



2021 – 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Ltd

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Our Vision

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia is a national not for profit organization with a vision of school communities building resilience in all students, especially the most marginalized and those at risk of marginalization, so they can reach their potential in education and in life.

Our Purpose

To achieve this WISA is working collaboratively with and supporting schools communities in building a strategic whole of school approach to health and wellbeing that creates a socially just environment where all students can thrive, particularly those at risk of or who are being marginalised.

WISA key Goals/ Objectives:

- 1. WISA is an ethical, sustainable and member-based not for profit organisation**
 - 1.1. Achievement of charitable status
 - 1.2. Diverse funding sources/streams
 - 1.3. Efficient and effective operations
 - 1.4. Effective in growing and guiding WISA
 - 1.5. Understands and mitigates its risk

- 2. WISA is a valuable support for school leaders of wellbeing for enabling socially just outcomes**
 - 2.1. Identify strategies that increase protective factors and reduce risk factors in marginalised communities in distress
 - 2.2. Empower school leaders of wellbeing to advocate and achieve systemic school improvement
 - 2.3. Lead research-informed professional development and practice in school wellbeing
 - 2.4. Actively engage school leaders of wellbeing through networks and training
 - 2.5. Lead the establishment of a vibrant national school wellbeing association
 - 2.6 Identify and promote the development of national benchmark standards for school wellbeing

Our History

WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Limited is a national not for profit organisation established in May 2015. *WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia* works under the auspices of the parent company *WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australasia Pacific Ltd*. The organisation achieved full charity status effective from 1 July 2015 under the subtypes of advancing education, advancing health, advancing social or public welfare and being a Public Benevolent Institution.

The Board, staff and patrons of WISA bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the organisation having worked at a local, state, national and international level in education and wellbeing. **There are very experienced hands and heads with big hearts in our organisation having worked in addressing wellbeing in primary and secondary schools in every state and territory across Australia for the past two decades.**

2019 saw WISA embracing new technology and innovation, partnering with Liminal VR in implementing the Liminal Virtual Reality Wellbeing project addressing anxiety and depressed mood directly with students in a group of eight secondary school communities in the greater Geelong area of Victoria. The virtual space proved to be highly successful in addressing anxiety. Staff used the program directly with individual students as well as in the classroom, both with very high success rates. This initiative went on to become a 2019 VicHealth Awards finalist.

With the COVID pandemic having a major impact upon students, school staff and families, the wellbeing needs impacting upon schools have more than doubled and the complexity of needs presenting to Student Wellbeing staff in schools across Australia presents a massive new challenge. WISA responded in 2020 by developing a range of webinars and workshops for school staff including leaders, as well as parents/carers to care for themselves and their students/children. The School Focused Youth Service in Victoria was key in funding and driving rollout of these much needed workshops across many parts of Victoria. The workshops also were popular in NSW and South Australia. The feedback on this support and resourcing has been overwhelmingly positive with participants stating it has built their resilience and provided valuable resources to support both them and their students healing and recovery from the trauma of both bushfires and the pandemic and then the floods. WISA will continue to offer this specialised support which includes leading Australian psychological and educational support practitioners in 2022 and beyond.

WISA's core business of building school community's capacity and capability to strategically and sustainably address wellbeing is more important than ever. Rates of marginalised students disengaging and exiting the education system continue to grow with many of these statistics remaining hidden. Safety in schools is still the single biggest school wellbeing issue requiring significant attention at the local level with a staggering 98% of schools not knowing the most effective interventions to prevent, reduce and resolve bullying. Bullying continued to increase further during the pandemic. Unhealthy afterhours device use is also contributing to relationship breakdown and impacting on the quality of learning.

The majority of staff in school wellbeing and leadership roles continue to feel totally overwhelmed by the recent COVID related growth in demand which comes on top of a trend of recent years of growing demands and greater complexity of needs presenting from students, staff and families. For schools with many marginalised students or those located in marginalised communities the demands for the wellbeing support regularly outstrip the resources available. All of this is occurring at a time where more and more health and wellbeing initiatives are being directed at schools and uptake of these initiatives continues to occur haphazardly with little thought to sustainable whole of school community approaches based upon effective evidence and implementation science. Implementation must be tailored to ensure individual school's identified needs are addressed utilising best practice frameworks of practice and tools and resources. The level of resourcing for Wellbeing in schools must increase in the coming year if Australia is to avoid the impact of direct, cumulative and vicarious trauma within school communities.

