



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT

LADYBIRD CARE FOUNDATION LIMITED



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Our logo is formed in the red and black logo colours to represent a stylised ladybird. Ladybird Care was established in honour of one of the founding members' children, Emma Louise Pascoe, who tragically passed away at the age of 18. She was affectionately known by family and friends as "Lily Ladybird". It was fitting that a stylised ladybird should be the key feature of our logo.

Dots - The white dot symbolises the child who has passed away surrounded by black dots... the family members that loved the child remaining together with the Mentor supporting that family.

Umbrella - Symbolises the umbrella of support that LCF offers extending to parents of children of any age who have passed away.



OUR VISION

To empower, support and care for grieving families who have lost a child, by equipping them with the knowledge and tools required to sustain long-term personal well-being.

OUR MISSION

To provide hope for the future and pathways towards healing for families whose child has died. Because the families we serve are our highest priority, we carry out our mission with the utmost care, confidentiality and respect.

PURPOSE

Ladybird Care Foundation is a charity which exists to ensure that every bereaved parent who wants and needs care from a Mentor with lived experience, receives it. We believe that no bereaved parent should have to walk this journey alone.



COMMITMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Statement of Commitment

We are committed to respecting and honouring the cultural practices, rituals, and beliefs of all people throughout their grieving process.

We acknowledge that grief and loss are universal experiences that transcend cultural boundaries, and we strive to provide appropriate support and guidance to individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Through our collective wisdom and experience, let us foster a future where bereaved families find solace, support, healing, and connection.

Acknowledgement of Country

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands in this nation where we live, work, and serve, for their stewardship and ongoing connection to Country. We hope for a reconciled future between all peoples of this great nation.





About Ladybird Care Foundation's Peer Mentor Program

Ladybird Care Foundation operates a unique Peer Mentor Program to support bereaved parents whose child of any age, infancy to adulthood, has died.



Peer Mentors with lived experience (at least two years bereaved) are interviewed for suitability and readiness, trained and supervised by our specialist bereavement staff, and provide (free of charge) vital support and human connection to recently bereaved parents, providing hope for the future and a pathway to healing and emotional wellbeing. Regular catch ups can be online, phone, text, or in person depending on preferences and location of the participants. Mentoring relationships generally extend for 15 to 18 months.

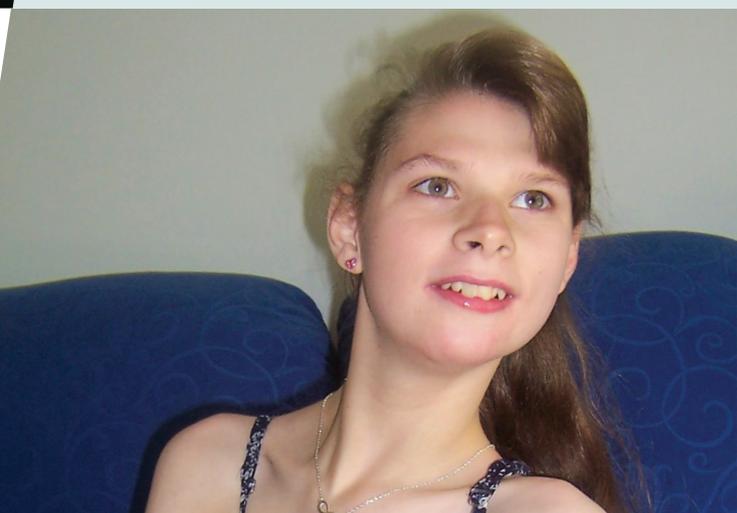
Bereaved parents can self-refer to this program or be referred by family, friends or professionals. All costs of running the program are sponsored by donors of Ladybird Care Foundation.



The Journey So Far

Ladybird Care Foundation commenced in late 2020 and in July 2021 funded a 12-month pilot Peer Mentor Program in the Qld Children's Hospital to support bereaved parents whose child had died.

