



YWCA | HUNTER
REGION INC

2020-21

99th ANNUAL REPORT



SUPPORT . EMPOWER . CONNECT

Acknowledgement

YWCA Hunter Region 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 acknowledge that this land was never surrendered, and recognise that it always was and will continue to always be, Aboriginal land.

YWCA Hunter proudly recognises the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to own and control their cultures and pays our respect to these rights. We show respect for their lifestyles, their customary laws and their elders both past and present.

YWCA Hunter Region

.....A bit of HERstory



The Young Women's Christian Association of Newcastle Inc. commenced with the adoption of a constitution on 14th December 1921. It started in Club Rooms in Newcastle then moved to 113 King Street where it offered classes, clubs and eventually a cafeteria open to all. Membership was available to women who believed in the purpose of the Association and were willing to work towards that purpose.



In 1947 land was acquired from the Australian Agricultural Company (the Merewether's) at 82 Parkway Avenue Bar Beach and in 1953 a much needed hostel was constructed with the money raised from the Newcastle people. The hostel housed young business women and students coming from the country to study at Newcastle Teachers College situated on the corner of



Union and Parkway Avenue, Bar Beach. When the Teachers College moved to the University site in Callaghan the hostel began to operate as low cost mixed accommodation. The property was sold in 2008 due to various reasons and change in core business direction.

The YWCA Newcastle, Dawson Street, Cooks Hill Centre originally, owned by Henry Thomas and Alice Mary Lucerne, was built in 1912 and purchased by the YWCA in 1963 for £15,425 from the beneficiary Alfred Barrett (the Lucerne's handyman). Mrs Lucerne had been an active member of the YWCA in the early days hosting many functions at her Dawson Street home and was a member of the Board in 1927, Vice President 1928 and Secretary in 1933. The gymnasium attached to the original house was constructed and opened in 1965 by Betty Cuthbert a leading Olympian Sportswoman.

The organisation's name was changed in 2006 to YWCA Hunter Region to reflect the geographic business area. The organisation has always been a membership organisation, governed by a voluntary board and incorporated through the Department Fair Trading in 1997.

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

The **YWCA Hunter Region** is a women's membership movement based on feminist principles. We aspire for sustainability through diversity from many beliefs and values with a genuine appreciation of our Christian heritage. **YWCA Hunter today exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.** This year marks 99 years of the YWCA operations in the Hunter.

The YWCA Hunter aims to move with recognised community needs in our program delivery. We currently offer services to encompass the needs of the different ages in our community. We deliver programs for preschool age, primary age, high school aged young people as well as the more advanced in years. We look toward nurturing emerging needs that may become evident, where we can complement the work of other organisations.

The Young Women's Christian Association of Newcastle Inc. commenced with the adoption of a constitution on 14th December 1921. The organisation's name was changed in 2006 to YWCA Hunter Region.

Through our national affiliate association with **YWCA Australia**, we are part of the **World YWCA** network, which connects over 122 countries across the globe. 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.

Organisational Strategic Values:

Respect

This is a foundational concept in all interactions and behaviours toward children, parents, staff, animals and property at the YWCA Hunter. It is also demonstrated in the acknowledgment of the traditional owners of the land and our commitment to Indigenous recognition and reconciliation.

Integrity

It is in practice being honest, open and direct, and transparent in our communications and behaviour.

Empowerment

Envisaging a world where women have the power to act on their own authority in a self-determined manner; to exercise their rights and to be full and equal members of society. This begins at a very young age and it forms a practical approach to our children's programs.

Connection

We aim to contribute to the building of a strong community that is inclusive, accepting and appreciative of diversity.

Equity

We endeavour to ensure that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, or disability are not obstacles to participating in our programs and that all are given the assistance they require to find enjoyment and success in their participation.

President and Executive Director's Report

2020-2021 in review

We would like to share with you some of the undertakings at the YWCA Hunter over the last financial year: our 99th year of operation. In December this year, we will reach the grand age of 100 and plan to celebrate this on International Women's Day in 2022.

