



# Annual Report 2022



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# Children needed Life Ed more than ever in 2022

Floods, fires and Covid lockdowns have all had their impact in recent years and the effect is that children's mental and physical health in 2022 has never been more compromised. Children need Life Ed now more than ever.

In August 2021, as part of the Australian National University Centre for Social Research and Methods' COVID-19 Impact Monitoring Survey Program, it was reported that 61% of children experienced a negative impact on their mental health. A portion of these mental health issues have also been attributed to

children spending more time online due to lockdowns with an increase in predatory behaviour being reported by the eSafety Commissioner. In addition, 44% of young Australians reported having a negative online experience in the last 6 months, this includes 15% who received threats or abuse online.

As an endorsed Trusted eSafety Provider by the eSafety Commissioner, Life Ed is proud to provide students with online safety education programs that demonstrate best-practice approaches.



1 in 4 children aged 2-17 are overweight or obese and this jumps to 1 in 3 in regional and remote communities <sup>1</sup>



Around 50% of mental health conditions begin before the age of 14 <sup>3</sup>



1 in 5 children report having been threatened or abused online <sup>2</sup>



Sources: 1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. Overweight and obesity among Australian children and adolescents. Cat. no.PHE 274. Canberra: AIHW | 2 eSafety Commissioner's Youth Digital Participation Survey 2017 | 3 Kessler, RD et al. (2005). Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Archives of General Psychiatry, 62: p. 593-602 | 4 The digital lives of Aussie teens, eSafety Commissioner (2021).



Children in the rural and remote communities that Life Ed reaches have been hit particularly hard, impacting their social and emotional wellbeing. More than 1 in 6 children aged 4 – 17 in rural areas have mental health conditions.<sup>5</sup>

Thankfully, due to increased demand by schools and support from the government and partners, Life Ed was able to travel further and wider in 2022. We are proud to say we reached 540,823 children, addressing their deepening needs for social and emotional learning, physical health and safety. This was 10% more children than 2021 with Heathy Harold visiting 3,859 pre and primary schools nationwide.

In 2023 we will launch two new primary school programs covering new learning in the physical health and social and emotional learning space and we will also begin developing a new module that educates children about the effects of vaping so they are empowered to make safe, healthy and informed decisions.

The great news is that in the last quarter of 2022, Life Ed was already experiencing increased demand for bookings for 2023 which means even more children will continue to thrive throughout Australia.



Sources: 5 Royal Far West.

# Our Strategy



## Every Child Deserves to *Thrive*

### Mission

To empower children and young people to make safer and healthier choices through education

### Vision

Healthy Australians living to their full potential

### Strategic Pillars

#### Leading Provider

Life Ed is recognised as the leading provider of preventative health education programs and gives every child the opportunity to thrive

#### Thriving Business

Life Ed's business thrives with a strong brand, diversified income and a unified federated model

#### Thriving People

Life Ed's people thrive through transparent and engaging processes and a safe and enjoyable work culture



# Our Impact



Backed by evidence, the Life Ed program has been evaluated by independent bodies including the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), social research agency Kantar Public and the Social Impact Measurement Network Australia.

Evaluations show a strong uplift in student health and safety literacy following participation in Life Ed, with the program instilling vital skills, knowledge and strategies that empower them to make healthier, safer and more informed decisions.

Educators also measure their impact through the feedback they regularly receive from teachers, parents and children about positive behaviour change.

From eating more fruit and vegetables, managing their safety online, being more respectful in relationships, understanding how to act in an emergency, having strategies to deal with unsafe situations and understanding the effects of alcohol and other drugs, children typically go home and tell their families what they discovered in their Life Ed session.

A systematic review found that only 15% of programs in the child protection curriculum address physical health, and safety-related programs only account for 5%. Life Ed fills a significant gap in children's physical health, safety and social and emotional wellbeing education.