Ladybird Care Foundation was established in honour of one of the founding members' children, Emma Louise Pascoe, who suddenly passed away at the age of 18. This tragedy motivated us to pursue improvements to bereavement care services in Queensland, where Emma and her family live, and beyond.



With the desire to see the Peer Mentor Program expanded beyond just the QLD Children's Hospital, and scaled nationally, in late 2022 Ladybird Care Foundation Directors embarked on a plan to operate the Peer Mentor Program in our own capacity to compliment the CHQ Bereavement Service's now concurrently funded program.

The remit has now broadened to include parents of adult children who have passed away. In June 2023 the first cohort of Peer Mentors was trained under our new model.

Between July 2023 and June 2024, Ladybird Care Foundation trained an additional three cohorts of new Peer Mentors and matched these Mentors with newly bereaved parents, offering valuable Peer Mentor support. By 30 June 2024, a total of 23 trained Mentors had been matched with 19 mentees. Training for upcoming sessions in October and November 2024 are at capacity.

Our services have now expanded nationally, with significant growth in NSW and Victoria and our first trained Mentor from Western Australia. We experienced sustained growth in SE QLD, with a continued desire to impact regional and rural areas.

To allow us to continue to meet demand for our services and to grow nationally, Naomi Mason, Peer Mentor Project Officer was appointed in November 2023. Naomi has a Bachelor of Social Work (Hons) and broad experience in grief and bereavement service development and provision, teaching, supervision and mentoring for health professionals including psychosocial aspects of palliative care.



(Board and staff - Back Left to Right - Craig Barke, Michael Delport, Wendy Collins, Leigh Donovan, Maree Pascoe, Samantha Adams, Naomi Mason, Wayne Pascoe, Front - Greg Beech, Colin Ginger)



Hope & Help for grieving families

Board Chair Report (extract from 2023/24 Chair report).

Year in Review - A Foundational Year

Since commencing operations in January 2023, LCF continues to expand its service footprint across Australia, with a growing number of Mentors and Mentees joining our programme. It is pleasing to see our vision for the programme coming to life as we intended it to do. I firmly believe that both staff and members of the Board should be very proud and satisfied with the work that we have accomplished to date, and for the vision that we hold for the future together. The Board continues to be delighted with the progress our General Manager and staff have made over the past 12 months. The Board is, of course, disappointed to hear of the departure of Dr Leigh Donovan, who will finish her time as Peer Mentor Program Manager, with Ladybird Care in November of 2024. We are delighted that Leigh will continue being involved in a consultancy and mentoring role. I especially wish to acknowledge the ongoing service of Naomi Mason, who commenced with us in November 2023, and Samantha Adams for their ongoing service to the mission and vision of our organisation.

LCF has delivered three Peer Mentor training sessions during the financial year 23/24, and in June 2024, we have 23 active Mentors supporting a growing number of mentees. It should be noted that, as I write

this report, Mentor numbers have grown beyond this and are currently sitting at 28 trained Mentors with an additional eight registered for training in November 2024. I also wish to recognise the many volunteers who have been supported by Ladybird Care Foundation during the year, and I particularly acknowledge the continuing work of Maree Pascoe in running our social enterprise Lys Coccinelle, and the countless hours that have gone into operating that part of the organisation. Thank you, Maree, for your service.

Financial Performance

It's pleasing to see that Ladybird Care Foundation continues to grow its income and expenses in line with its growth plans. This year sees significant increases in both income and expenses, as would be anticipated, as the organisation continues to grow and develop, employ more staff, and deliver more services.

I wish to acknowledge the significant donor base that the organisation has developed in recent years, but note, however, that major corporate sponsors have been more difficult to come by in the last 12 months. This presents a strategic challenge for the organisation to secure more substantial revenue streams into the future. I have taken the opportunity to list all sponsors later in my report.

Strategy

The Board has a dedicated strategy meeting scheduled for November 2024. This will be an important meeting for us to address our future plans and how we might work towards those plans over time. I am very much looking forward to the strategic journey of the organisation going forward. It is pleasing, however, that many of the recommendations from our 2021 strategy remain relevant and that we continue to track towards their delivery.

