

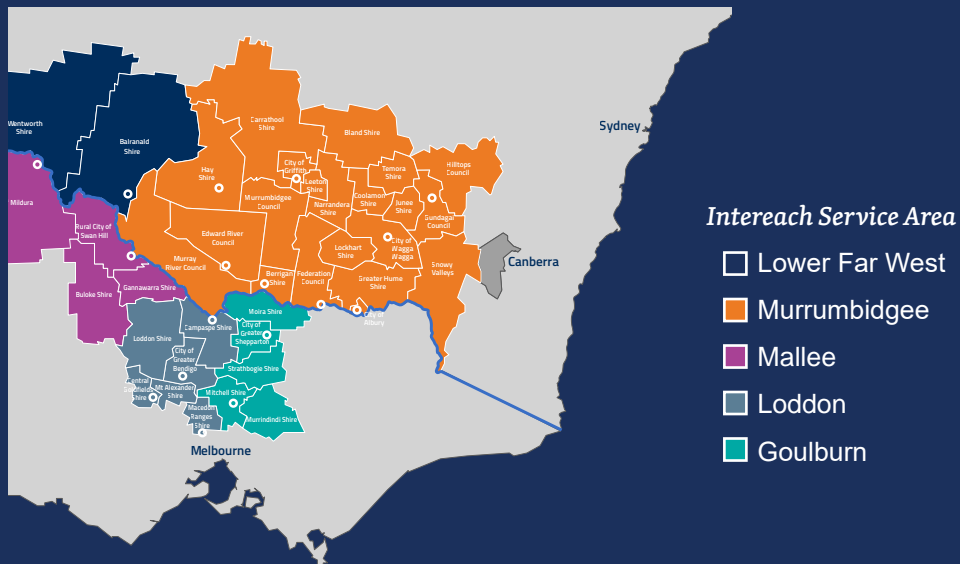


Annual Report
2023

Intereach is a not-for-profit community organisation that has been working across the Riverina-Murray region of NSW and central and northern Victoria for 50 years.

We are committed to developing community infrastructure and supporting rural and regional communities.

Today, we have 17 offices, which are located in Albury, Balranald, Bendigo, Cootamundra, Corowa, Deniliquin, Echuca, Finley, Gisborne, Griffith, Hay, Maryborough, Mildura, Seymour, Shepparton, Swan Hill and Wagga Wagga.



OUR VISION

Strong connected communities

OUR VALUES

Leadership

We use our social influence to motivate others to reach their full potential.

Partnership

We work collectively with others toward a common goal of positive social and cultural change.

Social Justice

We protect and promote human rights by recognising that all people are free and equal in dignity and rights.

WHAT WE DO

Intereach offers a wide range of services, support and information for:

- Children and Families
- Community
- People with Disability
- Mental Health
- Older People

Intereach is the National Disability Insurance Scheme Partner in the community across the Murrumbidgee region of NSW and Loddon, Goulburn and Mallee regions of Victoria.

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Intereach acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and their strong spiritual connection to the land and the waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present and to those of the future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We must always remember that despite major physical changes, this land is, was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

Intereach welcomes every person irrespective of gender or gender identity, age, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, country of birth, religious beliefs, sexual identity and other real and perceived differences.



CO-CEO REPORT

In December 2022, the Intereach Board of Directors made a significant decision to appoint Co-Chief Executive Officers to lead Intereach. We feel incredibly privileged to be trusted to lead this wonderful organisation and have embraced the opportunity to work with our Board, staff, communities, and partners to build on our strong history and deliver on our purpose.

2023 is a significant year for Intereach as we mark 50 years of service since our beginning in Deniliquin in 1973. This milestone has provided an opportunity for reflection and has been a chance to acknowledge the many people who have built and contributed to Intereach over five decades.

With the legacy of those who have come before us, and the ongoing and deeply important contribution of our people, we are committed to continuing to strengthen Intereach's position to meet the evolving needs of our sector and communities.

As we operate within a competitive labour market, one of our key goals has been the attraction and retention of our workforce. We continue to build our reputation as a destination employer. We are proud to say that our workforce now exceeds more than 500 people, and our volunteer base of around 100 continues to provide exceptional and critical services to our communities. These talented and committed people are the heart of our organisation and are the key to making our community impact possible.

In consultation with our staff, we have progressed several changes in our workplace that make it attractive to people joining and, importantly, staying with us. This includes the introduction of paid parental leave, alternative public holidays, availability of salary packaging for casual staff, and a review of our staff check-in meetings to be more individualised and to provide a greater focus on wellbeing.

A key priority has been ensuring that we have outstanding leaders to guide Intereach into the future. To this end, we were pleased to welcome Carolyn Holness and Maree Piffero to the executive team as General Managers.

Carolyn was acting in the General Manager - Corporate Services position for 12 months and has been a key force in supporting Intereach's vision and strategic planning, ensuring the organisation is well positioned to meet its future challenges and goals in supporting staff and communities.

Maree's appointment acknowledges the range of knowledge and experience that she brings in the community service sector. Maree is a strong and values-driven leader who is passionate about delivering outcomes for our people and communities. Maree supports the targeted delivery of quality services that meet the needs of our rural and regional communities.

The year has not been without its personal and professional challenges. The 2022 floods had a significant impact on our staff and our communities. Most of the Intereach footprint was touched in some way by the NSW/Victorian flood disaster.

We were proud of the compassion and unwavering commitment our teams showed during this difficult time. We had staff directly impacted by the flooding who still had their clients and participants front of mind when it came to support and safety. The journey to recovery can be arduous. Despite the challenges, our communities continue to demonstrate their incredible resilience and show that we truly are stronger together.

We continue to develop and support our growth mindset and culture across our organisation, ensuring that we take the time to consider the voice and impacts for the people who matter most – our participants, clients, and workforce. Significant analysis and planning throughout the year enabled us to prepare for expansion of our aged care services, particularly in the Commonwealth Home Support Programme in Victoria.

Our growth has resulted in many new staff joining our organisation, and it has seen teams work collaboratively and at a rapid pace to meet these opportunities head on. We are proud that the expansion of our services strengthens the ability of our participants to contribute to their own lives and to their community in the way they choose.

We have a strong foundation of significant core programs of excellence which define our reputation and highlight our expertise. We have embraced a business model which will support us in securing our future while being agile enough to enable our purpose. We also welcome the opportunity to continue and further strengthen our program offering to deliver localised and responsive support within our diverse communities.

We look to 2023/24 with enthusiasm and confidence. We thank our Board of Directors for their leadership and direction. We are proud to lead such a wonderful organisation.



Michelle Tai
Co-CEO



Yvette Buhagiar
Co-CEO





CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On presenting the Chair's report for 2022/23, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on those who have contributed to Intereach's service, innovation and growth over the past 50 years, and the legacy they have provided for this wonderful organisation.

They are the people who espoused and practised the vision and values that we hold close today - 'Strong connected communities', and 'leadership, partnership and social justice' - which are the heart of what we do.

It has been exciting to reflect on the past 12 months. We have made a significant contribution to our regions and communities and with a solid growth strategy, we have laid a foundation for what we believe will be another 50 years of success for Intereach.

The Board of Directors' decision to appoint Co-CEO's in 2022 brought with it confidence and continuity in the organisation. It has resulted in an alignment of goals, objectives and outcomes shared by the Board and executive management.

We have seen a solid working relationship between the Board and executive which has resulted in strong governance practices, focus on strategic objectives and growth, and a mindset for innovative ways of working.

Our executive and its team have made considerable progress on realising the three strategic goals set out in the Intereach Strategic Plan, developed in 2022. It is important to note our Strategic Plan was developed with consultation and input across Intereach.

Our first strategic goal was aimed to operationalise targeted and sustainable growth. We established frameworks for setting a sustainable rate of growth that leverage our resources, synergies, brand and partnerships, and provide clarity about our capability to deliver. This is being achieved by being clear about how we connect, strengthening our capability, and increasing service offerings within the many communities across the 38 Local Government Areas we live in and serve, in a reliable and equitable way. We are establishing frameworks for setting a sustainable rate of growth by being direct about our capability to deliver which leverages our resources, synergies, brand and partnerships.

Our second strategic goal is delivery of quality services, aimed to measure impact at an individual, family and community level. We've invested in, and are continuing to develop our quality systems, internal knowledge and learning and technology. Critically, we have also improved our capacity to measure and communicate outcomes.

Our third strategic goal, 'to be the destination employer' has been of particular importance over the past year as we expanded our workforce in an extremely competitive labour market. The fact that we have been able to attract and retain fabulous people clearly shows our achievement in this area.

Given all this, it's heartening that our reputation for service delivery is clearly in the sights of our funders and partners who have approached Intereach to support expansion of our range of services, from Family Day Care through to Aged Care. We have also been successful in attracting funding for localised and tailored programs. While we continue to drive our core services, we are also connecting individuals and groups thanks to the collective impact of our diverse services. These successes highlight our care and influence in improving the quality of life of people living in regional and rural NSW and Victoria.