## Teacher Feedback

**90%**

of teachers stated the effectiveness of content and knowledge delivered by Life Ed

**92%**

of teachers rated the delivery of the session as 'excellent'

**97%**

of teachers would recommend that their school re-book Life Ed

## Student Feedback

**93%**

of students said they would make good decisions about drugs after what they learned

**92%**

of students said they would make good decisions about alcohol after what they learned

**95%**

of students said they feel they can say 'no' if offered a cigarette

# Message from Our Chair

Sue O'Malley



Life Ed remained resilient and agile in response to the increased health education needs of Australian children in 2022. In post pandemic research Life Ed conducted, both teachers and parents claimed they were seeing an increased need for social and emotional wellbeing resources and I am so proud we have been able to continue to meet that need now and for future generations.

In 2022 we launched new social and emotional wellbeing modules and resources for children ensuring children are supported from the ages of 3-13 years. It was also wonderful to witness the launch of the Guide to Thrive initiative in October 2022. This new free program developed by Life Ed has provided a smorgasbord of resources to help children, teachers, parents and carers prepare for the leap from primary to secondary school which is such a critical time of change in a child's life.

When I reflect on the year that was, I think of, and express my gratitude towards, the many quiet heroes that are our amazing Life Ed Educators. They each make a positive impact to children and young people's lives and their passion and dedication is unsurpassed.

The Federal Governments continued commitment to children's health and wellbeing with \$6 million dollars over four years will enable Life Ed to take an even longer-term strategic view, to create multifaceted programs and adapt to diverse and changing needs of our school community. Our goal has always been for Life Ed to be stronger than ever before and thanks to the leadership of CEO Kellie Sloane and now Russell D'Costa; and our senior leaders together with the strength and commitment of our people and the CEOs within our Affiliate networks, we have largely achieved this ambition. Congratulations to everyone involved. It surely "takes a village". Life Ed is well on its way to its vision of healthy Australian's living to their full potential.



# Message from Our CEO

Russell D'Costa



Visits from Healthy Harold are treasured and impactful experiences for Australian children and in October 2022 it was announced this support is set to continue with the Federal Government's funding commitment of \$6 million to Life Ed over four years. As well as supporting Life Ed operations generally, this funding commitment will help us develop online safety educational materials for younger children in Years 1-4. The new materials will cover empathy and respect for others, risk-taking and consequences, cyberbullying, grooming and managing exposure to harmful online content.

The funding will also be used by Life Ed to integrate and adapt existing consent education materials for students from Foundation to Year 6. In addition, funding will support Life Ed to implement recommendations arising from an evaluation of the Life Ed program.

Our people and our partners have been instrumental in making 2022 one of Life Ed's most successful years yet. Following teacher consultation and research; our education team developed over 30 new resources that teachers use both before and after the valued Life Ed face to face visit. These new resources have been a welcome support for teachers who have been under

increased pressure to support children post pandemic. These resources, along with the new modules and resources we continue to develop would not be possible without the support of our corporate partners many of whom have been with us for multiple years. In 2022, this positive impact was felt far and wide with Woolworths funding The Life Ed Thrive Children's Fund delivering our programs to over 10,000 children in rural, remote and low socio-economic areas, ensuring all children have equitable access to Life Ed no matter their circumstances.

We thank the Federal Government and our partners for their continued commitment to children's health and wellbeing. The funding we receive will enable Life Ed to continue its mission of empowering children and young people to make safer and healthier choices through education.

# Supporting teachers with evidenced-based learning

We make a difference by delivering evidence-backed, engaging education to children in their formative years, to build the skills they need to lead safe and healthy lives. In 2022, our teacher survey indicated that teachers were under pressure in a post-Covid world and were reaching out for support from Life Ed more than ever.

Together with schools, we teach children and young people aged 3-13 the health, safety and wellbeing skills to make safer, healthier and informed decisions throughout their lives, creating a holistic impact on their long-term health.

The Life Ed program evolves constantly to help solve society's largest challenges. We engage the entire school community to ensure our programs meet their needs. In 2022, we were proud to introduce children to three refreshed programs including:

1. Our updated Early Years Learning Program
2. Our redeveloped Relate Respect Connect Program for Years 5 & 6.
3. Our redeveloped bCyberwise Program for Years 3 -5.