Legal and Governance Matters

We continue to be fortunate to have the ongoing pro bono support of Norton Rose Fulbright in relation to the operations of LCF. The compliance and governance review undertaken during FY23 was a foundational piece of work for LCF, and the recommendations from that review were actioned at the previous Annual General Meeting of the organisation.

Acknowledgement of Corporate Sponsorships

Ladybird Care Foundation has been fortunate to receive substantial corporate sponsorships both financial and in-kind from a range of businesses.

I wish to take this opportunity to offer my personal thanks to all the sponsors listed later in this report, for their generosity and for supporting the work that LCF has undertaken during the last 12 months. It is with great gratitude that I recognise these sponsors.

ACNC Compliance Matters

It should be noted that LCF will likely exceed the medium charity threshold in FY25 under the ACNC's turnover definitions for charities within Australia. Under these definitions, a medium charity is defined as a charity whose turnover exceeds \$500,000 per annum and is less than \$3 million per annum. The Board should note that there are slightly increased compliance burdens for medium-sized charities in Australia once this threshold has been reached. These include that the financial statement must be prepared on an accrual basis, and that there must be an external annual audit undertaken on the charity's financial statements. LCF is already in compliance with these requirements as of 30 June 2024.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to everyone who has played a role at LCF during the financial year 2023/2024.

Meet the Board Members



Wayne Pascoe

Director / Co-Founder / Emma's Dad

Business owner who is passionate about effecting change in bereavement care support services across Qld. Wayne is a member of the Community Advisory Group at the Qld Children's Hospital and also a Parent Mentor.



Colin Ginger

Director

Company Director, Colin is excited to see hope and healing realised for many bereaved parents and their extended families across our nation.



Greg Beech

Director

Former Business owner, school chaplain and the Children's Hospital School Chaplain, Greg's natural warmth & compassion mixed with incredible business acumen brings a wealth of lived knowledge to his role on the board of Ladybird Care.



Michael Delpport

Foundational Member

Wealth, business and life coach, Michael's goal is to live a life that enables others to discover what's possible.



Craig Barke

Director/Chairman

CEO of Uniting Care, Craig has a desire to see strategic plans & implementation of sound business practices affected by the Peer Mentor Program and outworked through the recruitment of suitable volunteer parent Mentors with lived experience.

Funding acknowledgements

Ladybird Care Foundation is grateful for the support of many individuals, small businesses, corporations and organizations for their financial and in-kind support.

Acknowledgement of Corporate Sponsorships

We offer our sincere thanks to all of our sponsors for their generosity and for supporting the work that Ladybird Care Foundation has undertaken during the last 12 months.

It is with deep gratitude that we particularly acknowledge our Gold Sponsors - we are fortunate to receive pro bono services from **Strictly Marketing** for our marketing, graphic design and website expertise and **Norton Rose Fulbright** in relation to a review of our operations and any ongoing legal or risk management advice.

strictlymarketing

 **NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT**

Ladybird Care is deeply grateful for the substantial corporate sponsorships both financial and in-kind from a range of businesses. Our August 2023 Gala Dinner Sponsors included the following organisations:

Auto Cable and Accessories – Gold Sponsors for the Gala Dinner and Annual Charity Golf Day

Symbio – Silver sponsor for the Gala dinner.

River City Cabinets – Silver sponsor for the Gala Dinner.

Cushway Blackford Consulting Engineers – Silver sponsor for the Gala dinner.

I-MED Radiology Network – Silver sponsor for the Gala Dinner

We acknowledge many corporate sponsors who have also supported our Annual Charity Golf Day.

Acknowledgement of Grant Funding

We are grateful for the support from the following organisations from whom we have successfully gained grant funding during the 2023/24 financial year.

- Commonwealth Bank Staff Foundation
- Sunnybank Community and Sports Club

- The Funding Network
- The Lord Mayor’s Charitable Trust
- AMA Queensland Foundation
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- The Broncos Charity Partners for 2024



(Commbank team, Wendy Shedden (Left) and, Elena O’Rourke (right), joined by Maree Pascoe and Wendy Collins of Ladybird Care Foundation)



Lys Coccinelle (French for Lily Ladybird) is our social enterprise, offering beautiful hand-made Australian home fragrance lines. All sales support Ladybird Care Foundation as 100% of profits are donated to our Peer Mentor Programs.