The birth of WISA and its subsequent development over recent years has focused upon working directly with schools, across all states and territories, to build the capacity and a capability of Leaders of School Wellbeing and their Wellbeing Teams to address these local school community wellbeing needs. This included guiding them to work smarter not harder in a planned strategic whole of school community approach to address wellbeing. Building sustainable evidence informed best practice resources for school communities to improve wellbeing, underpins all our work regardless of the traumatic events and circumstances that present themselves.

The data we collect from leaders of school wellbeing who attend our training, mentoring and conference events has identified significant wellbeing needs and trends across Australia. All of these undermine the quality of Australian education teaching and learning, as well as negatively impacting upon student engagement and attendance rates. This data led to new funding applications and initiatives to address these needs. None of which government has responded to address these challenges, which continue to grow. This data is also provided back to school staff who undertake WISA training and has also been provided to education and health Ministers, and has contributed to a number of funding applications, both to government, corporate and philanthropic organisations resulting in more WISA training being provided at no cost to marginalised communities in Western Australia and Tasmania.

WISA in 2020/21 undertook a national quality assurance project addressing all of the training, conferences and support provided to school communities. The National Service Delivery Impact Project 2021 was undertaken by Gemma Merryfull, B.Applied Soc.Science, Australian College of Applied

Psychology. This project successfully measured the positive impact of WISA in resourcing school communities, with a particular interest upon addressing the needs of schools, who has benefitted individually, the building of capacity and capability in schools, as well as sustainable practice and utilising and applying best practice. A report of this WISA quality assurance project is available from WISA upon request. A summary of key findings stated: *The project successfully reinforced that school professionals have implemented WISA training, conference and workshop professional learning and resources, with benefits for their own professional learning, sharing these with other staff, students, families, broader community, and wellbeing networks. Overall, the quality assurance of WISA professional learning and resources had 95% of WISA participants stating they would recommend WISA to others. To conclude, WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia has created a sense of community within schools right across Australia. The whole school community approach that they strive for, extends through from the student at its very core, to staff and families, to agencies and community and right through to the network of contractors, presenters and board members involved with this not-for-profit organization. Those involved with WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia are dedicated professionals from vast health and wellbeing backgrounds who feel just as passionate about creating communities, as they do empowering and supporting them.*

In Victoria the *School Focused Youth Service* continues into 2022 to fund a large number of WISA trainings to be provided at no cost to marginalised school communities at the local district and sub regional level. Hundreds of school staff from all parts of Victoria have attended many different WISA training events in the past year. The feedback from schools and the SFYS highlights that this model of collaboration and its school results continue to be extremely positive.

In 2022 the WISA Board acknowledged the plethora of new Wellbeing initiatives targeting school recovery post COVID from various organisations. The Board decided it was critically important for WISA's approach with schools to be supporting school communities in enabling all students to thrive so they can reach their potential in education and in life. This meant an approach focussing upon:

- **Strategic - working smarter not harder** in building sustainable evidence-informed approaches and resources to assist leadership and school governance to address the Wellbeing arm of the school's strategic plan, implementation and review.
- **Socially just environments** based upon a belief in a common humanity where people have a right to fair treatment and equal human rights. Promoting a just community means valuing inclusion, diversity and fairness whilst challenging injustice.
- **Build the capacity and capability of school wellbeing leaders** through a step-by-step targeted approach that guides schools to use Australian and international best practice to **implement a whole school community approach in addressing wellbeing.**

WISA Patrons have continued to provide sage counsel. These include Dr Rhonda Galbally OA, currently a federal Government Disability Royal Commissioner, Prof. Ken Rigby, one of Australia's leading international experts in addressing bullying recently awarded an OA, and Emeritus Prof Brian Caldwell continues bringing enormous educational expertise and experience as a previous deputy chair of ACARA and a previous Dean of Education at The University of Melbourne.