The reforms flowing from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety have been appropriately significant, and have strengthened our commitment to expanding our aged care services in a targeted and sustainable way. It has been a credit to the Intereach Aged Care team, and supporting Corporate Services teams, for the way they have embraced opportunities across this sector. There are a number of regions that now have continuity in aged care service provision as a result of our commitment to support and deliver these programs.

As we look to 2023/24, we turn to the next iteration of our Strategic Plan. Sustainability, people, and quality are the critical components for successful delivery of the plan, as well as meeting increased governance and regulatory requirements across our service offerings.

Importantly, we will continue to develop the plan 'from the ground up' so it is a whole of organisation document. Such a collaborative approach to engagement encourages ownership of the plan, knowing that we all have a part to play in our future success.

We have also reflected on our Board make-up and have undertaken an extensive recruitment process to attract new directors to our organisation.

This space continues to be a considerable learning curve as we work to secure directors from diverse backgrounds with the required experience and expertise to effectively oversee an organisation of our size and complexity. We also have the added challenge of ensuring we meet increasingly stringent legislative and regulatory requirements for our service sectors. I particularly want to thank our members who have participated in workshops in this regard to attract new directors.

I congratulate our leaders and staff on how they managed the 2022 flood crisis and recovery. The devastating impacts of those floods will continue for years to come. Our staff were responsive and resilient, often putting clients and participants before their own needs.

To my fellow directors, thank you for another year guiding Intereach. We can truly see the rewards of our efforts and collaboration.

Our Leadership Team is driving a wonderful and strong culture and so many staff provide positive feedback that they are proud to work for Intereach.

On behalf of the Board I want to acknowledge the work and efforts of all Intereach staff. They make a true difference to people's lives every day. It is an exciting time to be part of this dedicated organisation, where we will continue to see change, challenges, and successes.

We have a strong story to tell, and I look forward to seeing that story develop and transpire well into the future.

We are incredibly proud of our organisation.



Rob Brown
Intereach Chair





ROB BROWN

BSc (Hon) in Psychology (UNSW), MBA (Deakin)

Chair

Rob is Director Family Strategy at Peppin Planners, a family-owned advisory business based in Deniliquin.

Rob has a BSc (Hon) in Psychology (UNSW), a Master of Business (Deakin) and holds Certified Financial Planner accreditation. He has extensive career involvement in the situations and issues facing families and rural communities. Rob is the chair of Deniliquin Newspapers P/L.



ANDREW JOHNSTONE

BVSc (Melb)

Deputy Chair

Andrew is a retired consultant veterinarian in the Southern Riverina of NSW. He previously ran an extensive veterinary practice covering southern NSW and northern Victoria.

Andrew is a current Board member of Murray Local Land Services and has held various community, sporting and educational roles over many years. Andrew is committed to social justice and raising the profile and awareness of rural and remote community services.



CLIVE GOW

Clive is a family man, and ex-banker, having retired after 38 years in the sector. He is committed to seeing InterEach go forward with community-based leadership, a strong financial footing and a progressive agenda to pursue its sustainability through growth and community development.



PAT FOGARTY

GradDipSocSc Graduate and Post Graduate qualifications in Social Sciences and Management

Pat has a long involvement with the local community through her time as a Councillor and Mayor of Deniliquin, her service on a number of boards and her previous role as Southern NSW Regional Manager of Vinnies Services.

Pat holds Graduate and Post Graduate qualifications in Social Sciences and Management and has also participated in Australian Institute of Company Directors training. In 2007 Pat was awarded the NSW Premier's Community Services Award and in 2016 she was a finalist in the NSW Local Government 'Woman of the Year' Award. She is currently a Councillor on Edward River Council.



ANNETTE RADFORD

BA (Uni Melb), DipEd (Uni Melb), DipFLM, DipGov

Annette has had an extensive career in workforce learning and development, having previously worked in the Victorian public service, leading the development and delivery of professional development and training programs for staff working in bio-security policy, regulation and emergency response.

She has also led and managed teams providing project support in stakeholder engagement, evaluation and performance improvement. She worked for a number of years in a rural TAFE college, delivering training on-site and in workplaces, in partnership with a range of locally based industries.

Currently, Annette and her husband run a wool growing enterprise out of Euroa.



BRUCE SIMPSON

DipApSc (Hon), FAICD, FARLF

Bruce owns and operates a farm advisory business and a family farming business.

He has spent more than 40 years in the irrigated agriculture industry with experience in planning, management practice, water policy, corporate governance and community. Bruce is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD) and a former Murray Irrigation chairman.

He is a strong advocate for the importance of healthy, sustainable rural and regional communities.



NOEL GRAHAM AM

MBA, FAICD

Noel owns and operates a family farming business alongside his wife, son and daughter-in-law, near Deniliquin. He has a long and proud association with the region's rice-growing and irrigation industry, including 17 years' service as a SunRice director. Noel has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD).

Noel is passionate about giving back to his local community and has volunteered his time to a number of working groups and local committees across many years.



CHRISTINE GRAFITTI

BNursing, GAICD

Christine brings a wealth of experience in clinical governance, aged care and disability sectors with more than 30 years working in primary and secondary health. Christine has a passion for strong, connected communities and is committed to social justice in regional and rural settings.

A registered nurse, she has detailed knowledge of the health and community sectors and a broad understanding of public and community services policy direction and will continue to build community, government and stakeholder relationships to serve our regions. Christine has a Bachelor of Nursing, Diploma in Management and completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course (GAICD).



HAMISH BULL

BAgrSc (Uni Melb), BBus(EcoFin) (RMIT), CA

Having grown up in regional NSW, Hamish is passionate about regional communities. He brings to Intereach professional skills in commercial and financial management.

Hamish is a qualified Chartered Accountant, holds a business degree in economics and finance and a Bachelor of Agricultural Science. He has more than 20 years' experience across Asia-Pacific in business and professional service firms. His family has a love of travelling and community-based sport.

50 YEARS OF INTEREACH

Over the past half-century, Intereach has transformed and grown to meet the evolving needs of the communities it serves from its 17 offices across 38 Local Government Areas, by remaining committed to the core values of Leadership, Partnership and Social Justice.

Intereach's rich history dates back to 1973 with the formation of a Total Aged Care Committee which morphed into the Deniliquin Council for Social Development (DCSD). The foundation members of the organisation were Aldermen Kevin G Renwick, Sylvia Baker, John Field and Hector Campbell, Total Aged Care Chair Bert Farlow, secretary John Lindsay-Field and treasurer John Windridge when it was established as the Deniliquin Council for Social Development (DCSD). The organisation was founded with the goal of providing community programs and services, including Youth Club, Senior Citizens' Space, Meals on Wheels, Mobile Nursing Service, and Family Day Care for children.

Growth and an expanded reach resulted in the organisation becoming the Council for Social Development – Central Murray Region and the Regional Social Development Group before evolving into Intereach. In 2016, the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme provided Intereach with a significant opportunity to further meet the needs of local communities and empower them to live their best lives with Local Area Coordination and Early Childhood services being offered.

Intereach is grateful for the contributions of dedicated staff and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to support the communities within the Intereach footprint. Intereach has more than 500 staff and 100 volunteers located across the Riverina-Murray region of NSW and central and northern Victoria. Intereach is committed to investing in its people, providing ongoing training and development opportunities to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver high-quality support services.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary, Intereach hosted a series of events and activities across the year, including community open days, special anniversary celebrations, and the sharing of stories from current and former participants and staff.



50
1973 - 2023
intereach
50 YEARS OF SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

INTEREACH IN NUMBERS

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

TOTAL OF **78,476** ENQUIRIES RECORDED
65,416 PHONE CALLS
11,554 FACE TO FACE ENQUIRIES
1,189 WEBSITE ENQUIRIES/EMAILS
73,069 INTERNAL REFERRALS MADE
6,808 EXTERNAL REFERRALS MADE



NO INTEREST LOAN SCHEME

261 LOANS APPROVED
83% GROWTH SINCE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR
57% NEW BORROWERS



INTENSIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION

HOME VISITS
400+
ADULTS AND CHILDREN
SUPPORTED THROUGH CASE
MANAGEMENT
52



LOCAL AREA COORDINATION

NEW PEOPLE HELPED
1,620
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
342
ONGOING PARTICIPANTS
13,754
INCREASE IN PARTICIPANTS
16.7%



SAFER COMMUNITIES

YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED
THROUGH CASE
MANAGEMENT
12
YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED
THROUGH GROUP PROGRAMS
50+



COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

TRIPS COMPLETED	KILOMETRES TRAVELLED
16,666	395,783
DENILQUIN 6,137	DENILQUIN 214,550
GRIFFITH 10,529	GRIFFITH 181,233



AGED CARE SERVICES

SERVICES DELIVERED
101,853

HOME CARE PACKAGE
SERVICES DELIVERED
460

MEALS DELIVERED
22,231

DOLLARS SPENT ON HOME
MODIFICATIONS
\$ 275,097.51

NEW CLIENTS
1,419

NEW HOME CARE PACKAGE
CLIENTS
90

NEW COMMONWEALTH
HOME SUPPORT
PROGRAMME CLIENTS
1,217

TOTAL AGED CARE CLIENTS
3,402

TOTAL HOME CARE
PACKAGE CLIENTS
439

TOTAL COMMONWEALTH
HOME SUPPORT
PROGRAMME CLIENTS
2,699



OUR STAFF STATS

TOTAL STAFF **517**

NEW STARTERS **204**

NEW VOLUNTEERS **17**

STUDENTS **6**

BACKFILL OPPORTUNITIES **113**

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE **14**

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

FACEBOOK

REACH **193,843**

IMPRESSIONS **692,000**

PUBLISHED POSTS **287**

FOLLOWERS **6,895**

INSTAGRAM

REACH **4,597**

IMPRESSIONS **3,637**

LIKES **338**



OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

AFTER SCHOOL CARE ATTENDANCES **8,080**

VACATION CARE ATTENDANCES **2,746**

HR/PEOPLE AND CULTURE

At Intereach, our Human Resources team plays a pivotal role in shaping our organisation’s values and fostering a workplace that aligns with our core principles of Leadership, Partnership, and Social Justice.

In the ever-evolving journey of Intereach, our Human Resources team holds a profound role in shaping the very essence of our organisation. As we venture into another incredible year, we find ourselves on the cusp of remarkable growth, underscored by our commitment to our most valuable asset, our people.

GROWTH MILESTONES

In the past year, Intereach has witnessed remarkable growth with figures confirming our upward trajectory with 204 new staff joining us this financial year. This growth is not just reflected in numbers but in the very fabric of our culture. One of our most significant strides has been the introduction of Paid Parental Leave for eligible staff. A testament of our dedication to our strategic goal of becoming the destination employer of choice.

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

This initiative resonates deeply with our values and commitment to employees, recognising their responsibilities as caregivers and championing the importance of work-life balance for all. It ensures staff not only excel professionally but also thrive personally. With options for eight weeks of paid leave at full-pay or 16 weeks leave at half-pay, this program empowers our employees to embrace their multifaceted roles.

EMBRACING DIVERSITY

In our commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace and respect for the diversity of our staff, we have also implemented flexible public holidays. This inclusive approach acknowledges the diversity of our workforce, allowing our employees from diverse cultural backgrounds to observe their significant cultural days/holidays. It is a reflection of our understanding that our strength lies in the rich tapestry of cultures and traditions our employees bring to Intereach.

RESILIENCE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

While we celebrate our growth, we must also reflect on the challenges that came our way, particularly the floods that impacted our communities and staff towards the end of 2022. In the face of this adversity, our team members demonstrated remarkable resilience and community spirit. In these trying times, we extended flexibility to those actively involved in assisting their communities in recovery efforts.

This exemplifies our unwavering commitment to our local communities. We are proud to have a team that not only excel in their roles but also step up to support their local communities during times of need.

This year has been testament of our dedication to cultivating a workplace that embodies our core principles, celebrates diversity, and remains deeply connected to the communities we serve.

TOTAL STAFF 517

NEW STARTERS 204

NEW VOLUNTEERS 17

STUDENTS 6

BACKFILL OPPORTUNITIES 113

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE 14

STAFF MILESTONES

5 YEARS

Simone Baines

Program Manager LAC

Sally Barrett

Customer Support Officer

Suzanne Beddowes

Local Area Coordinator -
Community Linker

Meridith Blackmore

Family Day Care Educator

Tracey Christmas

Program Manager LAC

Kirstie Cook

Local Area Coordinator

Vicki Devereux

Family Day Care Educator

Suzanne Driver

OOSH Casual Educator

Jenny Fawcett

Family Day Care Educator

Bree Freeman

Local Area Coordinator

James Galea

Local Area Coordinator

Jane Gibbs

Local Area Coordinator

Geraldine Higgins

Child, Family & Community
Worker

Tania Howe

Family Day Care Educator

Grace Jefferies

OOSH Casual Educator

Kerri Anne Jones

Program Manager LAC

Sharyn Laughler

Senior LAC

Eloise Maher

OOSH Casual Educator

Karen Martin

OOSH Assistant

Tess Mercer

Program Manager Quality

Tracey Molluso

Local Area Coordinator

Sonya Perlowski

Program Manager - Community
Transport

Natalie Ryan

Senior LAC

Kylee Smith

Administration Officer NDIS

Michelle Tai

Co-CEO

Brady Trotman

OOSH Casual Educator

Bernadette Williams

Program Manager LAC

10 YEARS

Sharon Azzopardi

Community Support Worker

Alex Bull

HR Manager

Kristy Cakebread

Family Day Care Educator

Janette Camuti

Child Development Coordinator

Helen Ford

Child, Family & Community
Worker

Pauline Ford

Family Day Care Educator

Kelly Martin

Family Day Care Educator

Sally McMahon

Family Day Care Educator

Sandra Sanderson

Family Day Care Educator

Sonja Scammell

Family Day Care Educator

15 YEARS

Nicole Jennings

Finance Officer

20 YEARS

Rebecca Cowhan

Team Leader Finance





THANK YOU AWARDS

Intereach has recognised the outstanding work of our workforce at the annual staff Thank You Awards.

Throughout the year, staff are nominated for the exceptional work they do in supporting their participants and clients as well as recognising their strong relationships and support across the organisation.

Our awards reflect our values:

Leadership: We use our social influence to motivate others to reach their full potential.

Partnership: We work collectively with others toward a common goal of positive social and cultural change.

Social Justice: We protect and promote human rights by recognising that all people are free and equal in dignity and rights.

Here are our overall winners from 2022:



LEADERSHIP

Maree Piffero

*Senior Manager Local Area Coordination (LAC) NDIS Program
Cootamundra*

Maree Piffero is our 2022 Leader of the Year for her unwavering support to her team, the Local Area Coordination program and importantly, her commitment to bringing the very best service to participants.

Maree's leadership is described as inspirational. Maree is always calm, supportive and solution focussed. She not only encompasses all of Intereach's values and upholds our fundamentals in every interaction but her care for others and ability to follow through and "walk the talk" is amazing and brings such comfort that we are in the hands of a capable, compassionate and supportive leader.

She is never too busy to support anyone who reaches out whether it be for guidance or to lend an ear. She always puts people and their wellbeing at the centre of everything she does while balancing her own competing priorities and workloads.

One of Maree's great attributes is encouraging colleagues to think of their own solutions, working through the challenge in partnership to get the right outcome. She never says this is "what to do" – it is always a conversation around learning and understanding.

Maree is a wonderful leader for our organisation.



PARTNERSHIP

Simone Murphy - *Project Leader Community Links, Griffith*

What a year it has been for Simone Murphy who has been recognised as our Partnership winner for 2022.

Partnership is the essence of the work Simone undertakes every day with vision, enthusiasm and strong commitment to bring about social and cultural change.

Simone supports all Intereach programs offered across the Murrumbidgee region and has created valuable links with local and regional government, as well as community organisations across our NSW footprint. Her commitment and motivation never falters and Intereach staff and communities are stronger for her skills.

Simone demonstrates strong leadership with our Multicultural Reference Group and meticulously coordinates the volunteers recognition events on behalf of Intereach. Her committed, yet gentle approach, in dealing with a number of organisations and bodies shows real tenacity.

She has a wonderful way of bringing everyone on the journey. Her commitment to the values and strategic direction of Intereach exemplify her ability to build robust strategic partnerships that highlight the commitment of Intereach in bringing about great outcomes for our regional and rural communities.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Bec Clifford - *Local Area Coordination (LAC) Program Mildura*

Bec Clifford has the community at the heart of everything she does. Her desire to see the very best for people inspires her team and has wonderful outcomes for our participants.

Her collaborative approach in working with her staff highlights Bec's qualities as a leader which in turn have a flow-on effect with staff aspiring to provide outstanding service and support.

She goes above and beyond to help those most in need and was recognised for her efforts in gaining accommodation for a participant who was living in an unsafe and uncomfortable environment.

Bec reached out to contacts at housing providers in the local area and asked them for assistance. In under 24 hours she successfully found appropriate housing, ensuring the participant felt safe and comfortable. However, Bec did not stop there; checking in with the participant in the days following ensuring they were okay in the circumstances and even finding boarding for their pet.

Her dedicated and committed approach has been recognised by her staff who praise her support and guidance.

Bec is an outstanding 2022 Social Justice winner.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Intereach Learning and Development team supports our staff and the organisation by enhancing staff capabilities by building a motivated, engaged, and productive workforce. Staff can select courses, programs, and training that align with their role, team, or career goals.

