



Extended Families

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

*Stronger Together - Responding and
Adapting to a Changing World*

CONTENTS

01.	OUR PEOPLE	3
02.	PRESIDENT'S REPORT	5
03.	CEO'S REPORT	6
04.	SUPPORT COORDINATION	7
05.	MY TIME	8
06.	LinC - <i>Linking, Including and Connecting</i>	10
07.	EXTENDABLE - <i>Online program</i>	11
08.	E-LEARNING	12
09.	VIETNAMESE CAPACITY BUILDING	13
10.	VIETNAMESE FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	14
11.	PLAN MANAGEMENT	17
12.	VOLUNTEER MATCH	18
13.	VOLUNTEERS RECOGNISED	19
14.	TREASURER'S REPORT	20
15.	FINANCES	21
16.	DONORS AND SUPPORTERS	22
17.	SERVICES	23

OUR PEOPLE

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

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Vice-Presidents	Anthony Privitelli
Treasurer	Mei Wu
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Jessica Farago	Shaun Lim	Tayla Robinson
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Kayla Forward	Nelson Mancini	Rebecca Salib
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Ayden Hamilton	Isbah Najam	Rozalie Synowiec
Chi Zhing Tang	Jessica Naskopoulos	Tiffany Wasnig
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Lucy Taylor	Yen-Ngoc Truong	Emily White
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Tiffany Tong	Gabrielle Vervoort	Nagwa Zaytoun
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FINANCIAL AUDITOR

Mitchell Wilson and Partners, Chartered Accountants Malvern

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I am pleased to submit the President's Report for Extended Families Australia.

This year's theme of Stronger Together – Responding and Adapting to a Changing World is very apt for the 2020-2021 financial year. Change is never easy to manage. It is something organisations usually plan for, prepare for, and strategize about. In 2020-2021, we certainly did not have the luxury of time; from a governance and operational perspective, to say the year was challenging would be an understatement. The pace of change challenged us personally, professionally and as an organisation.

In that environment, it would be so easy to become isolated and distance ourselves from our friends, family and support networks. During this challenging time, Extended Families Australia banded together as an organisation, not just to look after our participants, but each other as well. This was a real-life example of our vision- "A society where children and young people with a disability experience full community inclusion and participation and their families are strong, resilient and connected" – in action.

In these circumstances, growth was not necessarily the most critical focus, but grow we did. However, growth brings its own set of challenges; challenges with appropriate levels of resourcing, and the need to improve the use of technology to deliver services in a remote setting are certainly not unique to Extended Families.

I would like to recognize the great work by Julie, the Management team, and staff at Extended Families, and for their dedication and passion in providing the best support for our community. It is a pleasure to work with and support such a dedicated group. Their commitment to the Extended Families community shines through in our strategy sessions, and in their interactions with the Committee of Management.

These are interesting times and the full impact of COVID-19 may be seen for some time to come yet. I believe Extended Families Australia will continue to deliver towards our Vision with professionalism, compassion and a growth mindset.

I look forward to continuing to support EFA and its growth journey.

Katherine Shamaï
Chairperson

CEO'S REPORT

2020-21- another year of managing uncertainty and change. However, despite the complexity and uncertainty that comes with responding to a global health crisis, the Extended Families team continue to be resilient and hopeful as we rise to the challenge.

After spending the first part of the year in lockdown and dealing with our own personal responses to a difficult environment; we have continued to adapt and keep a focus on supporting the families we work with. We know that it has been difficult for everyone, but we are aware that families who have children with a disability have many additional worries and challenges to deal with. The pandemic response has meant increased isolation, reduced access to services and limited opportunities for respite – the system responses that are essential supports for people and families living with disabilities. We acknowledge the effort and stamina of families as they navigate these times.



One of our challenges this year, is that, for the first time in many years, we have found it difficult to find the right staff for several programs. We have been short staffed in Support Coordination, and our new ILC funded projects took some months to fill roles. These shortages put enormous pressure on program leaders and managers who have had to fill in gaps and manage the impact on participants and families. I acknowledge and thank the program leaders who have taken the load to keep services going and the responsive team members who have helped with additional tasks when required. While appointments have been challenging, the flexibility and skills of many of our current staff has been highlighted in other ways, with some staff taking on new roles or adding new responsibilities within the organisation. Staff have taken up opportunities in areas such as supervision, finance, human resources and data management. It is an important value of Extended Families to recognise skills of existing staff and support them in their professional development.