ABOUT US

The CEO, Board and staff of WISA have backgrounds spanning the education, justice, public health, disability, homelessness, youth, student voice, community and health sectors together with education, medicine, criminal justice, family therapy, health and allied professional qualifications and experience. They have worked across the government, Catholic and independent school sectors in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary settings. This includes staff with expertise in teaching, health, mental health, school leadership, senior management and governance, whole of school approaches to school community wellbeing – students, staff and families;

proactive initiatives in wellbeing – including student voice/participation, student leadership and empowerment, youth and community development, school resilience and positive psychology/education, research and evidence-based best practice, mentoring/coaching, peer education school community partnerships including parent engagement and education, social and emotional learning, suicide prevention, Primary and Secondary school mental health and wellbeing initiatives; appropriate responses in wellbeing – special education, effective bullying interventions, conflict resolution, counselling and referral, group work, school nursing, supporting marginalised and homeless, addressing trauma and critical incidents. All have had experience working both at local, regional, state and national levels across education and health. Our patrons include leading experts in education, health, disability, justice, homeless, community and philanthropic sectors. Professor Brian Caldwell is a previous Dean of Education at the University of Melbourne and past Deputy Chair of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Dr Rhonda Galbally OA is on the Board of the NDIS, previous CEO of Vic Health and the Australian National Preventive Health Agency, previous Chair Melbourne’s Royal Women’s Hospital. Prof Ken Rigby OA is a national consultant for schools and a leading international authority in bullying and victimisation in schools with more than 100 peer refereed papers and other publications, member of the National Coalition Against Bullying, a former school teacher, psychologist, parent and academic, he draws upon his longstanding experience in providing practical advice to all those who are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of children in schools.

What WISA offers

There are four key strategic areas that WISA has created to help school communities to work in a planned strategic sustainable approach to addressing school wellbeing. These are as follows:

- 1. Provide support and build the capacity of Leaders of School Wellbeing**
 - Provision of three levels of training incl. tools, resources and skills practice.
 - Essential / Basic Training for School Leaders of Wellbeing*
 - Consolidating the School Wellbeing role*
 - Sustaining best practice in the Wellbeing role*
 - *Mentor support for Leaders of School Wellbeing*
 - Annual membership for Leaders of School Wellbeing to receive quarterly newsletters, resources/tools & discounts.

- 2. Enabling school leadership and governance to effectively resource wellbeing in their school**
 - A step by step guide
 - 2 day training for school leadership and governance bodies with a focus upon *Leadership Wellbeing* and *Leading and Resourcing Wellbeing Effectively*
 - Mentor support
 - Training in the *Most effective interventions to prevent, reduce and resolve bullying in schools*

- 3. Strategies for working with your most vulnerable students**
 - Whole school staff strategies 1-day training in *Strategies to support marginalised students*
 - A hardcopy and online guidebook with specific tools and links
 - *Staff Wellbeing training* whole day or modules

- 4. Population based approaches to school community wellbeing**
 - WISA Conferences alternating years – NT, SA, ACT, TAS then NSW, QLD, VIC, WA
 - Wellbeing in Schools Awards (seeking funding for this)

- 5. Consultancy in relation to a broad array of Wellbeing initiatives in schools**

OUR PEOPLE

Board members/Trustees 2021-22

Name	Position	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
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Assoc Prof. Bret Hart	Chairperson & Treasurer	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019,2020,2021
Kerry Ashley	Vice Chair, Secretary	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020,2021
Jac Van Velsen	Board Member	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020,2021,2022
Mary Tobin	Board Member, Chairperson	2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
Cassim Rawatt	Board Member, Treasurer	2021,2022
Robyn Ramsden	Board Member	2022
Wren Gillett	Board Member	2022

Employees/Contractors

Name	Position	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
Jac Van Velsen	Voluntary CEO	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
Ros Pretlove	Contractor National Professional Learning	2015, 2016
Linsey Hart	Contractor SA & NT WISA State Manager	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019,2020, 2021, 2022
Maria Hart	Contractor WA WISA State Manager	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
Michael Turner	Contractor Marginalised Training Provider	2015 - August 2016
Paul Cahalan	Contractor Leadership Wellbeing	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
Carolyn May	Contractor Leadership Wellbeing & Staff Wellbeing	2016 – Jan 2017
Kaye Dennis	Contractor Marginalised Training Provider	2017 - 2018
Jo Dwyer	Contractor NSW WISA NSW State Manager Leadership Wellbeing, Staff Wellbeing	2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

