



2023 ANNUAL REPORT





Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation Southern Cross Kids Camps acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Southern Cross Kids Camps:

Our Strategic Intents

Mission

Creating environments for life change with children who have experienced trauma.

Vision

Our programs provide children with a greater opportunity to become adults who flourish, unencumbered by their past.

Fundamentals of our approach

Our programs deliver hope to children who have experienced trauma.

We aim to create enduring pathways of connection for the children who participate in our programs. Our intended pathway is for children to first join us for our primary age program at 7-11 years and graduate to SCKC Wild as 12-14 year olds. Where appropriate, graduates of our programs may progress to volunteer as apprentice leaders aged 15-17 years. At 18 years of age they can become fully-fledged adult team members.

Our primary method of engaging with our target audience is via a five-day overnight camping program. Our camps are characterised by a 1:1 camper:buddy ratio. We have additional support staff to deliver the program.

We provide an environment in which children, volunteers and staff are physically, psychologically and culturally safe

SCKC is a Christian faith-based not-for-profit charity. We are motivated to serve our campers and community by the hope we have in Jesus Christ. We respect people regardless of their faith background. Our programs are open to children of any, or no faith background.

Our strategic intents

1. Our key intention is that children will experience a safe environment

At Camp, the safety of every child is paramount. We have excellent policies in place, which are alive and evident in practice.

This experience will be created by a team of safe adults whose priority is the children in their care. They will focus on the delivery of happy memories for every child.

We will deliver exciting, engaging and well-organised programs. These will build resilience, hope, self-esteem, relationship skills and a positive view for the future.

We have a current Reconciliation Action Plan to guide our engagement with Indigenous Australians and provide for cultural safety among Indigenous participants in our programs.



2. Team development lies at the centre of all we deliver

Our teams are outstanding. They are committed to our fundamentals and embody qualities that have endured from our foundation, such as sacrifice, persistence, inclusion and calmness.

Team members possess these attributes:

- **Faith:** while everyone is on a journey in regards their faith, our key leaders (camp directors, buddies, core staff) are people of faith who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Saviour.
- **Integrity:** their lives within and outside the context of camp are guided by strong moral principles. Our volunteers and staff, while not perfect, try to live consistently with their faith and values.
- **Character:** they possess the personal attributes that make them good role models for children and adults. Our teams comprise unique individuals, with differing strengths and personal qualities. When their character is developed, they provide great examples for all.
- **Competency:** they are trained, prepared and understand the role they play on camp and in our organisation. We are team players and do everything in the best interests of the children in our care. We are always ready to learn and improve.

We develop people who can effectively deliver our programs. Regardless of where they serve in our organisation, if they are in our realm, we intend to improve their skills and character. We want each person to succeed.

We select Camp Directors carefully. We train and equip them for the successful delivery of our programs to each child and volunteer. Teams will be effective through engaged and passionate leadership. We support Directors through regular communication, honest feedback and by providing fresh resources to help them prepare their teams and deliver great camps.

Our annual leadership summit provides specialist input, opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other. Through the active participation of all camp directors, core team and staff we

intend to continue to shape SCKC to proactively grow in its delivery of service to every child. We intend to encourage each other in a stimulating, rewarding and enjoyable environment.



3. SCKC will grow in effectiveness through the development of a broad support base

Our main initiatives are:

- *Develop resourcing relationships:* we provide opportunities for individuals, groups and companies to partner with us. We are selective in who we partner with. We require an alignment of values. This partnership is not simply about finance. While finance is vital, we seek ways to invite our partners to join us in various ways, on camp itself or in the activities that enable camps to occur.

We also seek to serve and promote our partners and return benefit to those supporters. We value generosity and will exercise this with our time, words and acknowledgment of those who support us.

- *Fundraising:* we conduct significant fundraising events. These endeavours provide the capacity to fund our initiatives. Priority for the proceeds of these events resides with our camps and the effective training of our volunteers.
- *Grants:* we seek and hope to win larger, longer-term grants and maintain excellent relationships with donors.
- *Social media:* We use social media to promote our organisation and its activities and supply content which assists others. We use social media for major fundraising initiatives and to increase our support base.