Well what a year it has been!! Firstly we do acknowledge our staff, our dedicated Board Directors, partners, members and friends for their loyalty and perseverance over this challenging and often frustrating year.

And what a challenging year it has been for all of us and for the organisation as we put aside our plans and went into lockdown and then crept slowly back with severely reduced clients in most areas to once again go into lockdown. We were excited about growing and developing new programs but we will need to wait and be patient like the rest of the world. We do look forward to the opportunities that will arise and the potential to introduce innovative new programs to meet community needs. I, for one, recognise the inevitability of unexpected outcomes and so we look with a positive attitude toward what can potentially come out of the pandemic years that we have just been through.

During lockdown all face-to-face programs were cancelled – Encore, Self Defence, Chair Yoga, Y-KinderYoga, Y-KinderDance and

Vacation Care. However, we continued to provide quality programs in Y-KinderYoga, Y-KinderDance and the Sit, Get Fit Chair Yoga by delivering them online, free of charge, to our clients.

We are proud to continue to support a number of charitable organisations working in our community, including: - Breast Cancer Forum; Cystic Fibrosis society; Soul Café; Make a Wish Foundation with the Special Children's Christmas party; Childhood Cancer in the Talk Like a Pirate program; Immune Deficiency Australia with the Quirkus Circus program; SES; The Rural Fire Services; Tomaree Breast Cancer Support Group and The Cooks Hill Community Gardens.

We express our appreciation to the Federal Government for the financial stimulus that was provided through the JobKeeper program. This assisted greatly when Covid-19 significantly impacted our ability to operate at the end of 2020.

Now I need to say farewell as I am retiring from the Executive Director's role at the end of the year. We look forward to an innovative new Executive Director moving the organisation to the next level. We welcome Anne Tait to the role and look forward to supporting her in the years ahead.

Nina Aubin
President



Jenny Baldwin
Executive Director



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)

"BE YOU"

Y-Kids Programs



All Y-Kids classes run on a casual pay-as-you-come basis to allow for the unpredictability of life with children.

Yes '**Y Kids Get a Better Start**'. We aim to deliver programs that are affordable and relaxed, providing the 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.

Y-KinderYoga

Y-KinderYoga. With the change of day to a Tuesday we also had a change of teacher. As we said goodbye to Frances we welcomed Heidi. The Tuesday class has been very successful with Heidi Piirala teaching the children many new skills in meditation, breathing control, along with unique yoga moves incorporating animals from around the world. The children also have the opportunity for more strenuous exercise with a modified gym circuit as part of the class and the challenge of the aerial yoga swing. This Tuesday morning class incorporates both children and parents and is a great way to teach children how to self-regulate their emotions: great for school readiness! The class was delivered online for our clients during lockdown.



