

YWCA Hunter Region



SUPPORT



EMPOWER

CONNECT



2017/18

96th ANNUAL REPORT



YWCA
Hunter Region

YWCA Hunter Region Inc.

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ABN: 72582209745

YWCA Hunter Region Inc acknowledges the traditional owners of country and their continuing connection to the land, sea and community. We are in the country of the Worimi, Gamilleroi, Wanarua, Gweagul, Darkinjung, Biripi and Awabakal peoples We pay our respects to them and their cultures and the elders both past and present for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia.

YWCA Hunter Region Exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.



Y Hunter Mission, Vision and History

Support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.

Strengthened by Christian heritage and enriched by our worldwide membership of women and girls the **YWCA Hunter Region** is a women's membership movement based on feminist principles. Today we aspire for sustainability through the richness of diversity from many beliefs and values. YWCA Hunter exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community. The YWCA in the Hunter has been delivering services to women of the Newcastle region in later years to the wider Hunter community for 96 years.

The **YWCA Newcastle** commenced operations at 113 King Street Newcastle in 1921 with Club Rooms, Cafeteria, Classes and a variety of Clubs open to all people.

There were 800 members in 1963. The YWCA moved into the Dawson Street Cooks Hill property in 1963 with the new gymnasium being added and opened by Betty Cuthbert in 1965.

The YWCA Hostel in Parkway Avenue, Bar Beach – War Memorial Hostel - was built in 1953 offering accommodation at reasonable rates plus 'wholesome lifestyle' for 'business girls and students'. It transitioned to mixed accommodation and then was sold in 2007.

The YWCA Hunter is part of a national and international movement, a global membership-based movement of women and girls, which promotes women's leadership and gender equality.

The YWCA Hunter has a diverse history of

program delivery and we aim to move with recognised needs/trends and available research in the community. Today we predominantly deliver programs focused on early intervention, delivering a suite of programs for children at preschool age and primary age. This will be our continuing focus.

As members of the YWCA Hunter Region Inc we are committed to the Code of Conduct values of:

Respect
Integrity
Empowerment
Connection
Equity

At all times we will endeavour to behave and conduct business in a manner that is consistent with these values.

The code applies to staff, volunteers and Board members in the performance of their duties and while representatives of the YWCA Hunter Region.

The **World YWCA** is a global network of women and young women leading social and economic change in over 122 countries. The World YWCA is one of the world's largest and oldest women's organisations with a global reach of 25 million women and girls. It advocates for peace, justice, human rights and care of the environment, and has been at the forefront of raising the status of women for over 150 years. The World YWCA develops women's leadership to find local solutions to the global inequalities women face. Annually the network supports 25 million women and girls.

Y President and Executive Director's Report



Elle Buyers
Acting President from January 2017
to September 2017
Board of Directors



Nina Aubin
Acting President from
February 2018



Jenny Baldwin
Executive Director

The year in review

We are pleased to share with you some of our highlights from the 2017-18 year. This is our 96th year of operation here in the Hunter region.

Elle Buyers stepped down from the role of acting President in September 2017 to allow more time for her personal life commitments. We do thank Elle for all her efforts during her time on the Board. Nina Aubin stepped into the role as acting President.

As the ED I would like to start with an acknowledgment of our staff, Board Directors, members, partners and friends. It is only with your skill, dedication and support that this organisation continues to meet the needs of our diverse community. I especially acknowledge the commitment of the Board. We have made some difficult decisions that required considerable courage this year and last year and the Boards ability to see what would be best for the YWCA Hunter in those decisions is commendable.

This year has been a time of refocusing and reconsidering our future direction after having put this to one side as we worked toward a

merged future. Our focus is very much still early intervention and we are looking to develop that area further. Our children's programs are strong and we want to build on this with a stronger client base to help us develop new programs. We look forward to what this may mean to program development as we try new endeavours to meet community and social trends.

Community trends and needs for women and children are relevant to us as we strive to contribute in a meaningful, collaborative way, to address those needs. With the increase in violence against women and specifically young girls we offered 2 free self-defence workshops for mothers and daughters or women of all ages. Nissa Lee was the facilitator and what an impact this had on the women and girls who attended. We will continue to be proactive in recognising where we can contribute.





of call for most of our clients so we look forward with excitement to what that will mean with a revamped, engaging site!

At a Board level we have needed to shift our focus back to our local needs. We have been working on the Constitution, the organisation's Code of Conduct and engaging advice on our financial investments over the last year.

On a purely administrative side we are looking to revamp our branding – website, logo and image. Our website is the first port

We look forward to what is ahead!

BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT

Nina Aubin (Acting from February 2018)

*Elle Buyers (Acting from January to September 2017)

*Denotes young women (aged 30 years or under) at time of appointment. The YWCA Hunter maintains a commitment to 30 per cent of Board appointments are held by women aged 30 or under.