- *Innovative income streams:* we pursue alternate opportunities that provide fresh income streams for our organisation. We continually seek new relationships.

4. Organisational excellence

The national SCKC organisation will:

- *Provide excellent service to our teams:* the Board and National Office will respond in a timely manner, focused on solutions and engage all we encounter with an outstanding proactive attitude. We exist to serve.
- *Develop healthy support structures:* our policies and procedures reflect best practice nationally and are implemented across the entire organisation. We embrace technology and through our on-line presence serve our growing and geographically dispersed network with useful resources and information.
- *Our Board, committees and specialist leadership groups:* will adopt a visionary and innovative posture, utilising the necessary expertise to exercise their duties to advance the organisation.
- *Recruit, across generations, the best available people into leadership:* we renew people in leadership to ensure the organisation is continually refreshed. Succession planning is valued and practiced. Diversity in leadership and all areas is sought and appreciated.

5. SCKC will enhance its effectiveness through the creation of community and partner alliances

Our key alliances in this area reside predominately with the individual camps in their region:

- *Referring agencies:* we align with the nation's best. Our reputation is built on our care for the children that are referred to us and the quality of our programs and people.
- *Church communities:* we will consolidate relationships with sponsoring churches, extend partnerships with churches to plant new camps. We help faith communities recognise the value of SCKC.
- *Campsite providers:* we partner with camp sites who share our vision and understand our campers. We involve ourselves nationally with the camping governing bodies.

6. The future

- *Camps:* we aspire long-term to have a presence in every region of Australia. We intend to launch 1-2 new camps each year. Long term sustainability is a key underlying consideration.
- *Our own camp site:* we look to operate our own camping facility - to host Southern Cross Kids' Camps and support our organisation financially.
- *Indigenous Australians:* SCKC will develop opportunities to serve Indigenous Australians. We will seek out relationships and insights to maximise our contribution and effectiveness. We will maintain and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan.
- *A pathway of connection:* We will develop a pathway for campers to engage with SCKC from primary school age to adulthood. We run primary-aged camps and Wild junior youth camp for graduated camper. We provide opportunities for children to serve as apprentice leaders or cousins to serve on our regular primary-aged camps and then to serve on camp as a fully accredited adult leaders.



About us

Southern Cross Kids Camps is a Christian organisation that interrupts the cycle of abuse and neglect in primary aged children who have had an unfair start in life.

Our camps are designed to bring fun, undivided attention and acceptance to the children who have been entrusted to us. We want to give them the best week of their year.

Every child on camp is assigned a “Buddy” who cares for them over the course of the week. This 1:1 ratio brings about incredible results for the child.



2023 has been another outstanding year for SCKC, with 17 Camps across five states & territories. An incredible 650 volunteers serving 400 kids. Including a new camp launched from the Gold Coast, which was a great success.

2023 saw a number of former campers return as leaders, this is always a highlight.

SCKC continues to go from strength the strength, with an exciting future in store.





Chair's Report

I was listening to a podcast recently and the speaker talked about our lives being “lived in a river”. He said that if that’s the case and we’re just treading water, then we will be carried to wherever the currents take us. Rather, he said, we need to “swim with intent” to get to where we want to go; conceivably that could be with, across or against the current.

SCKC’s National Board are committed to doing much more than treading water. Our strategic intents document defines our purpose and approach as an organisation and helps us navigate the many and varied currents we encounter. Time and again it has proved to be an invaluable guide as to what is both good and right for us as an organisation.