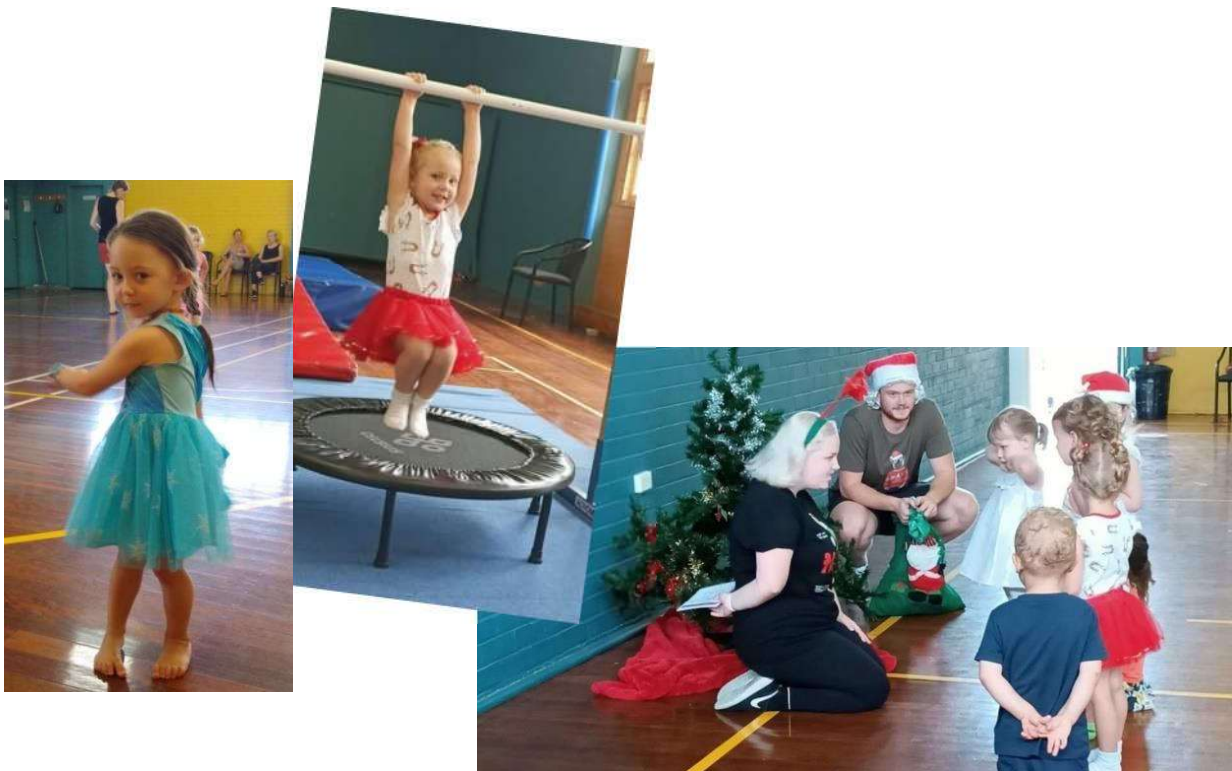
Y-KinderDance

Y-KinderDance is a FUN upbeat class that incorporates jazz, hip hop, ballet and a bit of tap. Aimed at both boys and girls it provides 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.

Mikaylee Biles is the dance teacher and she

brings lots of energy and a love of dance to her classes.

Classes remained popular during our online delivery as well. Y-KinderDance runs on a Monday with the 9.30 to 10.15am class open to the public. A separate class catering to the children of the Cooks Hill Preschool runs at 10.30 to 11.15am.



Sit. Get Fit - Chair Yoga

Yoga has many proven benefits:

- Increased sense of calm
- Improved immune function
- Reduced anxiety and stress
- Improved blood flow and circulation
- Enhanced quality of sleep

Yela is the Yoga Instructor and the chair yoga class is for anyone, but especially suitable for seniors, the less agile as well as others who may be active in yoga. Sit. Get Fit continues to be a very popular class where everyone leaves feeling stretched, loosened and relaxed. Class prices are kept low in order to cater for everyone. Classes were delivered online during the lockdown periods.



Self-Defence

This is a very popular class for high school aged girls. The program is part funded under the Active Kids subsidy.

It is a well-designed self defence program that is aimed at rapid learning and targeted to some

common strengths and abilities. Classes include personal skills alongside physical self-defence skills. Participants reported that they felt more confident in knowing how to react in times of threat and felt physically more able to do so.

Nissa-Lee Phillips and Ying McKenzie are our Self Defence instructors.

Nissa has a black belt in Taekwondo and trains in Aikido. She has also worked at the Center for Violence Education in the United States so brings a holistic approach to the class.





Y Vacation Care

School is out!
Vacation care is in!!

Children look forward to a
holiday away from school.

This financial year vacation care operated only during the January and April 2021 school holidays with vastly reduced numbers of children as many parents have changed their work arrangements since the lockdown and due to the pandemic.

However the quality of the programs, the talent of the team and the thrill of those attending had not diminished.

We have a great team of talented and energetic young staff members, the program is always dynamic and surprising and the children are always entertained and enthusiastic.