## Healthy Harold Goes to Preschool

Building the foundations of a healthy lifestyle starts early. In 2022 tens of thousands of children aged 3-5 participated in our new Early Years Learning Program across preschools and early learning centres around Australia. This project was supported by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment through the 'Being Healthy, Being Active' Grant. The program builds the mental, physical and social foundations kids need to thrive, through play-based, experiential learning.

Harold's Healthy Day, Harold's Big Feelings, and Super Safe Harold are programs that come to life through storytelling.

Children explore topics including healthy eating, hygiene, friendships, and safety. Delivered through big story books, videos and music by specialist Educators, children have been mesmerised as they have learned the challenges Healthy Harold faced as a young giraffe just like them. They are inclusive and reflect the diversity of Australian children and their lived experience.



### Physical Health



Food & nutrition, body systems, the benefits of physical activity and physical health education

### Social and Emotional Wellbeing



Respectful relationships, friendships, self awareness, self management and social awareness education

### Safety



Online safety, protective behaviours, emergency response and alcohol and other drug education

**The 3 streams above all lead to: responsible decision making - making healthier, safer and informed choices.**



## Online Safety and Respectful Relationships Programs the most popular for 2022

To address the increasingly complex challenges children and young people face today, we redeveloped two of Life Ed's most popular programs bCyberwise and Relate Respect Connect, to reflect current evidence.

bCyberwise supports children to navigate the challenges they face when connecting with others online. This includes recognising the body clues that warn us about unsafe or potential predatory behaviours and developing the help seeking strategies needed to recognise, react and report unsafe situations.

Life Ed are proud to be endorsed by the eSafety Commissioner as a Trusted eSafety Provider for bCyberwise. Trusted eSafety Providers are endorsed after demonstrating that they meet eSafety's strict requirements for online safety education, including:

- suitable expertise and experience
- evidence-based and curriculum-aligned programs
- compliance with appropriate child safety and insurance requirements.

Our redeveloped Relate Respect Connect module supports upper primary school students with the knowledge, skills, strategies and attitudes they need to develop and maintain safe and respectful relationships.

The new module has a diverse cast of young people who guide students through the content and concepts to help them understand themselves and relate with empathy to each other. They explore topics such as learning about the changes that are occurring at this stage of life and how they can impact their emotions, decision-making, and relationships, identifying the

characteristics and benefits of healthy and positive relationships, building empathy and understanding consent.

Both modules align with the Best Practice Framework for Online Safety Education and the UN Rights of the Child and updates have been funded through a Westpac Safer Children Safer Communities grant. In 2022, over 112,066 children participated in these two new modules nationwide.



**“Absolutely awesome content, students were highly engaged and could apply knowledge straight away. The Life Ed educator was very clear and knowledge was transferred perfectly.”**

Primary School Teacher





Talk to a trusted adult

Block the message sender

Report the message

Take a screen shot of the message

Ignore the message

Safety & Privacy  
Education  
Creativity  
Parental Control  
Age Restrict  
Cyber-bullying  
Workshops  
Interactive Content

# LifeEd.

Every child deserves to thrive



# Launching new programs to meet evolving needs



Discovering a healthy active you

In 2023, Life Ed launches a new middle primary program offering two new modules for Years 3 and 4: The Inside Story and Friends and Feelings.

The Inside Story is set in a kids' TV news program. A team of innovative young scientists shrink Healthy Harold and place him in a tiny capsule so he can travel inside the body of a young journalist, Max Questions, and report back on the 'inside story'.

The Inside Story teaches children:

- The impact food choices have on health and energy levels
- Strategies to promote healthy eating and physical activity
- How culture and community influence our food choices
- The function and components of body systems: respiratory, circulatory, nervous & digestive
- Factors that influence the function of body systems such as nutrition, exercise and medicines
- The connection between physical health and wellbeing

Engaging audio visual material cuts between Harold on his amazing journey gathering data about Max's body systems, and the busy TV news studio, where kid reporters deliver 'hot-off-the-press' updates on Harold's discoveries. Children learn how various body systems

work, as well as how the nutrients in food enter the body, provide energy, and fuel growth.