One area where the Board in 2023 has “swum with intent” has been in relation to our core responsibility for the governance of SCKC. There were several highlights in this respect:

- **Membership renewal:** there were several changes in Board membership through 2023, with two new Board “visitors” (Paulina Smith, Sarah Melville), Will Goh moving from “visitor” to full member and Wilma Calvert retiring from the Board. We will continue to look to identify and attract talented people to our Board, who are able to provide both stability and opportunity for long-term renewal.
- **CMA Conference and annual Board planning day:** as a Board, we spent two days together participating in the annual Christian Ministry

Advancement (CMA) conference. This was a great opportunity to gather with like-minded leaders with a passion for strong and healthy governance in faith-based organisations. We heard about leading practices in many areas of organisational governance and management. We also spent the day after the conference processing the key takeaways and thinking of how we can bring what we learnt into the way SCKC operates. Our plan is to continue to participate in these outstanding conferences and continually improve our effectiveness as a Board.

- **Board internship:** Sarah Melville, one of our many outstanding emerging leaders and a new Board “visitor”, was selected to join CMA’s Board Internship program. Sarah is part of a cohort of young leaders from across Australia who are participating in a one-year program in which they are trained in governance for faith-based and not-for-profit organisations and build networks across the sector and nation. It is a unique opportunity for Sarah and SCKC and one that I’m sure our organisation will benefit from

In addition to volunteering on the SCKC National Board, I also get to support my wife, Glenda, in directing the Bendigo SCKC camp. Our 2022 camp was tricky; with largely new cohorts of both campers and buddies and multiple disruptions due to illness among the children and volunteers. Our 2023 camp was much more settled. Most of the 2022 campers returned and quickly fell into the patterns of camp life and extended their trust to us. The team was wonderfully cohesive and highly competent. We had our first group of “cousins”, who added significantly to our camp family. As they do, the kids had the best week of their year and looked forward to the prospect of a Bendigo Wild (junior youth) camp in 2025.

I mentioned in passing before that Wilma Calvert retired from the SCKC Board at the end of 2023. Wilma was a great friend of our founder Carolyn Boyd, has been an outstanding and visionary SCKC leader and an effective communicator of the SCKC DNA. While no longer serving on the Board, Wilma will continue to support our regional camps and camp directors. Wilma is one of the heroes of SCKC. Her contribution to our organisation has been immense and deeply appreciated.

Craig Clifton
Chair, SCKC National Board



CEO's Report

One of my highlights of the year occurred in March. The Brisbane office of our largest corporate sponsor NHP conducted its inaugural golf day. The outcome was amazing and Southern Cross Kids Camps were the beneficiaries.

As time goes by that seems to be the way. The people who support us have captured the heart of who we are and what we do.

There are so many heroes in our story, supporting kids who have had an unfair start in life. While the Camp Directors and their teams are amazing on the front line of camp, so much happens behind the scenes to ensure that camps can be conducted.

This year, sausages were cooked, trivia questions were answered, tins were rattled, cakes were sold, gala dinners were conducted, Harley Davidson motorbikes were won, push bikes were ridden up mountains and golf balls were hit and donations were made.

So many people who support SCKC will never attend a camp. That is what true generosity looks like.

I would like to highlight a couple of outstanding contributors.

NHP Electrical Engineering are exemplary. As we visit various NHP offices around the country, we are welcomed and supported. NHP continue to have a major impact in children's lives throughout our nation.

Synnex Australia are an amazing Information Technology Company. They have been major supporters of ours for years now. They love our Golf Day and have players come from around the country to participate.

Techware are owned and operated by the Sia family. I love their company motto "Building Better Lives". It is a great alignment with SCKC. Techware have been with us for more than a decade.

While we have had about 650 volunteers this year, the team in the National Office is small, about 3.5FTE. Belinda as COO is extraordinary. Her capacity and wisdom is outstanding. Michelle Papworth as EA goes way above and beyond what one could expect. In the finance area Ces Thorp & Beck Lambert handle everything that comes their way with grace and wisdom.

I want to give a special mention to my wife Sandy. Her time on staff is coming to a close. She has served for the past 9 yrs with distinction. Much loved by so many around the country.

On a personal note, the camp that I have served as part of the team in recent times is Wild Yarra Ranges. This is our junior youth camp. It is great to be the bus driver and general helper on camp. Kellie Mason is our Camp Director, she and the team are amazing. We are already seeing some of our Wild graduates return to serve as apprentice leaders on our regular midyear Yarra Ranges Camp. When this happens, it really does feel like payday. All the hard work pays off.