SECRETARY *Stacey Lynch

Judy Gresham

Jenny Baldwin



Elle Buyers



Nina Aubin



Stacey Lynch



Judy Gresham



Jenny Baldwin

Y Staff Team 2017/2018

What a fabulous staff team we have – dedicated, passionate, enthusiastic and hard working. The success of our programs is due to the staff. Our administration staff are so much more than administration. They are talented and dedicated. Most of the vacation care ideas come from Natalie Smith. Amy Daymond, having joined us in Administration this year brings her own skills and personality to the role. Jennifer Sumner regularly is seen in the garden and we have her to thank for the many compliments that we hear from our neighbours. The Encore staff are dedicated and do an amazing job with the program.



Sue Boswell
Encore



Natalie Smith
Administration



Amy Daymond
Administration, Vacation Care



Sandra Woods
Encore



Sharon Jephson
Encore



Jennifer Sumner
Finance Officer, Encore



Lynette Edwards
Kindergym



Amber Bunt
KinderJazz and Vacation Care



Olivia Hacker
KinderJazz

Vacation Care staff team 2017/2018:



Bianca Flanagan
Vacation Care Educator



Tannon Muller
Nominated Supervisor VC



Laura Piggott
Vacation Care Educator



Emily Logan
Vacation Care Educator



Chelsea Seckold
Vacation Care Educator



Sarah Blinnikka
Vacation Care Educator



Sally Babic
Vacation Care Educator



Emily Sandall
Vacation Care Educator



William Sutherland
Vacation Care Educator



Stephanie Vella
Vacation Care Educator



Amber Martin
Vacation Care Educator



Kyle Lawther
Vacation Care Educator

Y-Kids Get A Better Start!

'I am learning through play for I will make a difference one day'

(UN Article 31 Rights of the Child)

"A persons a person no matter how small" (Dr Seuss)



Y-Kids Programs

All Y-Kids classes run on a casual pay-as-you-come basis so parents are not locked into weekly attendances as we acknowledge that life with children just doesn't always go that way!!

Our slogan emphasises the benefit of the Y-Kids programs and the activities involved -

'Y Kids Get a Better Start'.

The YKids programs aim to make early intervention classes accessible to all families. All classes are affordable and relaxed. Classes provide an opportunity for toddlers and infants to interact socially with their peers and to experience activities that enable them to explore and develop the social and gross motor skills essential for healthy neurological and social development for school readiness.

- building confidence
- developing social skills, language and communication

- learning about caring for others and the environment
- developing physical skills
- connecting and refining pathways in the child's brain
- Learning new and exciting things

It is our aim to build on the early intervention programs as we recognise the benefit of childhood learning in today's world and to deliver programs for children at preschool age and primary age.

As we strive to stay relevant KinderJAZZ and KinderYOGA have been added to the programs to stay in tune with current children related trends in the community. As yet we have been unable to find a suitable long term teacher for the KinderYOGA program so this is temporarily on hold but this is the future we envisage.



Y-Kindergym

The always popular Y-Kindergym classes continue to run on Tuesdays at 9.30am - 10.30am and at 10.45am-11.45am. The classes provide a structured program for children aged 1-5 years. Classes support a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to participate in activities that develop the necessary gross motor skills at this age.

Lynette Edwards, a trained kindergym instructor, facilitates these sessions. These programs continue to be the most popular preschool program with both the parents and children.

Picnic on the lawn after the sessions is always popular.



Y- KinderJAZZ

Y-KINDERJAZZ program was introduced last year and the growth has been steady and pleasing. This year we have seen it develop under the leadership of, first Olivia and more recently Amber, both qualified dance instructors. FUN upbeat jazz inspired dance class, appealing to both boys and girls, providing children with a joy for movement, body awareness, improved coordination and gross motor skills: all the physical skills essential for healthy brain and body development.

Classes consist of basic warm up techniques, dance moves with an emphasis on jazz and aerobics. The end of term performance dance is incorporated into the weekly lessons and each term ends with a performance and a

party.

Classes run on a Monday with the 9.30 to 10.15am class open to the public. A separate class caters for the children of the Cooks Hill Preschool from 10.30 to 11.15am. The preschool children are also learning a dance routine to be performed at their end of year graduation party.



Y Vacation Care

School is out! Vacation care is in!!

BRING ON VACATION CARE!!

"Can I go to vacation care everyday, pleasssse mum"

Yes school holiday time is when the YWCA Vacation Care program comes alive with an innovative, fun packed program that ensures the children of working parents have a thrilling and enriching school holiday experience.

The program is funded through DEEWR with parents eligible for the Government's Child Care Rebates. Funding is also received under the Inclusion Support Scheme to ensure that all children with varying needs are able to participate to the full.

Some of the children live locally while many come with their parents who work in the city. Our aim for vacation care is FUN, FUN, FUN. The children create and use their imaginations and physically challenge themselves through experiencing new ideas, new activities, new skills. They meet up with old friends and leave wanting to come back!

The program runs at the YWCA Hunter centre through each school holiday break –two weeks each break and three and a half weeks in the January school holidays. The program is based





on feedback from the children, information from their interest lists and input from the staff. We develop a program of activities, experiences and excursions that ensure no one is disappointed.

Excursions are particularly popular but the children also get a thrill out of the themed onsite days where they create, cook, eat and play their way through the day.