We've upgraded our training content using new development software to boost learner engagement. We're excited to continue to grow our course library on our Learning Management System, which now features a mix of internally developed eLearning and externally sourced training packages. Additionally, we're increasing our team's skill and capacity to optimise accessibility of documentation and training.

We've introduced a rigorous learning and development training mapping process, to monitor, review and update our online learning library content regularly. This helps us adapt to internal organisational changes and stay compliant with industry updates.

During this annual period, we have welcomed and on-boarded 204 new employees, who all started their Intereach journey through our Learning and Development Induction Program.

In collaboration with our Aged Care Team, Learning and Development ensures that volunteer staff in our aged care programs have access to an induction program and relevant training to support their vital roles within our communities. We're continually enhancing the capabilities of our aged care workforce to meet training requirements.

Our primary responsibility in Learning and Development is to develop our people. We ensure learning activities build workforce capability, contribute to strengthening overall organisational health and are strategically aligned to our organisational strategy. We now use Microsoft Power BI, an integrated Learning Management System analytical tool, to measure the effectiveness of our training and development, ensuring high-quality learning as well as monitoring and safeguarding compliance.

In the previous year, Learning and Development introduced a training procedure, which included a series of tools that help our Learning and Development team to build program specific training relevant to intended outcomes. We also launched a training toolkit with key resources to support subject matter experts across our programs in developing and delivering program-specific training. As an extension of this toolkit, we now offer tailored "Train the Trainer" sessions covering delivery methods, facilitation tips and learner considerations.

We are also providing training support for our organisational leaders to internally mentor and coach their teams for learning and development. Over the past three years, Learning and Development have collaborated closely with Therapy Pro, an external agency who we have a long-standing affiliation with. Together, we created a comprehensive leadership program aimed at nurturing and sustaining a dedicated group of leaders within Intereach, capable of driving performance throughout our organisation.

This two-year program, titled 'Managing Productive Teams' for year one and 'Alumni' for year two, is available to existing, new, and acting leaders. Additionally, we provide an 'Emerging Leaders' program for aspiring leaders. During this time, the Learning and Development team was excited to take the lead in developing and delivering the Alumni program. This initiative includes a series of workshops and 1:1 peer sessions, building upon the knowledge gained in the first year while fostering ongoing goal setting and peer connections to create a supportive network.



WORK, HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

The Work, Health, Safety and Environment team supports the psychological and physical safety of staff members and participants in the workplace, promotes wellbeing and ensures Intereach reduces its carbon footprint on the environment.

We've made significant efforts since the pandemic, focusing on environmental factors such as noise and ventilation, and have supported remote work arrangements, ensuring ergonomic set-ups and safety standards.

In May 2023, the Executive Team approved the newly developed environmental strategy to reduce the carbon footprint of Intereach over the next eight years, aligning with the Australian Government's greenhouse emission reduction target of 43 per cent.

To achieve this aim, we formed an environmental working group, concentrating on initiatives like tree planting, Clean Up Australia Day, waste reduction, and improved recycling across our 17 offices.

Our Work, Health, Safety and Environment team places a strong emphasis on both physical and psychological safety, including responding to new legislation from the WorkSafe Australian Regulator addressing psychological injuries. We're developing a Wellbeing Action Plan (WAP) guided by our Mental Health Framework, involving Human Resources, Learning and Development, Family and Mental Health, and the Work, Health, Safety and Environment teams.

Additionally, we've been redeveloping and redesigning our offices to enhance safety and accessibility. Safety plans have been implemented to prevent and address aggressive behaviour, and regular safety audits are conducted. We're also upgrading office equipment as a result of an ergonomics audit.

CARERS REFERENCE GROUP

The Intereach Carers Reference Group has been at the forefront of efforts to enhance visibility within our organisation and underscore the diverse ways in which it can support our dedicated staff while enriching the organisation as a whole.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Development of a Purpose Statement

One of the most significant milestones achieved by the Carers Reference Group in the past year was the formulation of a concise and focused purpose statement. The group has developed a valuable new resource that articulates the fundamental reasons for the group's existence and outlines its role within Intereach.

The purpose of the Carers Reference Group is threefold:

- To serve as a central point of contact within Intereach for carer information, linkages, and support: This highlights the group's pivotal role in providing vital carer-related information within our organisation.
- To actively gather and disseminate carer content within Intereach and our communities: This underscores the group's proactive approach to sharing valuable carer-related information both internally and externally.
- To provide a safe and supportive space for members and guests to share lived experiences, extend mutual support, and foster a sense of connectedness: This emphasises the group's commitment to nurturing a supportive community for individuals with carer experiences.

National Carers Week 2022

Despite facing unforeseen challenges with the 2022 floods, the Carers Reference Group made commendable efforts in recognising and celebrating National Carers Week 2022. While some planned events and activities had to be cancelled due to regional floods, the 'Carers Wellbeing Day' in Wagga Wagga successfully went ahead. Carers were invited to engage in mindfulness and craft activities, connect with peers, and enjoy a light lunch.

Creation of a Carers Information Sheet

The group's contribution extended to the development of a valuable resource - the Carers Information Sheet. This document details organisations that offer support to individuals, young and old, who provide care to their loved ones. Copies of the Carers Information Sheet are available at each Intereach office, ensuring accessibility for anyone seeking support. An electronic version is also available.





Our Marketing and Business Development team love getting out and making video content. Here is Michael filming staff and students from Echuca Twin Rivers Specialist School.

MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Marketing and Business Development team has fostered an environment in which Intereach has been able to build community awareness and tell the stories of how we have made an impact across our regions over the past 50 years.

There has been a growth and maturing of the Marketing and Business Development team, resulting in positive and significant changes for the organisation and critical support to our funding partners in delivering on key objectives of our partnerships.

Our program aim is to provide consistent messages across our operations to increase awareness and participation in supporting our service provisions.

The focus of the past 12 months has been lifting our social media presence. Across the board, our statistics reflect a marked change in our organisation and its ability to promote and engage with its community on its digital and social platforms.



REACH **193,843**
IMPRESSIONS **692,000**

PUBLISHED POSTS **287**
FOLLOWERS **6,895**

To support the organisation, a digital communications request form was introduced during 2022/23. This has empowered our teams to think about their communication needs as well as providing a range of information on a page, improving productivity for the team.

More than 180 requests were received and actioned during the year, ranging from event flyers to full video production highlighting our services, working with Intereach and interviews with NDIS participants.

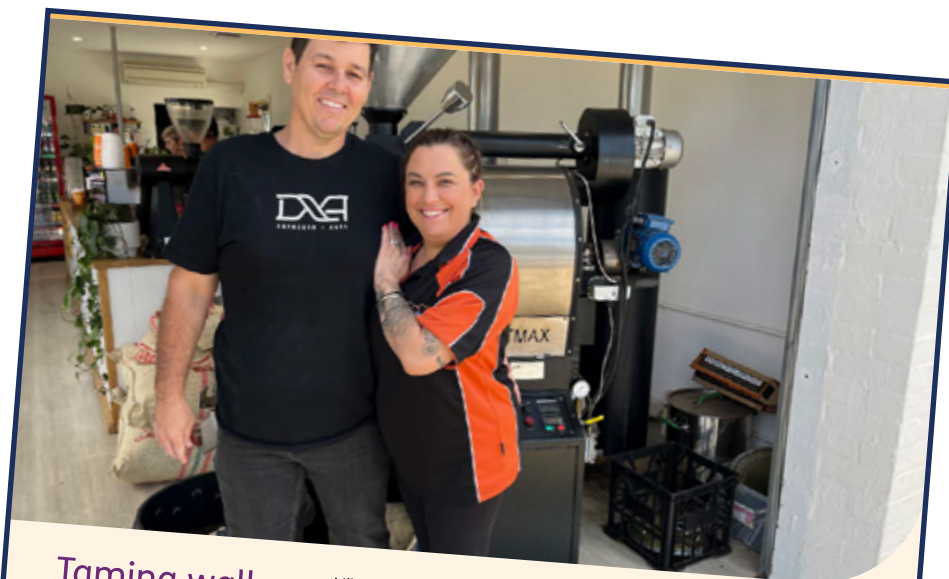
In supporting our business through targeted and sustainable growth, the team was responsible for a range of support, particularly across the area of aged care growth. The team assisted with a range of documentation and was a key player in a cross-functional team to support Commonwealth Home Support Programme transitions from a number of Local Governments in the Intereach footprint.

A significant highlight of the year was the launch of Intereach 50 years celebrations which attracted regional and national media attention.



REACH **4,597**
IMPRESSIONS **3,637**

LIKES **338**



Tamina walks tall in life and business, thanks to NDIS supports



Mildura cafe owner and business manager Tamina has an important message for other women with disability – it's okay to ask for help. "I have always been quite a strong, independent person, and I think you grow up with something like this, you feel you've always got to be okay, because it's easier for others around you," Tamina said. "But being able to learn to be vulnerable, to then become stronger, has actually been empowering."