I want to acknowledge the committed team of Inclusion Support Workers who have continued vital direct support of people with a disability throughout all stages and lockdowns. They continue to provide support, connection, skill development and respite at a time where most regular programs have ceased or changed from face-to-face delivery. Some families have chosen to put on hold or move to remote contact, but for many, the ongoing face to face support is essential to managing day to day.

In recognition of the isolation caused by stay-at-home orders, Extended Families facilitated a team exercise program in late 2020 to improve staff wellbeing, and keep people connected. Staff came together to keep up morale and take positive action by engaging in 'Workout of Covid' - a workout competition that rewarded people for connecting either online or in person while exercising. This event was a highlight for both those involved and the casual observer.

We were excited to receive a second NDIS ILC (Information, Linkages and Capacity Building) grant in partnership with the Vietnamese Families with Special Needs (VFSN). This has enabled us to further develop our initial pilot peer support group for Vietnamese young people with Autism, meeting more needs and further testing its efficiency. We have developed some much-requested school holiday programs for the Vietnamese community and continue to support the VFSN in its development. You can read more about these creative initiatives in this report.

As long term adopters of technology, we have continued to provide and improve services vital for efficiency. We already had cloud-based systems in place and used Zoom for communication, meetings, and service delivery. We also utilise bi-lingual online forms for service bookings, feedback and evaluation and more recently have adopted a SMS service in response to various communities' preference for mobile technology.

Last year we shared how our LinC program had taken some activities and supports online. These have continued and been further enhanced with school holiday focused online activities.

As we look ahead, it seems COVID-19 challenges will continue. Despite this, we know that building connections and supporting community engagement is vital and we will continue to explore flexible models to achieve this. We are planning to use the funding we receive from Home and Community Care (HACC) in the Southern Region with more specific targeted group activities in partnership with activity providers; and hope that we can implement these safely in the coming months.

Thanks to the Committee of Management who have continued to put in extra support during times of change, and to the staff, volunteers, participants, and families who continue to respond and adapt to our changing world. We are stronger together! Let's keep going and continue to build an inclusive and supportive community.

Julie Langdon
CEO

SUPPORT COORDINATION

The Support Coordination role is a complex one that involves helping NDIS participants and their families link to services, assist them to understand the details of their plan, manage their budget, access relevant mainstream services and provide other supports as needed.

Over the past year the support component of Support Coordination has been paramount, as families and coordinators work together in the context of the restrictions and often fears generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It would be impossible to reflect and report on our work without reference to the impact of the long periods of lockdown generated by this pandemic. For participants and their families this has commonly meant a reduction of formal supports, as many are not able to engage with online supports for various reasons. For others, it involves a flexible approach to ensure needs are met in a creative way. The constant is the Support Coordinator who makes every effort to ensure the wellbeing of their participants in these difficult times.

Support Coordination at Extended Families has evolved over time, from a focus on children and young people to a much broader cohort. This has occurred as we have responded to the evident needs in the community and has resulted in an evolving skill and knowledge base as we continue to broaden our horizons to people of all ages and focus on areas such as issues for older Australians, housing, adult mental health and post physical trauma, such as brain injury. Our Vietnamese and Chinese speaking worker base have both grown in the past 12 months as we aim to meet the need in these communities for Support Coordinators who speak their language and have an understanding of their culture and community.

We have seen staff come and go over the past year. Support Coordinators have left to pursue new opportunities and we have welcomed new staff who have mostly experienced orientation and learning about the role, and the organisation, from their own living rooms. We are very conscious of the impact of this and applaud the new workers for their flexibility. We have become acutely aware of the value of office collegiality and support and look forward to experiencing this again in the hopefully near future. We are also looking forward to enjoying more face-to-face time with our participants and their families. Whilst we have embraced new ways of connecting with families, which will no doubt remain as efficient options, there is nothing that can emulate sitting with someone in their own home, hearing their stories and their hopes for the future.

MY TIME

Playgroup Victoria continues to provide funding for the delivery of My Time Groups. The groups provide support for families who have a child with a disability or chronic medical condition to come together and provide support to one another and learn more about parenting and available services.

