

2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT

LADYBIRD CARE FOUNDATION LIMITED



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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.



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.



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, has died.

Volunteer peer mentors with lived experience receive high quality training and support from our professional team enabling them to extend empathy and companionship for their bereaved peers, free of charge. Commencing as a state-wide program in 2023, the Peer Mentor Program enables connections between bereaved parents wherever they live throughout Queensland. In 2024 the program is expanding nationally.

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.

Peer Mentors with lived experience (at least two years bereaved) are interviewed for suitability and readiness, trained and supervised by 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.

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 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.

Our hope is that we can ultimately operate a targeted service Australia-wide, where very few robust mentoring support programs for bereaved parents currently exist. Ladybird Care Foundation funded a pilot program with



the Children's Health Queensland (CHQ) Bereavement Service, based at Queensland Children's Hospital for 12 months from July 2021.

At the conclusion of the pilot program in June 2022, which resulted in the successful training of 3 groups of mentors, and many successful peer mentoring connections, our evaluation showed a strong and positive impact for Mentees.

Over 80% of mentees reported an increase in feelings of social connectedness; over 75% of mentees reported an increase in meaning and fulfillment in their lives; and over 94% of mentees reported that the peer mentor program met their need for bereavement support.

A commitment was eventually made by Queensland Health to continue this program within Queensland Children's Hospital.

With the desire to see the Peer Mentor Program scaled nationally, Ladybird Care Foundation directors then embarked on a plan to operate the Peer Mentor Program in our own capacity to compliment the CHQ Bereavement Service, now concurrently funded program. Integral to this plan was the employment of our General Manager, Wendy Collins and our Peer Mentor Program Manager, Dr Leigh Donovan.

In May 2023, Peer Mentor Program Officer, Samantha Adams, Psychologist, commenced.

Our Peer Mentor Program has been broadened to include parents of adult children who have died, with plans to expand the program to bereaved parents throughout regional and rural Australia.



A year of change and progress

Board Chair Report (extract from 2022/23 Chair report).

It's easy to forget as we sit here tonight that Ladybird Care Foundation (LCF) has only been operating in its own capacity since January 2023.

I want to acknowledge the significant decision made the LCF Board in November 2022 to pursue the appointment of a General Manager, and the subsequent appointment of Wendy Collins which LCF announced in January, 2023. The board has been delighted with the progress Wendy has made since appointment only a few months ago.

The subsequent appointments of Dr Leigh Donovan (April 2023), and Samantha Adams (May 2023) have indeed been highlights for me personally. LCF has successfully developed a peer mentor training program, authored by Dr Donovan in her consultancy capacity, and with intellectual property to the St Jude's program being granted directly from this organisation.

I wish to acknowledge the pro bono legal support provided to us by Norton Rose

Fulbright, a Brisbane based legal firm, this has been important in our establishment processes.

LCF undertook its first peer mentor training session in June 2023 with eight mentors completing the training. It is extremely pleasing to note that as I write this report, all of our mentors have now been matched to mentees and we find ourselves searching for additional mentors knowing the forthcoming demand for our services will increase.

I wish to acknowledge our staff, and in particular Dr Leigh Donovan for her steadfast commitment to the Ladybird Care Foundation mentoring program vision, and the progress it is made to date.

I also wish to recognise the many volunteers who have supported the Ladybird Care Foundation during the year and I particularly acknowledge the work of Maree Pascoe in running our Lys Coccinelle gift store and the many countless hours that have gone into running that part of the organisation.

Financial Performance

I'm pleased to report that LCF has maintained a strong financial position throughout the year.

Our revenue sources have increased from the previous year as noted in our audited financial statements, and this has allowed us to prepare for the growth which we are expecting in our services during the forthcoming financial year.

I wish to acknowledge the very significant donor base that the organisation has developed in recent years, and I particularly appreciate George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals for their ongoing commitment as our Platinum Sponsor for the Gala dinner again this year, as well as the Balmer family for their generous support.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to everyone who has played a role at LCF during the course of the financial year 2022/23. Together we have made a significant difference in the lives of a small number of people, destined to grow to a very large number of people. Thank you once again for your unwavering support. Sincerely, Craig Barke Chairman, Ladybird Care Foundation.

