



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Acknowledgment of country, traditional owners & community

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

We are a child safe organisation.

We welcome members of the LGBTIQ+ community and their allies.





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OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

WHO WE ARE

Junction Support Services is dedicated to improving the quality of life and making a positive impact for the people in our communities. One goal drives everything we do – to build strong, thriving communities.

Junction now offer more than 40 programs providing homelessness support, family violence support, disability support, youth support and more.

Junction have been nominated for a range of awards and were a finalist at the 2023 Albury Wodonga Business Awards in the Outstanding Business in Health and Social Assistance category.

Junction's Case Management Team was named a Robin Clark Making a Difference Award finalist at the 2022 Victorian Protecting Children Awards, and at the 2023 Awards, our Re-engagement and Community Safety team was a finalist in the Engaging Kids In School category.

These awards recognised the exceptional contribution of our team who have worked to directly improve the lives of children, young people and their families and carers in Victoria.

With over 260 employees Junction continues to put people first. As we reflect on the past year in our 2023 Annual Report, we also re-imagine the future.

We continue to broaden our reach, expand our service offerings and work towards brighter futures for the people in our communities.

Board Of Directors

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Sherril Hodgens

Vern Hilditch

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Acting Colleen Crispe

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Service Manager - Homelessness & Specialist Youth Services

Katherine Hodgens

Service Manager - Research & Development

Annie Shirley

Community Development Manager

Rachel Habgood

Quality & Safety Manager

Peter Greaves

Project Lead - Community Space

Colleen Tait



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON & CEO

We are delighted to share our 2023 Annual Report and we are filled with great enthusiasm and optimism, collectively reimagining the future of Junction Support Services. Over the past year, we have witnessed remarkable progress and transformation, signalling a new chapter of innovation and impact in our organisation's history.

Throughout the year, our dedicated teams have contributed towards rebranding Junction Support Services a huge undertaking, ensuring we can reflect Junction's commitment to aligning with the evolving needs of our community.

This year Junction brought together key stakeholders to contribute to our five-year strategic plan. In the upcoming years, you will witness this plan guide our work, under the pillars of People, Infrastructure, Organisational Identity, and Innovation and Sustainability.

Junction has also continued to be at the forefront of advocacy for youth, leading the charge in driving awareness and action to support the well-being of our young people. This year these efforts have resulted in the development of a dedicated youth space, co-designed by our own YO3690 in the heart of Wodonga, and the exciting announcement of a Youth Foyer. We believe these achievements reflect our unwavering dedication to empowering and nurturing the potential of our youth.

Furthermore, our expansion into providing services in Gippsland marks a significant milestone in our efforts to reach and support more young people within regional communities. Our innovative models in residential care have set a new standard in delivering high-quality, person-centred support to those in our care, and we are excited to continue on this work into the new year. Moreover, new programs such as the Victims Assistance Program reaffirms our commitment to providing comprehensive assistance to those affected by trauma and hardships.

This past year has also brought to light the unprecedented need within our communities for support services – with more than 2,400 individuals seeking support from Junction. We are incredibly proud of the unwavering dedication and hard work exhibited by every volunteer and team member at Junction Support Services. Their commitment to delivering vital support to our community, especially in the face of such extraordinary demand, is a testament to our collective resilience and compassion.

As we look ahead, let us continue to reimagine our future with integrity, innovation, collaboration, respect, diversity and inclusivity. Together, we will navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, we will empower people to achieve a brighter future.

Neville McCormick, Chairman

Megan Hanley, CEO





WHAT DRIVES Building Strong Thriving

Our Purpose

We empower people to achieve

Value



Strategic



DRIVES US

g Communities Together

urpose

achieve a brighter future

ues



c Pillars

People

- Learning & Organisational Development
- Team Wellbeing
- Community Voice
- Stakeholder Engagement

Infrastructure

- Inclusive and Productive Environment
- Service Administration
- Systems and Processes

COO REPORT

Junction has been supporting local communities across Ovens Murray and Goulburn for 34 years, with a commitment to providing these communities with innovative, place-based support. Our local communities continue to experience increasing hardship at the hand of inflation and the housing crisis. Across the course of the year, Junction received an unprecedented number of requests for service. The team worked in collaboration to support 2,474 children, young people and adults. This is 1,000 more people supported when compared to the previous year. This is a marked increase in support provision and a true reflection of the challenging times being experienced within our local communities.

While the demand on service has been at an unprecedented level, our teams have embraced these requests, met the individual needs of those seeking support and reimagined the way we can support the community. This has led to expanding and diversifying partnership opportunities, regional and state-wide advocacy to promote the need for additional and early intervention resourcing, as well as including the voice of the young people in the design of our service delivery.

We have seen many exciting initiatives take shape over the course of the past year, inclusive of the Wodonga Youth Foyer and our early intervention and diversionary program, Diverge. This is in addition to the YO3690 going from strength to strength as a local youth advisory group who have been pivotal in the design and implementation of Wodonga's youth space, Windbreak 3690.

Furthermore, the launch of Road Ready, a learner driver program for young people in Southern regional NSW, is a timely and much needed support for young people to gain their probational licence across the border.

Junction is a committed and passionate regional community service provider who acknowledges each

region possess unique characteristics and needs. For this reason, Junction embraces a place-based approach when supporting members of each regional community. This year Junction expanded services to regional Gippsland and commence caring for young people in Residential Care. With over 20 years' experience providing Residential Care in Ovens Murray, the organisation was excited to make this move and form part of the community, develop partnerships with local stakeholders and identify key local needs. Junction worked closely with local providers to transition numerous Residential Care houses and welcomed many new young people into our homes.

Across the past year the Junction team has expanded considerably, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all new team members and extend our thanks for their contributions to support the communities to build brighter futures. I would like to sincerely thank all staff, our management team and volunteers for their efforts. Once again, the positive outcomes and vision to provide support in regional communities could not be achieved without their commitment, dedication and team work.