For many years now, we have run two groups for Vietnamese families – one in located in Deer Park and the other in Springvale. The groups are run by Vietnamese speaking facilitators on a weekly basis during the school term. In 2021, we were pleased to receive funding for a third group for Chinese speaking families in Forrest Hill. This group has quickly become very popular with approximately forty registered members.

A key part of the success of the My Time groups is sharing the same cultural background and the same language. We have been so fortunate to have such skilled bi-lingual staff running these groups. They have provided ongoing support to the groups during the complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic and consecutive lockdowns in Melbourne.

One of the challenges during the COVID-19 lockdowns has been to transition these groups online, due to being unable to offer them in the usual face-to-face environment. The facilitators have been very creative and have developed a range of activities for the online groups, as well as identify and organise various guest speakers to participate and present in the sessions. Topics that have been covered in the sessions include; parenting a child with autism, occupational therapists discussing ways to assist skill development in children, sessions with the Association for Children with a Disability, a speaker from Centrelink presenting on mindfulness, activities and online games that are available.

We look forward to the time that families are able to meet in person on a regular basis once again.

Classics made simple
and sturdier
for the youngest readers!

- Are You My Mother? by P. D. Eastman
- Dr. Seuss's ABC by Dr. Seuss
- The Eye Book by Dr. Seuss
- The Foot Book by Dr. Seuss
- Go, Dog. Go! by P. D. Eastman
- Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb by Al Perkins
- He Bear, She Bear by Stan & Jan Berenstain
- Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You? by Dr. Seuss
- Old Hat, New Hat by Stan & Jan Berenstain
- The Shape of Me and Other Stuff by Dr. Seuss
- Ten Apples Up On Top! by Dr. Seuss
- The Tooth Book by Dr. Seuss


Random House
Seussville.com
randomhousekids.com
MANUFACTURED IN CHINA

HOP ON POP



By Dr. Seuss

The SIMPLEST SEUSS
for TODDLERS' USE

LinC - LINKING, INCLUDING AND CONNECTING

The Extended Families LinC Program is a support worker service dedicated to matching skilled, quality support workers with participants, focusing on Linking, Including and Connecting (LinC). This means finding the right match – whether that be finding a peer aged person to support social engagement, an Occupational Therapist student to work on independent living skills or finding a sporty individual to assist with participation in a basketball team.

The emergence of COVID-19 as a global pandemic meant a significant disruption to our services and an awareness that we need to shift our service focus so participants and Inclusion Support Workers would not lose the valuable connections they had built. We identified that people were responding differently to the pandemic and our service had to be flexible to accommodate individual needs and experience.

We developed resources to support online 1:1 sessions so participants could maintain connections with established relationships. We continued to build upon ExtendABLE; an online social group program, facilitated by Inclusion Support Workers and offering theme-focussed groups.

As restrictions eased in the second half of the year, we supported people to feel comfortable re-engaging and entering the community in new ways. Many of our young participants required extra support to leave the new comfort zone they had created at home, and we reminded people that we were patient, and here to help. We learnt that we could adapt quickly to COVID-19 as the risk ebbed and flowed – when restrictions allowed, we returned to community support and when a lockdown was called, we listened to what participants needed, and we adapted.

A big part of the beginning of 2021 was focussed on the implementation of a new rostering system – Skedulo. The impressive adaptability of the LinC team really shone, with everyone demonstrating patience and flexibility in learning and implementing a new system. The Inclusion Support Staff adapted positively to the change and now enjoy a mobile-integrated rostering system that can feed data back to our CRM in a much more meaningful way. A very important step for a growing program with many shifts, participants, and staff to manage.

By mid-2021, we felt hopeful, that life was going back to normal, and it was clear that we were stronger, together- whatever obstacles might be thrown at us along the way.

LinC STORIES

Sue Merlo is a LinC Inclusion Support Worker who has, with the permission of her participants, shared some of the little wins she gets to enjoy as part of her job.

THOMAS

Thomas is a young man with cerebral palsy, making it challenging to coordinate his movements. One shift, he told his mother he wanted to have a Karaoke- disco party- he loves to sing and dance to One Direction, Queen and ABBA.

This particular day, he wanted to turn the disco ball light on and have a pretend microphone with stand present for our sing-along. Thomas chose to play One Direction on YouTube so we could watch the music videos, listen and read to lyrics. We had been singing and dancing for about an hour and half, and it was lunch time, so his mum came to call us for lunch.

