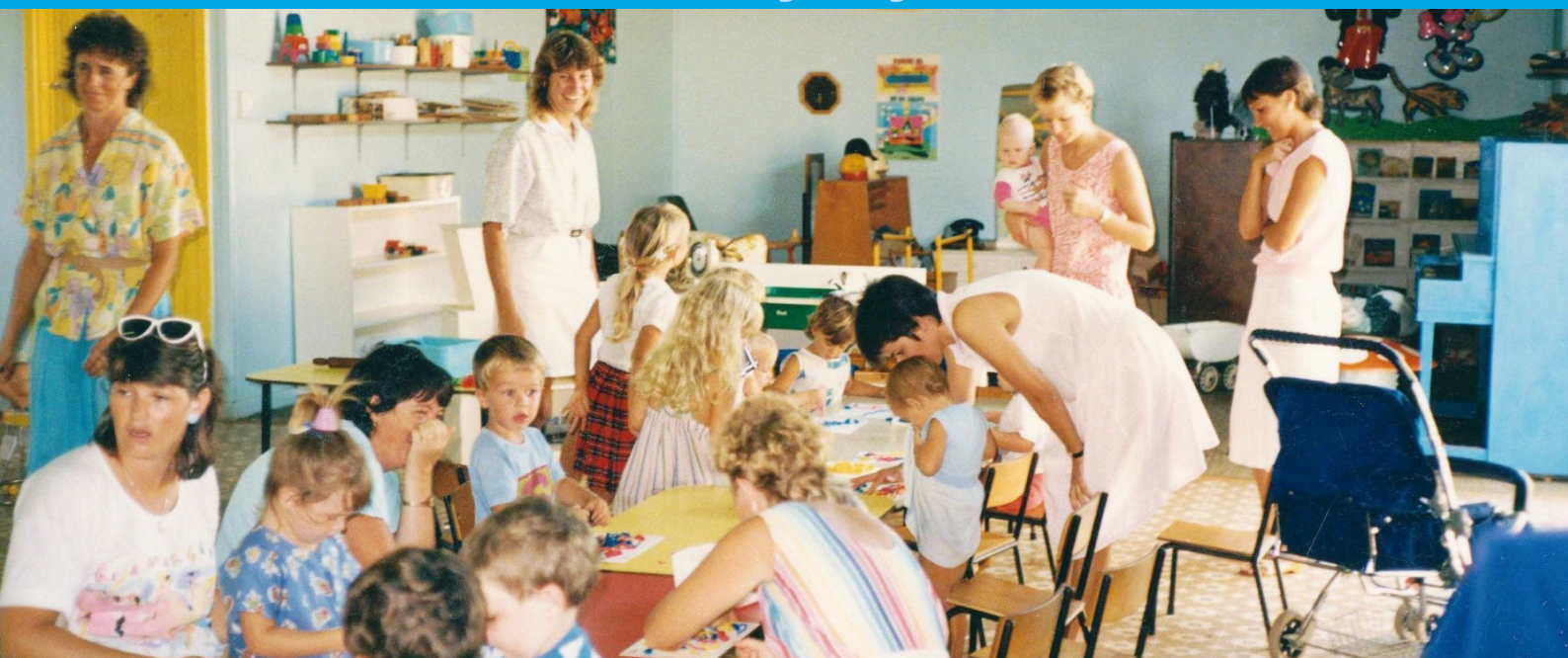




Celebrating 50 years



of Playgroup WA



**2021/22
ANNUAL REPORT**



1972-2022

Celebrating 50 years
Playgroup
WA (Inc)

CONTENTS

President's Report 2022	3
CEO's Report 2022	4
Playgroup WA's 50th Anniversary	5
Community Playgroups	8
Supported Playgroups	13
Supporting Aboriginal Communities	14
Mother-Baby Nurture	15
Marketing and Communications	16
Member Survey 2021	18
Thank you	19
Independent Audit Report/Financial Report	20

President's Report 2022



There is always something to celebrate in the world of playgroups and, in my time serving on the Board of Playgroup WA, I have had the joy of celebrating many of them in the President's report.

To have the opportunity to write this report during the celebration of Playgroup WA's 50th anniversary year is an extra privilege.

Reflecting on our 50 years of service to Western Australian communities has been both fun and enlightening. The volunteers who came together in 1972 brought care and commitment to provide support for playgroups in WA and five decades later, the benefits of playgroups for families and communities continues. This is hardly surprising given that playgroups are founded on our human needs of connection and belonging, and care and support for each other.

What is most pleasing in Playgroup WA's history is to see how we have been able to adapt and grow our support to meet the changing needs of WA families and communities whilst staying true to our foundational values and principles. It is what enables us to be here after 50 years serving the needs of today's families and communities.

Over the last year, the Playgroup WA team continued to work tirelessly to provide support and deliver our programs whilst we navigated through another year of COVID-related disruptions, and we know that playgroups play a vital role in providing stability and connection.

We hope you enjoy reading our re-cap of the past year's highlights, and our reflections on 50 years of operation.

On behalf of the Board, we continue to thank David and the team for the hard work and commitment, and to all our playgroup families for coming together and making playgroup what it is.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leanne Gordon". The script is fluid and cursive.