Volunteers

Name	Position	Dates acted (if not for whole year)
Troy Slade, Slade Design	Graphic and Web Designer	Since inception - ongoing
Jonathon Ashley	Data and strategy	2016
Rose Lavery	Charity application support	2015 & 2016
Anton Morrison	Nurse health checks at conferences	2015 -2019
Adele Hamlyn	Data, Strategy	2020, 2021, 2022
Liz Carr	Data Management	2021,2022

Acknowledging our Supporters

Many people continue to support us as we grow. In particular thanks go to our fabulous partners Anton, Mark, Bret, Jonathon.

To those who kindly volunteer their time and resources, including those listed above, we would not be where we are today without you. In particular the huge voluntary efforts of Linsey Hart with conferences, Adele in strategic support and development, Bret Hart and Mary Tobin in guiding the organisation together with Kerry Ashley who also addresses WISA policies, and Wren your taking of WISA into social media. To our contractors and the Board thank you sincerely for your continued generosity and commitment to making a difference.

SECTION 2

GOVERNANCE

STRUCTURE & MANAGEMENT

WISA is a registered Company Limited by Guarantee with ASIC and the ATO and also registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), holding Deductible Gift Recipient and Tax Concession Charity status.

The WISA Board of Directors provide ongoing strategic governance and oversight of the WISA strategic plan and operations, financial management, providing leadership and structure for growth.

Our CEO, state based contractors and Board continue to make every effort to meet and advise both Commonwealth and State Education Ministers and staff, of the work that WISA is undertaking to attract greater resourcing and support for wellbeing in schools, with the aim of collaborating with government partners to deliver training and support to schools.

WISA continues to raise awareness of what we do, the needs we have identified and how we can support Governments to improve and increase teacher and student engagement in education, along with their wellbeing, which is essential for improved academic and educational outcomes for students.

The WISA Board continues to be supported and backed by a very impressive group of academics that help inform WISA's work and involvement in schools, as well as very highly skilled and experienced Patrons. Our sincere and continued thanks go to Professor Helen Cahill, Prof. Donna Cross, Emeritus Prof Dorothy Bruck, Prof David Hillman, Assoc Prof Bret Hart, Dr Katherine Dix, Dr Annie Gowing and Vivienne Archdall. Providing evidence-based tools, resources, mentoring and training is essential to our work and we thank them for their generous support, professional and academic rigour to support the work we undertake.

Our model of business until we have secured long-term programmatic funding and philanthropic funding is to provide training and support through a group of WISA approved trainers who together set up a schedule of training and conferences across Australia. The contractors undertake all arrangements and risk, with a percentage of earnings paid to WISA. WISA sustains a website and partners with contactors in the development and ownership of training materials.

WISA has also developed a *Leader of School Wellbeing Network* organisation where members can receive mentoring, support, collegiality, shared resources and discount to further training offerings.

Whilst the above business model maintains the security of WISA operationally the model is very tight and is only able to be offered on a 'user pays' approach. What we have learnt is that if the training is sponsored by school networks or State Department's we have attendance and training can be more targeted to schools in greatest need. As our purpose is to provide the necessary training and support to marginalised schools, our lack of external funding support limits schools' participation, as most have already committed their budgets to a range of activities to support their school, so they invariably are not able to send their teachers to 'user pays' training.

Ideally, we would like to be delivering free training and support to any school that is marginalised (as they are often the most in need of assistance) with the backing of the Commonwealth Government and State support. WISA will continue to grow online training and support to improve access challenges presented by the pandemic but also to enhance rural and remote accessibility.

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22 Mary Tobin

The Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) Board has experienced another year of working together to promote vision and governance arrangements to support sustainability and the reach of the work of WISA. The ongoing impact of the Covid global pandemic has meant that the Board continued to meet virtually with all business conducted in an online environment. The WISA Board has embraced this new way of working and this reflects each Director's commitment and professionalism.