Wayne and Maree Pascoe presented at The Funding Network, from which we received donations from generous organisations supporting the Queensland Grassroots Crowdfunding event in October 2023.



Service delivery and strategic vision for the Peer Mentor Program



Peer support models have been adopted in many areas of health and social care including mental health, acute and chronic health management and bereavement. Peer to Peer relationships enable a sense of meaning and connection for both Peer Mentor (a trained companion with a lived experience) and Peer Mentee (someone seeking comfort in relationship with a Peer with a lived experience).

Why Peer Mentoring?

Bereaved parents are at risk of poor physical, psychological, emotional and social outcomes over an extended period of time. The grief arising from the death of a child presents a lifetime of adversity for parents as they attempt to navigate through life without their child. Compounding this experience is the loneliness and isolation that results, in most part, due to the avoidance of a bereaved family's social network knowing how to provide support, often distancing from this relationship at a time bereaved parents need it most.

Peer support models have been signposted as a targeted response to bereavement care in the Public Health Model for Bereavement Support. This contemporary approach acknowledges that while some form of bereavement support is required by everyone who experiences the death of someone close to them, professionalised support is not necessary, needed or helpful for all.

Health Benefits

Grief has the potential to become an insurmountable challenge, with significant impacts on emotional health and wellbeing if timely and appropriate support is not offered. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of child death, the ongoing care of bereaved parents is often overlooked, leaving families feeling isolated and left to navigate this difficult journey alone.

A universally reported experience of bereaved parents has been the struggle to feel understood in the depth and totality of their grief after losing a child. Mentees in the Peer Mentor Program consistently report that they appreciate being able to speak with someone who could truly relate to their experience. Other benefits include decreased feelings of loneliness and an increased sense of hope and finding meaning for the future.



Evaluation of Peer Mentor Programs demonstrate helpful outcomes for the bereaved by reducing grief symptoms, validation and normalization of grief from a Peer with a lived experience, reduced social isolation, and expansion of a social network, mutual support, and increased overall well-being.



Ladybird Care Foundation's Peer Mentor Program

Ladybird Care Foundation delivers a Peer Mentor Program based on that developed by St Jude Children's Research Hospital, USA. This long-standing program was contextualised for an Australian population and has been further refined for training and ongoing supervision to be delivered virtually. This ensures any bereaved parent can engage in training, regardless of their location in Australia or other life commitments.

Assessment and engagement of robust volunteer data management processes has been ongoing, along with a detailed evaluation of the impact of mentoring for the first cohort of Mentors and Mentees.

Integrated within the Peer Mentor Program are a number of risk management strategies, including completion of Encounter Forms by Mentors following each contact with their Mentee.

Clinical Program staff review the daily Encounter Form report to ensure a proactive response to any identified issues or concerns flagged. 326 encounters between Mentors and Mentees were recorded between 3 September 2023 (date of first match) and 30 June 2024, amounting to 166 volunteered hours.

2023/24 at a glance

June 2023 saw the launch of our first training program for Peer Mentors (parents more than two years bereaved who have progressed through an interview and been invited into the training program). During the 2024 financial year we have completed an additional 3 training groups (November 2023, March 2024 and June 2024) with an additional two training groups planned for the remainder of 2024.

As at 30 June 2024, 23 trained Mentors are matched with newly bereaved parents. This number comprised 19 females (bereaved mothers or caregivers) and 4 males (bereaved fathers) from four Australian states (QLD, NSW, VIC, WA). The average age of Mentors is 57.5 years with the average age of child at death 16 years. 70% of children died from diseases or morbid conditions and 30% from external causes.