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

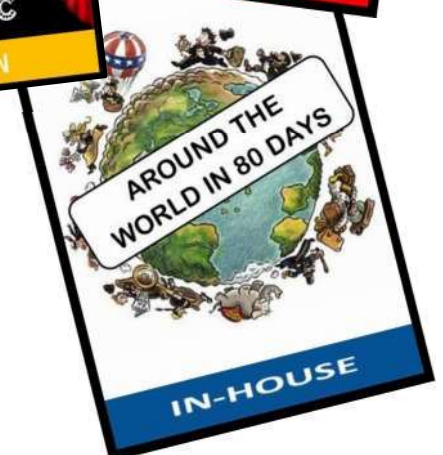
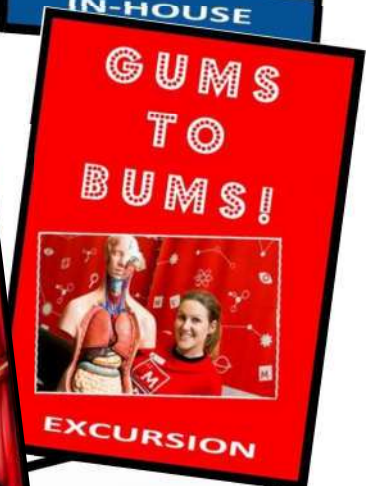
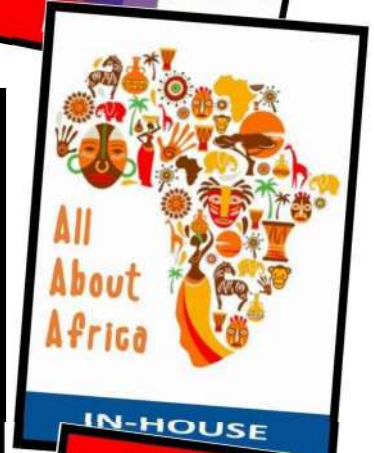
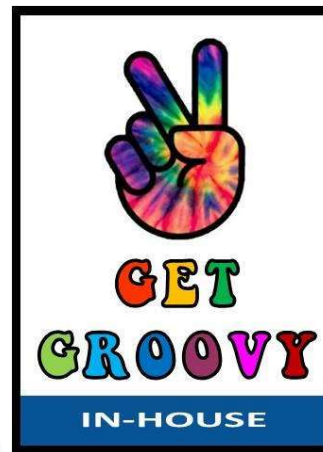
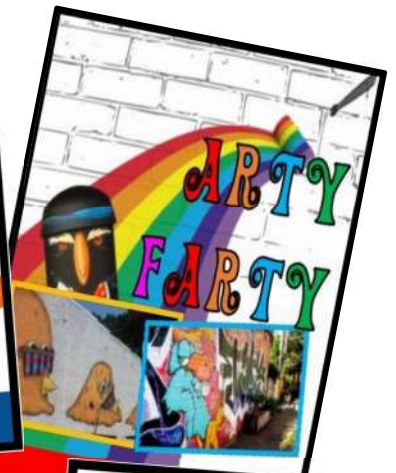
We cater for parents working in the inner city and local children alike. Most children meet new friends at VC providing the opportunity to learn valuable new skills, preparing them for the world. The children create and use their imaginations and physically challenge themselves through experiencing new ideas, new activities and new skills. They meet up with old friends and leave eager to return!



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

The program themes are 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.

All activities are delivered through much fun, community awareness and interesting themes set under the “My Time Our Place” and Government guidelines.



"We could attend at the school vacation care but the kids love the holiday away from school holiday"

"M just was so excited about Japanese day"

"We get ear bashed in the afternoon with both our boys' vacation care day stories. It's exhausting just listening to them!! But they don't tell us much about their school days so we are delighted"

"I can't wait for next holidays"

"I wish my children would get out the door this fast during school days!!"