As Chief Operating Officer, I welcome your feedback and can be contacted at michelle.fell@junction.org.au or 02 6043 7400.



2023

OUR IMPACT

2,474

In the past 12 months Junction Support Services worked with 2,474 children, young people and families, Here's what some of them had to say about their time with Junction.

I'm feeling much happier, have been able to talk about my father, and my relationship with mum much stronger.

I was listened to and cared for.

I was listened to and cared for.

I had trouble controlling my emotions, but this gave me control.

I'm being kinder and nice to friends and not starting fights, closer friendships, playing netball.

This helped me find ways to be more happy.

I feel more relaxed and not stressed as much as I used to be.

I have developed skills to help me regulate my daughters and have a deeper understanding of their needs.

I'm feeling much happier, have been able to talk about my father, and my relationship with mum much stronger.

The biggest change? My son realising his words have an effect.

The most helpful and understanding organisation I have ever dealt with.

This has been an excellent life-changing service providing support, time and understanding of my children. My worker has been a wealth of information in all areas of child development and play. I feel so lucky to have had this experience.

GIPPSLAND TRANSITION

For over 20 years Junction's Continued Care program and dedicated team of carers have been committed to delivering high quality services to ensure safety and stability for young people in out-of-home care who have experienced significant trauma and adversity.

Junction Support Services is proud to announce its expansion into the Gippsland area as a new residential care provider for young people.

As a regionally based residential care provider, Junction understands the unique needs and challenges that young people in regional areas face, and we are dedicated to providing tailored and responsive care that meets their specific needs. Our Team in Gippsland is committed to offering a comprehensive residential care service, aligned with our evidence based, trauma informed Continued Care Practice Model. We recognise the importance of creating a home-like atmosphere where young people feel secure, valued, and empowered to grow and navigate the transition to independence.

In transitioning into the Gippsland area, our organisation commenced working closely with the local community, government agencies, and other service providers to establish strong partnerships and collaborations and we are excited to continue building these relationships with local stakeholders. Junction will continue to work to ensure that our residential care services are integrated into the broader support network available in the region, allowing young people to access holistic and coordinated support. This collaborative approach will enable Junction to leverage local knowledge, resources, and expertise to deliver the highest quality of care for the young people within our care.

As we continue to embark on this new endeavour, Junction Support Services looks forward to positively impacting the lives of young people in the Gippsland region. Junction's team in Gippsland is dedicated to upholding our values of collaboration, respect, integrity, diversity and inclusion, and innovation as we continue to further establish and deliver residential care services that make a meaningful difference in the lives of the young individuals we work alongside. We are excited about the opportunity to contribute to the well-being and future success of young people in Gippsland and are committed to being a supportive, trusted, and inclusive presence in the community.





19 

Junction delivers services from 19 different sites across regional Victoria.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Case Study

Jake* has been in Out of Home Care for most of his childhood, and Junction was able to support his next step into the community, given the level of risk and concern that surrounds Jake, was impressive.

Through intense and devoted work with Jake in a 1:1 arrangement in Gippsland, Junction supported Jake in transitioning from Residential Care into his leaving care arrangement in a positive and safe way.

Jake's Targeted Care Package is managed by Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), and the handover between Junction and VACCA ensured Jake's needs were at the centre of all decisions.

Jake is now living in his own home – an achievement for him and all those who have supported him throughout his care journey.

FAMILY REUNITED

Case Study

Jay*, now nine, had a difficult childhood marked by family violence, parental drug use, and neglect.

Child Protection involvement and frequent placements were part of his life from infancy.

With both of his parents unable to care for him, Jay went to live with his grandparents and then had many changes, living with five different Kinship families before moving into Residential Care.

Following placement breakdowns with other providers, Junction was approached to create a safe and stable environment for Jay and soon after a one-on-one placement arrangements was identified the most appropriate for Jay.

Jay had prolonged periods of dysregulation and to meet Jay's individual needs, Junction formed a specialised team tailored to meet Jay's needs.

Caregivers saw Jay's potential and drew out the funny, intelligent, and friendly young person in Jay, engaging him in activities like fishing, biking, swimming, skateboarding, and card games.

Staff aligned routines with Jay's interests and ensured a consistent environment and a team of carers. The Australian Childhood Foundation provided additional support and skill development for the caregivers.

Jay continued seeing his siblings each fortnight. Similarly, fortnightly visits between Jay and his mother and finally, Jay reconnected with his father. Weekly visits with Jay's father marked a significant breakthrough after years of absence.

Carers helped develop relationships and parenting skills and appropriate behaviour and language guidance. The plan with dad involved gradual steps for reunification, clear goals leading to overnight access, with carers support. Carers coordinated with Jay's father throughout this period to ensure consistency between the Residential Care Home and his father's home.

Jay now lives with his father, supported by Junction through a Targeted Care Package.

This case illustrates the remarkable transformation in Jay's life, from a troubled past to a stable environment alongside his father, with ongoing support from Junction.



YOUTH

Wodonga Youth Foyer Success

Junction Support Services is proud to partner with the Victorian Government, BeyondHousing and Wodonga TAFE to deliver the Wodonga Education First Youth Foyer.

Wodonga TAFE, Beyond Housing and Junction Support Services engaged with the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence to align our advocacy and in late 2022 the consortium received notification that the Wodonga Youth Foyer would go ahead.

The Youth Foyer will provide secure, supported housing, access to education, training and job-skilling for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Junction will manage support to young residents through 24/7 onsite workers and operationalise the model once the Foyer is built providing housing to 40 at-risk or disadvantaged young people becoming student residents, who commit to training and study in exchange for subsidised accommodation and support for up to two years.