Many of the photos make their way to our Facebook page which delights the children.

All activities are delivered through much fun, community awareness and interesting themes set under the government, guidelines called 'My Time Our Place'.

Much is owed to the young staff team whose contributions, enthusiasm and energy are of an exceptionally high quality and we just couldn't do it without them!!! Tannon Muller has been the Nominated Supervisor for the past 3 years. This is Tannon's last year with us as he moves into permanent teaching positions. We are currently seeking one person to fill this position but in the meantime Laura Piggott and Bianca Flanagan are both in the role of responsible person in charge of the programming.

Enrolments continue to be strong as we reach full capacity on many days each vacation care. The program saw a total of 85 new families with 128 new children in the twelve month period from June last year.

Giant bubbles, kites, spooky spiders, museums, dog rescue, different cultures and art....so much to learn at vacation care.



"My daughter looks forward to meeting up with her 'vacation care' friends when she comes to the YWCA, and she just loves them"

"Keep up the great work! It is such a relief to know that my child is genuinely happy and excited to attend vacation care"

"great program and great staff, thank you so much"

"We love vc. As parents we love that our children as so happy to do this in their holiday time. Both our daughter and our son have such a great time. The program is great with a good mix of excursions and incursion days that they really enjoy"



What the parents told us this year and what we overhear:

"Why am I always first to go home, you always come too early mum"

"J...is loving vacation care. It is such a fun environment. This was just brilliant again...thank you"

"You have such a great program, my girls just love coming"

"I wish my children were this excited (and cooperative) about getting to school in the mornings!!"





YWCAencore
after **breast** cancer
gentle exercise program

Health & Well-being – Encore



YWCA's Encore is a free eight week program designed specifically for women who have experienced breast cancer surgery.

The program will:

- ✓ Improve mobility and flexibility in the upper body
- ✓ Improve general fitness, health and well-being
- ✓ Boost body image and self-esteem
- ✓ Help to relieve stress and tension
- ✓ Help to restore a sense of control
- ✓ Relieve discomfort associated with surgery and treatment
- ✓ Reduce the potential risk of lymphedema
- ✓ Assist in the management of lymphedema

Utilising both land and water based exercises YWCA Encore improves overall fitness as well as manages the side effects associated with

breast cancer treatment including pain, fatigue, loss of mobility and loss of strength. The program is tailored to each individual, accommodating all fitness levels.

Our Encore facilitators are trained professionals and undergo professional development annually to stay abreast of any new findings. Sue Boswell, Sharon Jephson, Sandra Woods and Jennifer Sumner make up the excellent and enthusiastic team of facilitators.

Encore sessions run in February/March and October/November in East Maitland, Waratah and Valentine and once a year in Salamander Bay. We are very grateful to Salamander Haven Village for their generosity in allowing use of their beautiful pool facilities and to Maitland Private Hospital for the subsidised use of their pool to run our program.

The program not only provides good physical results for the participants but is very instructive with excellent guest speakers. Sue Boswell has done an impressive job with contacts in this area. The ladies in the program often comment on the new information and understanding they get from the speakers.

Our Encore team is out and about in the community. Facilitators often visit doctor surgeries and speak at local support groups as part of their role. This has given a face to the information provided and has proven a very useful way of getting the word out into the areas that need to hear about it.

We also had a display stand at Wests Leagues Club for the Breast Cancer Forum on the 29th July - many thanks to Jennifer and Sandra for volunteering their time. It was a very informative day for those who attended and proved a valuable way of getting the YWCA Encore name heard. We also received many names of ladies interested in doing the Encore program in October and February 2019.

Comment from a facilitator:

“what a fabulous privilege it is to work with these amazing women at this challenging time in their lives. It’s empowering for me to see the huge difference this program makes in their confidence, outlook and physical abilities from week one to the end of week eight”

....and what our ladies say:

“even though I know the drugs, chemo etc are saving my life, I felt that encore has done the same. It has given me strength, courage and support to better myself and has given me a positive outlook on life”.

“I feel a lot stronger in myself”

“I feel happier and empowered. This was a great experience, facilitators and participants were fantastic. I found the financial counsellor, dietician/nutritionist and lymphedema talks especially useful for my situation”.

“everyone – facilitators and other ladies – were wonderful”.





Budget Accommodation for Female University Students

The top floor of the grand old building in Dawson St, Cooks Hill, one block back from the popular and cosmopolitan Darby St has been the temporary home to many female students, many of them international with their first taste of Australia.

The building currently accommodates five female residents.

Although there is an increase in university accommodation in the inner city region there are many advantages to staying at the YWCA Hunter:

- Tenants have secure and safe accommodation for females only – giving reassurance and peace of mind to their parents.
- Budget accommodation with competitive rates (\$160-180 per week).
- An ideal location:
 - Close to the city centre and sitting on the door step to the coffee strip of Darby St.
 - Close proximity to Newcastle University city campus and the conservatorium where the international students attend classes.
- Peace and quiet, an ideal study environment with only 5 rooms.



Newly renovated bathroom and toilet areas have given the accommodation a more modern look.

We have been fully booked for most of the year.



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