide in and I can come here before resorting to harmful means. I can use these strategies and overcome challenges which previously, I wouldn't have had the right tools for.'*



**We completed several strategic initiatives to transform our user experience and technology stack.**

- A content migration and new website allowed us to transition from a static content experience and enable personalisation on scale.
- A new coaching platform enabled us to meet the evolved expectations of parents and carers, and give coaches the flexibility to deliver the service at its best.
- We improved our security stance by decommissioning outdated hardware and software, reviewing our product and application footprint, and implementing security scanning on our codebases and infrastructure.
- We invested heavily in automation and testing to maintain high quality and minimise manual time spent testing releases.
- An up-to-date technology stack and improved processes have also allowed us to provide innovative new service experiences.
  - Experiments with on-demand PeerChat sessions, and Generative AI and content, have been explored to increase user engagement and impact, and to keep up with the digital expectations of young people.



**We met young people, and their parents and carers, where they are by:**

- supporting the gaming community through a brand new event *ReachOut, Level Up*
- raising awareness of ReachOut through our partnership with Doritos, who has permanently put our logo on the back of all of their chip packets
- partnering with Meta to explore how we can provide accessible and expert resources to parents and carers.

**We empowered the broader community to take care of themselves while also supporting young people.**

We grew our community of mental health advocates and supporters to 68,820 through *Laps for Life*, *Make a Move* and our newest event *ReachOut, Level Up*, where we reached new audiences and built a new presence in the gaming space. These events give our community the opportunity to do something for their own wellbeing while also raising money to support young people.

‘I was so incredibly proud of myself. I had advocated for myself and had fought the fight and won.’



I was in Year 9 when I needed foot surgery. I came back to school after being away for eight weeks on crutches and in these UGLY shoes and suddenly everything had changed. I didn't really fit in with my friendship group anymore. It felt like they didn't want me and I felt really lonely and isolated.

The next few years are a bit hazy. I was sleeping all day, not eating much, not leaving the house and I missed months of school because I couldn't get out of bed. I was crying all the time and just felt really awful. School took a bit of a back seat, so I also fell behind which did me no favours as my final year of school was 2020 (dare I say more).

Not much of that year was at school physically, however when I was in face-to-face classes, I wasn't really mentally present, so I'd never take in much. I started to get overwhelmed and overthink everything. This made me feel really anxious and stressed which led to panic attacks and major freak outs, sometimes in class. The year dragged on and then it came to exam time... Oh did you think it couldn't get any worse? Think again.

Have you ever heard of Functional Neurological Disorder? Yeah, neither had I. I still don't really completely understand it, but according to Dr Google it's 'a neurological condition caused by changes in how brain networks work, rather than changes in the structure of the brain itself'. Basically, my anxieties and stress had rewired my brain which led me to having weakness in my legs and loss of bladder control.

I was in and out of the hospital for a few weeks with urologist and physio appointments, so this became my main priority. I was really



letting myself rest and recover, however the exams were looming in the back of my mind. I was in this weird space of having exams in a month but having no energy and barely even being able to walk by myself.

When I returned to school all of my teachers and wellbeing staff were fantastic about getting me back on track. My coordinators were pretty set on me not doing my exams. The stress sent me to hospital, so why would I make myself do something stressful again, right? Wrong. I didn't come all this way to not come out the other side with something to show for it. I honestly felt like it would be like me giving up and giving in to the pressure if I didn't sit the exams, so I really fought for myself. I did some research on types of special considerations that the VCE people offer and filled out

all of the forms with letters from my doctors advocating for me. I got to sit in my own room and be able to leave the exam when I was finished so I didn't have to sit with the stress of overthinking every question and my answer.

This is why it is SO important to listen to young people. We know what we need! My teachers were all a bit worried, which looking back, makes total sense, but at the time it felt like they weren't listening to me. However, I pushed and got my way. After all of my exams were done, it was like a switch flipped and a giant weight was lifted off my shoulders. I was so incredibly proud of myself. I had advocated for myself and had fought the fight and won. My final marks were pretty average but I didn't care because I made it to the end.

I still have bad days here and there, but it just helps me treasure my good days. I just got engaged and bought a house and I have a job that I love. When I look back on how far I've come, I see it as growth. I couldn't get out of bed 75 per cent of the time and now I'm going for a walk every day! It might not seem like much, but I'm so incredibly proud of myself and I think anyone else who is fighting the fight should be so proud of themselves too.