When she arrived, Thomas had his back to the door, so he didn't see her there. He was clapping and kicking his legs in time to the tune of the music, copying what I was doing. I had never seen him be able to keep his balance and coordinate his hands and feet together at the same time. When the song finished, Thomas high-fived me to celebrate how well he had danced. It was such an incredibly moving moment to be part of. Thomas's mother shared, with a tear in her eye, that he had never ever managed to do hand claps and feet kicks in tune to the music before. It was so rewarding to feel having been a part of such a significant change in someone's quality of life.

A LITTLE GIRL WITH A WICKED SENSE OF HUMOUR

I work with a young girl who has Kubuki syndrome, who at times can have difficulties expressing herself. Sometimes she likes to go to the local petrol station for a small treat on the way home from school as a reward. One day I thought I would try to encourage her to get something healthier, so as we walked in, I said to her "How about a banana today?", without missing a beat, she slapped her hand on her forehead for added effect and quipped back, "Don't even think about it!". Her wit and humour brought laughter and smiles to everyone in the store.



EXTENDABLE – ONLINE PROGRAM

ExtendABLE is our online social inclusion program that was developed to help participants stay engaged and connected through the ever-changing climate of COVID-19.

ExtendABLE has continued to grow over the past year, with popular sessions running multiple times a week in order to accommodate high levels of participant interest. We have also been able to introduce more sessions, such as Magic with Alexander, Sweet Treat Cooking with Emily, Dance Fitness with Myah, and Pokémon with Cam.

With the easing of some COVID-19 restrictions, we were also able to facilitate community outings earlier this year. Participants met up in small groups of four with Inclusion Support Workers to go to Bundoora Park Farm, Chesterfield Farm, bowling and Scienceworks! It was so heart-warming to see our participants finally meet each other in person and cement the friendships they had developed online over the past year.

E-LEARNING

Working apart to stay safe has had its benefits, but also presented challenges. When staff are not together, fewer ideas flow, professional needs are pushed to the back-burner, and other priorities become clearer. Although it was in our plans to expand our eLearning offering, it was somewhat stagnated over the course of the year.

In the meantime however, uptake of our available courses increased, as did the overall engagement with eLearning by staff.

ACHIEVEMENTS

With most of our major courses already built and deployed, this year has given us the chance to assess our more immediate daily needs and identify knowledge gaps in preparation for future eLearning development.

As a result, we spent time planning courses that provided “learning chunks” to help staff through situations where specific knowledge was needed on-demand. One example was as a result of an increase in online and digital scams. “Phishing Awareness” provided a quick update and reminder to staff on how to deal with risks that arrive in our inbox.

During the year we also built our own in-house Learning Management System (LMS), on which volunteers and other 3rd parties are now able to engage with our content.

Looking ahead to 2021-2022 there are more short, task orientated courses to be developed and offered to staff and the continued expansion of content in our in-house LMS and potentially replace our proprietary system. We are also looking to offer eLearning content to clients and families.

Although more difficulties face us all in the short term, we are meeting these with positivity, and expect our eLearning program will continue to grow and thrive.

VIETNAMESE CAPACITY BUILDING

The Vietnamese Families with Special Needs (VFSN) group has been operating for many years to meet the needs of parents of children with disabilities and assist them in giving their children a happy and healthy life. The VFSN Committee and Extended Families meet regularly to plan a comprehensive program of community inclusion activities for families for each school term. Supported peer meetings for families run weekly during the school term on Thursday mornings and additional community inclusion events and parenting information workshops are held throughout the year. In the year 2020/21, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VFSN moved from meeting in person to virtual zoom meetings every Thursday and peer networking using the social media platform, Viber.

Under a new collaborative grant program with Extended Families funded through Information Linkages and Capacity Building, the VFSN were funded to expand the pilot program Vuon Len for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and introduce a new program of school holiday inclusion activities for Vietnamese children in the West. This grant also provided resources to build the organisational capacity of the VFSN and establish Sub-Committees to support the Committee of Management to focus on specific governance work streams.

The Thursday Parent Group Sub Committee was established and health was identified as a key topic among the community in terms of physical, emotional and general wellbeing, especially in the context of COVID-19. Programs were conducted throughout the year looking at various topics, including self-care and resilience.