I feel an incredible privilege to be part of the SCKC team. So many committed people on camp and behind the scenes striving to see one more child who has had an unfair start in life have the best week of their year and have their life transformed,

Pete Lusk
CEO



COO's Report

2023 was an exceptional year for Southern Cross Kids' Camps.

Across 5 States and Territories, we held 17 camps, delivering the best week of the year to 400 children. The success of these camps wouldn't have been possible without the dedicated efforts of over 650 volunteers who generously contributed their time and skills.

Reflecting on each camp visit, I am consistently reminded of the profound impact of camp and the outstanding individuals who volunteer at SCKC. Whether you served as a buddy, staff member, grandparent, part of the J-zone team, fundraiser or donor, your collective commitment is truly commendable. To everyone involved, both upfront and behind the scenes, thank you for the invaluable role you play in making a positive difference to kids that have had an unfair start to life.

Our teams are led by an extraordinary group of Camp Directors who invest countless hours in building and leading their teams, collaborating with referring agencies and delivering world-class camps that provide children with the best week of their year. At the annual Leadership Summit in Brisbane, 41 key leaders came together for

a weekend of connection, collaboration, and professional development, demonstrating their commitment to excellence. It was a fantastic gathering with incredible individuals.

A significant focus of the leadership summit was our Reconciliation Action Plan, now in the final stages of endorsement. Our leaders collaborated on creative ways to meaningfully celebrate Indigenous culture and promote reconciliation during camps and beyond. We look forward to launching our RAP officially in 2024.

Director Training, which occurred alongside the South Sydney camp in April, provided an incredible week of training for our emerging camp leaders. The talent, passion and vision of this group are crucial to the continuation and growth of SCKC camps across the country.

In June, our new Gold Coast camp successfully ran for the first time, bringing hope and joy to the invited kids. We look forward to the continued growth of this camp, meeting the needs of children in this region.

In January we had our 3rd Wild Camp, which is a youth extension camp of the Yarra Ranges camp, where graduated campers can return to SCKC for an outdoor wilderness adventure camp. This camp runs for teens in years 7-9 and this year saw our first cohort of 8 campers graduate. My personal highlight of the year was that 2 of these amazing young people went on to serve on the team of Yarra Ranges Camp, my home-base camp, in July. It was incredible to witness them go full circle in SCKC, having been part of camp for more than half of their lives now! Their commitment to deliver hope to the upcoming generation was inspiring and makes me very excited for the future.

Being part of this incredible organisation is an honour and I look forward to the opportunities that the year ahead holds for SCKC.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of those we serve.

Blessings,

Belinda McInnes
COO

Our People

Board:

Craig Clifton – Chair

Liz Green

Wilma Calvert - retired 2023

George Giamadakis

William Goh

Paulina Smith – Visitor

Sarah Melville – Board Intern

Staff:

Peter Lusk – CEO

Belinda McInnes – COO

Sandy Lusk – Assistant to CEO

Michelle Papworth – Executive Assistant

Ces Thorp – Accounts Manager

Beck Lambert – Finance Manager

Neil & Marcia Meyer – Trade Promotions

Camp Directors

Knox – Kim Hallworth & Fiona Hallworth

Casey – Peter & Suretha Moore

Adelaide Hills – Michael Brohier & Sarah Graham

East Sydney – Winnie Ho & William Lui

Bundaberg – Emma Reibelt

South Sydney – Meikle Bennett & Avril Mundy

High Country – Holly & Chris Cameron

Yarra Ranges – Tim Lambert & Belinda McInnes

Yarra Ranges Wild – Kellie Mason

Endeavour – Maryanne Yang

Kununurra – Glenda & Craig Clifton

Darwin – Lisa Burgan & Jenvie Marquez

Illawarra – Tammy Preston & Emily McCarthy

Bendigo – Glenda & Craig Clifton

Emerald – Emma Reibelt

Mildura – Bethany Simmons, Elliott Grayling, Chris Lawrence

Ballarat – Maddie Wilson

Goulburn Valley – Priscilla Smith & Anna Reed

The Teams

650 of the most amazing, well trained and dedicated people on the planet



Camps & Activities

Annually, every quarter is a celebration of who we are and what we do. Our camps run in school holidays as they occur around the country.