If there's one thing I'd love you to take away from my story, it's this – listen to young people. Right now, more than ever, we need people to listen because there are too many young people struggling in silence.



# Maybelline: Brave together



Globally, and in partnership with our community of mental health experts, Maybelline New York developed Brave Together, an initiative to support everyone experiencing anxiety and depression. Our universal mission is to help destigmatise mental health, offering access to free one-to-one support so no one has to struggle alone.

Together we've been able to reach Gen Z and Australian youth audiences where they are, within the gaming community and universities.

Following the success of our first-of-its-kind gaming campaign in 2024, 'Through Their Eyes,' the 'Under the Avatar' campaign was born. Commissioned research shows a staggering 76 per cent of female-identifying gamers have experienced or observed harassment or offensive behaviour whilst online gaming, and 71 per cent of male gamers who witness abuse in gaming just ignored it. The locally developed two-minute film encourages male players to change the game and speak up, whilst directing those who've experienced abuse to ReachOut.

Our B.R.A.V.E Talk training developed globally and adapted locally with ReachOut has seen us activate in universities across New South Wales and Victoria, educating students on how to safely support a friend or family member in need and empowering them to be brave.

Maybelline New York are thrilled to continue purpose-driven work within the Gen Z and youth community with ReachOut.

**Melanie Bower,**  
**Marketing Director, Maybelline New York Australia & New Zealand**

# A community of mental health champions



Not only do our events raise funds to support youth mental health, they also raise awareness. They create more opportunities for meaningful conversation around wellbeing within the community.

Creating safe spaces for participants to connect with each other helps foster an environment of mental health champions. Supporters are able to initiate conversations about mental health and the impact of suicide within the community, and also be more open to having safe conversations within their own networks – with family and friends, at work, and in school. In 2024 we celebrated the sixth anniversary of *Laps for Life* and had the largest turnout we have seen – with more than 10,500 swimmers across Australia participating in the event. We also launched a new event – *ReachOut, Level Up*: a week-long charity livestream gaming event where participants raised awareness of our services and youth mental health. It was wonderful to be able to connect with a new community and see safe conversations happening online during this event.

Throughout FY24, our community has also come together to organise their own events to raise funds and awareness of youth mental health. From raising funds for ReachOut through bikepacking in Europe, walking the Pacific Crest Trail, or running the New York City Marathon, to community choirs, charity walks, charity livestreams, and bake sales.

We recognised some familiar faces and also got to introduce a lot of new people to the ReachOut community. From everyone at ReachOut we would like to extend a huge thank you to the amazing communities and individuals supporting all our events and making an incredible difference in providing better mental health and wellbeing support to all young people.



## SAS



‘Human connections are what helps me find the light in days when light doesn’t seem possible.’

## STORY

I always had a happy childhood. There isn't anything I could say I was super upset about which is why, when I got to high school and suddenly for no good reason I wasn't okay, it was a shock.

Being exposed to social media at a young age came with its difficulties. I struggled a lot with body image and my healthy body was now never enough. There wasn't a single thing I could do to become these perfect people I saw online – they never really existed in the first place, they were just a picture-perfect portrayal of somebody's imperfect life. I didn't know that though. At that age everything felt so real. Every little emotion was blown out of proportion. I never felt I was enough without knowing exactly why. I was feeling so many things and I had no idea how to deal with them.

Eventually, my parents found out what was happening to me and they were able to get me help.

Being diagnosed felt like a breath of fresh air. Finally, there was an answer to why I felt the way I did. Why I struggled so much at school and socially. The diagnosis didn't take those feelings away though, and it's taken me a long time to fully understand my brain.

I think my mental health was slowly declining. By now I was in Year 12 and I was a teen living in a global pandemic, so I was struggling with the stress of HSC, not having a group of friends around me and missing out on what was supposed to be the most fun year of high school.

I didn't have many real-life friends. I hated my life, and when you hate your body and your life, you start to hate everything about





yourself. When you are filled with so much hate it's hard to find love for anything, let alone love for the life you're living.

Throughout my life, I have felt alone and isolated. Resources like ReachOut help people like me to better understand ourselves and feel less alone in what we're going through.

Recovery was far from easy, or fast. It was a journey that I feel I'm still on. I reached out to close friends and family and they helped me get the support I needed. I started to go to therapy and gained a better understanding of what was happening in my head.

