


The West Australian

telethon 7

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20-PAGE WRAP
ALL 136 TELETHON
BENEFICIARIES
REVEALED



Hello 
my Name is Sofia
and I am 9 years
old, I am Olivia
Sister and Olivia
has a lot of
special needs .



IN THEIR OWN WORDS! WA KIDS TELL YOU HOW YOUR RECORD TELETHON DONATIONS ARE MAKING THEIR LIVES BETTER

**Proudly supporting Telethon
to help WA kids in need**

Thank you to our customers and team members who dug deep once again and raised more than \$792,000 in 2023 to help sick kids from across the state.

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Flight nurse Glenn Powell with Lucy Scherpenzeel.
Picture: Iain Gillespie

Flying to the rescue

Special cots will let ill newborn babies move by helicopter

GABRIELLE BECERRA MELLET

Managing the care of a critically ill baby during an air transfer is a job John Iliff doesn't take lightly.

Working with the Royal Flying Doctor Service for the past five years, the aeromedical consultant has flown across WA to reach some of the State's most remote patients.

RFDS aircraft and helicopters work across every region — regularly travelling from Jandakot to the South West, Pilbara or Kimberley, as well as the Cocos and Christmas islands.

Now a welcome boost from Telethon will fund a bespoke engineering solution to enable neonatal cots — designed to move babies who are less than a month old — to be powered and secured in heli-

copters. Inside the cots themselves, special ventilation settings provide warmth and any crucial medical gases for the tiny patients.

"Moving a baby who is only 28 days old or sometimes younger, or even preterm, it's not like moving an adult — they're very brittle," Dr Iliff said.

"(The cots) allow us to move them with the least amount of disruption and with specialised care, which wouldn't otherwise be augmented in say the ordinary stretcher."

While the vital equipment is already in use in RFDS fixed-wing aircraft, the latest funding will give the service added scope to reach some of WA's youngest and most remote patients via helicopter.

"The helicopters operate within 250km out of Perth, fly-

ing straight back on just one tank of fuel, fuelled up in Jandakot," Dr Iliff said.

"The virtue of what these cots allow us to do is to land on the helipad at the QEII hospitals, direct on to PCH."

RFDS transported 200 newborn babies — aged 28 days or younger — to PCH last year, with 186 transferred by the State Government's specialised Newborn Emergency Transport Service.

Dr Iliff said the cot-fitted helicopters could cut back on ambulance transfers and — crucially — minimise transfer times.

"From a WA perspective, we want to minimise transfer times as much as possible because we see how much strain there is on health services across the State, we know that there's a lot of

ambulance ramping, there's a lot of strain and stretch on our colleagues," he said.

The Irish-born doctor said the increased capacity to reach critically ill babies across WA was improving equity in health care — and was a service close to his heart.

"I have Australian family and cousins, who've been here for many, many years and I've had family members who've had to utilise the service," he said.

"You can see the impact that it has, giving access to people who live out in the rural, remote and regional areas of WA, it gives them an opportunity to receive optimum care, regardless of where they live."

The custom-fit neonatal cots will be in use by RFDS' helicopters by mid-2024.

Hearing the silent victims of violence

LAUREN PRICE

Domestic violence casts a dark shadow over its victims, including the most vulnerable and innocent members of society — children.

Kids are often the silent and forgotten victims of the national crisis. But seeing violence unfold, or even just hearing it, can have long-lasting effects on a child.

At Anglicare, the Young Hearts counselling program provides a safe space for children who have been exposed to domestic violence to be heard.

Without Telethon's support — a partnership spanning more than a decade — the program, which provides over 200 sessions to children each year, would cease to exist.

Young Hearts counsellor Chris Steenhof, right, said to break the cycle, children — particularly boys — need to be shown and understand there are different ways of dealing with anger from what they've witnessed at home.



"It helps stop the cycle — 95 per cent of perpetrators are men — it's a gendered thing," Mr Steenhof said.

He said sometimes it involves giving kids an outlet to process their emotions. For those who miss out on support as they navigate their turbulent young years, it can have devastating impacts.

"We might see a drop in academics, see kids being suspended from schools more or social issues, or reverting back to bad coping mechanisms such as self-harm or drug use," he said.

"It will often pop up as outbursts, dysregulation of emotion, repeating physical violence that they might have witnessed or experienced first hand or developing depression or anxiety."

Mission Australia reports children are present in 70 per cent of households experiencing family violence, or about one in four children.



PROUD TO CELEBRATE

13 YEARS AS A MILLION DOLLAR PARTNER

For the past thirteen years, the Crown Resorts Foundation is proud to have been a million dollar partner to Telethon.

As a proud partner, we want to thank the Telethon team, our employee volunteers as well as the Western Australian community who have all helped contribute to Telethon's impact in Western Australia.


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THE DREAM TEAM

There's a whole gang of people helping kids like Ben live their best life

CLAIRE SADLER

For many children facing a life-long disorder, the support they need is wide reaching.

This is the case for 11-year-old Ben McDonough, who has spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy.

It impacts his speech and motor mobility, meaning he needs several avenues of support. But with the help of Telethon funding Ben has been able to access clinical trials, physiotherapy, community activities and more.

He's been involved in iStride,

a study that investigated the effectiveness of intensive locomotor training in children with cerebral palsy that focuses on posture, standing and walking patterns.

Ben is a full-time wheelchair user and plays basketball and enjoys frame running with the help of Rebound WA, a sport charity that removes barriers to participation.

Healthy Strides has also been key to building up the youngster's strength and endurance, providing him with intensive

physiotherapy to help increase his mobility.

Perth Children's Hospital has helped with Ben's mobility through routine treatments, including Botox, as well as a major bilateral hip surgery.

He has been involved in another study, CP Move Time, which aimed to get children with cerebral palsy moving more through eight weeks of intensive therapy.

And for five years he's been a member of Superfins WA, a swim club for people with dis-

abilities. It's meant Ben has been able to have swimming lessons like every kid his age.

His mum Andree McDonough said the assistance meant he had not only built up his strength and endurance, but also provided opportunities for him to participate in community activities.

"It was life-changing to be told Ben has cerebral palsy, but fortunately we have been able to get everything he needs to help him, which means he can participate as much as he can,"

she said. "The things Telethon supports are so far and wide-reaching and have so much impact in the community. The little things they do make a big difference. That is why Telethon is so special.

"There is probably plenty more we have done that Telethon has been a part of that we have not even realised."

Since 1968, Telethon has provided significant support to Perth Children's Hospital for new medical equipment, specialist facilities and research.

Picture: Iain Gillespie



PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
 Since 1968, Telethon has provided significant support to Perth Children's Hospital for new medical equipment, specialist facilities and research fellowships.

REBOUND WA
 Rebound WA removes barriers so children with disabilities can have the same participation opportunities in sport just like any other child. For Ben, that means frame running and basketball.

SUPERFINS WA
 A swim club for people with disabilities, the Telethon Superfins Learn to Swim program has helped get Ben into the pool for swimming lessons for the past five years.

ISTRIDE
 A study supported by the Telethon-Perth Children's Hospital Research Fund, iStride investigated the effectiveness of intensive locomotor training in children with cerebral palsy, the results of which have been very promising for children who require daily wheelchair supports.

CEREBRAL PALSY MOVE TIME STUDY
 Children with cerebral palsy can spend up to 96 per cent of their waking day sitting, which can have serious physical and mental consequences. Researchers behind the world-first CP Move Time study – run by the Telethon-funded Healthy Strides foundation – got 150 kids including Ben moving more through three intensive physical therapy sessions per week for eight weeks.

HEALTHY STRIDES
 Healthy Strides provides intensive, evidence-based therapy for children and young people to increase mobility. It has helped to improve Ben's strength and endurance through physiotherapy focusing on things like weight bearing and being able to self-transfer while standing.



Thank you
 for helping the children of WA to see their future.



Ex-Wildcat goes back to school

REBECCA PARISH

Former Perth Wildcat Greg Hire is passionate about mental health and wellness.

And he's channeling that to help regional kids with a new program through his non-profit mental health organisation, A Stitch in Time.

Thanks to funding support from Telethon, the risingUP program introduces important mental health concepts to students using hands-on, interactive workshops. They are all about early intervention and encouraging students to practice self-care when managing their own mental health.

Hire and his team will visit 100 schools across WA as part of the program, with presentations at several Kimberley and South West schools already under their belts.

The risingUP team includes a psychologist, experienced facilitators, elite athletes and trained youth educators.

They discuss concepts with students like gratitude, the importance of exercise and healthy sleep for a healthy mind.

"Mental health is a tough thing to talk about, to make it authentic and engaging as well as insightful and educational," Hire said.

Lifeline 13 11 14

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

New research is looking at the link between childhood burns and longer-lasting health issues

REBECCA PARISH

When a child suffers a burn, it's not just the scars that are left impacting their body — there are also ongoing health concerns that can impact them throughout their life.

Among these is an increased risk of heart disease.

With the support of Telethon, the Fiona Wood Foundation's burn injury research unit postdoctoral researcher Dr Blair Johnson is undertaking important research into why.

"This particular study is aiming to understand why some kids in particular, although it may be applicable to the work we do with adults as well, why some of them will end up with cardiovascular disease after they have a burn

injury," he said. "WA has this beautiful system called the WA hospital data link system, which lets us look at what people are going into hospital for.