In 2022, through the dedication and leadership of the CEO, Jac Van Velsen, WISA programs, although impacted, have continued. Whilst some programs have been provided face to face, the online platform continued through the use of webinars and videoconferencing. The global pandemic continues to impact across school communities most noticeably through staff shortages, due to sick leave, and ongoing stress in schools. This has had a profound impact on schools' ability to be able to release staff for professional learning sessions and, therefore, there has been a reduced level of engagement in the offerings to schools provided by WISA during 2022.

In 2022 the WISA Board welcomed two new Directors Ethan Sedgman and Jo Topp. Ethan comes from a family of educators, and he is a finance professional with 15 years of financial services experience across insurance and banking sectors. Ethan has extensive experience specifically with Commercial and Private Banking. His career has enabled him to develop expertise in the areas of working capital, asset finance, wealth management, residential and commercial lending. A Director in the NAB Private Wealth business he leads a small team of Private Bankers whilst also supporting a select group of high-net-worth families with debt and investment solutions. Ethan holds a Bachelor of Commerce, Diploma of Financial Markets and has received Chartered

Banker status from FINSIA & The Chartered Banker Institute (UK). He has been involved in committees and in recent times as the lead for large-scale fund-raising campaigns to support social enterprises, initiatives that have been designed to support grass root community foundations as well disadvantaged youth at risk of homelessness. With a passion for philanthropy Ethan is a proud member of the WISA board who looks to leverage his capital raising and finance knowledge to support the WISA cause.

Jo Topp, a specialist Child and Adolescent psychiatrist, from Tasmania joined the board recently. Jo has always chosen to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Earlier in her career Jo worked as a GP in Aboriginal communities and later as a medical officer at Austin Child and Mental Health Service where, for 2 years, she worked in a pilot project as an outreach worker, liaising with primary and secondary schools in the north of Melbourne. Jo reports that it became evident that early childhood experiences and mental health are fundamental to leading a productive and fulfilled life. Always fascinated by the interplay of factors: biological, psychological and social that contribute to mental health, Jo began working in psychiatry. Commencing psychiatry in 2006 and completing her studies in 2013, Jo worked in private practice until her retirement in 2018. Jo now channels her energy into many areas including climate change action and supporting the local community as well as sailing, choir singing and time spent with her grandchildren.

This year saw the resignation from the WISA Board of Wren Gillet. Wren brought a youthful dynamic and particular insight to the WISA Board specifically in the areas of social marketing and student voice. Her energy was infectious. Due to her many commitments and study Wren made the difficult decision to resign from the Board. We miss her and express our gratitude and best wishes to her for the future. Thank you Wren.

The Covid pandemic has supported the WISA Board in continuing to interrogate the work and business of WISA. During the year the board has committed to strategic and collaborative conversations exploring the narrative which best encapsulates the work of WISA. In a small, not for profit the board supports WISA in identifying specific manageable strategic priorities. WISA has a large vision. The Business Strategy is supporting the work of WISA to be marketed well, attract funding and for WISA to be sustainable into the future.

Jac Van Velsen, WISA CEO, continues to inspire and dream large. She works tirelessly driven by her deep commitment. During the challenging year of 2022, together with her teams across Australia, Jac has continued to deliver programs, engage in conversations with providers and sector - based industries and organisations to explore partnerships, funding and program opportunities. The WISA Board congratulates Jac for all of her hard work and dedication. As the board continues to interrogate strategy and support funding exploration, Jac is applauded for the way she is engaged and committed to the courageous conversations. The Board thanks you for everything you are and for all that you do and have achieved in 2022, Jac.

Partnerships with WISA continue to be a vital component of the WISA family. We note and value the partnership and collaboration with Bendigo Bank, Sleep Health Foundation of Australia, University of South Australia, The University of Melbourne, Liminal VR, Doctors Lyn O'Grady and Andrew Fuller and we continue to explore other opportunities as we move towards 2023.

We also thank our Patrons Dr Rhonda Galbally, Emeritus Professor Brian Caldwell and Prof Ken Rigby for their continued support.

As we move towards 2023 the WISA Board is committed to building upon the learnings of 2022. The WISA Board will continue to review and strengthen the Business Plan with a focus on marketing, promotion and financial sustainability. Our aim is that WISA is promoted as an organisation of first choice for Australian schools and Wellbeing Leaders seeking to strengthen and embed their strategic capability in building an environment where all young people are safe, engaged and connected so that they can learn and flourish. This requires clarity of message and a steady income stream to support the great work of WISA. These areas will form the key priority areas of the WISA board as we move into 2023. WISA has the vision, profile and best practice programs to do this. Consolidation of funding and effective marketing will secure its future.