Leanne Gordon
President



CEO's Report 2022

This report again shows the variety and depth of work Playgroup WA has continued to undertake over the past year. However, the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of Playgroup WA is a wonderful time to reflect and a powerful reminder of what people can do when they are active citizens in their community. We had no staff and no office when we started and the work of promoting and supporting playgroups was done by volunteers around kitchen tables for several years after our formation in 1972. What they had in abundance was belief and commitment, complemented by ability and wisdom. This mix inspired the rapid growth of community run playgroups and, more recently, extensive recognition from the professional service sector that playgroups are an invaluable way of supporting and engaging families with young children.

Over the past 50 years there have been many words used to describe the work upon which Playgroup WA was founded. We have believed and practised a strengths-based approach to our work with families long before the term was given currency in the social work profession in the 1980's.

We acknowledged that playgroups would reflect the unique skills and aspirations of participants combined with their local community environment before 'place based' work was named as a model.

We also worked with local, State and Commonwealth Government agencies across multiple portfolios, partnered with not for profits and businesses small and large to inspire and/or assist over 750,000 WA families (a conservative estimate) to operate their own local playgroups and develop their own partnerships, whilst using research to show that playgroup participation resulted in improved social connection, child development and active citizenship experience in their local communities. This enduring partnership with communities has resulted in over 2,500,000 playgroup sessions and 50,000,000 attendances. We did all this long before the term 'Collective Impact' came to prominence in 2011.

Our founders had little reason to imagine how wildly successful they would be. They have many reasons to be proud of their vision and the principles they developed. The past and current staff and Board can also be proud that they have remained true to these core principles. It is an amazing journey and long may it continue.

Finally, let me acknowledge the amazing contribution of Penny Chellew who retired this year after serving Playgroup WA for 33 years. Penny's commitment to the families and playgroups of Western Australia is unlikely to ever be matched.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Zarb".

David Zarb
CEO

Playgroup WA's 50th Anniversary

The beginning of 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of Playgroup WA. To celebrate the occasion, a historian, Lucy Hair, was commissioned to research the last fifty years of Playgroup WA and form a timeline of events outlining the development of the organisation.

Following the completion of the timeline, plans were put in place for a history book, a video capturing the spirit of playgroup, a 50th Anniversary Cocktail Party, and a special 50th Birthday Fun Day.

Below are highlights from the last five decades.



Highlights from 1972–1981

1972

February: A group of people met at St Andrew's Hall, Barker Road, Subiaco, hoping to form an association of Play Groups. At the time, there were at least 30 playgroups operating around Perth. At subsequent meetings, the name WA Play Group Association (PGA) was endorsed, a Constitution was ratified and a Committee was formally elected. It was noted that "no two playgroups are exactly the same" and the model of "you belong to a group – your group belongs to the Association!" was adopted.

1973

March: The first volume of *Interaction*, PGA's magazine, was published. Sharing information with families and communities was a key part of PGA's work.

August: The Play Group Association became incorporated on 26 August, 1973.

1974

April: A decentralised model of local Zone Coordinators was introduced and their first meeting was held. There were 27 metropolitan zones and 7 country zones.

October: The Zone Coordinators organised PGA's first Field Day at Kings Park. These would later be known as Fun Days and The World's Biggest Playgroup Days and would continue annually.

1977

April: The insurance scheme commenced, providing a useful benefit for member playgroups.

1978

January: PGA received a \$6000 grant from the Federal Department of Social Security, allowing the first paid worker to be employed (a Secretary, working 15 hours per week). Office items were also purchased.

1979

July-August: An informal version of the PGA Shop began, mostly selling craft paint for 5% above cost.

Highlights from 1982–1991

1982

April: After having six different offices in its first decade of operation, PGA moved to Meerilinga, 1186 Hay St, West Perth. They remained there for 7 years.

1986

PGA received \$60,000 in federal government funding. The association purchased its first computer that year, a major investment which cost \$8600.

1987

August: PGA's first Integration Officer was employed to provide support for children with special needs and their families.

September: The first Play School concerts were held. 9000 tickets were sold across 20 concerts.

1989

May: After 7 years at Meerilinga, PGA purchased its first building – 35 Wickham St, East Perth. A Lotteries Commission Grant of \$125,000 made the purchase possible. The grand opening of the new office was held on 28 May.



Some whimsical drawings
by Penny Davis,
illustrator of *Interaction*
for 25 years



A popular Play School concert



35 Wickham Street, East Perth

Highlights from 1992–2001

1993

May: PGA held a breakfast to celebrate their 21st birthday. Seven past presidents and members of the inaugural committee attended.

1994

The Wiggles concerts were held for the first time. They were an “outstanding event” and tickets sold out.

PGA had grown to include 5 Office and 6 Field staff.

1996

February: A pilot of the ‘Playgroups Plus’ program began, “to enable families who would not normally access a local playgroup to get support in forming and organising their own”. After its success, plans were made to continue the program, “taking us in a new direction and providing almost a social service”.

1997

March: PGA purchased a new building in late 1996 – Woodville Lane, North Perth. Proceeds from selling the former office at East Perth, as well as a Lotteries Commission Grant of \$300,000, made the purchase possible. The new office opened on 21 March.

2000

A *Playgroup Manual* was produced and given to each playgroup.

2001

July: PGA changed its name and logo to Playgroup WA (Inc) (PGWA).



A Playgroup Association logo and the current Playgroup WA (Inc) logo



Woodville Lane, North Perth

Highlights from 2002–2011

2002

May: PGWA held an activity morning in Kings Park to celebrate their 30th birthday, as well as the launch of their new website.