"And one of the things that we came up with was that those patients actually do have increased rates of cardiovascular disease, particularly things like ischemic heart disease and heart failure."

Dr Johnson will study the relationship between burn injuries, platelets and blood vessels to find out how the body functions after non-serious burns and what effect that has on developing cardiovascular disease.

He said while the research was far from informing treatment to stop that link in child burns victims, it was an important first step.

"At this point, we're still in the basic research phase, which means that we are a while away from having any sort of clinical intervention or any way for us to provide a direct benefit to patients," Dr Johnson said.

"It's very important that we do go through the process though . . . it ensures that we are providing as much benefit as we can."

The research will help families like that of Katie Cullen, whose daughter Ruby suffered burns in 2020, at the age of six, when a hot cup of tea fell from the bench onto her leg.

Her husband rushed Ruby to a cold shower and within three weeks — with the help of doctors — her burns had fully healed, much to Ms Cullen's surprise.

She said any research into the lasting impacts on children was important.

"For Ruby, and what she went through at the time, it was quite emotional and quite intense for the family," she said.

"Anything that helps them going forward would mean a lot to us. That's why we're involved."

WA children will be recruited for the research next month, with the study running for the next year.

Dr Johnson is also seeking a cohort of healthy kids aged 10-16 to take part in the study and is encouraging families to consider participating in the research.

Families who wish to be involved can contact the Fiona Wood Foundation.



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Telethon, 56 years
and counting.

We're here for good.





Blair Johnson
with Ruby
Cullen.
Picture: Justin
Benson-Cooper

Stepping up to help

CLAIRE SADLER

It is every parent's dream to watch their child take their first steps, but for Kathryn Somerfield it was a moment she never thought would come.

Two-year-old Hailey Somerfield is one of only five children in Australia, and just 600 globally, to be diagnosed with KAT6A syndrome — a rare neurodevelopmental disorder.

Her mum said the rare and complex nature of the disorder made it challenging to diagnose and access the right support. "The syndrome was only picked up for her last year in November. There is a whole list of things that can affect her like heart, development, speech defects and also feeding issues," Ms Somerfield said.

"On top of that she has some rare symptoms that unfortunately she has picked up on, including epilepsy and aches and pains in her muscles."

It all meant Ms Somerfield thought her daughter would never walk or talk, but through Rocky Bay's Early Start Intervention Program

— funded with the help of Telethon donations — the toddler was thriving within months.

Hailey, pictured, used to shy away from tasks such as touching objects, turning pages, and even taking baths, but thanks to the program she now tackles these activities head on.

"In the space of a month of seeing a physio she was walking and after seeing a speech therapist she said her first word within a couple of months," Ms Somerfield said. "It's not huge things but the small changes mean a lot."

"They are big to us because we didn't think she would ever say her first word and didn't think she would ever walk."

Thanks to Telethon funding, more children like Hailey will be able to learn life-changing developmental skills through the early intervention program.

Rocky Bay physiotherapy consultant Cristina Lee said Telethon donations would go towards expanding the program, including screening tools.



CHEF CLARA APPROVES

Clara is four years old and lives with type 1 diabetes.

Thanks to Telethon beneficiary the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre, she's learning how carbohydrates impact her blood sugar levels - which is critical to managing her condition.

It's just one way the centre is providing 2,000 WA families with education, connection, care and support to help them live a happier and healthier life with type 1.



MinRes is proud to support Telethon and the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre's efforts to help children and families confidently face the lifelong challenges of living with this complex autoimmune disease.



THE CARE FACTOR

There's an army of people offering support when families need it most



(Left to right) Amy Harry and son Austin, Tash D'Souza (Heartkids), Olivia Borovina, Amara Nolan, Melissa Dawes (Radio Lollipop), Captain Starlight, Tanya Menegola (KCSG), Kenley Martin, Dr Scallywag, Lola Gazo, Georgia Rogers, Teresa Dixon (kiind), Mia Rogers and Louisa Miles (Music Therapist Red Kite). Picture: Jackson Flindell

LAUREN PRICE

After a child is diagnosed with a critical illness or chronic condition, sleepless nights, long stays at the hospital and exhaustion follow.

Parents have described the experience of watching their child go through endless medical treatments as feeling like they're in an unbelievably bad dream from which they are unable to wake.

For the 112,158 children involved in Telethon-supported programs, and their families, the beneficiaries that frequent Perth Children's Hospital and beyond are "worth their weight in gold".

Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of West Australians, last year's 26-hour extravaganza raised a record \$77.5 million.

Some of the integral organisations supporting children include the Kids Cancer Support Group and the Starlight Foundation.

Three-year-old Kenley was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia after waking up "lethargic" and "not herself" one morning.

Her parents arrived at Perth Children's Hospital thinking she had a virus, but left with a cancer diagnosis.

From that day on, mum Courtney Martin said the Kids Cancer Support Group had provided unwavering support to their family.

"We could not have survived the past 16 months without them, they are beyond incredible, they are fundamental," Ms Martin said.

She said KCSG staff always made sure she and her family

had the essentials for any unexpected or overnight hospital visits.

"We were in the hospital for Christmas two years ago . . . and the next day someone just arrived with Christmas lunch for our whole family," Ms Martin said.

"Often with cancer you're admitted unexpectedly, and they will stack the kitchen, to make sure there's food there for us and there's toys there for kids and the crafts are always replenished."

Ms Martin said the organisation "wraps around families" beyond the hospital walls.

The simple act of putting a smile on a sick child's face can also help them cope with illness and often gruelling treatment.

This is what the Starlight Foundation — and their Cap-

tain Starlight superhero figures aim to do.

Mother Lisa Yovich said the Clown Doctors was a "god-send" for her daughter Lola, who endured long, "tough" days of chemotherapy for almost a year.

"She was hospitalised a lot, we spent most of our time here and they were always coming to visit the oncology ward," Ms Yovich said.

"They were always around just to bring some laughter . . . We are so grateful for them."

Through HeartKids, parents who have children with chronic heart conditions can be paired with a family support co-ordinator who has had a child go through something similar.

Jasmine Borovina said that after her daughter Olivia was diagnosed with a heart condi-

tion, the family's HeartKids co-ordinator Maree Green became "everything" to them.

Ms Borovina said Ms Green had stayed by her side while her daughter underwent open heart surgery. She said having someone to talk to — who wasn't a health professional — also provided great comfort.

"When you're in a hospital that long it's very isolating and very all-consuming, and just to have that break, whether it's just a five or 10-minute chat with somebody that gets it, it's amazing," Ms Borovina said.

Telethon has funded a total 276 grants for 2024, which will support life-changing programs, much-needed equipment and vital medical research.

This year's spectacular live fundraiser will be held on October 19-20.

Heroes help youngsters surf wave of optimism

CALEB RUNCIMAN

Children living with autism from around the State have been lapping up the opportunity to embrace their inner surfer with the Ocean Heroes team.

A total of 624 kids took to the WA coast last year as part of the surfing on the spectrum initiative — with the group supplying boards, lifejackets and wetsuits.

As a beneficiary of Telethon 2024, Ocean Heroes will help children build resilience while developing a new skill.

Kate Hillard — who lives in Broome — said the Ocean Heroes team had given her daughter, who lives with cystic fibrosis, a new wave of confidence.

"Having such an amazing team supporting the kids and families, it just really changed the way I see the world," Ms Hillard said. While young Leila is

not Ocean Heroes' primary audience, the program has been an engaging change in her usual exercise.

"Normally we'd do an hour of physio every day, but with surfing, they have found the inhalation of salt air, and physical activity has been so beneficial in strengthening the lungs," her mum said. "Each time she goes surfing she gets a certificate, now she has a wall covered in them."





THE LITTLE STARS WHO CONTINUE TO SHINE

CLAIRE SADLER

It might be six months since the four Little Telethon Stars took centre stage, but the memories are still fresh in the mind of each of the youngsters.

Harrison Carthew, Connor Barrett, Emily Houston, and Sophia Marshall stole the show and viewers' hearts when they helped drive Telethon to a new record total last year, raising \$77.5 million.

For Connor, who lives with cystic fibrosis, his favourite part was getting to spend so much time with Fat Cat and his new mates.

"My favourite part of Telethon was Fat Cat surprising us at lots of events because he's so cute and soft," he said.

"It was fun making friends with Sophia, Harrison, and Emily and we got to help so many other kids, so I feel really proud about all of that."

His mum Taryn Barrett said the foursome reminded people what the fundraiser was really about. "They will have a friendship for life now. It was just a great example of what Telethon is about, supporting these brilliant children and together they were able to make it easier for other chil-

dren that face challenges," she said.

Young Emily finished her treatment for leukaemia less than a month before she found out she was going to be a Little Telethon Star. The event made her realise every kid has their differences — and she also loved meeting Jimmy Barnes.

"To see her confidence grow through the whole experience, it is like treatment for leukaemia is a distant memory," her mum Andrea Boyd said.

"The big thing for Emily during her treatment was that she just wanted to be a normal kid, so for her meeting the other

Telethon Stars and the experience, it opened her eyes that she is just a normal kid that had to do extra stuff. For such a positive experience to come out of a negative one, it has been amazing for not only Emily but the whole family."

Sophia lives with type 1 diabetes, which means monitoring her glucose levels 24/7.

"It is great for Telethon to choose a kid that from the outside looks fine but there is lots going on to keep her healthy and keep her going," mum Jenny Marshall said. "There are so many people in the community that have invisible disabilities."