As Chair for 2022 I am grateful to be working with a group of people who genuinely want to make a difference. The unique perspective that each Board member brings continues to inspire and challenge deep reflection and optimistic exploration of what is possible for WISA moving towards the future. The diversity of the skill set of each Board member means that we are each learning and share an openness to exploration of what is possible as the Board continues to support WISA in realising its vision, reach and impact and overall sustainability. The Board continues to build upon all who have served and supported WISA since its beginnings. The WISA Board is committed to supporting WISA to build capacity across the sector so that school communities are supported to strengthen their capacity and capability to promote flourishing learning environments which enhance the wellbeing of all to support learning and teaching.

Mary Tobin

CEO REPORT 2021-22 ON WISA ACTIVITIES Jac Van Velsen

Ironically when school communities' wellbeing needs have never been higher in recent decades, Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) has experienced our lowest demand in 2022. This is due in part to the impact of the pandemic and natural disasters affecting staffing levels and staff exhaustion making it difficult for many schools to release staff to undertake School Wellbeing training, even online. So, our service provision has expanded to address these complex presenting needs and therefore it's been a year of even greater quality, not quantity. Despite WISA's outstanding evidence of effectiveness in supporting and addressing school communities needs and our wellbeing knowledge and resources being shared with students, staff, families and into the broader community, WISA continues to operate off a shoestring budget. This however has created greater innovation by WISA. The quieter demand for WISA training of school leaders of wellbeing in late 2021 and 2022 has enabled a growth in other areas. Increased partnering with leading academics and practitioners and videoing their contributions. This includes increased support to schools provided through social media, a major update of our core training content, a review of the Boards strategic direction, a growth in new Board members, and deeper analysis of our rich seven years of data collected from schools in all states and territories in relation to wellbeing. WISA has in the last year engaged with schools in every state and territory as well as with all state and federal education ministers.

I wish to thank our Board for their recent efforts in driving our strategic focus. It has been a substantial task to review, re-imagine, reset, and renew. The ongoing support of our chair Mary Tobin has been outstanding, and she guided our Board on this journey. We warmly welcome and are excited to introduce new Board members Jo Topp and Ethan Sedgeman. We also farewelled three very accomplished Board members who gave so much to WISA over the years. Long standing original Board member Kerry Ashley who is planning wonderful travels. She has been an office bearer for most of her time on the WISA Board including past Chairperson. Associate Professor Bret Hart also a long-standing Board Office bearer and past Chairperson is also greatly missed. Wren Gillet our youngest Board member aged 20 left to focus upon her studies and take up exciting media opportunities. Our board are the navigators of WISA and their passion, sage counsel and contributions are greatly valued.

The ongoing impact of the pandemic for this past 2021-22 year has been profound upon WISA. Sadly, we lost three of our contractors as they chose new directions in their careers. Special thanks and farewell go to Linsey Hart who headed to the country for a sea change. Linsey had been with WISA from the beginning, doing outstanding work with our conferences and providing WISA training to schools in various states and in particular South Australia. Sharon Sperling and Suzanne Hobson who were still relatively new to WISA left to focus on new career pursuits. This included the farewell of the *Nurture* initiative with Sharon moving across to *Nurture International*. We wish Linsey, Sharon and Suzanne well in their new roles. The passion, drive and commitment of these contractors was outstanding.

The backbone of WISA is our volunteers and they have given tirelessly to ensure the wheels of growth and WISA operations continue to turn smoothly. WISA also wishes to thank our Patrons for their ongoing support provided to WISA. These include emeritus Prof Brian Caldwell, Professor Ken Rigby,