PGWA received \$200,000 funding from the Commonwealth Government, including funding for more programs, such as programs based in rural areas and Supported playgroups. Supported playgroups differed from Community playgroups, in that they were facilitated by a paid Coordinator. PGWA now had 22 part-time staff.

2003

November: A new governance model was explored to clearly define the roles of the voluntary Committee members and the growing number of staff. The Committee would become the 'Board' and focus on strategic overview, while staff would be responsible for operational decisions. A Special General Meeting was held to pass a new Constitution reflecting these changes.

2004

September: PGWA's shop closed. After much research, it was no longer considered a value-add service. Instead, PGWA negotiated discount opportunities for their members at alternative suppliers.

Following several years of holding popular concerts, with acts such as Play School, the Wiggles, Humphrey Bear, Peter Combes, the Hooley Dooleys and Andy Jones, PGWA stopped offering these in their event line-up. Increasing costs meant these were no longer viable.

The Playgroups in Schools concept was explored. Intergenerational playgroups began with funding from the WA State Government.

2011

A regional office opened in Bunbury.



The PGWA Shop



The Wiggles with PGWA staff

Highlights from 2012–Present

2012

PGWA celebrated its 40th Anniversary.

2013

The *Little Things* digital magazine was launched. This would eventually evolve into the Little Things blog on the PGWA website and a monthly e-Newsletter.

2014

The Enhanced Transition To School project, an exciting new partnership between PGWA, the Department of Education, the Department of Local Government and Communities, the Association of Independent Schools and the Catholic Education Office, was launched.

2016

PGWA held one of its biggest events to date, a World's Biggest Playgroup Day at Elizabeth Quay. An estimated 15,000 people attended.

2019

Partnerships with Pakaanu Aboriginal Corporation and Great Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation were signed to deliver playgroups to Aboriginal families in Laverton and Albany.

2020

The global pandemic would postpone the annual Fun Day for three years. Despite several attempts to provide an event for playgroup members and the wider community, the next annual Fun Day would not be scheduled until November 2022.

2022

PGWA has 55 staff. There are 386 member playgroups across Western Australia, operating 884 weekly sessions. 90% of member playgroups and sessions are parent/carer-led.



Celebrating Aboriginal culture at playgroup



Generations of fun at playgroup



Community Playgroups

Community playgroups, led and driven by families with young children, remain the largest group of playgroups in WA. Community playgroups are varied, ranging from quite small groups to large multi-session groups. They meet a diverse range of needs and interests and continue to be cost-effective, accessible and affordable play and social support resources in communities across Western Australia. Playgroup WA's role in supporting community playgroups includes the provision of advice and resources to assist families to establish and operate their own playgroups. This support is partially funded through our family membership fees, along with funding from Playgroup Australia, under the Department of Social Services Family Support Program.

Despite the challenges faced across the sector in 2021 and continuing into 2022, community playgroups demonstrated their value as community connectors, providing important opportunities for families, including families experiencing social isolation, to connect on a regular basis, to develop social and peer support networks, and to play. Development Officers continued to contact and visit playgroups across the state, providing information and support in a range of ways including advice about a range of playgroup management issues, links to useful resources and supporting them to provide welcoming environments for families to enjoy together. The ongoing disruption of COVID has impacted on the transfer of information from one committee to the next and this has presented some

challenges for community playgroups over the past year. Staff have worked with groups across the state to assist and support them in restarting and re-organising with a particular focus on providing information, support and resources for Incorporated Playgroups.

During the year we said goodbye to two long-term and experienced Development Officers in Karen Collins and Penny Chelley. Three new Development Officers joined the team in the first half of 2022, providing an ideal time for a focus on building relationships with playgroups in their patches and establishing more about the issues impacting on them. We also supported playgroups across the state to promote their playgroups, including assisting with Open Days and direct promotion through social media, local newspaper promotions and the provision of resources.

The Development team was active in the development of new play and playgroup resources for playgroups. As COVID numbers increased in early 2022, a number of New Parenting Groups moved online, and where possible, Development Officers participated in these online sessions. New resources, including a video featuring the voices and thoughts of parents with young babies, and our new "Parents Love Playgroup Too" pamphlet, were developed to promote the benefits of playgroups for parents, many of whom experienced significant social isolation with the onset and continued presence of COVID in the community.

First 1000 Days at Playgroup

The First 1000 Days at Playgroup project is in its second year of delivery having gained approval for funding by Lotterywest in April 2021. The project will continue and expand on increasing opportunities for families in the First 1000 Days to develop relationships with local playgroups and service providers.

The First 1000 Days at Playgroup Community Engagement Officers have established and supported the setup of over 40 additional baby playgroups in the first full year of operation. Using existing Playgroup WA communications, infrastructure and connections within the local community, specific First 1000 Days sessions have engaged with over 500 families. By creating relationships between local playgroups, pregnant and new parents, the project has encouraged both peer support and local community connection.

The place-based officers foster relationships between these groups and local service provision, building on existing relationships within the sector, and expanding the opportunities for families in the First 1000 Days to access quality information and support. The project has been able to support the delivery of 38 parent education workshops across both pilot sites, increasing the preparation for

parenting and parental confidence in this critical period of child development.