Life Ed developed The Inside Story module with thanks to funding from our partner, Sanitarium Health Food company. Like Life Ed, Sanitarium is a long-standing, trusted health brand. Sanitarium's 'eat well, live well' purpose aligns with Life Ed's mission of empowering Aussie children to make healthier choices. Partnerships like Sanitarium's enable Life Ed to stay current and relevant in developing and delivering education that addresses issues facing children today. For more information about Sanitarium, visit [sanitarium.com.au](http://sanitarium.com.au)





Friends and Feelings was developed due to high demand from schools and teachers who identified the need for more resources to strengthen the social and emotional skills of young people, which diminished over the Covid school closures. This project was supported by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment through the 'Being Healthy, Being Active' Grant.

61% of students experienced a negative impact on their mental health as a result of Covid. Social and emotional skills have taken a big hit with some teachers saying they have needed to mediate more often, where kids were once able to resolve issues on their own.

So why students in years 3 & 4? The new module specifically targets the skills of social and emotional competence of Stage Two students (ages 8-11 years) as it has been identified as a critical time in a child's life to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills to manage emotions, make responsible decisions and show empathy for others.

In addition, some students who are now in Years 3 & 4 were particularly impacted by lockdowns as they experienced their first schooling years (K-2) remotely or with disruptions with little to no social interaction with classmates.

Friends and Feelings supports children to;

- Broaden their social and emotional literacy
- Identify and practice assertive communication skills

- Learn strategies to manage their feelings and behaviours such as mindful breathing
- Recognise, regulate their emotions
- Identify how feelings, values and thoughts influence decision making
- Identify the importance of diversity, respect and empathy

Life Ed is famous for making education fun and engaging and this module is no exception. Friends and Feelings is an animated comic-book style module set in a typical school playground where a group of five friends hang out and there is a journal that helps students unpack what they have learned and reflect on their own friendships.



**“My child has experienced a massive change in empathy, mindfulness and kindness towards his family, friends and the average stranger. I would just like to say thank you to your Life Ed team and program, as it has taught my son integrity and kindness.”**

**– Parent, New South Wales**

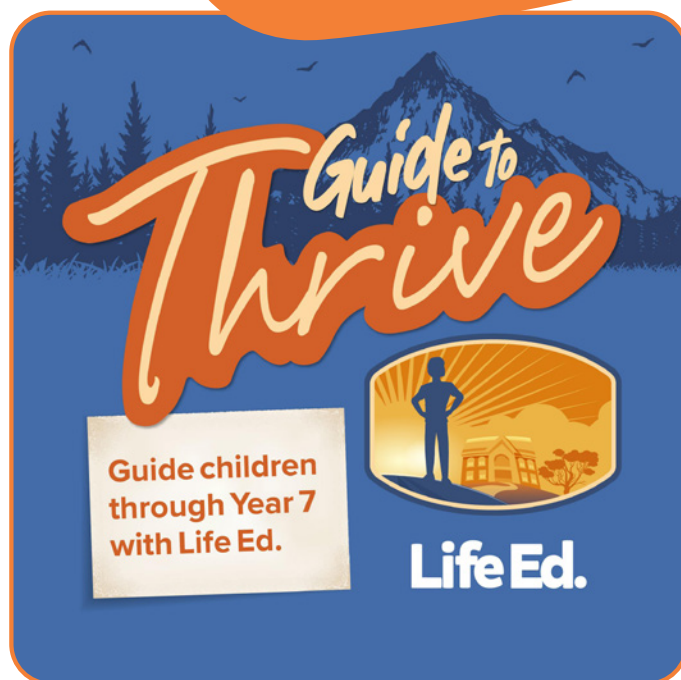
# Life Ed launched a new high school transition program

In October 2022, Life Ed launched the Guide to Thrive, a range of free, evidence-based resources to support students during their transition from primary school into secondary school.

Designed for teachers, parents and carers of young people in Years 6 and 7, the Guide to Thrive is a change tool kit that will arm students with the survival skills, expert knowledge and creative inspiration to help them thrive in secondary school and beyond.