I discovered little things that could help me cope – I love to bake, create art and run. I surrounded myself with incredible people who love and support me still.

One of the biggest things that helped me understand myself and how to handle life was connection – whether that was a conversation with a friend over coffee, a late-night chat about the meaning of life with my father, or just a smile from a stranger when I was having a bad day. Human connections are what helps me find light in the days when light doesn't seem possible.

I'm pleased to say I'm now in a great place. I don't face a lot of challenges but I know I have the resources to get through them and I'm extremely grateful for every person who has helped me get to this point.

EY:

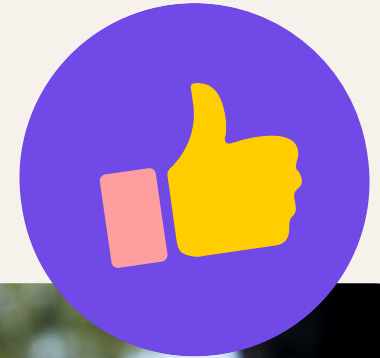
Supporting us

for more

than a decade

EY Australia is proud to have supported ReachOut as a national focus charity since 2012. Our collaborative relationship has continued to evolve and this year included EY and employee donations, fundraising, pro bono professional services, joint research reports and volunteering. ReachOut's vision of better mental health and wellbeing for all young people is one that resonates with EY and our people, and aligns to the EY purpose of building a better working world.

**Mathew Nelson,**  
**EY Regional Chief Sustainability Officer, Oceania**





# Partnering for change, support and innovation



ReachOut is proud to partner with a wide range of organisations who champion ReachOut's mission to provide better mental health for all young people. Our network and community of partners including corporate organisations as well as trusts and foundations, support ReachOut's innovation and growth, allowing us to continue to meet more young people where they are and harness the power of technology to provide positive impact and change.

Thanks to our partners, ReachOut has been able to continue to grow our PeerChat service that they've backed and believed in since the beginning. Like us, they recognise the value in a young, lived experience workforce for the mental health landscape, connecting young people with others who understand them.

Innovating our service for the future has been integral to ReachOut's strategic goals. Thanks to the support from our partners, this has involved reviewing our existing service offering and preparing it for the future, including how we can support parents and carers of young people, and how AI can be leveraged for good.

ReachOut seeks to meet young people where they are, and our partnerships have allowed us to tap into new communities and platforms to engage and support them.







Our brand-new community fundraising event *ReachOut, Level Up* was supported through dollar matching from Maybelline and Boost in order to raise awareness of ReachOut and support the gaming community.



Our partnership with Future Generation Global supports our Youth Advocacy Program which provides young people with a voice to Federal Government in order to advocate for their future and access to mental health support.



Doritos continued their *Be Bold. ReachOut.* campaign, supporting ReachOut and raising awareness by permanently putting our logo on the back of every Doritos packet.



Our partnership with Meta has allowed us to explore how we can support parents and carers on social media to provide accessible and expert resources to parents.

As part of our partnerships, ReachOut works closely to bring conversations, resources and skills around mental health and wellbeing to the staff and community of our partners. This includes hosting wellbeing sessions, participating in ReachOut events such as *Laps for Life*, *StepOut for ReachOut* and *Make a Move*, and hearing from our incredible Youth Ambassadors at our partner events to share their lived experience.

It has been another incredible year to raise critical funds and awareness for ReachOut, made possible by our amazing partners. We cannot thank you enough for your ongoing generosity and commitment to improving mental health for young people. We can't wait to see what 2025 brings.



## WILLIS



‘What I’ve learned  
through my journey is  
that times do get better.’

## STORY

I grew up with amazing parents and siblings, and loved my local primary school, but in high school, things were different.

Lots of the kids had existing friends from primary school with them, but I didn’t know anyone. I’d just sit by myself for recess and lunch.

The school was much bigger (so many people), and the rules were really strict around how things were done. I had a lot to adjust to, which was a bit of a shock. I wasn’t prepared for that.

Nearing the middle of high school, I started to realise that the way I felt wasn’t normal. The amount of anxiety I faced in a social context really caused me to struggle and I didn’t really understand what I was going through or put a name to it.

Then I found ReachOut. It became a place I could go to and learn more about how I was feeling, which was really helpful. But the difficult feelings didn’t disappear.