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 Delpert
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 organisations 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 Platinum Sponsors, George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals for their ongoing support of our Gala Dinner.

In addition, we were 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 constitution, insurances, policies and foundational risk management issues. Ladybird Care has been fortunate to receive substantial corporate sponsorships both financial and in-kind from a range of businesses.

Our September 2022 Gala Dinner Sponsors included the following organisations:

George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals
Platinum sponsor for the Gala dinner

Auto Cable and Accessories
Gold sponsor for the Gala dinner

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

We are grateful for ongoing support from:

Strictly Marketing
in-kind support for marketing and website

Norton Rose Fulbright
in-kind legal advice.



We acknowledge many corporate sponsors who have also supported our Annual Charity Golf Day. The golf day was held in July 2023 and will be reported in the 2024 Annual Report.

Acknowledgement of Grant Funding

We are grateful for the support from the following organisations from whom we have successfully gained grant funding during the 2022/23 financial year. Some grant applications completed during 2023 financial year were successful and will be received and reported in 2024 financial year.

- AMP Foundation
- Sunnybank Community and Sports Club
- Southside Community Club



Service delivery and strategic vision for the Peer Mentor Program

Following delivery of a successful Pilot Program based in the CHQ Bereavement Service, Ladybird Care Foundation turned its attention to the community sector.

A three-phase strategic vision was developed to provide a roadmap for our way forward between 2023-2025. At the conclusion of the 2023 Financial Year, we achieved the following.

Developing a position statement for the Peer Mentor program

Our first task in embedding a strong framework within the Peer Mentor Program was developing a position statement, the 'why' behind what we do.

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.

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).

Evaluation of peer mentor programs demonstrates helpful outcomes for the bereaved by reducing grief symptoms, validation and normalisation 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 deliver a Peer Mentor Program based on that developed by St Jude Children's Research Hospital, USA. This long-standing program has been contextualised for an Australian population and is now seeking to expand its remit to make access to Peer Mentoring available for bereaved parents in New South Wales and Victoria.

This vision incorporated development of the following: a position statement for the Peer Mentor Program, potential growth beyond the current remit of serving bereaved parents, expansion beyond Queensland into other Australian states, and assessment and engagement of robust volunteer data management processes for Mentors and Mentees.

Rigorous Program Guidelines

The LCF Peer Mentor Program has its foundation in the original St Jude Peer Mentor Program and has been adjusted to meet the Australian cultural context. In 2023, work commenced on Program Guidelines which incorporate a Model of Care (referral criteria, requirements for onboarding as a Peer Mentor or Peer Mentee,

Peer Mentor Training), data collection and management, safeguarding of program participants, and an evaluation framework.

Peer Mentor Training

A Peer Mentor Training Guide was developed which is provided to each Mentor in Training prior to training day for review and completion. This training guide attends to core mentoring skills and guides the Peer Mentor Training sessions, the first taking place in June 2023 with eight participants. New Peer Mentors continue to engage in mandatory monthly supervision via Zoom. To date training has been undertaken in person and plans are underway to develop a virtual training program to ensure any bereaved parent can engage in training regardless of their location in Australia or other life commitments.



Our first cohort of peer mentors from June 2023 training day.

Stakeholder Engagement

Ladybird Care Foundation relies on the community, government, and non-government organisations as sources of promotion and referral. In 2023, two information sessions were delivered by the

Program Manager via Zoom to a broad range of Queensland-based stakeholders who are engaged in the care of children who suffer an expected or sudden and unexpected death. Numerous additional conversations were held with colleagues throughout Queensland who expressed an interest in understanding how the Peer Mentor Program could provide adjunct care for bereaved parents they serve.

Research & Evaluation

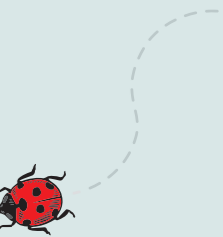
Ladybird Care Foundation is committed to listening and learning from the experience of program participants. In June 2023, LCF engaged Gretchen Young of Young Futures to design and deliver a pre and post mentoring experience evaluation framework which will track and record the experience of Mentors

and Mentees engaged in the first round of Peer Mentor Training. We expect this evaluation report to be available in late 2024. Evaluation is also integrated within each training session with the training program adjusted according to Mentor experiences.