Life Ed commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to research the contemporary issues students face in the middle years of school. ACER talked to a diverse range of young people to hear about their challenges and concerns during the primary to secondary school transition stages. The research found that a significant proportion of Australian students feel underprepared and scared about the transition to secondary school, with many wanting more guidance to demystify the transition, including better preparation in Year 6 and longer support in Year 7. This is why we've created Guide to Thrive.

To ensure the needs of young people were at the forefront of this project, the student voice is embedded throughout the suite of resources. The Guide to Thrive includes teacher professional development units, practical activities for teachers to implement in the classroom to transform research into practice, and



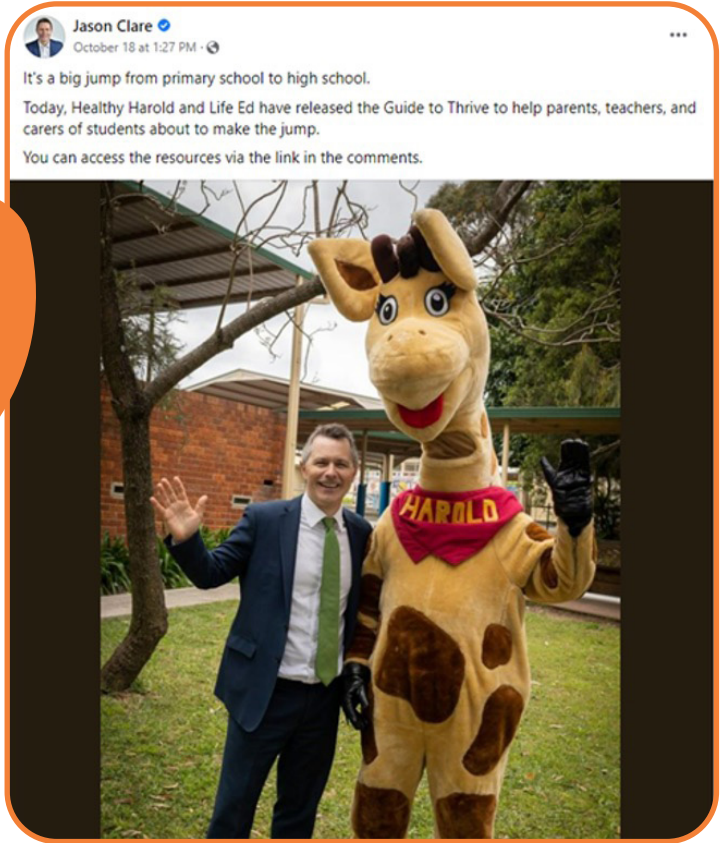
complementary resources for parents and carers to support them to talk to their young people and gather necessary information. Topics include managing schoolwork expectations; the new school environment; communication and social skills and change and uncertainty.

In 2023, Life Ed will continue to support thousands of teachers throughout Australia by launching a series of professional development resources to ensure they are best equipped to use the resources to continue to support children transitioning into high school in 2024.

This project was supported by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment through the 'Being Healthy, Being Active' Grant.

**Findings in over 80 focus groups of 444 Australian school children aged 10-14 indicated that while almost a third were feeling excited and positive about the change (31%), a quarter were overwhelmingly scared (25%) or overcome with uncertainty (13%) due to a lack of knowledge and understanding about their new education environment.**