The First 1000 Days at Playgroup project recognises the importance of family connection, peer support and community engagement and the ongoing experience of the COVID pandemic has further revealed the fragility of many family and social support systems, particularly with many families reliant on family and friends living interstate and overseas.

Throughout this period the project has advocated for parents to meet and have access to community venues, reducing social isolation and increasing levels of social connection and utilisation of playgroup venues. The officers have been able to support existing playgroups to be accessible, inclusive, and welcoming to the First 1000 Days parents which has increased membership and sustainability.

The project has been able to increase the organisation's marketing and promotion resources encouraging mums and bubs at Two Rocks Playgroup to share their First 1000 Days at Playgroup experiences on film. This video clip shows the benefits of joining a community playgroup during pregnancy and in the first 1000 days.

Launch of First 1000 Days at Playgroup Project and Mother-Baby Nurture Short Film

Playgroup WA's launch event of both the Mother-Baby Nurture short film and the First 1000 Days at Playgroup project took place on 27 July 2021. Attended by 87 people at Fraser's Function Centre, King's Park, it was a sit-down breakfast, with a Ministerial address from Minister for Mental Health, Stephen Dawson, film screening, panel discussions and an inspiring Welcome to Country by Shaun Nannup. The event was MC'd by David Zarb who spoke about the First 1000 Days at Playgroup project, and Sharon Cooke spoke about the Mother-Baby Nurture program. Some of the mothers from the Mother-Baby Nurture film attended the event and were acknowledged for their bravery in sharing their stories and raising awareness of the importance of supporting mothers and babies during the First 1000 Days. Both the film and the project received media coverage in The West Australian, STM (Sunday Times Magazine) and Seven TV News.



Regional WA Community Playgroup Work

The Playgroup WA Development team has continued to engage with regional communities across the state, supporting community playgroups including playgroups in schools and intergenerational play activities. Playgroup WA's South-West Playgroup Development Officer provides a strong presence in the South-West area, maintaining a comprehensive network of partnerships with community organisations and other local services for the benefit of playgroups.

Support for playgroups in other parts of the state is provided through the Perth-based Development Team with a schedule of visits, and regular emails, phone calls and other resources provided to assist playgroups in maintaining a strong presence in their regional communities. Regional WA playgroups are

strongly represented in playgroups receiving grants under the Toys and Equipment grants program. Playgroup Development Officers worked closely with these playgroups in helping them to develop their applications and guiding them through the process.

A number of regional visits were undertaken over the course of the year to provide support to playgroups in regional Western Australia. Visits were made to the Great Southern, Coastal Wheatbelt, Midlands Wheatbelt, Peel and Pilbara areas to support playgroup in those areas and to enable Playgroup WA staff to provide more direct hands-on assistance in working with playgroup committees and meeting with other relevant local stakeholders. Additionally, Playgroup WA remains active in the regional communities of Pingelly, Quairading, Albany, Laverton, and the Ngaanyatjarra Lands through our Aboriginal Playgroup Program.

"Playgroup is a highlight for us each week. My 4 yr old daughter wishes she could attend playgroup every day. I have found my village through playgroup and the friendships I have made and the support I have received from them has really helped me get through a tough year."



Enhanced Transition to School Project

The Enhanced Transition to School (ETTS) Project aims to strengthen relationships between playgroups and schools, including establishing and developing community led playgroups on school sites, and providing evidence-informed support to enhance home learning environments, to optimise successful school transition. It is a state-wide partnership with the Department of Education, the Association of Independent Schools WA, and Catholic Education WA. The project was initiated in 2014 by the WA Steering Committee on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education and Care with funding from the Australian Government and has been delivered by Playgroup WA across the State school sector in partnership with the Department of Education, the Association of Independent Schools, and Catholic Education WA.

The continued influence of the global pandemic impacted on schools and playgroups with ongoing uncertainty and disruptions. Through the first half of 2022, as a result of spikes in COVID cases, many playgroups were not able to operate on school sites. Despite this challenge, the ETTS Project was successfully able to establish new playgroups, restart playgroups who had been in COVID recess and support the effectiveness and viability of parent led playgroups in schools. Resources and support were provided to keep groups connected and engaged when they couldn't use their usual venue, including encouragement to meet in their local parks, provision of simple playgroup in the park kits, and short social media videos on simple activities using everyday items.

Staff changes within the team enabled more flexibility to better support playgroups as well as increased capacity to support rural communities with visits to support/encourage community playgroups in schools in Wheatbelt areas and the Southeast Coastal Mallee areas. Advocacy for establishing community playgroups in schools in the Mandurah area was also undertaken with the local Early Years groups, and in partnership with the Department of Education Early Childhood Branch, with the local Principals' Network. Consistent with other PGWA community playgroup programs, the ETTS Project continued to demonstrate that it is a successful universal strategy for connecting families, schools and communities, increasing family access to low-cost playgroup experiences, and positively influencing the mental health and well-being of families and children's early development and learning.

"My daughter loves going to playgroup. She gets very excited every time we go and does a wide variety of activities. Each session she plays outside, rides bikes and scooters, does craft, pretend play, plays with toys and runs around with the other children. It has definitely increased her confidence."



Intergenerational Activities Service

The Intergenerational Activities Service, through funding from the WA Department for Communities, continues to bring seniors and families with young children together to interact through play at playgroups and events and promote the benefits of intergenerational activities. These activities help to bridge the gap between the generations, understand and respect for both older people and young families, and rebuild a sense of community. As of 30 June 2022, Playgroup WA worked with and supported 38 service providers and organisations and eight member-playgroups throughout Western Australia.