Ongoing sessions providing current information and available services were key throughout the year. Presentations from a speech pathologist, occupational therapist and psychologist were among the sessions held, covering a variety of topics, including toys education for early intervention, communicating with teenagers, dealing with aggressive behaviour and mastering thoughts and feelings. Social activities that did go ahead in the year included a Mother's Day lunch, a group walk, art classes and general gatherings and get togethers when permitted (in COVID-19) which allowed parents to share resources and attend learning sessions that may assist them and their children through isolation.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 lockdowns, the VFSN Thursday Parent Group has continued to provide a vital role in supporting Vietnamese families living with disability in Melbourne's West and has helped to combat the significant impact of social isolation the pandemic has imposed upon us. We remain a resilient and connected community!

VIETNAMESE FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



TEAMWORK MAKES DREAMS WORK – PROJECT UPDATE

In November 2020 Extended Families and Vietnamese Families with Special Needs (VFSN) learnt that they had been successful in a grant application to the NDIS' Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Program to continue the work commenced a year earlier in building capacity within the Vietnamese community living with disability.

Specifically, the current grant (totalling \$733K over 2 years) enables us to

- Expand our highly successful *Vươn lên* Peer Group Program for Autistic Vietnamese Youth
- Implement a new school holiday community inclusion program called *Tham Gia*
- Continue supporting the VFSN in its journey of building organisational capacity

***Vươn lên* (VL) means To Rise in Vietnamese!** We currently have four VL participant groups and four parent groups operating in the West and Outer Southern metro regions. A total of 27 young people take part in fortnightly community-based peer meetings that are run by a team of skilled facilitators.

COVID-19 lockdowns have been hard on participants who keenly look forward to our fortnightly gatherings to socialise, practice and learn inclusion skills and to undertake a variety of community-based activities. VL has adapted by moving gatherings online during isolation and much work has been done by program development staff, facilitators, participants, and parents to encourage sharing and engagement, deliver interesting activities, interactive workshops and learning resources. While we can't achieve the full spectrum of benefits that in person gatherings can offer, it has been truly wonderful to see that our online program is providing a space in which people can experience a strong sense of teamwork and community.

"I (have) learned about many self-care tips, some support networks and learned what other people were doing to deal with lockdown."

(Recent VL A Session - Participant Feedback)



"Our son has improve in his self-confidence, social and communication skills immensely... it is very noticeable at home."

(Recent VL Parent Feedback)

***Tham Gia* (TG) means To Participate in Vietnamese!**

In December 2020, we launched a new community inclusion program for Vietnamese youth with disabilities in the West, which has been very popular and highly subscribed. TG provides larger group school holiday activities to primary and secondary school aged children and families.

The program is all about trying new community activities in a supported, bi-lingual environment and helping individuals to connect with local opportunities in an ongoing way. Attendance numbers at the in-person groups have been consistently high and there has been some wonderful feedback from parents and participants.

COVID-19 safety precautions and lockdowns during the first half of 2021 have presented several challenges in running large group events and communicating with families which the TG team has been able to meet. Some of the highlights from our Term 1, 2 and 3 school holidays has included a Family Zoo Day, a visit to CERES School of Nature, lawn bowls, art and craft workshops, African dancing and visiting Dream City – a high tech interactive centre where young people are inspired to learn through fun career activities.

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“The dancing was good! We hope there will be more dancing. The reptile encounter was good too!”

(Recent TG Event - Participant Feedback)



“(This was a) very meaningful event... parents and children can meet other families too socialise. Children will become more confident in communication and learn how to take care of others around them.”

(Recent TG Event - Participant Feedback)

Organisational Capacity Building this year has centred around supporting the VFSN to develop a series of subcommittees dedicated to helping the Committee of Management further develop areas of organisational governance. The subcommittees have developed Action Plans for priority projects linked to financial management, strategic planning, building a volunteer workforce, marketing and implementation of parent and family programs. During periods of lockdown the committees and members have been meeting over web based applications and working together to develop tools that help the organisation combat isolation and to grow and maximise available supports for Vietnamese people living with a disability.