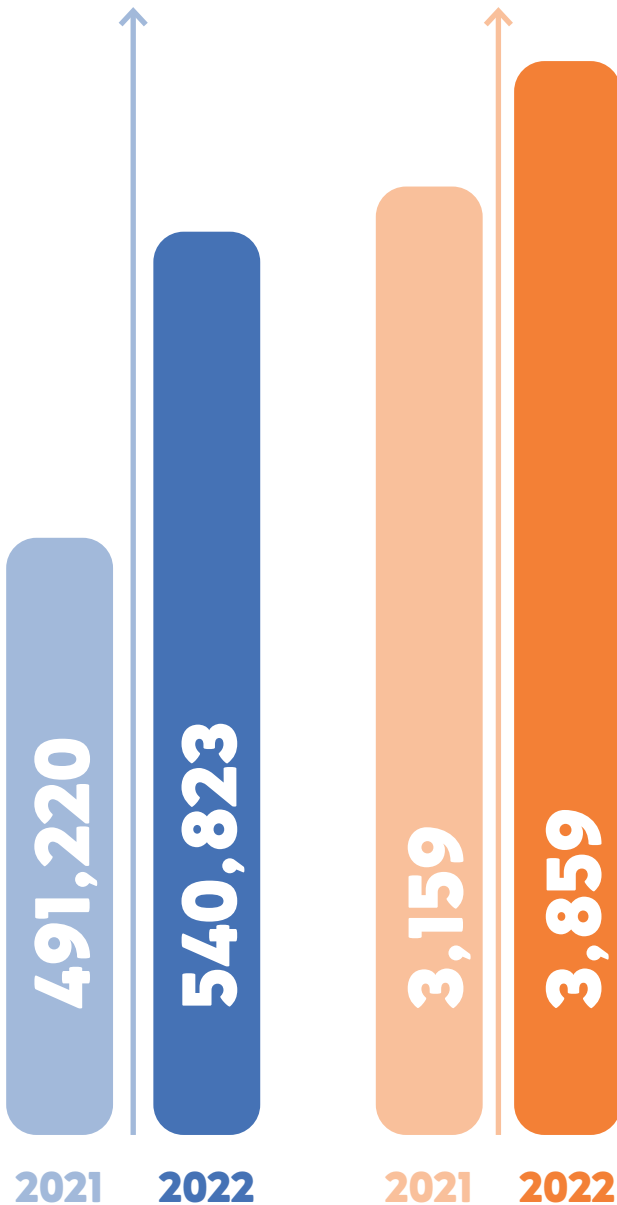
# Our Reach

## 13% increase

### in students visited from 2021 to 2022

700,000  
Students

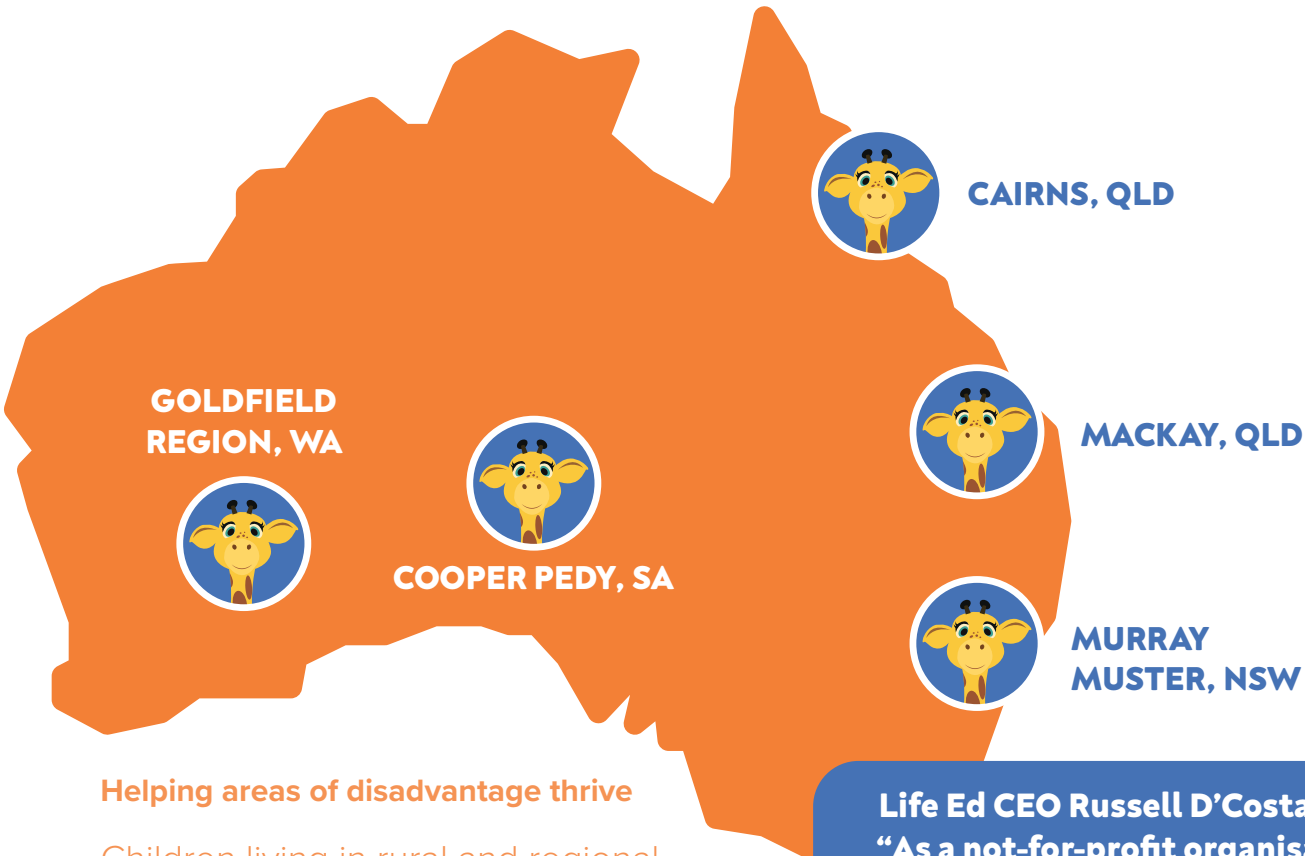
4,000  
Schools



More than 1 in 6 (16.2%) children and adolescents aged 4-17 in rural areas have mental health conditions. This is closer to 1 in 5 (19%) in outer regional areas.<sup>1</sup>



# The Thrive Childrens Fund



## Helping areas of disadvantage thrive

Children living in rural and regional areas, and areas of socio-economic disadvantage, face unique challenges to their health and wellbeing. Thanks to foundation partners Woolworths; the Life Ed Thrive Children’s Fund delivered much need education to over 10,000 children nationwide.

The Life Ed Thrive fund was created to address the increasing needs of children in rural and remote schools and schools from low socio-economic areas of Australia.

Without the Life Ed Thrive Children’s Fund it would be impossible for these children, who need it most, to experience a Life Ed visit. In 2022 we were able to reach more than 40 schools in areas of disadvantage from the Kimberley to the border towns of NSW and Victoria.

**Life Ed CEO Russell D’Costa said, “As a not-for-profit organisation, Life Ed needs help to reach children in remote and vulnerable communities across Australia. These are often the communities that need us most. The Thrive fund will enable us to teach children life-skills that can help break the cycle when it comes to issues such as chronic disease, mental illness and substance abuse.”**

**“After a very challenging few years especially in rural and remote areas – the Life Ed program gives much needed support and strategies for the children to help with overall emotional and social wellbeing” – Life Ed educator rural and remote regions.