At an intergenerational playgroup, families work alongside the staff of the hosting senior service to manage the playgroup. They tend to be small, intimate playgroups, providing opportunities to develop genuine friendships and relationships across the generations. Families without extended family particularly appreciate the opportunity for their children to develop relationships with community elders.

COVID-19 continued to impact on the capacity of intergenerational playgroups in residential and community aged care settings with many groups, particularly those in residential aged care settings not able to operate. A shift in our focus to working with active seniors in the community and community based aged care services was instrumental in maintaining operational groups once the immediate impact of COVID-19 had eased.

During the year, Playgroup WA assisted and supported the establishment of four new intergenerational playgroups in metropolitan settings and also provided hands-on support with restarting one group. Playgroup WA facilitated intergenerational playgroups at 68 Waverley Dianella Community Centre, Silverchain Mandurah Social Centre, and Silverchain Pendana Social Centre in Bentley. An Intergenerational calendar has been launched on the PGWA website to help promote intergenerational events and activities happening in the community, along with a video featuring active seniors and families at the Margaret River Uniting Church Intergenerational Playgroup.

In November 2021, Playgroup WA partnered with Gymnastics WA and Third Place to hold an intergenerational play day at Subiaco Theatre Gardens, with a gymnastics circuit, craft activities and morning tea. We also partnered with WA Museum to hold an intergenerational event at Boola Bardip in April 2022. Other intergenerational events included a play day at Silver Chain Everglades in

February 2022 and Victoria Park intergenerational event in May 2022.

Interest from families and service providers in intergenerational activities remains strong and we look forward to being able to resume building these connections over the next year.

Lotterywest Grants

With support from Lotterywest, Playgroup WA continued to offer financial support to community playgroups across the state. Funding of between \$500 and \$15,000 was available to support community playgroups to purchase toys and equipment. Following the positive feedback and strong uptake of the grants in the grants program which finished in June 2021, Playgroup WA was successful in their application to Lotterywest to continue the work of managing the Toys and Equipment grants program. The new 3-year grant program commenced in April 2022 with lots of interest from community playgroups. Forty nine registrations were received in the first few months of the program from April to June 2022, with grants being approved for 16 playgroups to the value of \$106,229.37. Development Officers worked alongside each playgroup in helping them to develop their proposals, based on the playgroup's specific needs, aspirations, and context of the group. Development Officers provided information and advice about a range of elements of their application, including advising on developmentally appropriate toys and equipment and suppliers.



Supported Playgroups

PlayConnect Program

The PlayConnect program is a component of the Australian Government's Helping Children with Autism Package (HCWA).

PlayConnect playgroups welcome families with children under school age with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or with needs related to ASD developmental delays in communication and social skills and/or behavioural and sensory issues. A formal diagnosis of ASD is not required to attend a PlayConnect playgroup. Siblings and extended family are also welcomed to participate.

PlayConnect playgroups meet at four locations throughout the Perth metropolitan area, Forresterfield, Willetton, Westminster and Whitfords. Each group is facilitated by experienced and skilled staff. Sessions run for up to two hours each week during school terms. The sessions consist of flexible play opportunities that are developmentally appropriate and suit the needs of the children attending, importantly they also facilitate much valued peer and social support for parents and other adults attending. Facilitators also provide families with quality information and links to Autism support services, including up to date information on how to get an NDIS plan.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has meant a few missed sessions due to lockdowns, Facilitators have stayed connected with families via Zoom and Facebook and continued to provide support to

families who were unable to meet in person. Another impact of COVID has been in the slow return to playgroups as for some families it has been an anxious time with many catching up on missed specialist appointments and getting used to a new normal.

Multicultural Playgroup

Playgroup WA continues to receive funding from the Swan Alliance to facilitate a playgroup for multicultural families in the Ellenbrook and surrounding areas as part of the Department of Social Services' Communities for Children Midland program. During the 2021-22 year, 24 families were welcomed at playgroup. Participants came from many different cultures and nationalities with at least 10 different languages spoken other than English. The playgroup continued to provide opportunities for parents to engage with their children in play, to support developmental outcomes in a range of areas, including social and emotional skills, critical in helping children transition to school. All parents reported that coming to playgroup increased their knowledge about the importance of play for their children to learn and grow. The sense of belonging and connection to community was demonstrated when friendships formed at playgroup continued outside of the playgroup setting with families participating in community activities and events together. The playgroup's funding was extended for a further 24 months from July 2022.