Tamina, 39, was born with spina bifida, a condition that affects the spine and spinal cord. With reduced feeling and nerve function in her feet and legs, Tamina walks with a limp and has problems with balance.

Until she joined the NDIS, Tamina also lived with chronic and debilitating pain. "There'd be days at a time where I would be stuck on the couch and in bed," she said.

"For a lot of my adult life, I was quite complacent with my own care," Tamina said. "So, for me, it was a process of having to accept that yes, I have a disability, and that disability is not a bad word. I'm still a mother, I'm still who I am and having a disability doesn't change that."

Tamina reached out to the NDIS – and the decision changed her life. "Because of the NDIS, and the supports I now have, I've been able to maintain a regular routine of exercise, physio and hydrotherapy, and I've been able to build up my strength to keep fit and healthy, so that my body can hold itself up," Tamina said.

With her increased strength and fitness, Tamina's pain has all but disappeared. "Now I'm lucky if I have a pain day once a month. It's incredible," she said.

"I thought I was an empowered woman before, but I really am now. These extra things I wouldn't have thought I would be able to do, I can do them because of the NDIS."

March 2023 | NDIS Quarterly Report to disability ministers

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Our connection with Mildura-based participant Tamina Bettess highlights our strong partnerships within our communities. Tamina was featured by the NDIS in a range of publications and social activities, the latest being a story that appeared in the third quarter of the Minister's NDIS report. The NDIS also featured Tamina on its social media channels on Mother's Day.



NDIS LOCAL AREA COORDINATION

Intereach provides Local Area Coordination (LAC) services on behalf of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) across the Goulburn, Loddon and Mallee National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) regions of Victoria and the Murrumbidgee NDIS region in NSW. We have been providing LAC services for more than five years. The NDIS is a national scheme to support people with disability to achieve their goals, participate in their communities and provide them, their families and carers with personalised, flexible care and support.

HEARING THE CALL TO HELP OTHERS

Sarah Frawley has always wanted to give back.

Growing up with a hearing impairment never stopped Sarah from pursuing her goals, even when she lost all hearing at the age of 23.

At the time she was in the final stages of finishing her teaching degree. Fast forward and the 31-year-old, who now calls Victoria's Kinglake Ranges home with her partner James and two dogs, is powering through her second degree, her passion audiology.

But it has been the incredible advances in technology and the support of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and local partner Intereach that has transformed Sarah's daily life. Sarah received cochlear implants in 2015 and 2017. They helped significantly with work and study, but the latest sound processors, the Nucleus 8 (N8), she received using her NDIS funding and with the support of Intereach have been a game changer.

"My hearing experience has been dramatically enhanced. It has been awesome," Sarah said.

Lighter, smaller, more powerful and providing greater clarity, Sarah can control her new processors through her smartphone.

"It has allowed me to grow in confidence. I can Bluetooth the processors through my phone which has made taking and making phone calls so much easier. It was something that I wasn't comfortable doing until this upgrade."

NEW PEOPLE HELPED

1,620

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

342

ONGOING PARTICIPANTS

13,754

INCREASE IN PARTICIPANTS

16.7%

"I have a wire-free experience which means I can directly stream music and video and phone calls to my ears which is an amazing experience.

"I want to thank Intereach so much for helping me get these upgrades."

Sarah was supported through Intereach's Seymour office with the team working closely with the NDIS to access the latest technology, quickly. Sarah was already severely deaf at the age of two and fitted with hearing aids, but 21 years later her hearing had worsened due to a sudden sensorineural hearing loss. Hearing aids were no longer an option.

"I remember my total hearing loss, it was traumatic. I had just finished my first semester of my final year of teaching and was meeting up with my partner James when my hearing had dropped to what felt like 30 per cent," she said.

"I had about a 70 per cent loss of hearing in a very short time and could feel it rapidly deteriorating down to nothing.

"At first, I thought it was my hearing aid. A change of batteries and a change of wiring didn't help. It was classic symptoms of me getting sick which had happened over the course of my life. I thought this was normal because my hearing normally fixes itself in a few days to a week after my episodes. However, a week later my hearing wasn't coming back, and it was concerning at this point.

"Here I was with one semester to go on my teaching degree, and I was told my hearing wasn't coming back. I went onto a waiting list for a cochlear implant, and I went six months deaf."

In terms of her academic achievements, it set Sarah's teaching degree back a year, but her new cochlear implants allowed her to complete her teaching placements and degree.

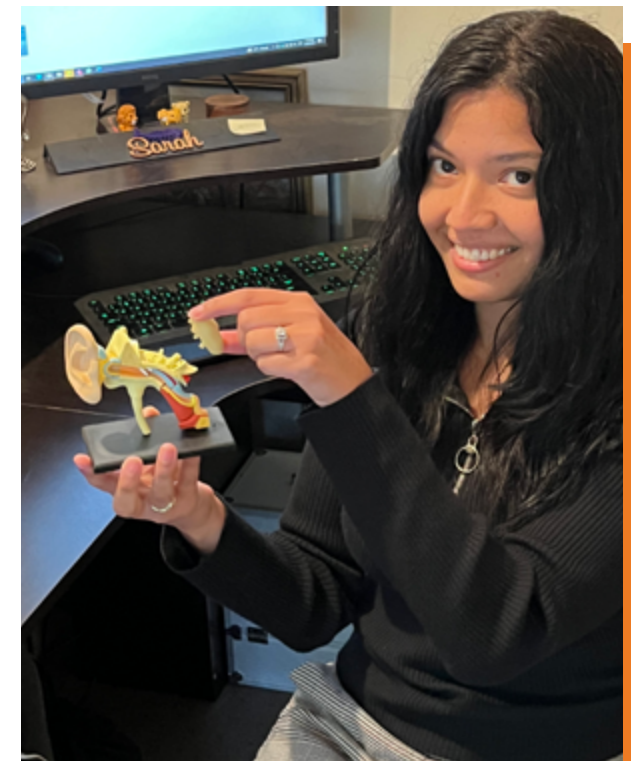
More than six years since her surgery and study, Sarah has been making an impact on many young lives with her teaching skills. But her desire to become an audiologist and give back to the medical field that has supported her for so long is what drives her studies and ambitions.

"My passion has always been in audiology. I have always wanted to help others and while teaching has done that, I wanted to do more!"

While at the start of her audiology journey, Sarah is already thinking of ways to support regional communities.

"I really would love to open a hearing clinic around where I live to cater for hearing aid and cochlear implant users. It is later down the track," she said. "But I know that for many in regional Victoria, even where I live now which is pretty close to the city, you still have to go into Melbourne for many of the services associated with cochlear implants.

"I do have a long way to go with my study, but I am excited."





EARLY CHILDHOOD

Interreach is the local Early Childhood Partner assisting children younger than 6 years old with developmental delay/concern and children younger than 9 years old with a diagnosed disability, and their families/carers. The Early Childhood approach supports children and their families in developing the skills they need to participate meaningfully in their daily lives and achieve the best possible outcomes throughout their lives.

MARCO’S REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF GROWTH

Meet Marco, an adorable three-year-old boy with a bright smile and a love of music.

Marco lives with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), but his determination and the support he receives from Interreach have paved the way for incredible progress in leading an independent life.

Mum Rayleen said Marco’s increasing confidence had opened new friendships and opportunities.

“Marco has always been drawn to music and spends hours playing with his toys and figurines, but we noticed some delays in his development, and we knew we needed to seek guidance and support,” Rayleen said.

“Interreach has been a game-changer for us. They understood our concerns and helped us set goals to support Marco’s learning and development.”

One of the key players in Marco’s journey is Malinda, his dedicated Early Childhood Coordinator at Interreach in Shepparton.

“Working with Marco and his family has been incredibly rewarding,” Malinda said. “We have established a strong connection, and I’m always here to offer guidance and celebrate Marco’s progress.”

Marco faced difficulties with his expressive and receptive language skills, often hesitating to engage in conversations and struggling to convey his wants and needs.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTICIPANTS	FIRST PLANS COMPLETED	RE-ASSESSMENT OF PLANS	NEW CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SUPPORTED
4,233	1,761	1,197	2,229

“It was challenging to watch Marco get frustrated when he couldn’t communicate effectively,” Rayleen recalls. “But with Intereach’s support, we’ve seen remarkable improvements.”

Intereach’s family-centered approach played a pivotal role in Marco’s progress. “Intereach, and Zanda Speech and Occupational Therapy understood our individual goals, expectations, values, and everyday life,” Rayleen said. “They tailored their interventions to meet Marco’s unique needs.”



With allocated funding from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Marco engaged with speech pathologists and occupational therapists to work on his goals at home and in various environments. He also attended Play Dates with Play Mates, an enriching program that enhanced his understanding and independence.

“Marco’s growth has been truly remarkable,”

- Malinda.

“He is developing the skills to produce two-syllable combinations and has gained the confidence to express himself and seek attention.”