And Harrison, who was diagnosed with spastic diplegia cerebral palsy and development delays at just 15 months old, has gained self-confidence since his TV debut.

He also deals with vision impairment and colour blindness, and his mum Pay Pay Lee said he was always name dropping that he is a Little Telethon Star — and wants to invite Fat Cat to every event. "We are feeling very excited to see all the beneficiaries (being announced this year). Hopefully it means opening doors for kids to access more facilities and support," she said.



We are supporting West Australians.

Hancock Prospecting and its businesses are proud to be million-dollar partners of Telethon once again.

Telethon's impact is seen in every part of the state, providing essential services and support for children and their families.

Following the example of our Executive Chairman, Mrs Gina Rinehart AO, our people continue to give generously to help West Aussies in need.

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ROY HILL



HAN ROY

royhill.com.au

Legacy of 20 years of vital support

Cystic Fibrosis WA's work has benefited thousands

CLAIRE SADLER

Brandan Chitty and his family were among the first to receive support from Cystic Fibrosis WA — and 20 years on the charity has now made a difference to the lives of thousands.

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disorder, primarily affecting the lungs but also the pancreas, liver, kidneys and intestine as a result of a build up of thick mucus.

Little Telethon Star Connor Barrett put a spotlight on the disease in 2023 when he shared with West Australians tuning into the annual fundraiser how it had impacted him.

Brandan's mum, Hayley Jones, was not even sure how to pronounce the disease let alone know what it was when her son was diagnosed when he was just three weeks old.

"It was daunting because back then we were told good luck if Brandan lives to his teenage years," she said. "Over time with new research and medicine now people can live into their 40s and beyond, but back then it was a big shock to us."

However, knowing CFWA was just a phone call away made things a little bit less scary.

"My daughter Addison was also born with cystic fibrosis, so when the kids had hospital stays CFWA would come see them and give them packs to keep them occupied," Ms Jones said.

"They bought the kids trampolines to help with physio and since Brandan got older they have helped him with gym



passes and registration for sports.

"Even if we are just having a bad time we can always call on them. They are an organisation that has fitted into our family."

Cystic fibrosis can be isolating, especially in regional areas, as people with the disease limit socialising due to the risk of spreading bugs.

But through the help of ongoing Telethon funding, CFWA provides services to regional kids like Brandan, pictured, and Addison, who live in York, to help them feel less alone.

"Growing up you think it's just normal and then you start going to school and realise you're a bit different. You have to take a lot of tablets while everyone else is running around and having fun," Brandan said.

"CFWA have been amazing though. They would come out to school every year and do a big talk at the assemblies and even come into our classes to show other students what CF actually is and to teach them about germ spreading."

Over 20 years, CFWA has been able to expand its Telethon-supported programs to reach more people. This includes outreach to families and schools in all WA

regions, health professionals doing regional visits to ensure families have access to up-to-date information, occupational therapy, and online programs to reduce the isolation of living with CF.

"Support from Telethon and the WA community is vital in helping make a difference in the lives of those in need," said CFWA fundraising head Jessica Hollinshead.

Picture: Ian Munro



THINGS ARE LOOKING PUP FOR FAMILIES

GABRIELLE BECERRA MELLET

They might be known as "man's best friend", but these furry friends are also instrumental in changing the lives of many other people.

Western Australian Assistance and Therapy Dogs trains these beloved canines to provide specialist assistance and therapy to clients across Perth.

And for the first time, a welcome boost from Telethon will now allow families to take part in individual consultations with WAAT Dogs assessors to determine exactly what kind of assistance dog they need.

Occupational therapist Tilly Clements said the funding was crucial in allowing children with disabilities and their families to access help.

"Obviously occupational therapy is not always the most

affordable thing for people, particularly if they don't have access to funding," she said.

Consultations will identify what type of training an assistance dog might need in order to provide 24/7 tailored support to a client, Ms Clements said.

WAAT Dogs founder Kay Whitely said dogs offered a wealth of benefits for clients, who often presented with autism, complex post-traumatic stress disorder or physical disabilities like cerebral palsy or spinal cord injuries.

For children, this often means finding a dog able to deal with more demanding behaviours, Ms Whitely said.

"Sometimes children with demanding behaviours really need the dog to snap them out of whatever is going on for them," she said.

"We train our dogs quite often on deep tissue pressure where the dog lies across the large muscle groups. So the dog lies across the legs, leans on their abdomen and holds their shoulders with their chin.

"What that does biologically is it releases endorphins so the child learns to self soothe."

Ms Whitely said she had witnessed the multitude of long-term impacts that assistance dogs had on clients since founding WAAT Dogs.

"I cry a lot — happy tears," she said.

"I've seen children with 100 per cent school refusal attending school every day because they've got a dog with them. I had one mum who had to co-sleep with her child for about 15 years . . . within one night of having the dog, she got to sleep with her husband."

Ensuring everyone has the gift of a sporting chance

CALEB RUNCIMAN

Fair Game is putting a smile on the faces of children in socio-economically disadvantaged communities by promoting a fit and healthy Australia.

This year it has been handed grants for two of its programs as part of Telethon 2024.

The organisation's Healthy

Communities program helps spread health awareness to remote communities across WA while its Recycle and Donate initiative sees second-hand sports equipment travel to those who need it most.

Chief executive Nicki Bardwell said her team — made up of volunteers — often travels to the Kimberley, Pilbara and Mid West

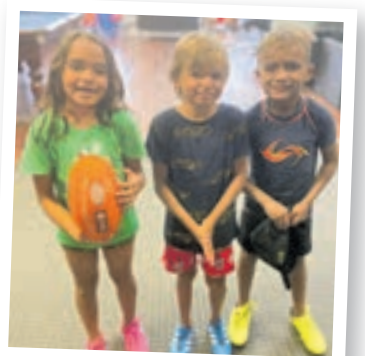
in order to reach young people.

"We're trying to make the activities really fun and engaging by gamifying the learning," Ms Bardwell said. "As a result of that the kids are retaining more knowledge and their base knowledge is going up."

One happy snap shows three young children happily wearing second-hand footy boots minutes

after they received them. The kids then went outside to test their new boots — despite temperatures soaring above 40C.

Bins dedicated to collecting second-hand sports gear are situated around the Perth metropolitan area and their locations can be accessed at www.fair-game.org.au/donate-equipment/.





GET A KICK OUT OF LIFE

LAUREN PRICE

For seven-year-old Franki Moura, being on a grass pitch and chasing any kind of ball is his happy place.

Franki, pictured right, is one of 350 kids living with a disability who are able to play AFL thanks to WA All Abilities Football Association's Kickability school program.

With Telethon's support, it has expanded to give more children with physical and mental difficulties the opportunity to join a fun sporting community and play the beloved Aussie sport in a supportive environment.

Franki's mum, Vera Moura, said it was important for the kids to feel included and debunk preconceived ideas of what someone with a disability can achieve.

"He is always really happy to be playing, and he's always extremely happy being around anything to do with balls and grass



she said. "The program is important because it bridges the gap of understanding and the preconceived thought of what someone with a disability can and can't do."

Ms Moura said it was vital kids with disabilities were "given the opportunity to play". "For those who have physical difficulties — sometimes their bone densities can be weakened from being in wheelchairs — it's good for them to be able to run around and get the strength back into their muscles and bones," she said.

As Franki had always watched his siblings play footy, the opportunity to play himself was exciting.

"He is one of the biggest smilers when he is out there," Ms Moura said.

Thanks to extra support from Telethon, by the end of the year almost 2000 kids from Broome to Albany — and everywhere in between — will experience the joy of playing footy.

and being outside and running around and doing sports," Ms Moura said.

The seven-year-old lives with KAT6A syndrome — a rare genetic disability that affects cognitive and muscular development.

"It's good for him to play sport in a way that isn't stifled by rules and regulations or in a way that impinges on his abilities,"



Research hope for heart patients

REBECCA PARISH

Behind closed laboratory doors at the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, important work is under way to help identify whether West Australian children will develop an enlarged heart as a result of a genetic cardiovascular disorder.

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is the most common genetic cardiovascular disorder in the State and the leading cause of sudden cardiac death in children. But currently the onset of the condition — and its severity — cannot be predicted.

Dr Daniel Reinke, a postdoctoral research associate at the UWA-based Institute, is hoping to change that with his work, which was awarded funding through Telethon.

He is developing a tool to help identify the likelihood that children will develop

HCM, enabling earlier and more precise treatment.

"Currently genetic screening is the gold standard for identifying children carrying disease-causing gene mutations and predicting the likelihood that hypertrophic cardiomyopathy will develop," he said. "But genetic screening is less than 50 per cent effective at predicting the development of the disease."

It means patients with the mutation are subject to long-term uncertainty and testing for the development of symptoms.

"The results from this (new) test will inform clinical management of patients and assist in identifying which patients should be given preventive treatment," Dr Reinke said.

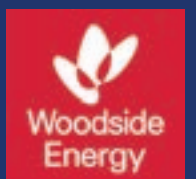
Wesfarmers, UWA-VCCRI chair in cardiovascular research, Professor Livia Hool, is overseeing Dr Reinke's work and said the research was an important step.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Woodside has proudly supported Telethon for over 20 years

Our volunteers in the call centre were thrilled to be part of the generosity and spirit of the people of Western Australia.