The Youth Foyer initiative is about prevention and pathways for young people, which are needed more than ever in today's housing environment. Junction, as the largest provider of youth homelessness services in the region, see on a daily basis, the impact of homelessness on our young people. Junction is thrilled that Wodonga will have a Youth Foyer and young people will have the opportunity to live in a safe and stable environment, while continuing education and/or employment pathways. Junction look forward to working with the consortium and government to see this crucial resource implemented in our local community

The build is expected to be completed in mid-2025, with move-in dates for students in the months that follow.



412

In the past 12 months Junction's Re-engagement, Education and Community team has supported 412 young people to re-engage in education.

Mental Health In Residential Care

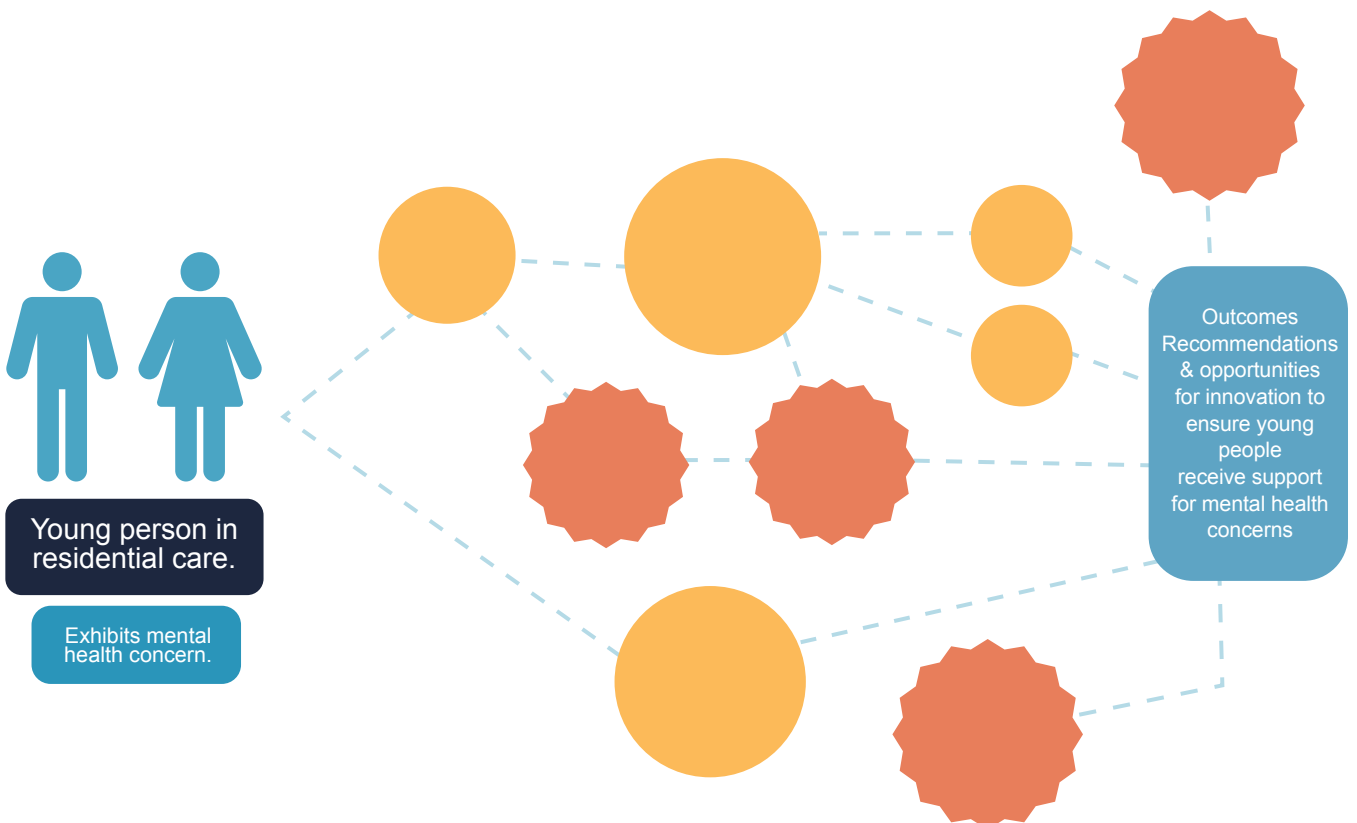
Junction Support Services has been a leading provider of residential care services in the Ovens Murray region for over 15 years. Junction has provided support to many young people to navigate the challenges of their life experiences including mental ill-health. Research shows that young people in residential care settings are more vulnerable to mental ill-health and exponentially experience psychiatric disorders when compared to the general population. Junction identified that there was a need for local collaboration to improve outcomes and provide earlier intervention for all young people in residential care services.

In 2023, Junction initiated discussions with Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to discuss the difficulties that young people in residential care experience accessing and engaging with mental health services. Junction was appointed to lead a systems change project and develop a partnership between clinical mental health and youth residential services. The project undertook qualitative research to identify systemic barriers and challenges and make recommendations to improve outcomes for young people in residential care. Cross-sectoral research was undertaken at different organisational levels and informed by youth lived experience.

This informed the development of a systems map which demonstrated the pathways, pitfalls and challenges for young people in residential care accessing mental health services in a complex system.

Themes that emerged from the research creating system barriers include lack of flexibility across services, young person's mistrust of services, and mental health stigma, and assets within the system including positive relationships between residential staff and young people, a therapeutic residential model, and care team meetings were all identified as supporting better outcomes for young people.

Further consultation has identified potential systems improvements and opportunities for innovation and collaboration which has contributed to the research findings and development of recommendations for the final report due to be released in December 2023, which will provide the draft protocols for future collaboration between the sectors to reduce barriers, increase engagement and improve outcomes for young people in residential care.





COMMUNITY SPACE

In December 2021, Junction purchased the vacant former Café Grove building in the heart of Wodonga.

Bringing this building to life, as our new Youth Space has been an exciting and rewarding project which has recently started operating. We are on track with our forecast to open a social enterprise café in the 2023-2024 year.