Sibling Program

Grief impacts siblings too, following the death of a brother or sister. Ladybird Care Foundation were privileged to be awarded a grant from the Lords Mayor's Charitable Trust (Brisbane City Council) to fund counselling for bereaved siblings based in Brisbane. This program is being rolled out in the 2023/24 financial year and will be reported on in the next Annual Report.

Financial Summary



The Financial Position of Ladybird Care Foundation is strong, with cash reserves resulting from the strong financial foundations since incorporation. These reserves will allow for our increased needs as we prepare for growth nationally.

During the 2023 financial year, the Directors opted to have the financial statements audited and adopted the accrual accounting method for recording and reporting transactions. Although these requirements were not yet required by the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) for a small organisation, it was

agreed that it would be prudent to set strong financial foundations and practices from early stages.

Audited financial statements reflect a total comprehensive Income (after expenses) for 2023 financial year of \$155,366.

Income is made up of Donations (82%), Raffle and Auction Income (8%) Grant income (5%), Lys Coccinelle, interest and other (5%).

Financial reports are available for viewing via the ACNC link below.



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>



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.

Media and Communications

We are grateful for the generous support of Strictly Marketing, who have provided new branding guidelines, website development, design of publications and social media management on a pro-bono basis.

Website

Ladybird Care Foundation's new website www.ladybirdcare.org.au was launched during the 2022-2023 financial year as part of our rebranding, as we moved from our pilot phase within the Children's Health Queensland to community-based programs.

The website continues to attract local, interstate and international interest and serves as an important point of contact and information for families seeking bereavement support.

Social Media

During 2022/23 Ladybird Care Foundation continued to grow its digital platforms to inform, educate, and connect with the general public, other organisations, health professionals and communities.

Data indicates that 84% of our followers are female, with the largest group in the age bracket 45 to 54 years.

Facebook visits are typically represented by a Queensland audience, with 7.3% each from Victoria and New South Wales. We aim to expand engagement from other states in 2024.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

We are proud of the wonderful team of professionals who have joined us this year, with anticipated growth for appointment of a team member based in Victoria to commence ready for the 2024 calendar year.

Volunteers

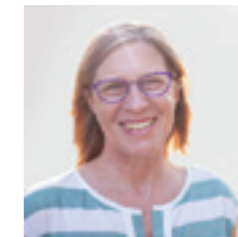
As well as our wonderful volunteer Peer Mentors, we are grateful for the generosity of time and talents of so many individuals who provide assistance with administration, finance, event planning, marketing, social media ideas, function set up and décor, fund raising, photography and videography, raffle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

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

Meet the Staff



Wendy Collins
General Manager
Previously Chartered Accountant, university lecturer in business, funeral director and manager with George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals, Wendy has a perfect combination of business experience and acumen, along with empathy in dealing with bereavement in a caring and professional context.



Dr Leigh Donovan
Peer Mentor Program Manager
Social worker, researcher, educator and advocate in paediatric palliative care, end of life care and specialist bereavement care for families. As a long-term advocate for an Australian health response to the care of bereaved families she was awarded a 2017 Churchill Fellowship.



Samantha Adams
Peer Mentor Project Officer
Samantha Adams is a registered Psychologist, with valuable experience with counselling, family relationship support, professional training and mentoring.



Maree Pascoe
Volunteer / Lys Coccinelle Manager / Emma's Mum
Creating memories with curated home and personal fragrance products. All profits support the Ladybird Care Foundation. www.lyscoccinelle.com.au



The voices of bereaved parents

"For so long I have walked around with this alone and with nothing to be done with it ... this seed in a bag just wanting somewhere to find root so that something wonderful can grow from it ... and Ladybird Care Foundation has opened the door to hope in that space."

- Bereaved father

"I was lucky enough to be directed towards Ladybird Care Foundation after the sudden and unexpected death of my adult son aged twenty two.

I have been matched with the most amazing mentor who has helped me through some of my saddest moments.

This is my year of 1st 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.

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."

- Bereaved mum

"My involvement in the peer mentoring program has given me a sense of purpose. It has put me in a position of privilege, helping others navigate through this grief journey nobody wants to be on. What I didn't expect was the blessing in return it has actually been."

- Bereaved mother and Peer Mentor



To make a donation:

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

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