Find out more about Woodside's contribution at:
woodside.com/sustainability/social



Realising the power of hearing

GABRIELLE BECERRA MELLET

For the first two years of his life, everything was a little quiet for Carter Ah Chee-Maytum.

Mum Yolandi Ah Chee said she quickly realised her baby was suffering from hearing loss — and behavioural issues such as scratching, fights with his sister, yelling and the inability to understand people were rife.

“He was a very angry little boy, because he couldn’t hear anything for the first two years of his life,” she said. “(It was) very sad-denning because that’s my baby and he couldn’t really hear me.”

Faced with an 18-month wait-list and thousands of dollars in medical bills at a private doctor, Ms Ah Chee said it was a struggle to access medical intervention.

After meeting with a surgeon through Cockburn Integrated Health, Carter was swiftly treated for persistent middle ear fluid with surgery to insert grommets.

“When he had everything done and he was looking at me and hearing what I was saying, it was so emotional,” Ms Ah Chee said. “Because he suffered for so long.”

The not-for-profit organisation Carter’s family accessed is a collaborative between providers — bringing together specialist ear health services and speech pathology for Aboriginal children.

For the first time, Telethon will now fund a services co-ordinator and full-time speech pathology service for the super clinic.

Ear, nose and throat surgeon Francis Lannigan



said chronic ear disease was considered by UN agency the World Health Organisation as a marker of public health — and Australia was leading the world in its disease rates.

“When you reach above the level of about 4 per cent, it’s considered to be a public health crisis,” he said. “In remote communities, up to 70 per cent of Aboriginal children have chronic ear disease.”

Dr Lannigan said more needed to be done to address the health-care disparities — including addressing the disease rates in Government commitments like Closing the Gap.

“I’d like to see a cohort of First Nations children arrive at kindergarten with normal speech and language,” he said.

“I cannot understand why it isn’t a bigger focus of the Closing the Gap program.”

He said hearing loss in infants impeded a crucial stretch of development.

“Our brains are critically wired for language acquisition between the age of six months and 18 months,” he said.

“You can improve things with interventions after that but you can never regain that window of brain plasticity.”

Cockburn Integrated Health chief executive Clory Carrello said Telethon funding would boost services for families who may be facing wait-list blowouts in the public health sector.

“These kids are struggling . . . they’re struggling hearing which impacts on their speech and development,” he said.

“The Telethon funding means we can improve our systems and processes.”

Our son James has been known as 'Mr smiley' at PCH since he was just a few months old. He is now 10 and is bubbly, engaging, vivacious and highly social. He captivates everyone he comes across.

We are deeply grateful for Down Syndrome WA and in particular Nikki who helped us navigate and survive those early years. James had 5 surgeries by age six, including open heart surgery with critical complications that led to emergency surgery in ICU and the head of ICU telling us he didn't know if James would survive. How incredibly grateful we are that he did! James was also on a SATS (oxygen + heart) machine at home for 3 years with hospitalisations every 3-5 weeks due to his lung defect. As a result of all the surgeries + invasive treatments, James developed complex medical PTSD, which was followed by 2 years of weekly trauma therapy at PCH.

Nikki was by our side bringing comfort and reassurance to James as he went through a 6th surgery last year. Nikki's presence at PCH is invaluable. The ongoing support we've received from DSWA has been pivotal in our lives, helping create a world where rather than being defined by 'that's impossible', James is the absolute definition of 'I am possible!'

James brings us and everyone he meets so much joy with his vivacity and empathetic heart, teaching us all about living in the present moment.

Thank you,
Fiona (James' Mum)

JAMES' MUM FIONA

Letters full of love from sick kids and their siblings on how WA's donations save lives

JUST WRITING

CLAIRE SADLER

“My Dad used to carry me to the shower because I whasent (sic) very strong but thanks to the doctors and nurses thay (sic) helped me get better so please help them to help other kids like me.”

These are the words of eight-year-old Lola, who was among several

children who wrote letters to this year’s Telethon beneficiaries to tell The West Australian’s readers what the fundraiser means to them.

Lola wants people to donate to help the doctors and nurses that looked after her when she was diagnosed with clear cell sarcoma, an extremely rare type of cancer.

“I had to have very, very strong medicine called chemo and radiation that made me even sicker!” she wrote.

“I lost all my hair and even had to eat through a tube in my nose.

“Dad still gets worried and cries but not me because I’m tough and brave.”

This year’s 136 Telethon

beneficiaries announced morning ceremony record \$77

raised last

The gen mean the c

continue t and bright children.

Eight-ye was thank

FREE

Rebound WA
Sport & Recreation Programs for Youth with Physical Disabilities
reboundwa.com/services/youth



My name is Lola I'm 8 years old and I'm in year three and I love going to school and being with my friends

I got clear cell Sarcoma and it's a type of blood cancer. I was very sick and the doctors took my kidney and a very big lump out of my tummy but it's ok because I still got a spare kidney in the back of the cart

I had to have very very strong medicine called chemo and radiation that made me even sicker! I lost all my hair and even had to eat through a tube in my nose. My dad used to carry me to the shower because I wasn't very strong but thanks to the doctors and nurses they helped me get better so please help them help other kids like me. Dad still gets worried and cries but not me because I'm tough and brave.

PS I hope you like the heart it is so tiny

Love from Lola and Pruni (dog)

Thank you



LOLA

My name is Matthew I AM 8 years old and I have a younger sister who has Down Syndrome. My name Hannah had a big heart operation at 4 months old and as a result gained many other disabilities. We are very lucky because she died a few times but the doctors at PMH fought very hard to keep Hannah with us. Because of Hannah's disabilities she has needed lots of help.

HeartKids helped us lots when Hannah had her big operation and when she was in hospital. Hannah's House helped us early in her recovery. The Healthy Strides team help Hannah learn to sit, crawl and use her walker and I get to join in helping her count the pictures on the wall. We want to play at the park together. I would love Hannah's first word to be Matthew!

MATTHEW WRITING ABOUT ALL THE HELP HIS SISTER HANNAH HAS RECEIVED



SOFIA AND OLIVIA

All About Olivia

tello my name is Sofia and I am 9 years old. I am Olivia's sister and she has a lot of special needs. When Olivia was 2 weeks old her heart stopped beating.

Olivia is constantly sick in and out of hospital and Mum has to go with her. I wish Olivia could talk to me. When I tell her I love her it would be nice to hear it back.

I like the fact that Olivia can make sounds and can sign some words so I can talk to her. Because of Olivia we got a Starlight wish. We got to fly on an airplane + went on a big boat.

Thank you for reading my letter about Olivia.

Thank you for everything the type 1 diabetes centre. I love this because they help us in the kitchen and I love that there's a BBQ area.

Having fun playing at the family centre

LINCOLN THANKING THE TYPE 1 DIABETES FAMILY CENTRE

ING TO SAY THANKS

ies are set to be d on Friday uring the Giving breakfast after a .5 million was year. erous donations rganisations can o build a better er future for WA ear-old Matthew ful for several

Telethon beneficiaries who helped his little sister Hannah, who has Down syndrome and also has other disabilities after a heart operation when she was just four months old. "We are very lucky because she died a few times but the doctors at PMH fought very hard to keep Hannah with us," he wrote.

"Because of Hannah's disabilities she has needed lots of help. HeartKids helped us lots when Hannah had her big operation and when she was in hospital. "Hannah's House helped us in her early recovery. "The Healthy Strides team help Hannah learn to sit, crawl and use her walker and I get to join in

helping her count the pictures on the wall. "I would love Hannah's first word to be Matthew!" And eight-year-old James wrote that the Allergy Support Hub had helped him to "feel brave" despite his food and bee allergies. "I get worried when I'm sitting near people eating my allergens. I'm scared of bees so I always have to

wear shoes," he wrote. "I had lots of fun at the ASH workshop. ASH helps me to feel brave and I get to meet other kids with allergies. We can share stories." Nine-year-old Sofia got to spend some special time with her sister Olivia — who has non-verbal autism, cerebral palsy, and brain abnormality due to a genetic condition —

through the Starlight Foundation. "I wish Olivia could talk to me," she wrote. "When I tell her I love her it would be nice to hear it back. I like the fact that Olivia can make sounds and can sign some words so I can talk to her. Because of Olivia we got a Starlight wish — we got to fly on an airplane and went on a big boat."

Realise your abilities



- ★ Therapy services
- ★ Assistive technology
- ★ Employment services
- ★ Home and living services
- ★ Community participation

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abilitywa.com.au



On the right track

CALEB RUNCIMAN

Kids of all sporting abilities had a blast as they hit the athletics track for the annual White Zebra family fun day.

The White Zebra Foundation — the not-for-profit arm of WizeTherapy — has been awarded four grants as part of Telethon 2024 and this year the organisation's family fun day gave kids plenty of opportunities to get amongst the fun.

Children with mobility limitations, like five-year-old Ben Berrigan, had access to frame runners, which helped them dominate on the racetrack.

His mum Christine Berrigan said Ben had a blast last Saturday.

"The borrowing of the running frame has been so beneficial for Ben because he's got Down syndrome and he's also deaf, so his balance isn't so great," she said.

"The running frame for him gives him that extra bit of support that he needs to run around with his brothers and keep up, it

gives him that independence to be mobile.

"Now we have to keep some doors closed because he can get in the running frame and take off, which is great for him . . . not so great for us!"

Ms Berrigan said the day was also a great opportunity to socialise with other families.