The plan is on track to see the café open late in 2023. It will be a training space for young people who may otherwise struggle to find opportunities for work experience and to gain job skills.

This beautiful old building certainly brought with it its fair share of challenges, given its 100 or so years of age. We're looking forward to seeing the building come alive in the warmer months and spill out onto the green space of Woodland Grove.

The social enterprise café is the next big thing for the High Street space – seeing Close Collective Café take shape. Exterior signage and furnishings for the café will also add a new element to enjoy from the street.

YO 3690 MOVIE NIGHT

Junction Support Services' youth reference group - YO 3690 - staged its first community movie night in April. The YO 3690 group began their tenure with a camp in Yackandandah where they forged relationships and learnt about leadership, networking and project management. This led to planning and screening of two movie sessions at Wodonga Senior Secondary College's Performing Arts Centre on Friday, April 28.

Group member Lu Nistico wanted the event to bring people together from all walks of life. The YO 3690 recognised that have individual interests and this should be recognised. The YO wanted the event to be for everyone so it was more relevant and age appropriate. Reclink also attended and hosted yard games. Junction's COACH counselling bus parked out the front to provide a sensory space. Fellow organiser and YO member Alex Atkins hoped YO3690 events would be a welcome addition for Wodonga's young people. The YO hoped by hosting the movie night that events like this offer a break from hardships and encourage positive connections and experiences.



196



This year the Early Help program assisted 196 families from July 2022 to July 2023.

EARLY HELP

Junction is committed to a focus on early intervention support as it is vital in stopping small problems becoming major concerns that lead to family breakdowns. Junction was excited to receive the opportunity to provide Early Help across the Ovens and Murray region in 2022 to 2023. Early Help's aims to work with parents to support them in building parenting confidence, having quality parent child interactions, responding to challenges, empowering family members to have a voice, increasing parents self-care, and increasing child and family community links.

The Early Help Program worked closely with Melrose Primary School and Wodonga West Primary School and Children's Centre with family coaches locating at the schools weekly to increase accessibility and remove barriers for families. They also attended the Wodonga Library story time, meeting families in community. These close links proved invaluable. Teachers and wellbeing staff were able to make referrals directly to the family coaches, and parents were able to meet in a familiar space. The program was so highly regarded by parents that a high number of referrals to the program were by recommendation by previous families.

The program also builds ongoing community and individual support. Group work was established with parents identifying specific needs and goals. These groups ran for 8 weeks with Family Coaches facilitating group learning. The feedback was positive with all participants reporting and improvement in their parenting skills and confidence. The families took time to provide feedback saying thank you "for creating a safe space" "for giving us so many new skills" and saying their "lives and perspectives had changed for the better." These families have established a bond and continue to connect following the group support period. This has created their own community of support which is a key goal of the Early Help program.

This year the Early Help program assisted 196 families from July 2022 to July 2023. Junction hopes that this is 196 families that will be stronger, more resilient, and not need intensive support from other community support programs in future. It is fantastic to report that the Early Help program was refunded for another 12 months, allowing Junction to continue to provide early intervention to our community and support another 196 families before a problem becomes too overwhelming.





COMMUNITY EVENTS

Grit and resilience festival:

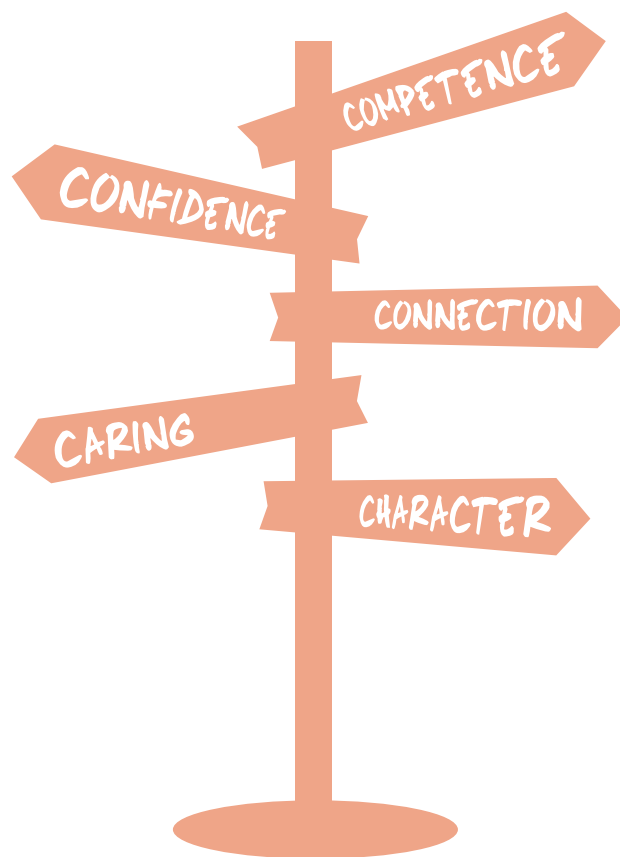
Junction attended the Grit and Resilience Festival in Wangaratta to acknowledge World Mental Health Day. As part of the festival the Early Help team facilitated activities to engage families and children through making wellbeing beads and a Lego play pit for children to be creative. This allowed the team to educate the community around services available to them.

Creative Lands Festival:

Creative Lands Festival was an initiative of the Indigo Council to bring together local service providers and community via art. Junction was excited to participate connect with rural communities in Rutherglen. The team had an interactive marquee involving a Lego making competition and drum beat area. Children were free to be creative in their Lego designs, while their parents chatted with the family coaches. The drums allowed the children to be innovative in alternatives way.

16 Days of activism:

To raise awareness, and to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls Junction have been proud to support 16 Days of Activism for many years. During the 2022 campaign, Junction joined with Wodonga Council and Zonta. Zonta had 16 orange ladies which they moved around Wodonga with facts about Family Violence for the 16 days of the campaign. These 16 ladies joined Junction at Junction Square on Friday 2nd of December for a community gathering. The focus of this was to highlight victim survivors and the work of all those in the sector.