Although Marco needs substantial support from his allied health team as he is nonverbal, he is tracking along well and has been learning how to communicate with a device that the family hopes to buy with NDIS funding.

Marco’s love for music has flourished during his sessions.

“He lights up when he’s participating in singing and music,” Rayleen said proudly. “And he’s becoming more engaged with his therapists, actively seeking interactions. It’s incredible to witness his increasing confidence.”

The positive changes in Marco’s development have not only impacted him but have also transformed the entire family.

“The NDIS, through Intereach, has given me the tools and support I needed to better understand and advocate for Marco.”

“It has made a significant difference in our lives.” Rayleen said.

Marco has been accepted into the Intensive Latrobe Program, which will provide him with comprehensive intervention targeting all areas of his development. The Latrobe program has advised and recommended Marco engage in another 12 months of a step-down approach to help him transition to school.

“Seeing Rayleen’s confidence grow and witnessing their joy as Marco reaches new milestones is incredibly rewarding,” Malinda said.

“It is what makes coming to work at Intereach each day so fulfilling.”

Intereach’s commitment to a family-centered approach ensures every support and intervention is tailored to Marco and his family’s best interests. Early interventions have empowered Marco to develop the skills he needs to excel in his everyday life.

Rayleen also proudly announced she raised \$380 for the walk towards Autism awareness fundraiser.

With Intereach by his side, Marco’s journey is filled with hope, progress, and endless possibilities.



AGED CARE SERVICES

As we get older, sometimes we need a helping hand to stay independent. Interreach understands how important it is for our aged care clients to stay living in their own home and to keep active in the local community. A range of support is available to people aged 65 and over, or 50 and over for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, that is flexible, personalised, and affordable.

The past year has been a period of significant growth and transformation for Interreach as we continue to provide essential aged care services across the communities we serve.

We are proud to report that due to Macedon Ranges Shire Council, City of Greater Bendigo and Loddon Shire relinquishing their Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) contract, we have expanded our geographical footprint for Interreach Aged Care Services by an impressive 11,447sqkm (equivalent to one-tenth of the area of Victoria). This expansion reflects our commitment to ensuring our services reach those in need across a wider region.

From 8 May to early August, our dedicated team started providing services to 432 clients. These services encompass the core offerings of the CHSP, including domestic assistance, personal care, social support, and home modifications/maintenance, as well as meals in Bendigo and Loddon, and a social support group in Loddon. These services will help to enhance the quality of life for our older community members.

The successful transition and expansion of our services would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication and support of our entire team. We would like to express our gratitude to the teams in rostering, IT support, Communications, HR, and Finance for their invaluable contributions. The attendance of staff at two information sessions in Macedon Ranges contributed to the smooth transition.

SERVICES DELIVERED	HOME CARE PACKAGES SERVICE HOURS	MEALS DELIVERED	DOLLARS SPENT ON HOME MODIFICATIONS	NEW CLIENTS
101,853	66,884	22,231	\$ 275,097.51	1419

We have taken the opportunity to reflect on our learnings from this period of expansion and how we can share this knowledge and insights to support the changing Aged Care provider landscape in our communities

The transition has led to the expansion of our aged care team, in office-based roles and service delivery. Team Leaders for Community Support Workers and Volunteers, additional Care Coordinators, and Program Managers have all been employed. We also welcome the appointment of our first Clinical Manager Sally Murphy, who comes to us with a wealth of experience as a nurse educator with major metropolitan hospitals and a passion for ensuring the best possible clinical outcomes for those in our care.

In line with our commitment to providing the best care, we recently participated in the End of Life Directions in Aged Care (ELDAC) Working Together Program.

The program aims to connect service providers in the specialist palliative care services, primary care and aged care sector to support community aged care services to ensure quality care for older Australians with life-limiting or terminal illnesses.

Several of our aged care staff, led by our Aged Care Links Program Manager, Sue Filipovich, took part in a two-day Program of Experience in the Palliative Care Approach (PEPA) training program, expanding their knowledge about end-of-life care, including the benefits of advance care planning, the delivery of care and local services, resources and supports.

Throughout the year, our team also actively engaged with the community through various initiatives and activities including:

- Aged care information sessions in Jindera, Walla Walla, Henty and Culcairn as part of NSW Seniors Week activities.
- Participation in the Riddells Creek Autumn Community Market in March.
- Representation at the Bendigo CHSP Careers Transition Expo in April.
- Delivering a Navigating Aged Care Services presentation at the Riddells Creek Neighbourhood House in May.
- Guest speaking at the Albury Probus and Albury Inner Wheel meetings.

Finally, we are honoured to receive wonderful praise from a representative of Seniors Rights Service, a testament to the exceptional dedication and care provided by our aged care team.

“In my experience working with case managers and coordinators for community care, you all stand above all of the rest. You care about your clients and go above and beyond for them. I always feel comfortable referring people to you or tell existing clients that they are in great hands.”



NEW HOME CARE
PACKAGE CLIENTS

90

NEW COMMONWEALTH
HOME SUPPORT
PROGRAMME CLIENTS

1,217

TOTAL AGED CARE
CLIENTS

3,402

TOTAL HOME CARE
PACKAGE CLIENTS

439

COMMONWEALTH HOME
SUPPORT PROGRAMME
CLIENTS

2,699



FAMILY DAY CARE

Intereach Family Day Care provides care and education to children aged 0-13 years in a home environment with a registered educator. Educators are trained and supported by the experienced and highly qualified Intereach Coordination Unit. Intereach Family Day Care operates in NSW and Victoria, offering flexible childcare options for full-time, part-time, casual, overnight and weekend care.

We can proudly reflect on the significant expansion of our Family Day Care services in the western Riverina. This endeavour has been driven by our commitment to support families and provide high-quality care and education.

Our journey started on January 30 2023, when we welcomed 16 experienced educators to the Intereach family. Their partnership signifies more than just an expansion; it represents our dedication to making a meaningful impact on local families.

Rebecca Fitzpatrick, Family Day Care Nominated Supervisor, shared her excitement:

“We believe this initiative will have an immediate positive effect on families in the region. We’re looking forward to delivering our services to support local families with the quality care and support they deserve.”

This expansion placed eight educators in Griffith, three in Leeton, three in Narrandera, and two in Hay. It’s a testament to our commitment to growth, and it significantly strengthens the Family Day Care team.

We now have more than 70 Family Day Care educators across the Intereach footprint, and we continue to build upon the momentum from educators who joined us in 2020 and 2022.

Our educators bring expertise and passion to their roles. They understand the unique value of Family Day Care, offering families quality and flexibility in care and education.

As we embark on a campaign of recruitment, we reflect on this journey. We encourage individuals in early childhood, social services, and health care sectors to consider a career with us. Being an Intereach Family Day Care Educator means enjoying flexible hours, maintaining an excellent work/life balance, receiving support from our Coordination Unit, and being part of a network of educators who provide mutual support.

We are proud to share that many of our Family Day Care Educators have been nominated for the 2023 Regional Educator Awards. This recognition reflects their outstanding contributions to early childhood education and care in our communities, and we celebrate their dedication.

This expansion and the recognition of our educators are moments of reflection and pride in our journey. We thank our community for their ongoing support as we continue to nurture and empower families across our footprint.



Did you know that Intereach Family Day Care is a registered Smiles 4 Miles Early Childhood Service?

Smiles 4 Miles is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria which aims to improve the oral health of children and their families.

Educators implement learning experiences for children around these key messages of Drink Well, Eat Well, Clean Well.

QUALIFIED EDUCATORS

74

FAMILIES SUPPORTED

615

CHILDREN IN CARE

852

HOURS OF CARE DELIVERED

388,561



OOSH/Vacation Care children attending the annual OOSH Colour Run

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Intereach Out Of School Hours care (OOSH) provides quality centre-based childcare for primary school-aged children in a safe and caring environment. After School Care operates during NSW school terms and Vacation Care operates during NSW school holidays.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE ATTENDANCES **8,080**

VACATION CARE ATTENDANCES **2,746**

THE RIGHT CARE FOR ZAC

Our family became part of Intereach's Out of School Hours (OOSH) care when our eldest son, Zac, started school in 2020. Zac immediately embraced OOSH and even requested to attend during school holidays whenever I had time off. This year, we enrolled Zac's younger sister, Lucy, in the program as well.

When deciding on Zac's school enrolment, I, as a working parent, sought advice from fellow parents about after-school care options. During an informative session at the school, I discovered the array of services offered by Intereach, including the Vacation Care program. This prompted me to reach out to the OOSH manager and initiate the enrolment process.

My husband runs a small business in town, and I work full-time. Both our families reside nearby, but with our parents also working, we needed a dependable service to ensure our children's safety after school, especially considering my occasional out-of-town work commitments. Consequently, our children have permanent after-school care bookings for five days a week, and they attend during school holidays around

99 per cent of the time due to limited leave during peak periods for both of us.