"Everybody was so happy . . . it wasn't even just your own kid, it was for every other kid to see how far they've come," she said.

"We did the same athletics day last year and Ben had only just started walking, and then to see the change to this year where he's running and did the whole long jump on his own — which was unexpected for us."

Vortex throwing, long jump and running races were just some of the many events on offer this year.

The White Zebra Foundation also offers the trial and hire of dedicated speech output devices for kids with speech and language difficulties through its equipment loan library.

Harrison Lee Carthew enjoys the action.
Picture: Jackson Flindell



Students can make the grade

LAUREN PRICE

They say education is the key to breaking the cycles of disadvantage, but for some, paying for a tutor can really stretch the household budget.

That's why the Achievers Club was started. It's a free tutoring service for school-aged students who need extra support with their schoolwork.

The charity is run entirely by about 100 volunteers and exists thanks to the committed students who want to improve and continue to show up.

Each Saturday morning during the school term, mentors sit down with students to help with their school work, free of charge.

For Tereka Laila, 14, the program has supported her for four years and her father James Laila said it has given her hope she can achieve more in life.

"Tereka was struggling with her assignments and her grades weren't good . . . they (her teachers) said she needed extra support in maths and English," he said. "When she started going to Achievers Club her grades started to improve significantly. It's boosted her hope in her journey in academics."

The volunteer-run charity hopes Telethon funds will enable it to bring on more mentors and students.



Raising funds for WA children
– to us, that's big!

Over the past decade, BHP has contributed \$40 million to the Telethon Kids Institute, through Telethon, to help improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Western Australia.

bhp.com

BHP

Bianca Sibbald with her son Parker.
Picture: Ross Swanborough



Keeping young front of mind

CLAIRE SADLER

Children whose families are impacted by mental illness are at a much higher risk of experiencing issues themselves later in life.

It is a pattern the Kookaburra Kids Foundation is hoping to break with the help of new funding from Telethon.

The foundation supports young people impacted by family mental illness, with the aim of teaching children and adolescents help-seeking behaviours if they ever are struggling themselves.

Its programs include annual adventure camps and activity days at places like Caversham Wildlife Park, interwoven with mental health education.

Bianca Sibbald enrolled her eight-year-old son Parker with Kookaburra Kids after her own experiences.

"I had a lot of mental health

challenges growing up and I couldn't understand why until I was recently diagnosed with ADHD," she said.

"Mental health was never a big thing to talk about when I was growing up, so we need to raise the next generation to know it's OK to acknowledge and process their emotions rather than bottling them up."

Ms Sibbald said she would be worried for her son's future mental health without the support of early intervention programs such as Kookaburra Kids.

"Without this program it wouldn't allow the kids to open up and connect, so I'd be worried it could have negative effects on their future mental health," she said. "For him to be able to connect with other children and open up has been really beneficial."

A Telethon grant given to Kookaburra Kids means more

children like Parker will be able to attend the activity days and adventure camps.

The funding comes as the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed there were 3249 deaths by suicide in Australia in 2022 — 105 more than the previous year.

Kookaburra Kids chief executive Renee Coffey said the grim statistic was proof that investment in programs promoting mental health strategies from an early age was necessary.

"It's incredibly disappointing to see suicide rates on the rise — we are conscious of the fact that every number in that statistic is a life lost," she said.

"Through Kookaburra we encourage young people to learn help-seeking behaviours so they have the confidence to seek help when needed."

Lifeline 13 11 14
Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

RioTinto | Embrace 

Committed to a mentally healthy future

Our partnership with Embrace @ Telethon Kids Institute and Telethon means researchers like Dr Alix Woolard can work to tackle obstacles placed in front of children and young people to develop the right support at the time.

"Dealing effectively with trauma and other mental health challenges allows for the next generation to thrive," Dr Woolard says.

Find out more about how we are building thriving communities here



THE 2024 TELETHON

12 Buckets

Big Buckets and Future Leaders

are peer-led mentoring and personal development programs for educationally disadvantaged high school students who need additional support and guidance. These programs are led by a youth coordinator with assistance from youth workers and volunteer mentors.



A Stitch in Time

The risingUP program will introduce mental health concepts to students at 100 schools across WA, encouraging self-care and building skills to help manage mental health concerns. Workshops are delivered by psychologists, experienced facilitators and youth educators.



Ability Solutions

The All Abilities

Art, High Care Kids and Adaptive Innovative Community Equipment programs aim to improve quality of life for children with complex disabilities, encouraging engagement in artistic sport and recreational activities. Innovative equipment items are tailor-made to support the individual needs of children.



Ability WA

The Assist-Kids Equipment Library

provides children with disability or development delay access to specialised equipment, supporting their overall wellbeing. The In-home Baby Intervention Service provides vital early intervention therapy to babies "at-risk" of developmental delay and/or disability. Hap-pea Mealtimes provides evidence-based practical therapies to children experiencing mealtime difficulties.



Achievers Club WA

The Achievers Club helps school students from disadvantaged backgrounds who need additional support and guidance with their schoolwork. One-on-one mentoring sessions delivered by dedicated volunteers help build self-confidence, trust and a sense of achievement.



Australian Children's Music Foundation

The Music for Hope program provides music education and instruments to children and at-risk youth. The program offers the opportunity to learn and develop musical skills while experiencing the joy of creativity, developing imagination, and achieving positive educational and behavioural outcomes.



adhdWA

SPARK provides children with ADHD and their parents, the skills to manage ADHD before, during and after diagnosis. Specialists employ a strengths-based approach to increase understanding of the condition, teach adaptive ways of thinking and provide practical skills for daily life.



Thanks to our generous donors and the WA community, Telethon is proud to support 136 beneficiaries in 2024. Each of these deserving organisations has committed to playing its part to ensure a brighter future for WA children through life-changing programs, state-of-the-art equipment and world-renowned medical research.

All Stars for Autism

The Teen Mentoring Program provides high school students with autism the opportunity to mentor younger children with autism. This groundbreaking initiative enables autistic children to connect, collaborate and inspire each other as they work together on creative and meaningful community-driven projects.



Allergy Support Hub

The Allergy Brave Program delivers tailored therapies to support children with severe allergy anxiety to build confidence and increase mental wellbeing. The Free to Play, Grow and Connect program provides education services to assist children and families in navigating their allergy diagnosis and managing life transitions.



Anglicare WA

Young Hearts is a free counselling service for children and young people who have experienced family and domestic violence. Through art, play and narrative therapies, these young West Australians are supported to rebuild trust and attachment, express their emotions and make sense of their experiences.



Asthma WA

The Children's Asthma Hub (formerly Paediatric Respiratory Hub) offers comprehensive support for children with respiratory conditions, aiming to reduce hospitalisations and life-threatening asthma incidents. It provides lung function testing, analysis and consultations - all conveniently consolidated into a single appointment, effectively minimising health risks.



ANZCA Foundation

Research into how children experience and communicate pain will help develop crucial tools to enhance child healthcare. Investigating the impact of anaesthesia on babies' brains during major surgery aims to reduce adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes and improve the wellbeing of babies undergoing surgical procedures.



Kookaburra Kids

When a parent suffers from mental ill-health, the impact on children can be debilitating and long-lasting. The Kookaburra Kids camp and activity days provide vulnerable children with skills, peer support and emotional literacy to support a healthy childhood and reduce their risk of developing a mental health issue.



Autism Western Australia

The Autism Association of WA supports families of children showing signs of autism to access early diagnosis and intervention. The program includes specialist playgroups, workshops and groups to improve capacity, knowledge and social wellbeing for the whole family.



Barking Gecko Theatre

The Ticketing Access Program allows vulnerable and disadvantaged children free access to Barking Gecko Theatre Company performances, encouraging inclusivity and improving wellbeing and quality of life.



BIGHART

Through youth work strategies and mentoring support, Maragutharra: Working Together aims to connect young people living in Roebourne to creative skills, culture and each other, improving their wellbeing, sense of belonging and resilience.



BYA

The Warren Youth Mental Health Support Program delivers mental health and social wellbeing workshops curated specifically to the needs of at-risk and disadvantaged youth in the Manjimup community.



Blind Sports WA

Let's Get Visible is an accessible sport and recreation program specifically designed for children living with blindness or vision impairment in WA. The program aims to encourage inclusion, improve quality of life and break down stereotypes.



Bridge Builders

The Backpack Buddies program collaborates with schools in Mandurah to provide weekly backpacks filled with nourishment for children experiencing food insecurity. With a focus on enhancing wellbeing, creating brighter educational opportunities and making a tangible impact in children's lives, the program strives to create positive change within the community.



Bully Zero

Through the delivery of powerful bullying intervention and prevention programs in WA schools, Project B.R.A.V.E. aims to reduce incidents of bullying. The project strives to mitigate the harmful effects of bullying and enhance the wellbeing of vulnerable children.



Cahoots

The Cahoots Hearts and Minds Program (CHAMPS) is a holistic wellbeing program for children living with disability and/or disadvantage. Through art and



sensory experiences, CHAMPS aims to improve children's mental health and wellbeing.

Camp Autism WA

Camp Autism WA provides unique camps for autistic children and their families, inclusive of siblings, parents and caregivers. The camps support families to build and strengthen skills, make social connections and inspire personal development in a warm, friendly environment based on fun and adventure.