**



# Our Partnerships

It takes a village to raise a child, and all across Australia our partners are helping empower children to live safe and healthy lives. Without you, we couldn't do our job to support the next generation of Australians to thrive.

## Woolworths Fresh Food Kids

Since 2018, Woolworths Fresh Food Kids has helped 500,000 students learn about nutrition through the sponsorship of 'My Body Matters', 'Ready Steady Go', and 'Growing Good Friends' modules. Also, a foundation partner of the Life Ed's Children's Thrive Fund, Woolworths funded Life Ed to reach over 10,000 students in rural, remote and low socio-economic areas in 2022, as well as providing fresh fruit.

Woolworths are the major sponsor of Australia's Healthiest Lunchbox competition and campaign, along with Dairy Australia and Nutrition Australia.

## Calcium for Strong Bones

Dairy Australia are committed to educating Australian children on the health and nutrition benefits of consuming dairy to build strong bones, via professional development for our Life Ed Educators and the upgrade of our Life Ed augmented reality TAM-e with a skeletal system. Through the partnership, we also celebrated Healthy Bones Week and World Milk Day.



## ACCO

Look out for super star Harold on the front cover of Spirax books and other ACCO Brands stationary such as Texta products. To celebrate NAIDOC week, over 800 people tuned in to see Aboriginal Artist, Bayley Mifsud teach kids how to create their own Aboriginal artwork at home, sponsored by our Silver Partner, ACCO Brands.

