



REACH

**ANNUAL
IMPACT
REPORT**

2024

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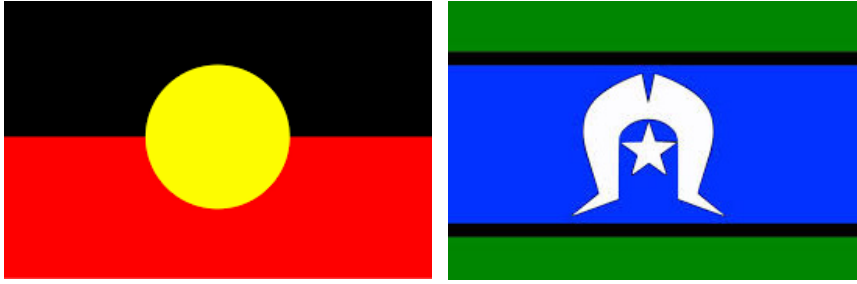
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Reach Foundation respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians across the lands on which we live, work and play: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. To their ancestors, Elders, youth, and children past, present and those of the future, we acknowledge and honour their ongoing connection and belonging to the land, skies, waterways, and as the oldest living culture in the world.





FERGUS WATTS CHAIRMAN

Challenge brings opportunity—that’s what we share with young people at Reach, and 2024 was indeed a year of challenge and opportunity. As we navigated a tough economic and changing landscape, we remained unwavering in our mission: to empower young Australians to reach their potential.

This year tested us in new ways, but it also reaffirmed the power of our work. We saw firsthand the resilience of the young people we support, the passion of our facilitators, and the dedication of our community. Reach continued to evolve, delivering impactful programs, forging strong partnerships, and deepening our commitment to youth wellbeing.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors, the trust of our partners, and the tireless efforts of our team. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors for their leadership, commitment, and belief in Reach’s vision. Their guidance has been instrumental in ensuring we continue to grow and create meaningful impact.

As we reflect on 2024, we are proud of what we’ve achieved and energised for the road ahead. Thank you for standing with us in this journey. The best is yet to come.



ALISON WRIGHT CEO

I joined Reach at the end of August, and in my first week, I had the privilege of participating in one of our flagship programs, Thousand Faces camp. This life-changing experience for 50 young people and adults from all walks of life was the best introduction I could have hoped for. I witnessed young facilitators skillfully navigate deep and complex issues, felt the unwavering care of our volunteers and supporters, and saw firsthand the passion, energy, and wisdom of our “Crew” and team.

Our impact can be hard to define because we operate at the prevention end of the mental health journey—helping young people before they fall into crisis. Through powerful experiences, we equip them with the skills, tools, and support to thrive.

It’s an honour to lead an organisation built on the vision of AFL legend Jim Stynes and filmmaker Paul Currie, to learn of its beginnings at we marked 30 years and to consider our future and next 30 years. The end of the year brought challenges and consolidation as we prepared to strengthen our core business.

My thanks to our Board and the Reach family—partners, donors, and supporters—who stand with us. And to the team: your dedication drives everything we do. Together, we are making a lasting impact for young Australians.

THE PROBLEM

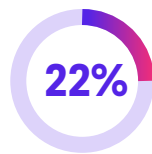
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

MENTAL ILLNESS STRIKES EARLY AND LASTS A LIFETIME:

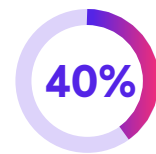
Adolescence is a critical window of development – it shapes identity, decision-making and self-worth. Yet, it is also the period when mental illness takes root, often persisting into adulthood if left unaddressed.



2 in 5 Australians aged 16-24 report experiencing a mental disorder.¹ This figure is 50% higher than in 2007.²



22% of young people experience high psychological distress.³



40% feel concerned about suicide.⁴

MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES IMPACT EDUCATION, CAREERS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE. WITHOUT INTERVENTION, OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO THRIVE CAN BE DERAILED BEFORE THEY EVEN BEGIN.

PREVENTION IS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY:

Only 1% of Australia's mental health funding goes toward prevention, despite national health strategies recommending at least 5%.¹ Meanwhile, mental ill-health costs Australia \$70 billion annually. Prevention is not just ethical—it is economically urgent. Preventative youth mental health programs show returns ranging from \$1.19 to \$3.06 per dollar invested, when considering broader societal benefits.²

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2023

2 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2022

3 2024 Mission Australia Youth Survey

4 2024 Mission Australia Youth Survey

5 2021-2030 National Preventive Health Strategy

6 National Mental Health Commission, The Economic Case for Investing in Mental Health Prevention: Summary (2023)



OUR PURPOSE

Reach's work focuses on building known protective factors to enhance young peoples' social and emotional well-being, and in turn reduce the development and/or severity of mental health problems in the future. Our post-program survey questions reflect these social and emotional well-being and protective factors throughout adolescence.