and Dr Rhonda Galbally. Sincere thanks go to both Adele Hamlyn and Liz Carr for their significant operational volunteer contributions. Their passion, drive, professionalism and outcomes are exemplary. Liz has undertaken the massive task of keeping our national database of schools we engage with updated, as well as compiling and analysing our previous seven years of participant feedback data from School Wellbeing Coordinators/Leaders of Wellbeing, Principals and other staff who have attended our training events, conferences and mentoring. The participant feedback data from the School Wellbeing Coordinators/Leaders equates to a 10% sample of Wellbeing leaders from all states and territories. From 2015 the three greatest challenges School Leaders of Wellbeing faced in their school was: 1. Time/resourcing/demand for student wellbeing. 2. Support and engagement for wellbeing across the school community. 3. Knowledge and confidence in undertaking the wellbeing role. There is a wealth of data we have collected from school leadership, school leaders of wellbeing, school staff, students and parents/carers on wellbeing in their schools and we will continue to analyse the results. We thank you Liz for your hard work, commitment, discipline and focus, passion and professionalism. Similarly, Adele has addressed a broad range of tasks in organisational management including updating policy, assisting with approximately a dozen funding applications, and driving social media growth. Her sage counsel and her huge contributions to WISA and support to me are greatly appreciated and valued. I wish to mention here that there are many others who have volunteered time and expertise to support WISA. These include our graphic designer Troy Slade who frequently doesn't charge; Our IT support Geekly Computers for sage advice and discounted labour; Ros Pretlove for the core training content review; Lynley Clarke for the build of our online learning platform; leading practitioners Andrew Fuller and Dr Lyn O'Grady, and leading academics Professor Helen Cahill who provides presentations such as this year's AGM keynote address pro-bono, Professor Donna Cross who provides support, Prof Ken Rigby ensures we are kept abreast of the latest research in addressing bullying, and Prof Brian Caldwell who ensures we are aware of the latest developments in education. Our accountant Robyn Bourke is outstanding.

In 2021 in addition to our core training WISA continued to provide workshops for school communities to support them in responding to wellbeing challenges related to COVID and understanding loss, grief and trauma and building resilience. These workshops occurred across multiple states during the pandemic with over 1000 participants including parents, principals, and school staff from 185 schools.

WISA has continued to grow and embrace the pages of social media over the past year through our youngest Board member Wren Gillett growing our WISA identity and our story on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. In 2022 Adele Hamlyn took over this work and has focused on building a strong presence on Twitter. Facebook and LinkedIn have also been maintained. We ask you to please find us as wisawellbeing on Twitter and Facebook and WISA Wellbeing in Schools Australia on LinkedIn and like and share us with your contacts to spread the word and great resources.

WISA continues to be part of a national mental health in education roundtable of key stakeholders with Beyondblue's *BeYou* initiative. WISA also continues to partner with Liminal VR and has been successful in expanding the VicHealth award winning VR platform initiative to schools nationally.

School Wellbeing leaders are telling us that they are exhausted and have been throughout this year with Term One feeling like Term 4 and the end of the year. Increased anxiety is still widespread, and we are aware that there are large numbers of students who have disengaged from education. We have also seen a substantial exodus of teaching staff in the big states of Victoria and New South Wales where there were substantial lengthy lock downs. We know many students have missed key milestones in their development due to the pandemic and that family violence and trauma have increased during COVID. With students being connected in the online space, WISA is aware that students in states where the pandemic and natural disasters did not have such a profound impact into their schools, still experienced trauma vicariously through their online devices.

The school wellbeing space has never had such a high profile and importance attached. Yet our greatest challenge in Australia is ensuring that the school leaders who drive wellbeing across their school communities, who are predominantly teachers, receive training and resourcing to undertake

this vitally important role in our kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. We need to ensure schools utilise Australian and International best practice frameworks and resources to not simply respond to their substantial local school community needs but to also embed a greater emphasis upon health promotion, prevention, and early intervention. Substantial research demonstrates that this is the only way to reduce the increasing wellbeing needs that were evident in schools across Australia prior to the pandemic and have now grown to rates of approximately 50% of students.

We know that we must all work together if we are to make a greatly needed positive difference in school communities, so our students and staff remain engaged in education and all students can thrive in education and in life. Whilst our attendance rates of school staff have dropped dramatically and the pandemic risks have forced predominantly online learning to occur, we are pleased to acknowledge our training of leaders of wellbeing in a comprehensive whole of school community approach, ensuring schools are safe learning communities and providing strategies to support marginalised students are still having a very positive impact and fulfilling our purpose. Our door will always remain open to anyone who wishes to join us and work together on this journey. As a tax-deductible organisations please also consider a small regular or one off donation through our donate button on our homepage of our website <https://wisawellbeing.com.au> to help us ensure our children and young people are receiving the health and wellbeing support and resources they require to thrive and move forward.