## Growing healthy gardens

School kids across the country got grubby in the garden, thanks to our Growing Good Gardens Grants program. Supported by Yates, children were encouraged to design a garden to help build healthy habits. Interest 'super seeded' our expectations with over 520 schools, preschools and community groups submitting their grant application for an opportunity to win \$2,000 to build their garden. There were ten lucky winners, Kenmore Park Preschool QLD (winner of the double grant), Memorial Park Community Kindergarten QLD, Aberfeldie Primary School VIC, Edgeworth Community Preschool NSW, The Hills Sports High School NSW, Regional Community Care Ltd NSW, Angaston Kindergarten SA, Padbury Catholic Primary School WA, Latrobe High School TAS, Mitchell Street Child Care Centre NT.

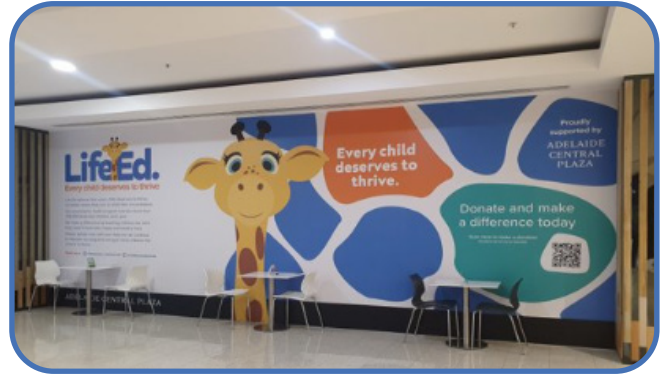


## Harold Goes Shopping

As part of the Precision Group \$170k 3 year Silver sponsorship, \$50k was raised in 2022 with fundraising activations, centre promotions and display advertising across their shopping centres including Adelaide Central Plaza, Port Adelaide Plaza, Chevron Renaissance and McArthur Central.

## Making an impact on Vaping Education

CHP Australia sponsored new lessons and parent resources for our 'Mind Your Medicine' module. Then in 2023 CHP Australia will fund the development of a new module that will help address one of schools and parents growing concerns which is educating children on the effects of vaping and smoking.



### Corporate partners:



### In kind partners:



# Our Board



**Susan O'Malley**

Chairperson



**Shaun Bonétt**

Deputy Chairperson



**Alexander Collinson**

Treasurer



**Robert Conroy**

Company Secretary



**Justin Levis**

Director



**Sarah Cleggett**

Director



**Peter Morgan**

Affiliate Director (QLD)



**Alan Cadman**

Affiliate Director (NSW)



**Chelsea Parkinson**

Affiliate Director (VIC)



**Tom Beresford**

Affiliate Director (SA)



**Mike McAuliffe**

Affiliate Director (WA)



**Peter Burnheim**

Affiliate Director (NT)

# Our financial performance

## OUR FINANCIALS

2021-2022



**\$3.6 M**  
revenue



**\$4.0 M**  
net assets

## OUR PEOPLE



**\$1.3 M**  
employment



## OUR PARTNERS

**\$1.0 M**

sponsorships,  
fundraising  
& donor  
support



**\$2.4 M**

Federal Govt. Grant\*

## COST TO DELIVER OUR PROGRAMS

**\$18.8 M**

Total costs for the 12 months to June 2022 incurred by Life Ed Australia and its Affiliates in delivering programs to children throughout Australia.

Life Education Australia's financial records for the year ended 30 June 2022 were audited by Grant Thornton Australia in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. A full copy of our annual financial statements is available on request or from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website.

\*For the period of 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2022 a total of \$4.4M tied funding has been received to support program development.

## How you can support us

Donate to the Life Ed Thrive Children's Fund

Donate towards our program development

Partner with us

Engage your school community

## Connect with us

1300 427 653

[www.lifeed.org.au](http://www.lifeed.org.au)

[www.facebook.com/HealthyHaroldLifeEducation](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyHaroldLifeEducation)

[www.instagram.com/lifeed\\_healthyharold/](https://www.instagram.com/lifeed_healthyharold/)

[www.linkedin.com/company/lifeeducationaustralia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lifeeducationaustralia)