THESE INCLUDE:

- FEELINGS OF WORTH AND UNDERSTANDING SELF
- FEELINGS OF COMPETENCE AND AUTONOMY
- FEELING ABLE TO PURSUE AND ACHIEVE LIFE GOALS
- ENGAGEMENT IN ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MEANINGFUL, VARIED AND SPARK CURIOSITY
- AWARENESS OF EMPATHY FOR OTHERS, AND CONNECTEDNESS WITH OTHERS
- HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS WITHIN AS WELL AS OUTSIDE OF THEIR FAMILY





OUR IMPACT

For 30 years, Reach has been a leader in preventative mental health. Reach is a unique, youth-led, independent charity that refuses to judge new generations by old standards. Our programs are designed with the young people who deliver them, ensuring that every experience resonates deeply with those we serve. The work of Reach not only helps young people, it positively affects the lives of families, communities, schools, teachers, young professionals and adults.

WHEN ONE YOUNG PERSON BUILDS RESILIENCE, THEY STRENGTHEN THEIR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH, RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. THAT IS THE LONG-TERM RIPPLE EFFECT OF OUR WORK AT REACH.

IN 2024, REACH ACHIEVED:

45,045 INSTANCES OF PARTICIPATION ACROSS AUSTRALIA



89% OF PARTICIPANTS FELT THE WORKSHOP IMPROVED THEIR EMPATHY



97% OF SCHOOL STAFF SAW AN INCREASE IN STUDENTS' SELF-AWARENESS



87% OF PARTICIPANTS FELT THE WORKSHOP WAS A SAFE SPACE



98% OF SCHOOL STAFF WOULD RECOMMEND A REACH WORKSHOP

OUR WORK

Each year, we run 1,000 workshops and camps, reaching more than 45,000 young Australians aged 10–25. Our programs meet young people where they are—at school, in their communities and in the workplace. Designed to be age-appropriate and/or tailored to specific needs, every Reach program creates a safe, interactive, and supportive space that enhances social and emotional wellbeing. We uphold the highest standards of Child Safety and align with evidence-based approaches to ensure meaningful impact.

**EVERY REACH PROGRAM
CREATES A SAFE, INTERACTIVE,
AND SUPPORTIVE SPACE THAT
ENHANCES SOCIAL AND
EMOTIONAL WELLBEING.**

OUR PEER-TO-PEER MODEL

Through an immersive training pathway starting at age 15, Reach Crew develop skills in facilitation, group dynamics, and adolescent mental health before leading workshops themselves.

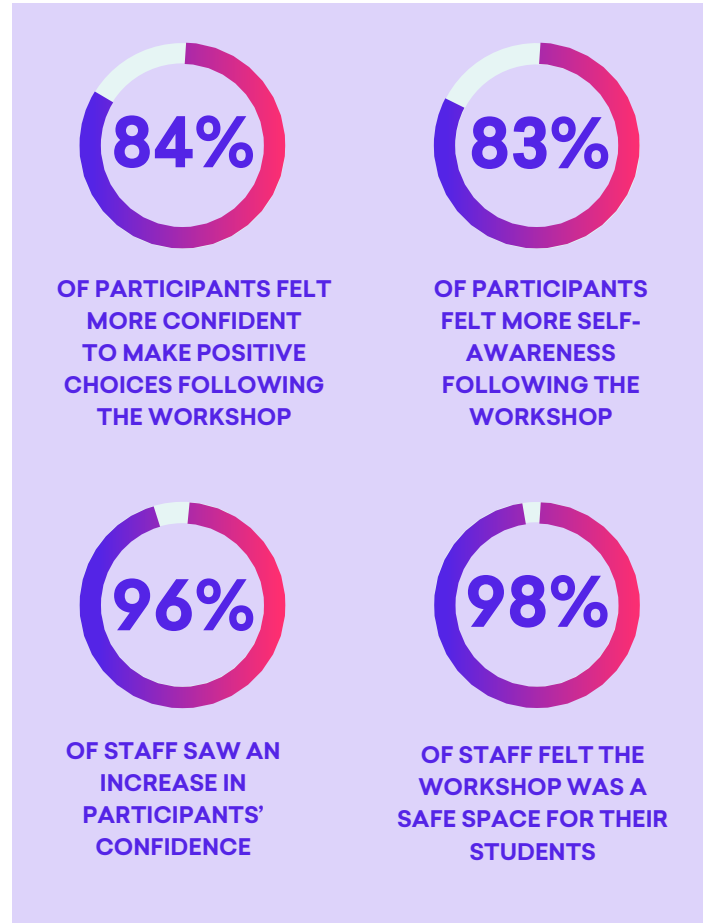
This model ensures that Reach’s programs evolve in real time, staying relevant and effective. Each new wave of young facilitators refines and improves the curriculum, ensuring that Reach continues to meet the needs of young Australians today and in the future.

Supported by a dedicated team of wellbeing professionals, this model keeps Reach at the forefront of youth mental health programs. All of our work is underpinned by our Wellbeing framework in compliance with National Child Safety Standards.



SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Every day, the Reach team is actively engaged in Primary and Secondary Schools across Australia, delivering a diverse range of workshops designed for students in Years 5–12. Our programs align with national curriculum guidelines and address key topics tailored to each year level, including connection, positive peer relationships, empathy, teamwork, respectful relationships, transitioning to high school, and discovering personal purpose. Additionally, we offer gender-specific programs for Year 10 and 11 students, which examine the influence of gender stereotypes on young people and provide a space for participants to explore their identities beyond societal labels.





COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

We deliver a wide range of community programs and camps aimed at building confidence, self-awareness, and resilience in young people.

WHILE EACH PROGRAM IS UNIQUE, THEY ALL SHARE A COMMON PURPOSE: EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO UNLOCK THEIR POTENTIAL AND THRIVE.

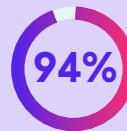
We provide both universal community programs, open to all young people, and targeted programs designed to support specific groups.

IMPACT RESULTS FROM THESE PROGRAMS:

- HEROES DAY
- THOUSAND FACES
- GROUNDED
- RAMP
- LEADERSHIP DAY



92% OF PARTICIPANTS FELT MORE ACCEPTED FOLLOWING THE WORKSHOP



94% OF PARTICIPANTS FELT MORE CONNECTED FOLLOWING THE WORKSHOP



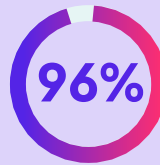
97% OF PARTICIPANTS FELT THE WORKSHOP WAS A SAFE SPACE



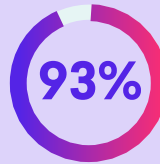
WORKPLACE WELLBEING

Reach's Workplace Wellbeing programs are designed to support graduates and young professionals in the early stages of their careers. These programs offer essential tools and strategies to help navigate the challenges of transitioning into the workforce, focusing on skills like resilience, communication and professional development. Topics include managing workplace stress, building confidence, setting career goals and fostering a growth mindset. By providing tailored support, Reach's Workplace Wellbeing programs help young people thrive in their new professional environments, empowering them to succeed while maintaining their mental health and overall wellbeing.

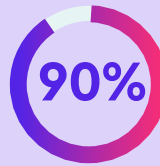
OUR CLIENTS:



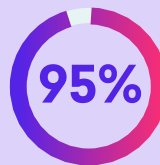
OF PARTICIPANTS RATE WAKE WORKSHOPS 7/10 OR HIGHER



OF PARTICIPANTS FEEL FACILITATORS CREATE A SAFE SPACE TO SHARE



OF PARTICIPANTS FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO OTHERS AFTER ATTENDING



OF PARTICIPANTS WOULD RECOMMEND A WAKE WORKSHOP



OUR PEOPLE

BOARD



FERGUS WATTS CHAIRMAN



ROBERT COLLIE DEPUTY CHAIR



SABINA READ



RICHARD CHAPMAN



SASHA LAWRENCE



30th Anniversary Reach Gala Ball

OUR STORIES

PAUL'S STORY



During my teenage years and early adulthood, I was someone who kept parts of my life so compressed, I was almost ashamed of aspects of it, that I would fear people may treat me differently if I was to share certain parts of my life and insecurities.

I attended my first Reach workshop a couple of years after I had finished school. Before having a Reach session, I had previously only had wellbeing workshops that told me how to live my life, what I needed to do to be a certain type of man and the correct values I should uphold. But for the first time in my life during the workshop I got asked to do a really basic yet beautiful activity, where I had to stand in front of the room and “talk about someone you love”. Here, I talked for the first time in front of a group of people about having a dad who passed away and the impact this had on my life.

My experience when first joining Reach was great, even though it was a little frightening stepping into the unknown. At the start we were practicing self awareness and self-development fortnightly at trainings, led by other Reach facilitators, that had genuine care, curiosity and drive to nurture us on our

own journey through Reach. One of the great things about Reach has been going on this journey alongside others that are like-minded and who are all willing to push you along, listen and share that same level of curiosity and empathy.

The impact Reach has had on me is real! I didn't wake up the next day from my first ever workshop a completely different person, however, over time the Reach has helped me develop as a person. It has helped me in becoming more open and honest about my life, letting me be able to have more open and honest conversations with the people in my life I love, and not hiding parts of my life. It has allowed me to see the importance of story telling, sharing parts of your life and how profound that impact can be from sharing. I have enjoyed going into communities, hearing young people share their stories and what is going on in their lives, learning from them and understanding different perspectives. Seeing and hearing these stories has given me great perspective, and it is always so amazing learning from the bravery shown from the young people we work with.

OUR CLIENTS AND SUPPORTERS

AIS International Group

Altus

Amaroo Foundation

Andrews Foundation

Anthony Costa Foundation

ANZ

Australian Association of Graduate Employers

Bastion

Beyond Bank

Deakin University

Erdi Group

Flowers Vasette

Geelong Community Foundation

George Alexander Foundation

Harris Family Foundation

Headspace

Highland Foundation

Joe White Bequest

John Holland

KFC

King & Wood Mallesons

Kmart

Leidos Australia

McLardy McShane

Melbourne Football Club

Mick Fanning Foundation

Myer Foundation

Nelson Alexander Foundation

Perpetual Foundation

Pitcher Partners

PwC

Retail Prodigy Group

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards

RSM Australia

Sandhurst Retail Logistics

Stockland

T2 Tea

The Victorian State Government

Zurich