Camp Quality

The Child Life Therapy program uses play therapies to reduce anxiety and distress in children undergoing cancer treatments at Perth Children's Hospital. The Kids Impacted by Carer's Cancer program offers support and recreational activities to improve the mental and social wellbeing of children whose parents have been diagnosed with cancer.



Child and Adolescent Health Service

Optimise2 research explores how to improve the safety of intubation for infants aiming to reduce the small but serious risk of oxygen desaturation resulting in brain damage, cardiac arrest and death. An Australian-first post-sepsis care platform will provide individualised support to families and children impacted by sepsis. Telethon Trust Fellowships enable clinicians to undertake innovative research projects.



Child Cancer Research Foundation

Back on Track WA provides children diagnosed with cancer access to tailored educational support through mentoring, tutoring and collaboration with online education providers. This aims to improve children's overall wellbeing and help them regain a sense of normalcy and purpose.



Children's Cancer Institute

Children's Cancer Institute research will develop and apply novel technologies, models and minimally invasive methods in bringing precision medicine to WA children and young people diagnosed with cancer.



Clown Doctors

Clown Doctors use evidence-informed, humour therapy to improve quality of life for children at Perth Children's Hospital. Purposetrained to work in medical settings, Clown Doctors address physiological and psychological needs - distracting frightened children, encouraging resilience, providing respite for parents and supporting hospital staff.



Cockburn Integrated Health



Studies show Aboriginal children have the highest rates of ear disease and associated hearing loss in the world. The Aboriginal Ear Health Program aims to improve hearing outcomes of Aboriginal children by providing streamlined access to specialist care that is integrated, culturally safe and family centred.

Communicare

My Play School is an early intervention education program for migrant and refugee children aged three to five years with developmental vulnerabilities. Welcome Journeys supports the mental health and wellbeing of refugees and migrants with complex life barriers through psychosocial, peer and educational supports.



Constable Care

The At-Risk Aboriginal Youth Filmmaking Program empowers children in Newman to manage mental health issues, develop teamwork, empathy and critical thinking. The Critical Thinking and Ethical Decision-Making Program delivers free and ongoing programs to low socio-economic public schools across WA.



Curtin University

The development of a mixed reality visualisation tool may lead to reduced pain and fewer follow-up surgeries for children living with congenital heart disease. Assessing the safety and efficacy of co-administered IV medications aims to reduce the risk of catastrophic outcomes in vulnerable babies. An online therapy intervention aims to treat mental health issues resulting from grief.



Cystic Fibrosis Western Australia

The Chronic Wet Cough Community Education Program enhances respiratory health awareness in regional Aboriginal communities - empowering families and educating health professionals. The Thriving Families program delivers regional outreach to ensure children with cystic fibrosis and their families have access to therapy, support services and respite care.



Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service

The Child Development Program is a comprehensive, culturally safe service for Aboriginal children (Koolingas) in Perth with complex health and developmental needs. The service provides life-changing diagnostic and therapeutic support to families.



Dismantle

BikeRescue aims to inspire at-risk young people to envision a better future for themselves. Working shoulder-to-shoulder to build bikes, mentors build rapport with young people leading to



GRANT RECIPIENTS

conversations around healthy lifestyle habits, relationships and mental health.

Down Syndrome WA



Down Syndrome WA offers family support, developmental playgroups, educational resources and care packs to improve the wellbeing of children with Down syndrome and their families. A special camp for teens with Down syndrome aims to build friendships, skills, capacity and self-belief.

The Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation (DSF)



The Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation (DSF) family support initiative supports children with learning and language difficulties and their families through in-person and online information sessions and targeted resources. DSF is working towards developing a brief assessment for reading difficulties to reduce the significant wait times for assessments.

Ear Science Institute Australia



Research into the prevalence and incidence of hearing loss and ear disease of Aboriginal children in five East Pilbara communities will help inform service provision and improve the hearing health of Indigenous children.

Earbus



The Hear Today, Shine Tomorrow program provides regular ear health services to children in regional and remote WA, helping diagnose and treat middle-ear disease and hearing loss. Auditory Brainstem Response testing helps identify hearing loss and assess neurological function in newborns, aiding in the early detection of hearing-related issues and neurological conditions.

EdConnect Australia



EdConnect Australia supports disadvantaged students across WA through dedicated volunteers who aim to positively impact their mental

health, wellbeing and academic success. Offering a trusted role model enables challenges, fears and concerns to be raised and addressed while reducing isolation and loneliness.

Edith Cowan University



The PhenoCycler-Fusion System can reveal hidden patterns in tissues and organs, leading to insights about diseases like cancer, autoimmune and neurological conditions affecting children. The system will support collaborative studies across multiple research institutions to make groundbreaking discoveries of new treatment targets for debilitating conditions.

Edmund Rice Camps



Mega Camps are week-long respite programs for at-risk or disadvantaged children, offering fun, recreational opportunities to improve mental health. The Remote Community Program provides respite and mentoring programs to vulnerable children in regional and remote areas who are deemed at risk or disadvantaged.

Eon Foundation



Using edible gardens as a tool, the Thriving Communities program empowers children with skills, knowledge, and infrastructure to grow, harvest and cook. It also reduces food insecurity for children affected by poverty by providing a source of free, fresh food.

Epilepsy WA



The Children and Epilepsy Program provides loan seizure alert devices, outreach and nurse support to children with epilepsy and their families. The program helps to improve health outcomes by reducing the risk of epilepsy-related harm, fear, anxiety and stigma around seizures, treatments and testing regimes.

Expression Australia



The CODA WA program delivers workshops and

group sessions to help build resilience and provide a support network to bilingual and bicultural children of deaf adults. The program aims to increase awareness and understanding for children living in both the deaf and hearing communities.

Fair Game



The Recycle and Donate project distributes pre-loved sports shoes and equipment, enabling children to experience the physical, mental and social benefits of sports participation. The Fit and Healthy in the Outback program delivers interactive health promotion activities in remote communities aiming to reduce lifestyle-related diseases, build cohesion and improve mental wellbeing.

Fiona Stanley Hospital



A new research project will aim to reverse peanut allergy in infants, generating evidence to translate potentially life-changing treatment into a future community-based model of care. The establishment of a standardised hearing health registry will create a paediatric ear health database to ensure timely care, enable future research and enhance service quality.

Fiona Wood Foundation



Magnetic Resonance Imaging will provide insights into how childhood burns may lead to changes in the brain, affecting longterm mental health. The research will assess the relationship between burn injury, platelets and vascular function to characterise mechanisms that contribute to the development of cardiovascular disease after non-severe childhood burns.

Foodbank



The School Breakfast Program supports students in more than 500 schools, improving food security and increasing education, health and social outcomes. Through the nom! Children program, public health nutritionists provide parents with

young children the knowledge, skills and confidence to create nutritious meals.

Football Futures Foundation



The Football for All program helps build confidence and increase the social, mental and physical wellbeing of young people with disabilities through inclusive soccer. An inflatable pitch ensures the safety of football players and caters for the requirements of blind football.

Fostering Hope



The Fostering Joy program supports children in foster and out-of-home care with the supply of essential items, as well as hosting fun, children-focused events aimed at creating a community of support.

FACES



Children with autism often experience poor academic and social outcomes. FACES uses science-based interventions aimed at improving social and behavioural skills, and ultimately increasing educational outcomes for neurodivergent children.

Hannah's House



Hannah's House care programs support children with complex needs to reach developmental goals, attend school and social activities, and provide respite for the whole family. The Playtime Program offers accessible play activities delivered by a qualified play specialist, aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of children with complex needs.

Harry Perkins Institute



A new research project aims to develop new treatments for two genetically distinct muscle diseases, potentially finding a lifesaving solution for children. The creation of a blood test to detect early stages of liver disease in children with cystic fibrosis will allow earlier access to treatment and improved quality of life.

Healthy Strides Foundation



The Power of One project combines consumer-driven research with real-world practices, creating rich data sets with machine learning models to improve the health and wellbeing of children with disabilities. An advanced body-weight support system enables children to confidently practice their walking and balance without fear of falling.

HeartKids



HeartKids provides vital in-hospital, regional and local community services to thousands of children with congenital heart disease and their families, ensuring they are supported, informed and educated throughout their child's health journey.

Helping Little Hands



The Connections program provides premature babies and their families access to critical support services, removing stressors so families can focus on their child's health. The Aboriginal Support Fund supports Aboriginal parents with premature or sick babies by reducing barriers to attending hospital and ensuring parents are part of their babies' care.

HorsePower Hills



HorsePower Hills aims to empower children with diverse abilities to break through physical, cognitive, emotional and social barriers utilising the power of the horse to develop new skills, discover new abilities and define the life they want to live.

Inclusion Solutions



Building Inclusive School Communities is a program that aims to foster the social inclusion of children with disabilities through inschool presentations delivered by Paralympian and former Little Telethon Star, Ben Popham OAM.

youthfocus

Thanks WA!

Your support helps us provide mental health services to young people, when and where they need them.

youthfocus.com.au

thermomix

Thermomix® is proud to be a supporter of Telethon. We would like to thank our people for their contribution to the event, and the Western Australian community for their ongoing generosity.

Grace and Bianca

thanks to **telethon**

the **BACK ON TRACK Education Program**

is Helping Kids with Cancer

FIND OUT MORE BACKONTRACK.ORG.AU

A Child Cancer Research Foundation

Institute for Respiratory Health

It is common for asthmatic adolescents to have breathing issues that are misdiagnosed as asthma. The institute will conduct research to evaluate whether a decision-support tool can facilitate earlier diagnosis. A high-performance liquid chromatography machine will help measure drug delivery and effectiveness, and test new drug formulations.