Supporting Aboriginal Playgroups

Playgroup WA continued to operate supported playgroups for Aboriginal families living in regional and remote Western Australia through funding from the National Indigenous Australian's Agency (NIAA) under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. The program aims to increase participation in early childhood development activities, enhance school readiness and families' engagement with schools, and enhance parenting confidence in supporting children's development. The program also aims to encourage employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginal families. Playgroup WA is currently funded to facilitate playgroups in various regional WA locations as well as in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

Supported Playgroups for Aboriginal Communities in Regional WA

Aboriginal playgroups continued to operate in Pingelly, Albany, Quairading, and Laverton with a new site in Mt Margaret being established in the second half of 2021. Partnerships with Great Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation in Albany and Pakaanu Aboriginal Corporation in Laverton continued with the longer-term view of supporting those organisations to manage the groups at the local level and be able to apply for funding in their own right in the future. The program was funded through the National Indigenous Australians Agency's Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) aimed at enhancing child development, school readiness and engagement with school, as well as enhancing the capacity of parents and other caregivers to support their children's learning and development. Playgroup WA has worked in partnership with schools and other services, including health and allied health services, in helping families to support their children's health and wellbeing. Where possible these services have been invited and encouraged to connect with families at playgroup sessions, enabling opportunities to observe children's development in a natural play setting as well as being able to connect with parents and caregivers within the context of a safe and supported environment. A secondary key element of the IAS program was to continue to provide

employment opportunities for local Aboriginal community members. Over the past year, we have provided employment for nine Aboriginal staff members within the five regional WA sites.

Ngaanyatjarra Lands

Playgroups continued to operate in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands communities. Playgroup WA employs a full-time staff member at Warburton and in the second half of 2021 we were fortunate in being able to offer additional employment to a local Aboriginal member who has provided valued local knowledge and skills in working with the community, including being able to read and speak in both English and Ngaanyatjarra language, helping to maintain local language in literacy and other playgroup activities. We have continued to offer five playgroup sessions each week in Warburton. A key outcome for the Warburton group has been the continued strong partnership and collaboration with the Warburton school and local health services. This included jointly hosting a regular Mums and Bubs session at the playgroup to help engage with and support young parents in the community. Nutrition and cooking workshops were also conducted by health services during playgroup sessions. Unfortunately, due to changes in staff availability in Blackstone we were only able to offer playgroup sessions in that community until the end of 2021 and were not able to find a replacement to facilitate sessions in 2022. While playgroup was operational in Blackstone the playgroup continued to connect and collaborate with the school as well as other services including NPY Women's Council and health services.

A visit to the Lands communities of Warburton, Jameson and Wingellina was timed to coincide with the re-establishment of playgroup sessions in Wingellina. Two staff members from the local community were employed to facilitate playgroup sessions, however changes in their circumstances meant that the playgroup has not operated in that community during the financial year. We continue to work with other service providers with a view to identifying suitable potential staff members for the playgroups in Blackstone, and Wingellina.

Mother-Baby Nurture

Playgroup WA continues to deliver perinatal and infant mental health service through Mother-Baby Nurture (MBN), a 10-week group program for vulnerable infants and their mothers in the first six-months postpartum. The program aims to strengthen the developing attachment relationship as well as alleviate symptoms of maternal postnatal depression and anxiety. Family wellbeing is also assisted through the provision of information about other local supports and services, as well as referrals as required. This year Playgroup WA delivered 24, 10-week cycles of MBN across six metropolitan sites servicing the needs of 132 vulnerable families. Sixteen were funded by the North Metropolitan Health Service (North Perth, Gosnells, Fremantle and Baldivis) and eight (Ellenbrook and Midland) were funded by the Swan Alliance; made up of Mission Australia, Ngala and Anglicare as part of the Department of Social Services Communities for Children. The Midland MBN group was delivered in partnership with Midland Women's Health Care Place.

We were grateful that in-person groups have again been possible in the past year but have also taken learnings from the online groups and have been able to offer hybrid sessions on occasion in consultation with participants. Professional development for facilitators in the previous year has also meant that groups have been able to flow between in-person

and online formats when isolation requirements have needed to be met by participants. This has allowed us to continue to deliver a service that supports the vital connections between mother and baby at a vulnerable time, as well as supporting them to maintain connection with other mothers in their group, thereby reducing social isolation.

The eight short stories filmed in November 2020 for Perinatal Anxiety & Depression (PANDA) Awareness Week have continued to provide a valuable way to promote the work of Mother-Baby Nurture and to educate and enhance relationships with healthcare providers who refer to the service. This video was officially launched at a special event in July 2021.

Beginning in July 2022, a new group will be piloted at the ISHAR center in Mirrabooka. This is the result of a new partnership agreement between Playgroup WA and ISHAR with funding support from The Smith Family Communities for Children site. Sharon Cooke steps down from her role as coordinator of the program at the end of July 2022 and will be taking up an opportunity to provide direct parent-infant therapy for clients at Raphael Services. Sharon has been a strong advocate for the Mother-Baby Nurture program at both a grassroots and systems level and brings continued expertise to the team through her ongoing role as senior facilitator in the North Perth area.



Marketing & Communications

Member Communications, Social Media and Website

Throughout the year, Playgroup WA regularly communicated with our members and the public via our social media channels, website and e-newsletters. The Marketing team continued to support Playgroup WA's programs and projects with event coordination, promotions, flyers, other promotional materials, and social media/website promotions. The Facebook group for Committee Members grew to 498 members compared with 355 the previous year, with good engagement, discussion and sharing of ideas in this closed group.



**e-News
Subscribers**

Open rate increased
from average of 14%
to average of 24%



**2,852
Instagram
Followers**

↑ 478



**19,554
Facebook
Followers**

↑ 1,282

The Facebook group Playgroup at Home WA, previously launched in March 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions first commenced, continued as an online group in which playgroups and partner community organisations can share their ideas, free events and playgroup vacancies with WA families. This year, group membership remained steady at 4,900, the same as the previous year.

The Playgroup WA website had a total of 268,451 visits throughout the year. The homepage, Find a Playgroup page and Play Ideas resources continued to have a strong interest as the top ranking pages.