The educators at Intereach have been incredibly welcoming and consistently go the extra mile to engage the children. The sports skills workshops are particularly popular among the older boys and some girls. Zac and Lucy both thoroughly enjoy the craft activities and techniques taught. In fact, Lucy has been finger knitting since term 1 and willingly shares her skills.

The children often rave about the scrumptious and filling afternoon tea provided during after-school care, and the weekly educational program caters to a wide range of ages and interests, ensuring inclusivity based on the children's requests.

Moreover, the educators genuinely care about our children's development and celebrate their milestones with us. An example of this is when Lucy lost her first tooth during vacation care. The tooth was carefully preserved, placed in a ziplock bag, and kept safe until the end of the day when we picked her up. This level of care makes us feel like we're part of an extended family.

Catherine
Zac and Lucy's mother



FAMILY AND MENTAL HEALTH

Family and Mental Health Services provide a range of programs and support across the Intereach NSW footprint. These include Family Links, Reach Out And Relax (ROAR), Children and Parenting Service, Aboriginal Health Program, Intensive Family Preservation, Safer Communities, Community Centres, Connected Communities and Sprinkles Playgroup.

Each Family and Mental Health Services program provides specialist and unique support to their target groups including to families, parents, carers, Aboriginal people, people of diverse cultural backgrounds, young people and children. Support is provided through one-on-one engagement, group work and community activities. Although comprised of many different programs, the Family and Mental Health team is a cohesive unit of experienced practitioners who provide trauma-informed, compassionate and non-judgmental approaches to all those who we lend a helping hand to. From parenting programs to early intervention for young people and lots in between, we are always happy to help!

INTENSIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION

HOME VISITS	ADULTS AND CHILDREN SUPPORTED THROUGH CASE MANAGEMENT	YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED THROUGH CASE MANAGEMENT	YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED THROUGH GROUP PROGRAMS
400+	52	12	50+

COOPERATIVE LEGAL SERVICE DELIVERY PROGRAM

In April 2023, Intereach established a collaborative venture with Legal Aid NSW, marking the inception of an impactful partnership. In this alliance, Melissa Van Lierop assumed the pivotal role of Regional CLSD Coordinator for the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery program (CLSD Program) under our organisation’s banner.

The CLSD program actively supports 12 regional justice partnerships spread across various regions of rural and remote NSW. These partnerships span from the lands of the Wilyakali in the west to the Bundjalung Nation in the north, encompassing the Awabakal lands, and extending further south to the territories of the Yuin people.

The core objective of each partnership is to cultivate a robust network of essential legal and community services. This network is meticulously designed to enhance accessibility to justice and uplift legal and social outcomes for individuals facing social or economic disadvantages or displacement. Despite its lengthy title, we often refer to the CLSD Program as ‘Justice Partnerships’ for simplicity.

The funding agreement between Legal Aid NSW and our regional coordination service clearly outlines the responsibilities of both the service and the regional coordinator, ensuring the seamless operation of this vital initiative.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

TARGETED EARLY INTERVENTION

Our Targeted Early Intervention Programs address specific challenges that people and families may be facing. We do this by providing timely support and tailored services to improve the wellbeing of individuals and families.

PROGRAM OVERVIEWS

- **Sprinkles Playgroup** (Griffith)
Sprinkles is a multicultural playgroup available to the multicultural families in the Griffith area. The purpose of Sprinkles is to provide a comfortable and safe place for parents and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.
Sprinkles embraces cultural diversity by exploring different knowledge, traditions, food and holidays and runs activities encouraging child development and school readiness where appropriate.
- **Indigenous Supported Playgroups** (Wagga only)
Organise and run playgroup activities with Aboriginal children and parents that encourage child development and school-readiness.
- **Indigenous Advocacy and Support** (Wagga, Leeton, Narrandera)
Provides one-on-one support with an Aboriginal Worker to listen and problem solve issues or circumstances with Aboriginal community members.
- **Indigenous Community Engagement** (Wagga, Leeton, Narrandera)
Organises and runs events/festivals in collaboration with Aboriginal community stakeholders that meet the needs of the people in the target groups.

- **Family Capacity Building**
Provides structured case-planned intervention to address attachment, regulation, and development within the context of parent-child relationships.

- **Mentoring / Peer Support**
Organise and run peer-support groups to provide access to information, shared activities, and social support to meet the needs of people in the target groups. (e.g. new parents groups)
- **Parenting Programs**
Organise and run evidence-based parenting programs to meet the needs of people in the target groups, either one-on-one or in a group.
- **Information, Advice and Referral**
Provide information, advice, and supported referrals at community centre locations and within targeted support group work and casework interventions.





ABORIGINAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Aboriginal Health Program practises prevention and early intervention approaches, encouraging individuals and communities to access and refer to services. Its education and awareness activities focus on changing attitudes toward family violence and abuse solutions. Responding to local needs by engaging with communities, including Elders and other community leaders and relevant government agencies, encourage healing and promotion of Aboriginal independence and empowerment.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE AND LEGAL CHECK-UP CLINIC

During May, Intereach joined forces with Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CLSD), Hume Riverina Legal Service, and Legal Aid to host a free birth certificate and legal check-up clinic in Deniliquin. This collaborative endeavour was specifically designed to offer crucial support to our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members living in NSW and Victoria.

The impact of this event was immediately evident. Eighteen individuals, previously without a birth certificate, accessed this essential piece of identification. Several participants had follow-up appointments with legal experts to address their broader legal concerns. These one-on-one consultations offered personalised solutions and guidance, helping individuals navigate complex legal matters.

Community members received legal health checklists, enabling them to better understand and prioritise their legal needs. This practical tool empowers individuals to take control of their legal wellbeing.

Perhaps most importantly, the clinic introduced participants to the avenues available for accessing free legal assistance within their community. Those attending learned how to self-refer and, when needed, seek assistance from the dedicated staff at Intereach. We are proud to have played a role in helping community members obtain vital documentation and access the necessary legal resources.

WELCOME BABY TO COUNTRY CEREMONY

Across Australia, Aboriginal families are reviving the tradition of welcoming new babies to Country. This traditional ceremony involves smearing the baby's face with ochre, adorning them with a weaved headband crafted by Aunties, and gifting them a possum skin. This skin is reminiscent of those used by generations past to swaddle newborns.

The significance of this ceremony lies in its power to initiate a profound cultural connection for these young ones. It's a step toward cultivating a sense of identity that was historically denied to many Aboriginal people. Culture protects families and individuals. It carries the hope of reducing the alarming number of children separated from their families - a distressing practice that continues to this day.

Crucially, this ceremony enjoys the support of First 1000 Days Australia, a movement dedicated to empowering Aboriginal families by equipping them with the resources and knowledge needed to nurture their children's health and wellbeing from pregnancy to the age of two.

In this heartwarming gathering, held at our Deniliquin office, 15 babies, accompanied by their parents, grandparents, and other guests, were lovingly welcomed. About 60 people, including respected Elders, attended. The resounding feedback from attendees was nothing short of glowing, with many eagerly asking, "Are we going to have another one?"

Adding to the significance of the day, Uncles extended a warm welcome to the baby boys, while Aunties did the same for the baby girls. Each child also received gifts, including certificates, Aboriginal storybooks, baby essentials, ochre, and plants.

This "Welcome Baby to Country Ceremony" is a testament to the enduring strength and resilience of Aboriginal culture, as it strives to nurture the roots of identity and family bonds for the newest members of the community.





CHILDREN & PARENTING SERVICES

Family Services offers families practical support, information, advice, referral and opportunities to develop their parenting and household management skills. The team provides tailored support for families at home or in the community.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

New Parents Group

“Attending the New Parents group has been the single most valuable activity I’ve participated in since giving birth to my son, Joe. Meeting other mums on the exact same journey and being able to share with them has been a godsend. Learning from all the different agencies each week on how to best care for our babies has set us up for success in the first year of motherhood.

I am so grateful for our New Parents Group. I feel we will still be meeting together for many years (and babies) to come. Thank you Intereach and Deidre from the Families team for facilitating this important group!”



Introduction to infant first aid

“The infant first aid course I attended was informative and thorough, which relieves some of the stress around caring for a baby in an emergency. The information we received was easy to understand and it was great to learn first aid and CPR specific to infants. I now feel equipped and prepared for any emergency. Thanks so much!”

KIMOCHIS PROGRAM

Intereach's Children and Parenting Services team introduced the Kimochis program to several schools and pre-schools this year.

The social-emotional learning and character education program is based on research that shows when children are taught social, emotional, and behavioural skills at a young age, there is a positive effect on how they problem-solve and interact with their peers later in life. Kimochi, which translates to "feeling" in Japanese, is the heart of this program.

Kimochis aren't merely plush characters; they each embody a unique emotion, brought to life through engaging storybooks. These seemingly simple toys wield profound power as communication tools that support children as they learn to recognise and navigate their emotions, demonstrate care and concern for others, forge positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and tackle challenging situations constructively.