JDRF

The JDRF Global Centre of Excellence improves the lives of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes. The centre will address the effective and rapid translation of research breakthroughs into clinical care to ensure that new therapies and evidence are implemented into practice and policy.

The Katina Woodruff Children's Foundation

The Inclusion Development and Readiness project supports recently arrived refugee and migrant children to overcome trauma and dislocation and move forward to new and healthy futures. Individualised cultural support programs improve mental health and wellbeing, allowing children to adjust better to their new setting.

Kids Are Kids

The Therapy in Schools program provides health assessments and intervention within an evidence-based trauma-informed framework to vulnerable children, improving literacy and developmental outcomes. Therapy equipment will increase children's access to therapy services, encouraging development and improving quality of life.

Kids Cancer Support Group

The Peer Support Program supports the mental health and wellbeing of families affected and bereaved by childhood cancer, providing much-needed connection and advocacy during and post-treatment.

Kiind. (Formerly Kalparrin)

Kiind supports children with disability and their families at Perth Children's Hospital and across regional and remote WA. The Kiind hospital program helps families to understand the implications of a diagnosis and to get necessary support in place quickly. After discharge, Kiind offers ongoing practical, social and emotional supports.

Legacy Western Australia

Legacy WA supports children who belong to the families of veterans who have sacrificed their lives or health while serving in the Australian Defence Force. Its Education Assistance Program ensures these children do not experience educational disadvantage as a result of their parent's ill-health.

Life Ed Western Australia

The ROCKS 2024 program partners with primary schools in the Goldfields region to educate children on health and safety measures, such as healthy eating, exercise, mental health, quality sleep and cyber safety.

Lifeline WA

Digital Crisis Support connects young people in crisis to life-saving care and support via text or online chat. This service offers a safe and non-judgemental space to provide support and referrals to young people facing mental health issues.

Lion Heart Camp for Kids

Lionheart's Family Camps support grieving children following the death of a parent or significant person. The camp provides a safe space for children to learn critical skills to navigate grief. The Grief Pathway Program provides a wrap-around grief support for children following the death of an immediate family member.

Lions Eye Institute

Lions Eye Institute combines world-class treatment with groundbreaking

scientific research in eye and vision health. Its community outreach service, Lions Outback Vision, strives towards its mission to prevent and cure blindness and eye disease from infancy to childhood and beyond in metropolitan, regional and remote WA.

Little Big Steps

Physical activity plays a pivotal role in maintaining and improving the overall health of children undergoing cancer treatment. Little Big Steps provides physiotherapy support to help kids keep moving while undergoing cancer treatments at Perth Children's Hospital.

Make-A-Wish Australia

Make-A-Wish grants inspirational wish journeys for critically ill children. For everyone involved, the impact of a wish has an immediate uplifting and positive effect, empowering children with hope and joy when they need it most.

Meningitis Centre Australia

The KnowActVax program educates communities and raises awareness of Meningitis in WA. Sharing the message "Know the signs, act immediately and vaccinate". The program strives to save lives and reduce the risk of disability in children throughout metropolitan, regional and remote WA

Miracle Babies Foundation

The Nurture program supports Perth families with sick or premature babies through comprehensive parent-to-parent support from pregnancy, throughout their stay in the hospital to the transition home and beyond.

Mosaic

The Learn2Adult program prepares teenagers living with disability to take control of their lives and become confident adult decisionmakers. Using a unique roadmap tool, teenagers achieve better life outcomes and avoid the harm and restriction too often experienced by young adults with disability.

Murdoch University

A new protective safety workstation will significantly enhance Murdoch University's drug development program, improving the exploration of treatments for childhood diseases. A gene-targeting approach aims to determine potential treatments for untreatable childhood dementia — a debilitating and life-limiting disease. Yawardani Jan-ga improves the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal youth in the Kimberley.

Nature Play WA

Talk N Walk is a wellbeing program facilitated by an app, co-designed and piloted with 11 to 14-year-old girls. The program aims to help young girls develop and strengthen social connections, and improve their physical activity and mental health.

Neurological Council WA

The NeuroKids program supports the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents living with neurological symptoms or conditions through free, in-home and community neurological nursing services, case management and care navigation.

Neuro Muscular WA

The Lessons for Life program aims to develop and deliver comprehensive education and learning targeting significant moments in a child's condition journey. It will provide greater opportunities for children living with neuromuscular conditions to live full lives.

Ngala

The Attachment and Biobehavioural Catch-up (ABC) home visiting program supports caregivers of infants and toddlers to foster their development and form healthy relationships with their little ones. A specialised infant mental health screening protocol will identify and address early signs of infant social and emotional development difficulties.

North Metropolitan Health Service

North Metropolitan Health Service is committed to providing excellent health care for patients and the community. A Whole Genomic Sequencing Service will expedite genetic testing for paediatric patients in WA and allow faster diagnosis and interventions for the most vulnerable.

Ocean Heroes

Ocean Heroes aims to improve the wellbeing of children with autism and their families through surfing. Combining compassion, skill and patience, Ocean Heroes provides the thrill of surfing in regional WA through free events catering for more than 1,000 neurodiverse children.

OzHarvest

Nourishing Our Schools tackles children's food insecurity in schools and at home. The program provides school breakfasts and lunches, cooking programs and nourishing hampers for vulnerable families. In 2024, OzHarvest aims to expand the program to 100 schools across Perth.

Parkerville Children and Youth Care

The Education, Employment and Training program works with students to help them achieve their potential by developing their literacy, numeracy, social and life skills in a safe and secure environment. The organisation's Multiagency Investigation Support Team helps children impacted by sexual abuse by improving access to the services required to respond to their needs.

Perron Institute

Through innovative research, the Perron Institute aims to improve quality of life for people suffering from devastating neurological conditions. A new research project will aim to develop novel treatments for several incurable Chromosome 15 imprinting disorders

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Camp Quality
campquality.org.au

THANK YOU

For helping us to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children in WA.

Schools Plus
Every child has the right to the same opportunities
schoolsplus.org.au

Perth Children's Hospital Foundation



A range of projects will support WA children's health and wellbeing through movement assessments, physical exercise programs, advanced technology and the development of WA first children's hospice. Research into respiratory illness, rare disease and heart attack risk will improve health outcomes for WA children.

Pregnancy to Parenthood



The Vulnerable Infants Program is a no-cost clinical intervention and training program delivered in Perth and Geraldton. It supports foundational relationships between parents and their babies, and reduces the risk of mental health issues in infancy.

PAMS



Baby Coming You Ready? is a digital platform co-designed by Elders, Aboriginal parents and clinicians. It aims to bridge communication barriers between Aboriginal women and their healthcare provider during pregnancy and after the baby arrives.

Radio Lollipop



Through Radio Lollipop's Ward Visiting Program, volunteers in eight hospitals bring smiles and laughter to children, improving wellbeing, creativity and companionship. The radio station at Perth Children's Hospital allows children to request songs and even help host the on-air broadcast.

Reach



Reach Baby is a movement program that creates a collaborative environment free of judgement to understand babies' developmental needs and challenges. With playful, enthusiastic and highly experienced instructors, Reach Baby offers babies and their parents a chance to move, play and reach their personal best.

Rebound WA



The Giving Kids A Go program aims to remove physical and mental barriers that exist for children and teenagers with a physical disability. This provides them with the same sports and recreation opportunities as their peers, and offers a support network to families.

Reclink



Reclink provides opportunities for children with disabilities, poor mental health and/or from marginalised communities to access a range of inclusive cricket activities to improve physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Redkite



Redkite provides financial assistance to families facing childhood cancer, aiming to relieve stress and enable families to provide the best possible care and support to their children. Specialist child counselling and music therapy help support the mental health and wellbeing of children diagnosed with cancer.

RDA Brigadoon



RDA Brigadoon enables children with disabilities to experience enjoyment, challenge and a sense of achievement through participation in equine-supported activities. Riding equipment ensures children can safely access equine therapy and support.

RDA Brookvalley Farm



Equine therapy supports children with disabilities with mobility, coordination, balance and strength. The Equicizer is a mechanical horse that offers safe, soothing, low impact core exercise, and fun, alternative ways to deliver equine therapies for people with disabilities.

RDA Carine



RDA Carine offers equine-assisted therapy to children living with varying abilities and additional needs. Through interactive equine activities, the program aims to enhance physical, cognitive, and emotional wellbeing

while providing a supportive and nurturing environment, fostering personal growth and independence for participants.

RDA Oakford



At RDA Oakford, children with additional needs can access extensive physiotherapy in a fun manner. Two new ponies with exceptional temperament will help ensure even the most vulnerable children can safely access services.

Rocky Bay



The Early Start Intervention Program provides critical early intervention to children under the age of five with, or at risk of, rare diseases who would otherwise experience delays in accessing funded services. The program offers multidisciplinary therapy services, including fine and gross motor skills communication, eating, mobility and more.

Royal Flying Doctor Service



Critically ill babies and children present some of the most challenging medical situations for RFDs doctors and nurses. A bespoke engineering solution will enable neonatal cribs to be powered and installed in two rotary aircrafts, and will provide vital additional capacity to transport infants directly to Perth hospitals.