The new Playgroup WA Resource Kit website was launched in August 2021 to replace the Playgroup WA Manual PDF document. This is a comprehensive resource on how to run a playgroup for playgroup committees and others interested in supporting playgroups, such as local government, aged care centres and schools. This website had 12,080 total views throughout the year, with the top visited pages being the homepage, Templates and Checklists page, Welcome message, Managing a Community Playgroup and Playgroup WA Immunisation Statement.

Campaigns and Promotions

50th Year History, Celebrations and Events

For Playgroup WA's 50th year celebrations in 2022, the Marketing team planned a range of activities. "Celebrating 50 years, 1972-2022" was added to the Playgroup WA logo to use throughout 2022. Promotional items were ordered with the 50th anniversary logo displayed, including pens, hand sanitisers and packets of jumbo chalk. Marketing support and 50th anniversary branded promotional materials were provided to playgroups who held 50th celebrations (open days or other events), as a gift to members and to celebrate 50 years. More than 30 playgroups had registered to hold an event by the end of the financial year, with more planning to hold events in the second half of 2022. These 50th celebrations were held in both regional and metropolitan Western Australia throughout 2022.

Playgroup WA commissioned Lucy Hair, a local professional historian, to research and write a timeline history and then a book on Playgroup WA's history, covering the key milestones and themes. To do this, she reviewed Playgroup WA archive materials including the Minutes of annual meetings and annual reports from the 1970s to now, followed by interviewing a range of people who were strongly involved in the Playgroup Movement in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Photos and old films were also found in the archives and converted into digital files, both for record keeping purposes, as well as to include in the history book and also in a video.

Playgroup WA hired Perth Video Productions to produce a video on the spirit of playgroup, featuring past and present members and staff. The book and video were both completed and launched in the following financial year, at Playgroup WA's 50th Anniversary Cocktail Party in October 2022.

The World's Biggest Playgroup Day was planned for March 2022, however this was postponed due to the spread of COVID-19 in the community and increased government restrictions. Plans were put in place to hold this in November 2022, under the new event name, Playgroup WA's 50th Birthday Fun Day.

Early Bird Promotion

The Early Bird Promotion is Playgroup WA's annual campaign to encourage members to join/rejoin playgroup. It took place from late January to mid-March 2022. This included social media advertising and promotions for members to join by 18 March to go in the draw to win several prizes, including Perth Zoo Family Membership, family pass to Scitech and a Made to Be Messy playgroup incursion. The promotions focused on the benefits of joining a playgroup. During this time, there were 4,613 "Find a Playgroup" searches through Facebook promotions. Brand awareness was very strong, reaching 64,598 Facebook users and making 514,377 impressions.

National Playgroup Week

During March 2022, there were some restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19, however Playgroup WA celebrated National Playgroup Week through promotions online, including a competition to win tickets to see the Wiggles live in concert. Playgroup

WA also supported playgroups to have their own, smaller events throughout 2022, celebrating Playgroup WA turning 50 years old.

Member Discounts

Member discounts for 2022 Playgroup WA members were introduced in January 2022. This is provided through Neat Ideas, with a dedicated Playgroup WA branded website for members to log in and gain access to a wide range of discounts on attractions, retail items and more. This opportunity was promoted to members through our website, newsletters and flyers distributed to playgroups.

COVID-19 Communications

Throughout the year, the Playgroup WA website was regularly updated with playgroup-specific information and links to Government website information, to help guide playgroups through the changing pandemic requirements. By mid-April 2022 most restrictions were lifted.

Playgroup WA's marketing and communications featured highly in the 2021 Member Survey.

Top 4 Playgroup WA Membership Benefits:

1. Monthly Newsletter
2. Competitions

3. Play Ideas
4. Events



Member Survey 2021

The Playgroup WA Annual Member Survey was distributed in November 2021 and received 725 responses. The demographics and responses were consistent with previous years.

Demographics of Respondents



More than 90% were mothers



66% have a 2 or 3 year old



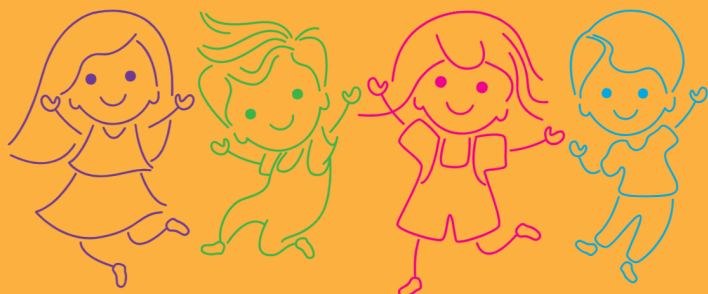
54% not currently in paid employment



48% have a 0 or 1 year old

"The team are extremely helpful"

Top reason to join a playgroup:



To enable my child to play with other children

"The support and guidance has been outstanding"

Top 2 benefits of going to playgroup for parents:



1) Building new friendships with people in my community (83%)



2) Spending special time and having fun with my child (71%)

Committee members were satisfied with the support received from Playgroup WA, especially for help with running a playgroup, play ideas & activities, promotional materials, information for parents and grant application assistance.