Whenever I was down or overwhelmed, I would spend a lot of time sleeping to try and push away the thoughts that were causing me a lot of stress and anxiety.

Starting university was a changing point for me as I felt free and could do whatever I wanted. I could do things that interested me, I wasn’t forced to hang out with the same people all the time and I could seek help in my own, independent way.

But law is a very social degree, so there was a lot of self-growth to undertake. In every class we had to discuss ideas with others, and work in groups. Uni friendships are not structured like high school ones, and I had to figure out the new social rules.



What I've learned through my journey is that times do get better; you just have to make the most of the present. It's important to prioritise yourself and look after yourself. Don't worry about what others are doing, just focus on your good qualities and the progress you make each day.

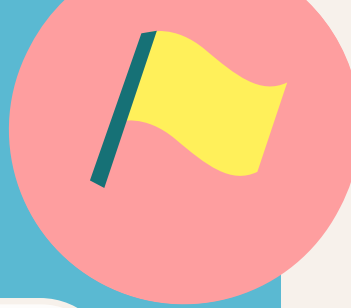
As time moves on, I've begun to enjoy attending social events, but I still find them tricky to navigate.

Now, I want to be able to give back, so I've become a ReachOut Youth Ambassador. In ReachOut's online spaces I've been able to meet like-minded people, and share my experiences to help others going through similar things.



KFC:

Helping a young  
workforce be  
their best selves



Supporting young people in Australia to get the skills, opportunities and mental wellbeing support they need to thrive is a cause close to our heart.

For many of the young people who work at a KFC restaurant, this is their first experience in the workforce. We proudly provide our young team members with life skills, training and development opportunities, and mental wellbeing support to help them be their best selves, make a difference and have fun – that is our people promise.

The KFC Youth Foundation is our way of supporting young Australians, beyond our restaurants. We are proud to have ReachOut as a charity partner for the KFC Youth Foundation, who are doing some incredible work providing support and online resources for young people in a way that works for them. We're looking forward to seeing what comes next for ReachOut.

**Gabby Hunt, Corporate and Internal Brand Communications  
Manager, KFC Youth Foundation**



# Youth-led advocacy and awareness



Youth involvement is woven into the fabric of ReachOut – from our strong network of youth volunteers to co-designing our services and raising awareness about mental health.

In 2024, we continued to build on this strong foundation of youth involvement. We doubled down on our efforts to platform youth voices by launching a new program that involves young people in shaping the national policies that affect their mental health and wellbeing.

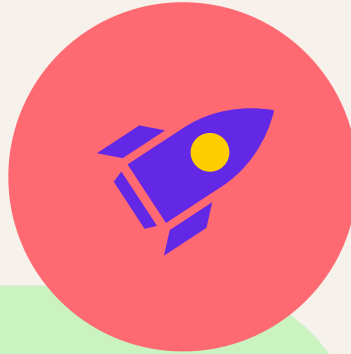


## REACHOUT'S YOUTH ADVOCACY PROGRAM

ReachOut's Youth Advocacy Program works to ensure that young people's voices and lived experiences are represented in the government policy and decision-making processes. The program was co-designed with young people and sector experts to ensure it meets young people's needs and facilitates productive and impactful engagement with government.







## MEET REACHOUT'S YOUTH ADVOCATES

- April, 21, NSW
- Carly, 18, NSW
- Chase, 24, VIC
- Georgia, 22, VIC
- Will, 21, VIC
- Layla, NSW
- Sina, 23, NSW



## YOUTH ADVOCATE PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2024

- the cost of living
- young people and technology
- access to mental health support

## TAKING OUR ADVOCATES TO CANBERRA

In the first year of the program, ReachOut's Youth Advocates have led two key advocacy campaigns on the mental health and wellbeing impacts of the cost of living crisis and the proposed social media ban.

These campaigns involved drafting government submissions, taking their recommendations to Canberra and sharing their lived experience and perspectives with Senators, MPs, the broader sector and in the media.





# Our backers



In the last 12 months, 2.5 million people turned to our services for mental health and wellbeing support. We'd like to thank our backers for helping us to continue supporting young people and their families through peer support, coaching, online communities, personal stories and other online resources.

We recognise our government partners, the Australian Government Departments of Health and Social Services, for their funding and support for our services.

We also thank our corporate partners for their generosity and dedication to supporting young people and their mental health.