Twenty-one bereaved parents (Mentees) have been referred to the program over the past year, seeking connection with a Mentor. They comprised of 18 females (bereaved mothers) and 3 males (bereaved fathers). Parents are located in two Australian states (QLD, VIC) and represent 20 deceased children whose average age at death was 17 years. Mentees were referred via a variety of pathways including private counsellors, government organisation or via social media.

The Program is staffed by 1.3 FTE (Program Manager and one Project Officer) and one casual Project Officer. All staff are qualified Social Workers or Psychologists and have undertaken additional specialist bereavement care training.

¹ Cause of death is categorised through the framework used by Queensland Family and Child Commission Australian child death statistics 2020.



November 2023 cohort



March 2024 cohort



June 2024 cohort



Building alliances with referrers

A strategic approach to program growth has seen multiple robust relationships develop between organisations and colleagues within the bereavement care sector. We particularly acknowledge Very Special Kids, Childhood Dementia Initiative and Grief Australia for their commitment to walking alongside us to enable smooth pathways into the Peer Mentor Program for parents they serve.

Throughout 2023/24 financial year there was extensive collaboration and engagement with a broad range of community organisations who now frequently refer bereaved parents to the Peer Mentor Program, either as Mentors applying for training, or newly bereaved parents seeking support.

The clinical team delivered a number of information sessions, participated in panel discussions and provided facilitation of various further education sessions for the following organisations –

- The Centre for Men
- Very Special Kids
- Grief Australia
- Palliative Care Queensland
- Far North Queensland Health and Social Care Professionals
- Various General Bereavement Services, Hospitals, Hospices and Health Services
- Childhood Dementia Initiative
- Red Kite
- Red Nose
- Standby Suicide Support
- Child and Adolescent Health service - WA
- Oceanic Palliative Care Conference – Leigh Donovan workshop facilitator
- Sydney Children’s Hospital Network Palliative Care Program Symposium – Leigh Donovan delegate
- Palliative Care Queensland Webinar PCQ -June 2024 – Caring for the Carer in a Compassionate Community - Naomi Mason presentation delivery



Research and Evaluation

Ladybird Care Foundation is committed to listening and learning from the experience of program participants. In June 2023, LCF engaged Gretchen Young of Young Futures to design and deliver a pre and post mentoring experience evaluation framework which will track and record the experience of Mentors and Mentees engaged in the first round of Peer Mentor Training. Evaluation is nearing completion with a report to be available in late 2024.

Evaluation is also integrated within each training session with the training program continuously being refined and improved.

In October 2024 significant work will commence with respect to Impact Measurement and Evaluation. The first stage of this process is to develop a Theory of Change which articulates a long-term goal and clarifies what LCF is intending to achieve over the long term at both a community level and more focused specifically for bereaved parents.

Sibling Program

Grief impacts siblings too, following the death of a brother or sister. Ladybird Care Foundation was privileged to be awarded a grant from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust (Brisbane City Council) to fund counselling for bereaved siblings based in Brisbane. This program was rolled out in the 2023/24 financial year as a trial and the results for siblings have been highly impactful and positive. Nevertheless, a decision has been made to focus for the time being, on further growth of the Peer Mentor Program and its expansion nationally. After the current funding has expired, the Sibling Program will be paused, with a view to reconsidering after further Strategic Planning and evaluation.



Financial Summary

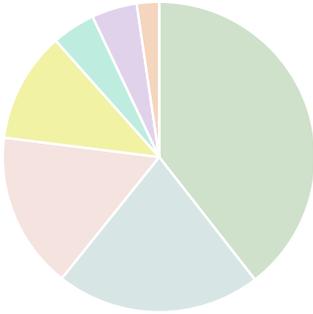
The Financial Position of Ladybird Care Foundation is strong, with cash reserves resulting from the strong financial foundations since incorporation.

During the 2024 financial year, a modest net surplus was achieved. Although audited accounts are not required by the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) for a small organisation, it was agreed that it is prudent to set strong financial foundations and practices from early stages.