DIVERGE

Junction has piloted a new approach for young people at risk of criminal and anti-social behaviour- empowering 13- to 21-year-old young people and their families to overcome difficult circumstances.

Diverge is an early intervention program that supports at risk young people from entering the Police, Youth Justice or Criminal Justice systems. The program supports positive community engagement, outdoor and group activities, and linking into education, training or employment pathways. Diverge works collaboratively with Victoria Police, Youth Justice, Wodonga TAFE to ensure the young people are actively identified and support through the program.

The Diverge program has a multidisciplinary team and utilises a whole-of-team approach when working with young people and their families/caregivers. Diverge work closely with schools including Wodonga Middle Years College, Wodonga Senior Secondary College and Wangaratta High School to support the young people to remain connected positively with their school of enrolment.

Diverge works with several community service organisations and can accept referrals from young people and their families, anyone working with the young person and from identified streams such as police contacts and Youth Justice referrals.





CLIENT VOICE

Knowing more services in the community

Gone from being homeless to having three different houses, now in stable housing

Stress levels decreased due to the great support

Wanting to do more activities

I'm happier

More happier, looking forward to school more

My daughter and I (mother) are a lot closer. Communication between us has improved. Mother of client.

Feel like a better person

Diverge is based on the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Model that considers the individual's holistic environment and aims to increase their personal development across the Five Cs:

Competence: Positive view of one's actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational.

Confidence: The internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; positive identity; and belief in the future.

Connection: Positive bonds with people and institutions—peers, family, school, and community—in which both parties contribute to the relationship.

Character: Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviours, a sense of right and wrong (morality), spirituality, integrity.

Caring: A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

YOUNG PEOPLE TRANSITION FROM CARE

For the past 12 months Junction continues to focus on one of our most vulnerable cohorts, young people living in out of home care. As a sector it is evident that we need to work together to ensure young people who have a care experience can thrive, either this is through access to education and employment, safe accommodation, health and wellbeing or their connection to culture and community.

The focus on supporting young people in residential care through a dedicated Community Engagement in Residential Care Worker was a positive step. The role is centred on holistic support, encompassing life skills development, positive social connections, empowerment, and self-determination. These elements are crucial for the overall well-being and successful transition to adulthood for young people with a care experience. Through our engagement we have supported young people to develop their life skills, engage positively in the community, given them opportunities to connect with businesses, education providers, community spaces, and supported them to develop the confidence to connect with peers outside of the residential houses. Even though the funding was limited to 12 months, the difference it has made in the young people's engagement and sense of belonging has been significant to the young people's experience in care.

The challenge of securing accommodation for young people transitioning from out of home care is a persistent issue faced by many in the sector. The Transition to Tenancy initiative is a commendable effort to address one of our greatest challenges. It reflects a collaborative and multi-agency approach. This joint effort demonstrates a shared commitment to improving outcomes for this vulnerable cohort by ensuring there is a housing option available to them as they exit care. This may include access to Office of Housing, Transitional Housing, Community Housing, or Private Rental.

The Transition to Tenancy initiative stands as a testament to the collective commitment to improving the outcomes and opportunities for young people with a care experience in the Ovens and Murray area.

Junction Support Services took the proactive step of purchasing our Leaving Care housing properties, which are a block of units, to address the critical need and demand for accommodation among young people transitioning out of care.

Over the past 12 months the property has provided 4 young people with safe accommodation and wrap-around support to empower them to develop the necessary life skills required to move into sustainable, independent living arrangements and achieve self-determination. Through this opportunity the young people living in the homes have had the capacity to re-engage in education, employment, develop their life skills and start to plan their futures as their transition into adulthood.

We are excited to see continued outcomes for young people in our out of home care spaces and will continue to ensure all young people in care have every opportunity to thrive.





BRIGHTER FUTURE

Sara*, 52, has experienced a long history of family violence, mental ill health, drug and alcohol addiction and homelessness. She has relied on Junction for help many times during her adult life.

Child Protection has been involved resulting in foster care for her children in 2015. This involvement further impacted Sara's mental health and due to Sara's drug use, she was court-ordered to attend a drug and alcohol treatment service.

In 2015 Sara was offered a Transitional Housing Management property; however, due to her poor mental health, she surrendered the property and had been homeless ever since. Last year Sara again reached out to Junction for support to help her find and secure stable accommodation.

Sara recently received an offer of long-term public housing, that she accepted, Sara was approved for a flexible support package to help her purchase furniture and set up her new home. Sara is currently linked with mental health services through Mind. Sara is very appreciative of the support from Junction and stated she is "feeling like her old self again", which she has not felt in a long time.

Sara is physically and mentally healthier and is excited to have her family stay and spend quality time with her, making new positive memories with her family.

NAVIGATOR GIVING BACK

In recent years the Navigator team have partnered with Birallee Park Neighbourhood House – who have operated an emergency food relief project for over 13 years. In late 2022 'Our Table to Yours', where meals are prepared for freezing and distribution to anyone experiencing hardship in the local community, clocked up 2,000 meals prepared with the help of young people from the Navigator program.

Navigator aims to reconnect young people with community and show them creative ways to engage. Together with Birallee Park Neighbourhood House, Navigator's young people are able to give back to the community, learn about building resilience through food security and knowledge, reduce isolation, encourage new friendships and build new skills.

ACHIEVING GOALS

Sally*, 14 was referred to Navigator in May 2022 after struggling with attendance at a local government school. Sally enjoys school and aspires to attend university, but her continued absences affected her goals. The school could not provide appropriate support.

Navigator identified other barriers the family faced and referred them to family services, one of which is that Sally works 25 hours a week to support her family, who are under financial pressure. Long shifts affected Sally's sleep schedule and made it difficult for her to attend school and concentrate on her studies.