Top 3 benefits of going to playgroup for children:



Increased social skills from interacting with other children & adults (93%)



Turn taking/sharing skills (60%)



Increased physical activity skills (60%)

Top 3 benefits of being a playgroup committee member/leader:



- 1) Great way to meet others
- 2) Stimulating
- 3) Rewarding

The number one initiative Playgroup WA can do to further support playgroups is introduce online payments and improvements to the database/portal administration for managing memberships, followed by continuing to assist with fundraising, play ideas and workshops on managing playgroups.



70% of respondents said they paid \$150 or less per annum to attend playgroup

Thank you

Thank you to our funders, partners, sponsors and advertisers for their continued support over the past year, enabling Playgroup WA to support and promote important messages to families with young children throughout Western Australia. Playgroup WA is continuing to seek partnerships and advertisers that are aligned with Playgroup WA's values and support the achievement of our strategic objectives.

Thank you to our valued funders:

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Lotterywest

National Indigenous Australians Agency

Playgroup Australia

Swan Alliance

WA Department of Communities

WA Department of Education

WA Mental Health Commission

WA North Metropolitan Health Service

Thank you to our valued supporters and partners:

Goodstart Early Learning

Great Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation, Albany

Meerilinga

Midland Women's Health Care Place

Pakaanu Aboriginal Corporation Laverton

Parenting Connection

Radiance Network

Royal Life Saving Society WA

St John Ambulance

Telethon Speech & Hearing

Wanslea

...and thank you to all our advertisers, service providers, volunteers and supporters.

DIRECTORS:

ROBERT CAMPBELL RCA, CA

VIRAL PATEL RCA, CA

ALASTAIR ABBOTT RCA, CA

CHASSEY DAVIDS RCA, CA

**AUSTRALIAN
AUDIT** 

Playgroup WA (Inc.)

ABN: 14 415 755 273

Abridged audit report

For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

Scope

I have audited the abridged financial report of Playgroup WA (Inc.) for the year ended 30 June 2022 as set out on the following page in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the information reported in the abridged financial report of Playgroup WA (Inc.) is consistent with the annual general purpose financial report from which it is derived and upon which we expressed an unqualified audit opinion in our report to the members. For a better understanding of the entity's financial position and performance, as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year, and the scope of our audit, this report should be read in conjunction with the annual general purpose financial report and our audit report.

DocuSigned by:



A8F8BD4DE37245F...

Alastair Abbott CA

Registered Company Auditor No. 486826

Australian Audit Pty Ltd

Level 8, 251 St Georges Tce PERTH, WA 6000

DATE: 26 October 2022

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Playgroup WA (Inc.)

ABN: 14 415 755 273

Abridged financial report for the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022	2021		2022	2021
	\$	\$		\$	\$
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
AS AT 30 JUNE 2021			FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021		
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash assets	1,894,723	1,599,988	Grants	2,422,144	2,572,692
Receivables	45,104	35,638	Client contributions	205,724	195,824
Investments	153,884	288,566	Investment income	(12,019)	34,669
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	2,093,711	1,924,192	Other income	23,091	18,356
NON CURRENT ASSETS			Employment expenses	(2,093,606)	(1,764,102)
Plant and Equipment	32,875	50,567	Program expenses	(225,026)	(213,078)
Property	1,600,000	1,600,000	Administration expenses	(198,051)	(171,096)
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	1,632,875	1,650,567	Property expenses	(98,015)	(90,033)
TOTAL ASSETS	3,726,586	3,574,759	Promotional expense	(46,035)	(28,682)
CURRENT LIABILITIES			Depreciation	(17,692)	(6,705)
Payables	879,906	757,700	Surplus from operating activities	(39,485)	547,845
Provisions	69,640				
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	949,546	757,700	Other comprehensive income	-	-
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			Total comprehensive income for the year	(39,485)	547,845
Provisions	15,129	15,663			
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	15,129	15,663	STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS		
TOTAL LIABILITIES	964,675	773,363	FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021		
NET ASSETS	2,761,911	2,801,396	Cash flows from Operating Activities		
EQUITY			Receipts from operations	2,629,313	2,837,880
Retained Earnings	1,086,962	830,802	Payments to suppliers and employees	(2,334,739)	(2,052,107)
Capital Reserves	633,018	633,018	Net cash used in operating activities	294,574	785,773
Asset Revaluation Reserve	956,595	956,595	Cash flows from Investing Activities		
ETTS Funding Reserve *	30,343	41,689	Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	-	(47,967)
FTD Funding Reserve *	44,711	332,805	Interest received	161	376
Intergen Funding Reserve *	10,282	6,487	Net cash used in investing activities	161	(47,591)
TOTAL EQUITY	2,761,911	2,801,396	Cash flows from Financing Activities		
			Receipts from capital grants	-	-
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN			Net cash generated by financing activities	-	-
Beginning Retained Earnings	830,802	602,285			
Profit/(Loss) for the year	(39,485)	547,845	Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	294,735	738,182
Transfers (to) from reserves	295,645	(319,328)	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	1,599,988	861,806
Closing Retained Earnings	1,086,962	830,802	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	1,894,723	1,599,988

NOTES

The Abridged Financial Report has been derived from the audited general purpose financial report that is prepared in accordance with note 1 to that report.

* The balance of these reserves are the funds committed from surplus of this financial year to be used in the next financial year



Playgroup WA

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Web: www.playgroupwa.com.au

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm



1972-2022

Celebrating 50 years
Playgroup
WA (Inc)