The journey of building both individual and organisational capacity during a global pandemic has been challenging- but it has also been rewarding and has prompted additional creative impetus. We have continued to learn about each other, and achieve significant outcomes. COVID-19 has underlined the importance of working together and it has emphasised our shared interconnection. It has shown us that collectively we can overcome most obstacles... and indeed... that teamwork makes our dream work!

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL – A CONTRIBUTION BY DANNY DO (PEER WORKER FOR VFSN)

I am Danny, I have been lucky to be offered work as a peer worker for those with Autism in the Vietnamese community in May 2021. My role is to help participants do things together, such as: build social skills through outings, play games, help them learn and find new things they may like, and teaching them to use the transport application.

I have been glad to see the group attendance grow overtime. I have learnt they have many hidden skills but need others to help unlock them. I look forward to continuing to discover what they enjoy doing as well as further developing their social skills.

By working in Vietnamese program, I have shared my knowledge and also gained many new skills from peers and staff. I hope these skills will continue to help in opening better pathways for those in the community and I hope to continue playing my role in supporting those living with a disability.

Danny Do
VFSN Peer Worker



PLAN MANAGEMENT

At Extended Families, the plan management service supports NDIS participants by providing a financial intermediary service. In the last year, the service has grown to support 420 participants.

During the pandemic, the plan management team quickly adapted to the changing working environment, whether that was back in the office from February to May or working remotely. Microsoft Teams became the main communication channel to allow to resolutions of plan management cases and talk through NDIS policies. It enabled us to respond and manage the increase in participants with ease; especially those in Culturally and linguistically diverse communities, largely in the growing sector from the Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin group.

As quoted by a carer of a participant “I’m comfortable and confident to communicate with (a) plan manager in Vietnamese. I have (had) positive experiences with (the) Extended Families plan management (team, they provide) quick responses to requests, clarity, transparency, and (moreover) I can easily communicate in Vietnamese.”

“Tôi cảm thấy thoải mái và tự tin hơn khi được giao tiếp và trao đổi bằng tiếng Việt cùng với ban Quản Lý Kế Hoạch từ Extended Families. Ban Quản Lý Kế Hoạch của Extended Families đem đến những trải nghiệm tích cực cho tôi như phản hồi nhanh các yêu cầu, rõ ràng, minh bạch và đặc biệt là tôi có thể dễ dàng trong việc giao tiếp bằng tiếng Việt.”

The team has undergone continuous training throughout the year to deal and understand the complexities of the NDIS system, the annual NDIS Compliance Audit further strengthened our skills and knowledge and allowed us to make improvements to our work within the NDIS guidelines. The exercise also helped identify areas which needed further attention and tenacity to details.

In responding to the changes and demand for better service delivery, we are utilising existing and current technology to launch a new user-friendly mobile application for participants and families to manage and track their plan budget on their mobile device. This new initiative will provide the participants and families timely information and access to the latest available budget for their plans. This equates to better planning of the allocated budget and ensuring smoother delivery to the services needed.

The team also participated in the First Extended Families Annual Workout to help maintain connections within the organisation as well as for general wellbeing. Although we didn’t come out on top, we did have a fabulous time getting together over Zoom for a workout which was great to clear the mind and have some fun together, albeit remotely.

When lockdown eased very briefly in the year the team took advantage to support local businesses in Coburg and joined together for lunch.

Moving forward, we are actively looking at, and thinking of, ways and means to help further improve on the existing service and seeking new ideas to anticipate the future needs of the participants.

VOLUNTEER MATCH

The Volunteer Match Program at Extended Families facilitates positive connections between people within a community to provide support to children, young people and adults with disabilities and their families. The energy, skills, knowledge, time, interest and care that volunteers bring with them enriches the lives of participants and their families. The program fits within a wider support system for each participant, assisting them to work on their personal and NDIS goals through connections made with their mentor. It seeks to widen social networks, empower individuals, promote inclusion and strengthen the bonds people have with their friends, family and within their local area.

The role of the volunteer, whilst formally supported through the organisation, can have more of an informal feel to the participant and their family, who often welcome this point of difference in the service they are provided by the program. In developing a friendship with the participant, individual volunteers can provide practical assistance and mentoring support, helping participants develop important life skills that enable them to take part in sport, recreation and leisure events or activities that are of interest to them. The program aims to assist in overcoming any inclusion barriers which may exist, alongside assisting the participant to develop any skills they may need for participation and can support them to make social connections within their community and with activity peers.