Sally's case manager helped her explore other pathways, and she decided on a flexible pathway that better suited her circumstances. This new smaller classroom setting with one primary teacher has removed some of the barriers Sally had with feeling anxious in a big classroom environment and unable to build relationships with her teachers. Sally still wants to finish Year 12 and knows she can transition back to mainstream school if her confidence and sleep improve. Sally and her case manager recently visited TAFE to learn about the options available for studying Sally's desired degree after school in another flexible pathway. Knowing she had options other than university for further study motivated Sally to attend school even if her pathway look a little different from how she first imagined it.

Navigator also supported Sally to access the Young Carer bursary to acknowledge her work around the home to help her mum and younger siblings. Sally now has \$3000 to spend in 2023 on education-related expenses, which has dramatically eased financial stress. Sally has begun enjoying education again and is back on track to complete Year 12.



300 

The animal-assisted therapy program continues to achieve great results, providing over 300 hours of support.

INNOVATIVE THERAPY

Case Study

Junction's Specialist Children's worker supported Amanda, 7 yrs old. Amanda has experienced significant trauma and, as a direct result, struggles to manage, communicate and regulate her emotions.

One of the most significant barriers to service delivery to this child was that she could not sit still for long enough for work to occur.

The practitioner introduced Toast with the hope that he would assist in reducing the levels of energy by going for walks.

Toast and Amanda played and walked, and at the end of the time, Toast lay down on the floor and started to sleep. Toast was exhausted after all the high-energy activity.

Amanda noticed this and lay down behind Toast, giving him a belly rub.

Amanda commented how Toast was no longer panting but breathing all the way into his belly.

The practitioner then got Amanda to copy this breathing, and both Toast and Amanda settled very quietly for the first time in the session.

Amanda commented that resting was nice and thanked Toast for teaching her how to use her breath to calm down.

This was a significant breakthrough and has assisted Amanda in future sessions and at home and school.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development team takes the lead of multiple community projects, strongly advocating to fill gaps and service the needs of our local community through innovative projects and programs.

Mental Health in Residential Care

Mental Health Literacy in Recovery project engages with Alpine, Towong, Indigo and Yarrowonga shires to improve mental health literacy amongst young people impacted by natural disasters. In 2023, a workshop was delivered at the Cobram Mental Health Expo, engaging with over 220 students to build their mental health literacy through activities which developed strategies for self-regulation and mindfulness.

Future Proof project supports young people to actively engage in disaster recovery spaces and provides engagement and support to young people wanting to study in related fields. In 2023, the Youth Advisory Group was formed to upskill young people in leadership, and engage them in disaster recovery, preparedness, response, and community resilience building. In 2023, Future Proof hosted a Demonstration Day where young people from local high schools were able to gain hands on experience putting out fires, working at heights, with first aid, and navigating low visibility situations.

Statewide Children's Resource Program supports all Specialist Homelessness Services funded across Ovens Murray and Goulburn regions providing training, resources, secondary consultation, and brokerage program to assist practitioners working with children. The program has developed a host of resources aimed at improving engagement between funded services and infants, children and young people accessing services and responding to their unique needs.

Wodonga Project Over the past 4 years, Junction has strongly advocated for earlier support for young people in Wodonga at risk of homelessness. In 2023, Junction received a generous grant from the Jack Brockhoff Foundation towards the delivery of this project. In 2024, Junction together with the local consortium will deliver the Wodonga Project working with students - bringing together health, mental health and housing supports, youth specialists, council, and other services to identify and act early to support local young people before crisis occurs.

In 2023, Junction enhanced communications with the community by launching a new website, and a social media presence, aimed at promoting local community events, good news stories, and the availability of supports through Junction's programs. Junction will continue to advocate strongly for our local young people and community and share information on how Junction is responding and meeting these needs.





HEADING NORTH

NSW Road Ready Learner Driver Program

Junction has offered the young people who live in Victoria the L2P driving program for over 10 years however Junction were unable to offer this program to residents of NSW due to eligibility and funding issues. January 2023 marked a major milestone for young people in Albury NSW. In January the NSW Government announced a supported program for residents of NSW - people aged 16 to 24 who don't have a supervising driver or car to get hours up. Junction is very excited to announce this program is on track to begin by the end of 2023.

Junction recognise that transport is a significant barrier for young people to gain meaningful employment and connect to others. A recent survey showed that 4 per cent of young people in Albury didn't have access to a car or mentor driver and there is no learner driver program currently that offers this level of support.

The program aims to help at least 40 Albury young people and is seeking members of the community with their full licence to volunteer as mentors.

We travelled over 5,000,000 kms to support our clients.



This year, Junction's 45 mentor volunteers in our current L2P program supported 65 young drivers to work towards achieving their required learner driver hours.

23 young people successfully achieved attaining their probationary drivers licence.

QUALITY & SAFETY, PEOPLE & CULTURE

At Junction we are immensely proud and grateful for the commitment to service and unwavering client support our workforce delivers each and every day, particularly during the largest growth period of the organisation's history. We value the people within our organisation and recognise the critical role they play in determining our success.

Growth doesn't happen by good luck, or by chance. Growth occurs through dedication and effort, building a trusted reputation and commitment to service delivery. Growth is a testament to the efforts and contributions of its employees represented through a shared commitment to the organisation's mission and goals.

The Quality and Safety team plays a crucial role in ensuring the organisation's compliance with legislated requirements and maintaining high standards of excellence in its services. Here's a breakdown of their key responsibilities:

Quality Assurance: The team is responsible for maintaining and improving the quality of services provided by Junction Support Services. This involves setting and upholding high standards and ensuring that all operations align with these standards.

Risk and Incident Management: Our Workplace Relations Officers are responsible for managing risk and incident investigation which includes addressing and resolving issues directly related to client incidents and complaints. This is essential in ensuring the safety of clients and employees, as well as the reputation of the organisation. Their expertise in this area is vital for identifying and mitigating risks and managing incidents effectively.