Audited financial statements reflect a total comprehensive Income (after expenses) for 2024 financial year of \$24,731

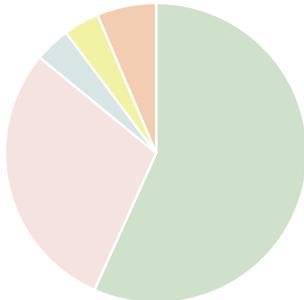


Income



- Event Sponsorship Income
- Donations
- Raffle and Auction Income
- Grant Income
- Lys Coccinelle Social Enterprise
- Event and Other Income
- Interest

Costs



- Employee Costs
- Event Costs
- Lys Coccinelle
- Admin and Marketing
- Other



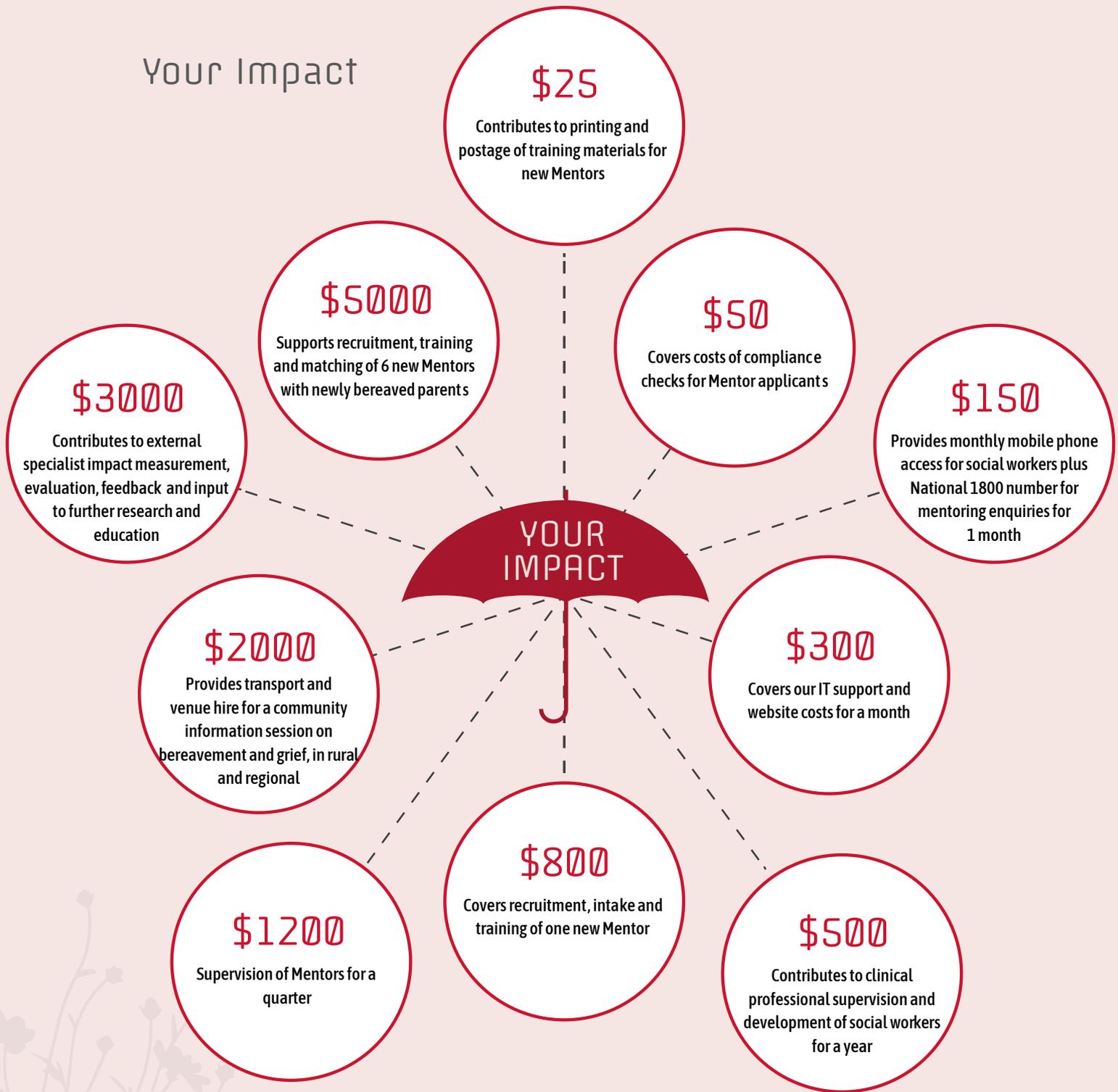
SCAN THE QR CODE

to view Ladybird Care Foundation’s Financials and Documents or copy the below ACNC link:

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/3b9105df-92e6-ea11-a817-000d3ad1f9f4/profile>



Your Impact





Acknowledgements and Thanks

Staff

We are proud of the wonderful professionals who are part of the Ladybird Care team. We are looking forward to future expansion as the Peer Mentor Program continues to grow.

Volunteers

As well as our wonderful volunteer Peer Mentors, we are grateful for the generosity of time and talents of so many individuals who provide assistance with administration, finance, event planning, marketing, social media ideas, function set up and décor, fund raising, photography and videography, raffle and auction prize sourcing.

We cannot name every person, but we are truly grateful for the many people who serve so faithfully.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our General Manager, Wendy Collins, for her unwavering commitment to exceptional leadership over the past year. Her attention to detail, compassionate approach, and remarkable capabilities have been instrumental in guiding our organization towards achieving our goals.

Wendy's hard work and dedication inspire our team and strengthen our mission. Thank you, Wendy, for your invaluable contributions and for leading us with passion and integrity.







Lys Coccinelle Fragrances

Our social enterprise, Lys Coccinelle fragrances, French for Lily Ladybird, supports the Ladybird Care Foundation by gifting 100% of profits to our charity.

Our Australian-made products are crafted with meticulously researched, premium ingredients sourced from ethical and sustainable resources. All members of the Lys Coccinelle team generously volunteer their time and expertise to support our shared mission.



The Voices of Bereaved Parents

The impact of our Peer Mentor Program continues to grow with the organization. As more Mentors are trained and mobilized more bereft parents are able to receive life-changing care and companionship.

“Thank you to the whole team at Ladybird Care including all the amazing humans that volunteer and give up their time, to help us totally lost grieving parents navigate our way through this dark time. Listening to our constant stories, some told more than twice, never judging, never making us feel weird or strange because of our grief, and allowing us to be sad when we need to be, laugh with us when we remember a funny story about our child, and they never ask anything in return. I hope one day I can reach the point in my journey to do what you do and help another parent through their journey.

(Peer Mentee, Bereaved Mum, December 2023)

“I came to be a Mentor to help someone on their journey and already I have been not only helped But changed ... grown ...

(Peer Mentor, Bereaved Mum, 2024)

“I have been supported by my Ladybird Mentor for the past 5 months or so, and can't speak highly enough of the support that I've received”.

(Peer Mentee, Bereaved Dad, March 2024)

“I was lucky enough to be directed towards Ladybird Care Foundation after the sudden and unexpected death of my adult son aged 22. I have been matched with the most amazing Mentor who has helped me through some of my saddest moments. This is my year of “firsts” without him and through my Mentor's kindness, their understanding of how I'm feeling in that moment, I have come to accept my grief is normal, I'm okay, and I will get through the initial pain and change my grief into a celebration of my beautiful son.

(Peer Mentee, Bereaved Mum)

“I have been extremely fortunate to have Justin* as my Mentor, he has been there for me, without hesitation at the times when I have really needed to just talk, vent, cry. I can only say I appreciate that you have paired me with Justin*, in what is my hardest journey, thank you. *(Peer Mentee, Bereaved Father)*

** name changed for privacy*

“When I look at you, I know you get me and are totally invested in what I'm telling you. Feeling understood is a profound human experience.” *(Peer Mentee, Bereaved Dad)*



To make a donation:

Ladybird Care Foundation | BSB: 064170 | Account No. 10788501

Phone 1800 954 224 or visit www.ladybirdcare.org.au