The impact of the Kimochis program resonates through the experiences of schools such as Hay Primary School and Barham Pre-school.

Fiona, from Hay Primary School, said: "We have continued to work with our Kimochis program with some great results, especially putting your BRAVE in front. This has had the most impact in my classroom. My class really enjoyed our sessions with Intereach. The blend of toys, stories, and visuals caters to diverse learning styles. Having weekly lessons is definitely the best way to keep practising the messages and covering the concepts."



Thank you for making the time to visit 1S each week to facilitate the Kimochis program and introduce HPS to a wonderful way of learning about our feelings. We look forward to our continued learning through Kimochis."

At Barham Pre-school, the Kookaburra Room has embraced Kimochis for two years, witnessing the program's positive impact firsthand.

"We have had positive feedback from the educators, children and families. Educators have noticed children being able to relate some feelings and emotions back to the Kimochi characters. Educators have also observed children implement some of the strategies they have learnt in the program such as 'Calm Down Breathing – Smell the flower blow out the candle' and Cat 'Band aid - redo,'" said Helen Ford, Program Manager Family Mental Health Program.

"Families are equally engaged, with children eagerly discussing their adventures, and what they have learnt, at home."

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SAFER COMMUNITIES

Safer Communities, based out of our Corowa and Albury offices, provides intensive case management services to vulnerable young people to build their skills, achieve their goals and feel part of their community.

Our Youth Workers engage one-on-one to provide support with general wellbeing and life-coping skills, participation in day-to-day activities, including school and work, pursuing personal goals, and developing friendships and positive relationships at home and in the wider community.

This year, Safer Communities has supported several young people to achieve some awesome goals and engage in some fantastic opportunities, that might have otherwise not been possible.

Young people in the program have re-engaged in school and found a safe educational environment where they can work towards their year 10 certificates.



We have had young people secure apprenticeships and plan small, manageable goals they have been working towards, as well as long-term career dreams, such as joining the military.

Young people are becoming independent by having their voice heard and basic needs met. In turn, two of the young people we support now feel confident to speak up and have joined Federation Youth Council to help advocate for young people's needs in their community.

Participants have obtained their driver's licence, attended school camps and engaged in new hobbies and interests, with thanks to the support of the program. Most of all, many young people have found hope and a sense of being cared for.

Despite their many hardships, they have found the inner strength, worth, and confidence to believe in themselves and look towards a positive future.

Bec and Beris, from Safer Communities, foster nurturing, non-judgemental and positive relationships with these young people, which allow them to shine.

We are privileged to get to know and lend a hand to these brilliant young people and help shape their bright futures because everyone deserves to have people cheering them on!



COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Intereach Community Transport supports older people, people living with disability, including children and their carers, people who are transport disadvantaged and Department of Veterans' Affairs support recipients, to stay independent and connected to their local community.

In the past year, Intereach's Community Transport services have been bustling with exciting activities and events that have enriched the lives of our clients. One standout event was our social group outing to the Elvis exhibition in Bendigo. With overwhelmingly positive feedback from our clients, we are keen to continue exploring art and culture in our region.

One of our clients, Angela, expressed her gratitude in a heartfelt message:

"Hi Emma & Intereach staff. What a wonderful day we all had at the Elvis display. Thank you very much for organising it. Our bus driver, Barry, was great. The bus driver and everyone in our bus said they had a great time. Many thanks, Angela and Anne."

Throughout the year, our Community Transport team worked diligently to ensure our clients could take part in various activities. During Seniors Week, we organised trips to movie sessions and a range of engaging activities.

We also represented Intereach alongside our Aged Care team at the opening of the Deniliquin town hall. The festive season saw us spreading joy as we took our clients on a Christmas light tour of Deniliquin. This annual tradition brought our community together and provided a wonderful opportunity for socialising. The Deniliquin Community Transport team has successfully organised these tours for two consecutive years, further strengthening our bonds with our clients.

Furthermore, we actively engaged with our local community by presenting to the Griffith Fall Prevention Group and taking part in the Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service NAIDOC family fun day, and Griffith Community Services expo. These events allowed us to connect with our community, share information about the support and services we offer, and forge meaningful relationships.

Unfortunately, our active calendar faced disruptions due to the NSW and Victoria floods. Planned visits to the Moama Lights and Griffith Spring Festival were cancelled because of the flooding in those communities, but our dedication to our clients and community remains unwavering.



TRIPS COMPLETED
16,666

DENILIQIN 6,137
GRIFFITH 10,529

KILOMETRES TRAVELLED
395,783

DENILIQIN 214,550
GRIFFITH 181,233



REACH OUT AND RELAX - ROAR

ROAR aims to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. It provides early intervention support to people up to the age of 18, and their families, who may be showing early signs of, or are at risk of developing a mental health issue.

My experience with Rainbow on the Plains

In 2022 my family and I made the trip to Hay for Rainbow on the Plains Festival for the first time. We were fortunate enough to be able to take my entire family to enjoy the festival while I was there as part of my role in the ROAR program. While at the event, I had the privilege of walking in the march. It was an electric atmosphere and something I had not witnessed or been a part of before. There was an intense sense of positivity and inclusiveness from the entire community, and it was a very emotional experience for me.

After completing the march and taking note of the excitement and pride from the whole community, I reconnected with my family including my wife Sharon, daughters Lilly and Poppy, niece Tara and my son Lewis. They were all in tears, each of them bursting with pride that I had been given the opportunity to participate in the march. They all expressed how important it was and how proud they were that I had been out there raising awareness for the mental health of young people.

My son Lewis, in particular, was very emotional. He explained that he had never felt so accepted in his life. He shared that being a transgender person was sometimes very isolating but to have the opportunity to be in a place where he felt complete acceptance not only by his family, friends and loved ones but the entire community at large, was something he had never felt before. He said he had always been proud of me but seeing what we were achieving in that march was an amazing thing to witness and he was so proud to be my son.

We hugged and cried together, and it truly was an amazing moment as a parent. We agreed as a family that we would attend the festival every year.

The entire event, from my perspective, was a huge success. We engaged with hundreds of people, speaking about youth mental health, inclusivity and acceptance. It was one of the proudest times in my life, as a father and professional who has supported people in need for more than 10 years.

It is rare you get to see and feel the impact you can have on people working in the community services field, but this occasion was one of those. I am grateful for the opportunity through the ROAR program to participate in Rainbow on the Plains.

This was my and my family's experience, and I'm sure this is just one of thousands of similar experiences for everyone who attended.

Paul Stevens,
Child Youth and Family Worker - ROAR
Pronouns: He/Him/His





FINANCE

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	14,164,822	13,005,228
Trade and other receivables	1,409,104	981,906
Other assets	315,439	282,074
Total current assets	15,889,365	14,269,208
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	3,665,579	4,084,798
Right-of-use assets	3,561,915	4,124,524
Intangibles	24,591	26,839
Total non-current assets	7,252,085	8,236,161
Total assets	23,141,450	22,505,369
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	2,477,317	2,347,164
Contract liabilities	3,425,916	2,469,424
Lease liabilities	837,320	867,700
Borrowings	77,004	77,004
Employee benefits	2,546,327	1,967,364
Provisions	245,946	245,946
Total current liabilities	9,609,830	7,974,602

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liabilities	3,355,043	3,818,698
Borrowings	83,381	160,385
Employee benefits	468,336	377,089
Total non-current liabilities	3,906,760	4,356,172
Total liabilities	13,516,590	12,330,774
Net assets	9,624,860	10,174,595
Equity		
Reserves	435,960	435,960
Retained surplus	9,188,900	9,738,635
Total equity	9,624,860	10,174,595

FINANCE

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from customers	46,428,085	42,483,097
Payments to employees and suppliers	(44,400,210)	(41,218,958)
Interest received	373,588	27,603
Interest paid	(25,161)	(10,190)
Interest paid - leases	(250,344)	(307,408)
Net cash from operating activities	2,125,958	974,144
Cash flows from investing activities		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	18,591	121,682
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(19,759)	(276,490)
Payments for intangibles	(28,650)	-
Net cash used in investing activities	(29,818)	(154,808)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of loans	(77,004)	(77,004)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(859,542)	(1,041,873)
Net cash used in financing activities	(936,546)	(1,118,877)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	1,159,594	(299,541)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	13,005,228	13,304,769
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	14,164,822	13,005,228



FUNDING PARTNERS

We are able to make a difference in the communities where we live and work through the funding we receive and partnerships with a wide range of community, non-profit and government-funded organisations.

- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Transgrid
- Transport for NSW
- Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network
 - Services Australia
 - Victorian Department of Health
 - Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
 - Good Shepherd
 - NSW Department of Communities and Justice
 - Department of Health and Aged Care
 - Legal Aid NSW
 - NSW Department of Education
 - Department of Social Services
 - NSW Health
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs



Communities
& Justice



Education &
Communities



Health



Transport
for NSW



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources



Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



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