Compliance: The team ensures that all aspects of Junction's operations meet legal and regulatory requirements. This includes maintaining registrations and accreditations.

Diversity and Inclusion: The Diversity and Inclusion Officer is working on initiatives to achieve Rainbow Tick accreditation, signifying that Junction Support Services is inclusive and supportive of the LGBTQIA+ community. Additionally, they are developing a Reconciliation Action Plan to promote reconciliation, acknowledgment, and inclusion with First Nations people.

Policy and Procedure Development: The team is actively involved in developing and maintaining the organisation's policies and procedures. This is essential for ensuring that operations are consistent, transparent, and in compliance with best practices and funding requirements.

Overall, the Quality and Safety team's dedication to maintaining high standards, ensuring safety and compliance, and promoting diversity and inclusion contributes significantly to Junction Support Services' growth and success. Their work not only safeguards the well-being of clients and employees. People is at the heart of what the People & Culture team do! It's what drives us.

Our dedicated P&C team oversees the entire employment journey, from recruitment to onboarding, engagement and retention, industrial relations, safety, well-being, reception, learning and development, HR reporting and systems management.

The commitment, drive and tenacity of this team has been pivotal in attracting, engaging, and onboarding over 120 new employees to support the rapid growth and expansion seen across Junction Support Services in 2023 enabling delivery of a raft of new programs such as the NDIS, Inner Gippsland Residential Care, Community Engagement, and the Victims Assistance Program. This has been a remarkable achievement for the team, and the agency as a whole.

The additional investment of key roles within the P&C team such as a Team Manager, Training and Development Officer, People & Culture Administration Officers for Ovens & Murray and Inner Gippsland, and an Occupational Health & Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator further underpins the commitment of the Board and Executive in recognising the importance of investing in its people. The right people, with the right skills, aligned to the values and mission of the organisation is the key to develop, define and deliver our culture, that underlying trait of who and what we are.

The anticipation of process improvements in 2024, facilitated by the implementation of new HRM software, is a positive step forward. This software will empower the team to focus more on supporting and engaging with the operational teams, strategic development, and community engagement, which is crucial for the organisation's effectiveness by providing cutting-edge, real-time analytics to help inform future decisions around our people strategies.

It is a privilege to have such a dedicated team and their efforts in enhancing employee engagement and contributing to the success of the organisation is commended.



Junction truly is my home away from home and I see many of the people within it as my second family.

I love my role and the impact we have in the community as an agency.



As an agency within this sector, we are faced with daily challenges, yet I believe that despite this we continue in our commitment to respond with care and respect at all times.

I am truly inspired by all the work at Junction. I know that each member of the team strives for our clients to succeed and is delighted to share their special achievements and milestones. I wish that all our clients knew how their success brings us all joy.

I love how our team and the wider organisation will support one another in a time of need and bands together to achieve the best outcomes for the clients and families that we are supporting.

The team are extremely supportive of one another, and quick to provide assistance whenever someone is in need.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Junction truly is my home away from home and I see many of the people within it as my second family.

I am grateful for the opportunities Junction provide for professional development and growth and feel privileged to be part of such a meaningful organisation.

After spending the past 3 years in my previous role working remotely and virtually, I was thrilled to join the Junction community, and I love coming to work in a vibrant office environment to work directly with people again.

I love coming to work at Junction and feel it is a privilege to be part of a team with such a wide variety of experience and knowledge. I really value the fact that we have input and share in the strategies to help reach the organisation's goals. I look forward to what the future holds for Junction.

COMMUNITY JUNCTION



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The financial information presented in this Annual Report has been derived from the audited Financial Report of Junction Support Services for the year ended 30 June 2023.

A copy of the full financial and auditor's report is available at www.junction.org.au

Junction recorded a total comprehensive result of \$2,521,730 (2022: \$1,618,308).

Revenue totalled \$23,090,683 (2022: \$17,575,861) consisting of revenue from operating activities \$22,716,780 (2022: \$17,464,250) and revenue from non-operating activities \$373,903 (2022: \$111,611).

Expenditure totalled \$20,568,953 (2022: \$15,957,553) with employee benefits totalling \$16,515,967 or 80.30% of total expenditure.

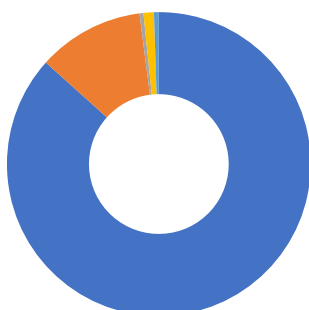
Junction continues to maintain a robust financial position with working capital of \$7,240,730 and a current ratio of 2.39 with the key strength supporting this being the strong cash reserve of \$11,260,446.

The objective of Junctions strategic reserves are primarily to safeguard against the risk of major unforeseen events, ensuring the long-term sustainability of Junction and its activities to support those most in need. These funds are utilised to fund major strategic initiatives and the continuation of major transformation projects that will further build organisational capability to ultimately support service delivery to clients.

REVENUE & EXPENSES

Revenue 2023

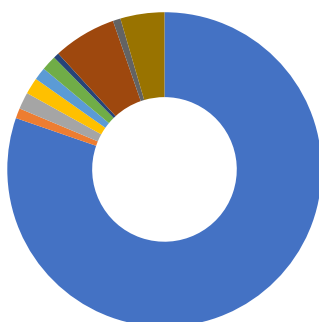
- Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
- Other Government Grants
- Non-Government Grants
- Investment Revenue
- Other Revenue



| Revenue | 2023 | 2022 |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing | \$20,007,511 | \$16,127,968 |
| Other Government Grants | \$2,611,896 | \$1,299,680 |
| Non-Government Grants | \$97,373 | \$36,602 |
| Investment Revenue | \$255,060 | \$12,591 |
| Investment Revenue | \$118,843 | \$99,020 |
| Total | \$23,090,683 | \$17,575,861 |