Summer Camps:

Knox, Casey, East Sydney, Adelaide Hills & Yarra Ranges Wild Camp

Autumn Camps:

High Country, Bundaberg & South Sydney

Winter Camps:

Yarra Ranges, Endeavour, Gold Coast & Darwin

Spring Camps:

Bendigo, Ballarat, Emerald, Illawarra & Mildura

We want communities to be enriched because there is Southern Cross Kids Camp in the region.

SCKC brings together outstanding teams of volunteers to serve their local communities.

Each child who attends camp has one adult leader – “Buddy”, who is responsible to give the child the “best week of their year”.

The outcomes of camp reach way beyond the week of camp. Improvements in every aspect of life are often reported back to us by Case Workers and family members.

There is no charge for children to attend camp or leaders to serve on camp, therefore fundraising is a major component of SCKC.



Fundraising & Events:

Conducting a camp is a huge undertaking. As part of that process Camp Directors are responsible for raising of finances to help fund their camp. Sausages are cooked, trivia nights are conducted, gala balls are held, all manner of creative ideas come to the fore locally.

As well as that, Nationally we conduct some significant events.

Our 2023 Cycle4Change bike ride was conducted on the Sunshine Coast in May. This was a huge success, with 30 riders and 12 crew enjoying the challenging course over 4 days of riding. This event continues to grow annually.

2023 saw two Golf Days conducted. In March NHP Queensland conducted its first Golf Day with SCKC as the beneficiaries. Nudgee Golf Club was the venue. The day was full of fun and generosity. This event is sure to grow in the coming years.

Our tradition Melbourne Golf Day was conducted once again the prestigious Huntingdale Golf Club in Melbourne's Sandbelt. It was a record day with more than 100k being raised on the day.

We continue to raffle Harley Davidson motorbikes with great success. We are grateful of the support of Harley Heaven in Ringwood and Neil & Marci Meyer for their tremendous efforts to ensure these raffles are a success. It is always exciting to call the winners after the draw, it is always the highlight to hear the winners response.

2023 saw the introduction of Iceberg Leadership Training for our key leaders across the organisation. Jason Smith is a great friend of SCKC and master trainer of leaders. This will become an annual event for our emerging and current leaders.

Our Leadership Summit was conducted in Brisbane. Our current leaders gathered from around the country to receive encouragement, community and outstanding input over the course of the weekend. Jen Knoll was our expert presenter. This is always a great weekend to be with our outstanding leadership teams as we celebrate the past year and prepare for what is to come.

Grants continue to be a significant form of income for us. Our grant applications seek to gain funds for conducting camps. A successful application is always a huge benefit for a local camp. The impact of which can last for several years.

Our Supporters

We all want the world to be a better place, don't we.

The people and companies who are supporters of SCKC are actively making sure that life gets better for hundreds of children each year.

Once again NHP lead the way in their support of us. Their financial generosity to SCKC is amazing, but it goes way beyond money. The NHP Staff are encouraged to participate in a variety of

activities associated with SCKC. They ride in the Cycle4Change bike ride, play golf on Golf Days, conduct Bunnings Sausage Sizzles and attend camps as part of the team. We are truly grateful to be associated with such a magnificent company.

Other companies such as Synnex, Techware, AIPS & GJI Insurance have been long-term significant supporters of SCKC.

As well as that, families and individuals continue to show generosity that is extraordinary.

This all adds up to a community that wants to see a better life for kids from hard places.

Thanks for cheering us on.



Major Sponsor



Foundation Sponsor Since 2007



Major Sponsor



Financials

3 Years Income & Expenditure



For financial & further information on SCKC visit

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/c0e1f626-39af-e811-a95e-000d3ad24c60/profile>



Southern Cross Kids' Camps

A Week of Happy Memories

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HOPE
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