Following the extensive challenging lockdown periods of 2020, it was extremely pleasing to see existing Volunteer Matches resume contact in person and begin to again work on connecting individuals with their communities. The year 2021 has brought with it opportunities for the much-needed social connection people had been missing, but also a level of unpredictability, with the continued challenges of the ongoing pandemic. Further lockdowns in the State of Victoria again impacted the ability of the program to make new matches and at times for volunteers to meet up in person with participants. Despite this changing world, where possible, Volunteers and participants have continued to demonstrate that they are stronger together, adapting as needed to maintain their friendships and connections with one another. Companionship comes in many forms, and Extended Families Volunteers offer great flexibility in the level, nature, time and location of the support they provide. When faced with these challenges, the ability to stay connected via remote forms of contact such as Zoom, FaceTime and similar platforms, enabled volunteers to remain part of a support system keeping families going during such difficult times.

Extended Families recognises the importance of the role of volunteers. "Volunteering is a fundamental building block of civil society. It brings to life the noblest aspirations of humankind the pursuit of peace, freedom, opportunity, safety and justice for all people..." Volunteering creates positive change for the volunteer, the organisation and the community. Whilst Volunteers often become involved to increase the quality of life of individuals with disabilities and their families, feedback shows that often Volunteers gain as much out of the experience as participants. Volunteering opportunities at Extended Families offer participating volunteers the reward of helping a child, young person or adult to be authentically included in their community and an opportunity to develop valuable experience and skills in the disability field and recreation and leisure sectors. Extended Families has recently begun the process of expanding its volunteering opportunities to include volunteering in the organisation's existing social and peer group programs, such as Vuon Len and Tham Gia. This will enable Volunteers to begin to participate in group settings where they can have a role in empowering, supporting and connecting individuals and families in Vietnamese communities; an exciting expansion for the organisation across both programs.

VOLUNTEERS RECOGNISED

Thank you to our volunteers for their time and dedication in helping support our vision.

Eve Addis
 Leslie Allanach
 Claudia Di Fabio
 Sylvia Giles
 Nicola Grant
 Jane Green

Carolyne Jones
 Michael Klieber
 Amelia Lam
 Maree Lay
 Claudia Manibui
 Joshua Martin

Karen Mirfin
 Elle Nguyen
 Michael Timms
 Siobhan Zigomanis
 George Zographos

A MEANINGFUL CONNECTION

Paul was almost 13 years old when he was first introduced to his Extended Families volunteer, Mike in 2017. Paul, who is on the autism spectrum and diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder) had been waiting for a ‘match’ for just over 12 months. Paul’s Mum was providing care for her two sons with special needs on her own, a huge task for any parent. It was difficult for the family to access activities outside of the house without support, and as a result Paul’s Mum felt quite isolated.

Mike joined Extended Families as a Volunteer in 2017, as he felt he had something to offer others having experienced the joys and challenges of raising his own family alongside his background in education and learning. Thankfully for Extended Families and Paul, Mike chose to approach Extended Families as he felt they were providing him an opportunity that fitted in well with his previous positive volunteering experiences.

Since Paul’s and Mike’s introduction 4 years ago, a meaningful connection was established. Paul’s mother hoped for Paul to develop a friendship and rapport with a ‘father’ type figure in Mike, someone who could provide support to assist Paul through his teenage years.

With the pandemic and rolling lockdowns meeting up for Paul and Mike was difficult, until the ability to meet outdoors was allowed. It was decided early in their relationship that they would each take turns choosing an activity for their next planned visit. Activities included, visits to a variety of local nature walks and reserves, activity centres, such as Gravity Zone, and the occasional special outing further afield, such as Puffing Billy, Scienceworks, a trip to the snow and attending the football to watch Paul’s beloved Hawthorn.

Paul’s mother has very much appreciated and valued the relationship Paul established with Mike. She credits the relationship they have, in getting Paul through difficult periods over the years.



TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to report a strong financial year despite the challenges repeated lockdowns throughout the year.

Extended Families Australia has done a tremendous job in responding and adapting to all necessary changes and this would not have been possible without all the dedicated staff and volunteers.

According to the 2021 audited financial report we enjoyed an adjusted operating profit of \$97,472. Government support payments totalled \$695,000 over the year. We saw a revenue increase of 123.6% compared to 2020 FY, this excluded government support payments.