Expenses 2023

- Employee benefits
- Consulting
- Depreciation
- Computer and IT
- Motor Vehicle
- Rent and occupancy
- Electricity, Gas & Water
- Brokerage
- Repairs & Maintenance
- Other



| Expenses | 2023 | 2022 |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Employee benefits | \$16,515,967 | \$13,498,742 |
| Consulting | \$213,744 | \$187,479 |
| Depreciation | \$355,598 | \$169,164 |
| Computer and IT | \$348,964 | \$143,362 |
| Motor Vehicle | \$267,925 | \$172,597 |
| Rent and occupancy | \$318,123 | \$302,191 |
| Electricity, Gas & Water | \$118,279 | \$115,374 |
| Brokerage | \$1,337,313 | \$652,683 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | \$162,338 | \$111,165 |
| Other | \$930,702 | \$604,796 |
| Total | \$20,568,953 | \$15,957,553 |

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

As stated in Note 1(a) to financial statements, in option of the Directors' the Company is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. These are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and mandatory professional reporting requirements to the extent described in Note 1(a).

The Directors declare that the financial statements and notes set out on pages 3 to 13:

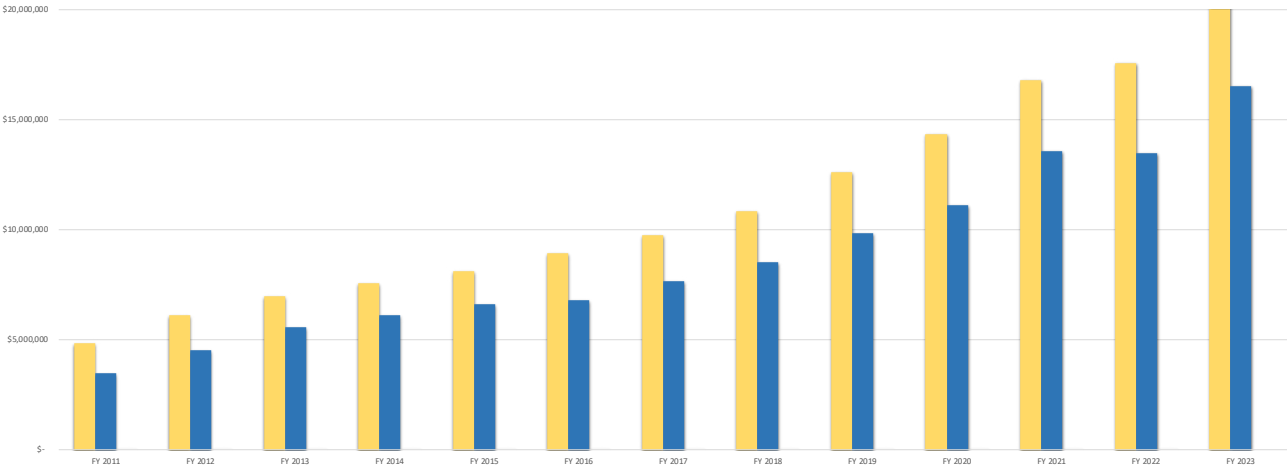
a. Comply with the Accounting Standards, as detailed above, and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012; and

b. Give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2023, and of its performance, as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flow, for financial year ended on that date.

In the opinion of the Directors there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.

REVENUE AND WAGE GROWTH



STATEMENT OF PROFIT LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2023

| | Notes | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue | 2 | 23,090,683 | 17,575,861 |
| Employee benefits expense | | 16,515,967 | 13,498,742 |
| Consulting expenses | | 213,744 | 187,479 |
| Depreciation expenses | 6 | 355,598 | 169,164 |
| Computer and IT expenses | | 348,964 | 143,362 |
| Motor Vehicle expenses | | 267,925 | 172,597 |
| Rent and occupancy expenses | | 318,123 | 302,191 |
| Electricity, Gas & Water expenses | | 118,279 | 115,374 |
| Brokerage expenses | | 1,337,313 | 652,683 |
| Repairs & Maintenance expenses | | 162,338 | 111,165 |
| Other Expenses | | 930,702 | 604,796 |
| Total Expenditure | | 20,568,953 | 15,957,553 |
| Surplus before income tax expense | | 2,521,730 | 1,618,308 |
| Income tax expense | 1(c) | - | - |
| Net surplus | | 2,521,730 | 1,618,308 |
| Other comprehensive income | | - | - |
| Total comprehensive result for the year | | 2,521,730 | 1,618,308 |

*The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2023

| | Notes | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ASSETS | | | |
| Current assets | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 3 | 11,260,446 | 10,439,929 |
| Accounts receivable | 4 | 940,721 | 130,108 |
| Other current assets | 5 | 261,582 | 130,108 |
| Total current assets | | 12,462,749 | 12,462,749 |
| Non-current assets | | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 6 | 4,980,173 | 3,095,896 |
| Total non-current assets | | 4,980,173 | 3,095,896 |
| Total assets | | 17,443,723 | 13,872,260 |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| Current liabilities | | | |
| Accounts payable | 7 | 1,223,080 | 815,363 |
| Provisions | 8 | 1,728,572 | 1,787,651 |
| Other | 9 | 2,270,367 | 1,570,073 |
| Total current liabilities | | 5,222,019 | 4,173,087 |
| Total liabilities | | 5,222,019 | 4,173,087 |
| Net assets | | 12,220,903 | 9,699,173 |
| EQUITY | | | |
| Retained earnings | | 12,220,903 | 9,699,173 |
| Total Equity | | 12,220,903 | 9,699,173 |

*The statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS:

Thank you to our Valued Supports

Funding bodies



Major Supporters





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS:

Thank you to our Valued Supporters & Accreditations

Supporters



Accreditations





**Thank you to all our dedicated
Junction Support Services
Staff, Volunteers and Clients
for making 2022-2023 a year
to remember.**

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