Schools Plus



Schools Plus partners with schools in WA communities facing disadvantage. It aims to implement place-based strategic initiatives to improve the mental health and wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, helping children thrive and fulfil their potential.

Sensorium Theatre



Sensorium's Imagine program will see new high-quality, multisensory performing arts intervention programs delivered in schools, libraries and early years centres throughout WA. The program aims to improve the wellbeing of children who are disadvantaged and marginalised due to disability or socio-economic circumstances.

Shooting Stars



The Art with the Stars program uses art and performance to empower Aboriginal girls to develop a sense of pride in their cultural identity and the strength to rise above racism in schools. By yarning throughout this cultural immersion, participants learn new skills and reconnect with themselves, their communities and country.

Sony Foundation Australia



You Can Stay is a free accommodation program for regional children diagnosed with cancer, ensuring equal access to essential hospital treatment and enabling families to support their child in Perth. The Children's Holiday Camp provides free and fun overnight care for children with disability, offering valuable respite for their families and carers.

Spectrum Space



The Holiday Makers Program nurtures the social and emotional development of autistic children by providing a safe inclusive space where they can meet others and experience new activities based on their interests. The program aims to improve children's social skills, self-esteem and confidence.

Spinnaker Health Research Foundation



Spinnaker aims to improve the quality and access of physical activity programs available to children with autism through individualised programs co-designed by the child, parent/carer and exercise physiologist.

Sports Challenge Australia



The world-first E-pals platform supports the mental and physical health of children identified as at-risk. Dedicated mentors offer a strong, supportive and consistent role model, and provide a sense of belonging and connection.

St John of God Foundation



St John of God Foundation aims to transform health care, through excellence in personalised patient treatment and leading medical research. Cutting-edge medical equipment will ensure neonatal babies and children at St John of God hospitals receive the best possible care. Training mannequins will support specialist training in CPR for babies.

Starick



The Thriving Through Connection program aims to improve the safety and wellbeing of young people who have experienced family and domestic violence through individual and group-based support, psychosocial education, practical assistance, advocacy and referral, and social and peer connections.

Starkick



Starkick is a unique West Australian All Abilities Football program for children that runs alongside Auskick at junior football clubs. Children with disability are provided with the support and resources they require to enable them to participate and have fun playing football in a community club environment.

Starlight Children's Foundation



The Captain Starlight program at Perth Children's Hospital uses play and social connection to help sick children cope in times of stress and positively impact their healthcare experience. Livewire supports teens with the stress and isolation of their illness by providing opportunities for creativity, connection and entertainment.

Superfins



The Superfins Learn to Swim program offers children with disabilities access to swimming lessons tailored to their individual needs. It aims to promote water safety and improve physical health and fitness while learning the basic skills of swimming.

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Finding the keys to **brighter places**

More young Australians than ever are experiencing mental illness. With the support of Telethon, the Perron Institute's multidisciplinary youth mental health research team are conducting research into our brains and genes to unlock the mysteries surrounding mental illness and to help create the future of personalised treatments.

perron institute
for neurological and translational science

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Superyou Therapy



Superyou Therapy uses alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) tools to support children and young people with complex communication needs. AAC devices help give a voice to children with disabilities and additional needs, improving independence, education and mental health.

Swan Districts Foundation



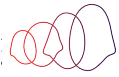
Through accessible sports and targeted mentoring, the Disability and Inclusion program allows children with disabilities to build self-esteem, independence and communication to support their education and employment pathways and improve mental and physical health.

Telethon Kids Institute



Telethon Kids Institute is one of the largest and most successful medical research institutes in Australia. Researchers are searching for answers to the big issues in child health, including extra challenges faced by Aboriginal kids and families. At Telethon Kids Institute, the vision is simple: happy, healthy kids.

Telethon Speech & Hearing



Telethon Speech & Hearing offers quality educational, diagnostic, therapeutic and support services for children with hearing loss and speech and language delays. These essential early interventions and school support services ensure children achieve success in education and future employment.

The Fathering Project



The Fathering Project aims to promote positive fathering behaviours and fathers' engagement with their infants, preschool, primary school and adolescent-aged children. Its programs support educational outcomes for disadvantaged children, and emotional and physical development for neurodiverse children.

The Salvation Army



A dedicated child counsellor at Graceville Women's Refuge supports the mental health and wellbeing of children impacted

by family and domestic violence. This role provides specialised assessments, one-to-one psychological care and identifies pathways to relevant support and long-term recovery.



The ORIGINS Project

The ORIGINS Project is following 10,000 children and their families over a decade, following their progress from pregnancy and beyond to investigate the prevention of disease and to discover how every child and family can reach their full potential.

The Smith Family



Learning Clubs offer secure and supportive out-of-school hours learning environments for vulnerable primary students facing disadvantages. In these settings, students can access resources, specialised learning and activities to enhance their academic skills. Guided by skilled tutors and nurtured in socially connected environments, students also experience improved wellbeing.

Therapy Focus



The School Readiness program offers individual and group therapy sessions and a play-based therapy space to help children with disabilities and developmental delays prepare for schooling. Unique equipment tailored for a child's individual needs increases quality of life and supports their goals and aspirations.

Thriving in Motion



Thriving in Motion is a unique exercise service targeting children and young people whose ability to participate in community or school-based physical activity is impacted by physical, mental or behavioural conditions. Movement for Mental Health supports vulnerable children improve their mental wellbeing through exercise and physical activity.

Tiny Sparks WA



Neonatal Unit Care Packages offer crucial support to families during unexpected and stressful hospital stays. Nurturing Regional NICU Families aims to close the gap for families with premature babies living in rural, regional and remote WA through free access to an

online program supporting connection, bonding and developmental milestones.

Transplant Australia

Transplant Australia supports WA paediatric transplant recipients and their families through a dedicated camp experience. The camp is designed to build a connected community of peers, and improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre



Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) Family Centre supports people with T1D to live a life full of joy and happiness. T1D Empower is a mentoring program for teens which supports the development of coping strategies, resilience and strong support networks. Community-based blood glucose testing will increase access to vital testing, improving health outcomes.

The University of Western Australia



The University of Western Australia is undertaking various research projects aimed at improving health outcomes for children. This includes research into childhood diseases, exercise therapy for children with central auditory processing disorder, reducing pre-surgery fasting distress, preventing childhood asthma, and investigating the intergenerational impact of lifestyle, health and environment.

Variety

Variety's Motor Mouth Camp helps give a voice to children with complex communication needs. The family-inclusive camp combines fun with intensive therapy and support from volunteer speech pathologists and occupational therapists for children who use augmentative and alternative communication devices - opening up a new world of communication.

Victor Chang

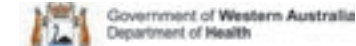


Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) is the most common genetic cardiovascular disorder in WA. Currently, HCM onset and severity cannot be predicted. Victor Chang Institute will develop a tool to assist in identifying the likelihood that children will develop HCM, enabling earlier and more precise treatment.

WA All Abilities



The Kickability in Schools program empowers children with disability to participate in Aussie rules football, fostering connection and enhancing physical and mental wellbeing. A new "convergence container" boosts inclusivity by offering a calming space for children with sensory sensitivities to take a break while attending community events.



WA Department of Health

The WA Child Research Fund supports research leading to better health outcomes for children and adolescents in WA. It promotes the translation of research findings into evidence-based health policy and practice and contributes to integrating research capability across universities, research institutes and health services.

WADSA



WA Disabled Sports Association programs offer children with severe and complex disabilities. It enables access to adaptive equipment to improve physical engagement and social wellbeing, as well as build confidence, self-advocacy, problem-solving and communication through sports and recreation.

WAAT Dogs



WAAT Dogs supports children with disabilities and their families in acquiring an assistance or therapy dog. It provides empowerment, support and professional training to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities or health conditions in WA.

Wheels for Hope



Wheels for Hope delivers the gift of mobility by providing loan wheelchair-accessible transport to assist WA families with disability. The loan transport enables vital access to medical and remedial care, education, family and community activities.

White Zebra Foundation



The Family Sponsorship program provides children with disabilities access to therapy services where other funding options are not available. The Equipment Loan Library allows children to trial speech output devices and frame runners, improving communication and mobility. An inclusive Athletics Day will build children's self-confidence and celebrate their efforts.

The Women and Infants Research Foundation



The Women and Infants Research Foundation is one of Australia's leading independent research institutions dedicated to improving the health of women and infants. Its research aims to decrease fetal harm, improve outcomes for preterm babies and use AI to enhance care for children with rare diseases.

Youth Focus



As the only youth-specialist, non-government mental health service in WA, Youth Focus ensures young people can thrive by providing access to mental health support at no-cost, when and where they need it most. Counselling services change the lives of thousands of vulnerable young people, across metropolitan and regional WA.

YouthCARE



YouthCARE is WA's leading provider of pastoral care and values education programs in more than 600 school communities. The organisation promotes social, emotional and educational outcomes for students and families in regional and remote WA.

Zero2Hero



The Kimberley region has the highest rates of hospitalisation for self-harm in those under the age of 24 in WA. Zero2hero aims to combat this by providing mental health programs for vulnerable children in the region, equipping them with skills and knowledge to navigate mental health challenges.



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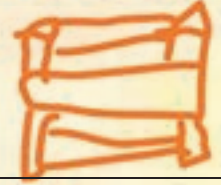


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our way and especially made
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park together



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first word to
be Matthew




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