NDIS income saw an increase by 125%, which is a great result given the challenges of another COVID-19 year. To support this increase in revenue, we have continued to employ more staff to meet the needs of participants and the organisation. Overall expenses increased 121.3% compared to the prior year.

As at 30 June 2021, the net asset position was \$1,364,043 which translated to a 238.9% increase from last year's position.

In conclusion, we are holding a reasonable amount of cash which will cover the organisation's short-term obligations, (approximately three months) using only cash or cash equivalents.

Please refer to the annual report for further details of the financial position of Extended Families.

FINANCES

EXTENDED FAMILIES AUSTRALIA INC.
A.B.N. 97 470 256 857

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income			
Revenue		5,147,073	4,159,596
Other income		699,430	322,291
Expenditure			
Administration expenses		(316,150)	(237,613)
Depreciation expenses		(18,869)	(14,116)
Special event expenses		(268)	(14,745)
Staffing expenses		(4,715,338)	(3,889,958)
Volunteer payments		(3,406)	(5,244)
		<u>792,472</u>	<u>320,211</u>
Profit		<u>792,472</u>	<u>320,211</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year		<u><u>792,472</u></u>	<u><u>320,211</u></u>

EXTENDED FAMILIES AUSTRALIA INC.
A.B.N. 97 470 256 857

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	Retained earnings \$	Reserves \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2019		243,215	8,145	251,360
Profit attributable to members		320,211		320,211
Balance at 30 June 2020		<u>563,426</u>	<u>8,145</u>	<u>571,571</u>
Profit attributable to members		792,472		792,472
Balance at 30 June 2021		<u><u>1,355,898</u></u>	<u><u>8,145</u></u>	<u><u>1,364,043</u></u>

**For a complete copy of our Audited Financial Statement – see separate insert or request
from Extended Families by emailing info@extendedfamilies.org.au*

DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

At Extended Families we celebrate the generosity and long term commitment of our donors whose gifts enable us to continue to positively impact people's lives. We sincerely thank our donors and supporters for their contributions.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

We acknowledge the support of the Victorian and Federal Governments, with significant funding provided by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Social Services.

CORPORATE PARTNERS, CHARITABLE GRANTS AND SPONSORS

Jack Moody Charitable Foundation
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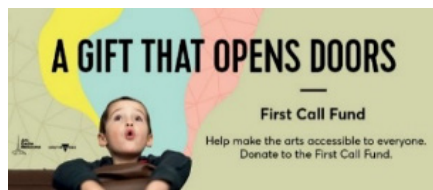
City of Whitehorse

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Michael Louis
Claudia Manibui
Joshua Martin

Karen Mirfin
Anthony Privitelli
Katherine Shamai
Michael Timms
Tien Trinh



SERVICES



VOLUNTEER MATCH

Our volunteers provide genuine friendship, practical assistance and mentoring support to a child/young person, helping them to develop life skills. They help them take part in sport, recreation and leisure activities that are of interest to the child. Some volunteer matches also provide direct support for the family.



LINC (LINKING + INCLUDING + CONNECTING)

LinC provides skilled inclusion support workers to support participants with skill development, capacity building to overcome barriers and assistance to engage in the community, social and recreational activities. Our workers support the achievement of specified social, personal and developmental needs and goals.



EXTENDABLE

ExtendABLE is an online social inclusion program that was developed in response to the social distancing requirements of COVID-19. The ExtendABLE program aims to reduce the experience of social isolation for people with a disability by creating an opportunity to connect with others through online groups.



SUPPORT COORDINATION

Extended Families provides independent support coordination to help you manage your plan. Our team of experienced staff, source and assess support options, connect with services, access the NDIS portal, coordinate services and manage your plan, respond and deal with any crisis, build your skills and confidence, implement and monitor your NDIS plan and re-develop your goals before your plan review.



PLAN MANAGEMENT

Extended Families is a registered plan management provider and can manage NDIS funding for supports on a participant's behalf. Plan Management is an intermediary financial service that manages the financial and administrative aspects of a NDIS Plan.



PARENT AND PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Regular get-together programs for parents and children with a disability to share experiences, develop connections and receive support, information and education relevant to their care role.



**Extended
Families**

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