Jac Van Velsen

SECTION 3

OUR FINANCES

TREASURER'S REPORT – Acting Treasurer Robyn Ramsden

WISA has continued to demonstrate financial resilience through extremely challenging conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The main impact was a significant decrease in WISA's core business activities, particularly the number of schools attending WISA training sessions. The decrease in school attendance was mainly due to the reluctance of schools to release staff for professional learning given already significant COVID related disruption and also WISA's decision not to offer conferences during the pandemic.

Further to our income falling by sixty percent compared to the previous financial year, our expenditure also increased due to the high costs associated with consultant fees to Nurture International and the return of unspent funds related to the Nurture Grant.

In addition to WISA continuing to seek government funding, applying for various philanthropic grants and pursuing Corporate Opportunities, the Board has also continued to invest in re-examining the current business model and developing a strong Business Strategy to take us forward. This includes considering strategic focus to give clarity to the work of the WISA Board and ways to promote and market priority programs so that the work of WISA is known and focused. We are also exploring the possibility of developing an annuity type of income stream for WISA.

As we emerge from the pandemic and with a clear focus on the future, we envisage that WISA will be busier than ever. I am very optimistic that WISA will be in a stronger financial position when we meet again this time next year.

Robyn Ramsden Acting WISA Board Treasurer
FINANCIAL REPORT – See WISA Website 2022 report

SECTION 4

OUR OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

HOW YOU CAN HELP

WISA is a not for profit Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered Charity with the ACNC - PBI, holding DGR and TCC status. Our work is aimed to alleviate poverty and distress by supporting schools to build resilience in all students, especially the most marginalised and those at risk of marginalisation. We are supporting school communities to be better able to address their Wellbeing needs through training, conferences and critical support directly into schools, promoting the best of outcomes for students in their future life trajectory.

If you are able to assist us in any way to drive our vision and purpose, we welcome you to contact us for further discussion. Perhaps you have heard of some funding that could assist or you are able to offer or are aware of donations or pro-bono work or goods and services to support our work. We welcome all contributions to support us to grow this worthy not for profit organisation and promote optimal outcomes for our Australian students and school communities.

Volunteer your time

WISA has a number of opportunities for volunteers including Board driven committees, and we are seeking general support to maintain these, as well as expert opinion and advice.

If you feel you could assist us or know of someone who can on any of the following topics, please contact us for further discussion.

- Marketing and Promotions (Website, Social Media)
- Financial planning and strategic positioning for growth
- Corporate Governance (Structure, Policy, Risk Management, Strategic Planning,)
- Human Resource Planning (Contract Management, preparing for Employed staff)
- Research and Data Collection and Analysis

As a growing Not-for-Profit company, we need all the help we can to get started, so volunteering your support and assistance will assist our capacity and deep and direct our work to better able to support school communities.

Make a donation and how you can support us.

WISA is a not for profit Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered Charity with the ACNC – with PBI. WISA holds Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status and therefore able to provide tax receipt for any donations made to WISA.

All donations will be mentioned in future Annual General Reports and off course our Website as a support, unless requested that we not do so.

As a growing company we have many ways in which individuals, company's or groups can support us, whether through promoting our work and services or providing your time, expertise, goods, services or financial donation.

Without a community of interest and support we will not grow WISA to its full potential to meet school and community needs. We welcome you to contact our CEO to discuss how you can assist. Details are below.

Leave a bequest

Similar to making donations think about leaving a donation from your will or property that WISA can use to further this important work.

Support an event or fundraising activity

Our most marginalised school communities often do not have the resources to attend WISA conferences and training events from which they can benefit greatly. Your support can enable them by providing free registrations.

Become a corporate partner

Our conferences and training events can benefit from your support.

Other ways you can help our cause

Talk to us.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our 2023 priority focus areas are as follows:

1. Build capacity and capability of school leaders of wellbeing to drive and embed wellbeing best practice.
2. Empower schools to embed safe and inclusive practices.
3. Support schools with strategies to support marginalized students to remain engaged and thriving in education.

CONTACT US

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