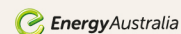
Government



Platinum Partners



Diamond Partners



Gold Partners



Silver Partners



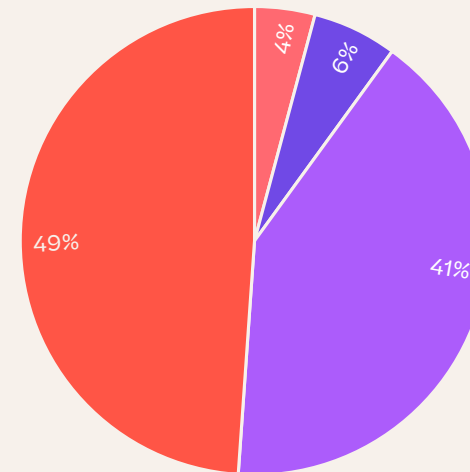
Bronze Partners



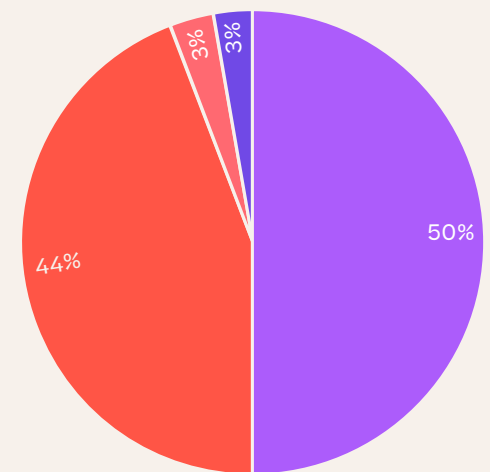
# Financials

	\$ 2023/2024	\$ 2022/2023
<b>INCOME</b>		
Government grants	8,619,666	7,157,353
Donations	7,253,861	8,014,137
Non-government grants	1,017,841	564,777
Interest income	736,585	432,753
Consultancy and other income	13,305	7,933
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>17,641,258</b>	<b>16,176,953</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Employees	10,690,476	7,856,984
Design and delivery of services	2,931,057	2,610,888
Marketing	1,354,011	1,398,571
Fundraising	1,168,242	976,861
Administration (This includes occupancy, depreciation and amortisation)	1,291,920	1,067,234
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>17,435,706</b>	<b>13,910,538</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		
Net fair value gain/(loss) of financial assets	(10,195)	(22,861)
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus</b>	<b>195,357</b>	<b>2,243,554</b>

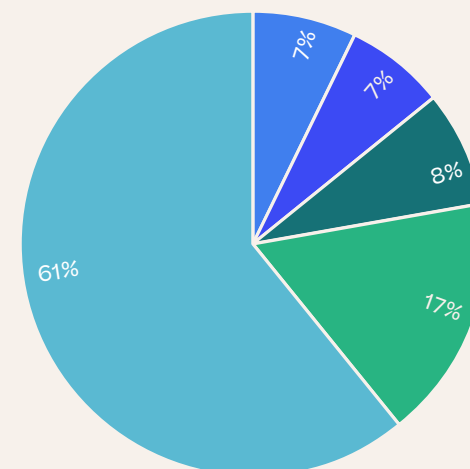
Income 2023/2024



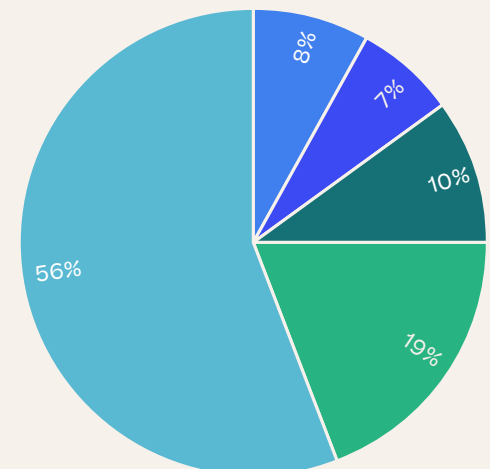
Income 2022/2023



Expenditure 2023/2024



Expenditure 2022/2023







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or email [info@reachout.com](mailto:info@reachout.com)

ReachOut provides a safe, online place for young people to chat anonymously, get support, and feel better. And, ReachOut's resources for parents and schools provide valuable information and advice to help them better support the young people in their lives.