"Oh dad why did you come so early....." (Not the warm welcome that dad had hoped for)





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.

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 facilitators are trained professionals and undergo professional development annually to stay abreast of any new findings. Sharon Jephson, Jennifer Sumner, Kim Oeser, Sue Boswell and Yela Wilson make up the excellent and enthusiastic team of facilitators. Sue left us this year and sadly Kim passed away this year.

We will miss them both.



Both the February 2021 and the October 2020 programs were interrupted by the pandemic.

Unfortunately the Breast Cancer Forum, usually held at the West Leagues Club annually in July was cancelled again this year due to the pandemic. The forum has been a valuable referral point for Encore participation. We have relied heavily upon our support groups for referrals for the past 2 years. We look forward to the forum next year.



....comments from the ladies:

"Enjoyed all the exercises. I believe the most valuable thing I've learned is how a little can change a lot. AND my body really needs to move and loves it."

"The comradery with the other participants was very beneficial. I am very able to practice what I've learnt from the sessions at home. I found all sessions positive and was on a high when I left."

"I have enjoyed every moment. I would like to do this class again. Great exercises and pool work."

"An extremely valuable program, very well delivered by capable facilitators. Highly recommended."

"A few weeks into the Encore Program I noticed my swim strokes had significantly more power/strength. Thrilled!! Thank you so much."

"I am now a little more interested in exercises and understand more about lymphatic system and the benefits of exercise."

"Learning the lymphatic exercises is very helpful to me."

"I feel so alone with what I have been through. The understanding and support has been wonderful."



Budget Accommodation for Female University Students

The top floor of the building in Dawson St, Cooks Hill is short term accommodation for female university students, most of them international with their first taste of Australia.

The building currently accommodates five female residents.

There are many advantages to living at the YWCA Hunter, not least of all being right on the doorstep of Darby St coffee/restaurant strip.

- Tenants have secure and safe accommodation for females only – giving reassurance and peace of mind to their parents.
- Budget accommodation with competitive rates (\$165-185 per week).
- An ideal location:
 - Close to the city centre, Queens Wharf and the night life of Newcastle.
 - 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.

BOARD MEMBERS 2020/2021

PRESIDENT
SECRETARY

Nina Aubin
Lanita Brady *
Judy Gresham
Jenny Baldwin

*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.

Judy Gresham has decided to step down from the Board at the end of this year and we wish to extend to her our appreciation and all the very best in the years ahead. She has served on the Board of Directors for many years and the Board has appreciated her consistency, dedication and wisdom.



Nina Aubin
President



Lanita Brady
Secretary from AGM 2019



Jenny Baldwin
Executive Director



Judy Gresham

Y Staff Team 2020/2021

What would we do without our fabulous, flexible staff team? It has been a challenging year as many of our programs have not been running and the huge number of changes and adjustments that we have had to incorporate due to the covid pandemic. Our staff team has been amazing.

We welcomed Kim Oeser to the Encore team last year but sadly she passed away this year.

Amy Daymond left us this year as she moved into a new career and left our shores for New Zealand.

We feel privileged to have such a team of truly dedicated and talented individuals.



Lewis Mason
Administration, Vacation Care



Natalie Smith
Administration, Vacation Care



Amy Daymond
Administration, Vacation Care



Caitlan Tull
Administration/
Vacation Care Educator



Mikaylee Biles
KinderDance and Vacation Care



Heidi Pirrala
KinderYoga



Yela Wilson
Encore Facilitator
Chair Yoga teacher



Kim Oeser
Encore Facilitator RIP



Sharon Jephson
Encore Facilitator



Jennifer Sumner
Encore Facilitator



Nissa Lee Phillips
Self-Defence



Ying McKenzie
Self-Defence

Vacation Care staff team 2020/2021:



Bianca Flanagan
Vacation Care Supervisor



Max McKenna
Vacation Care Responsible Person



Zoe Bunting
Vacation Care Educator



Hannah Post
Vacation Care Educator



Ferry Tan
Vacation Care Educator

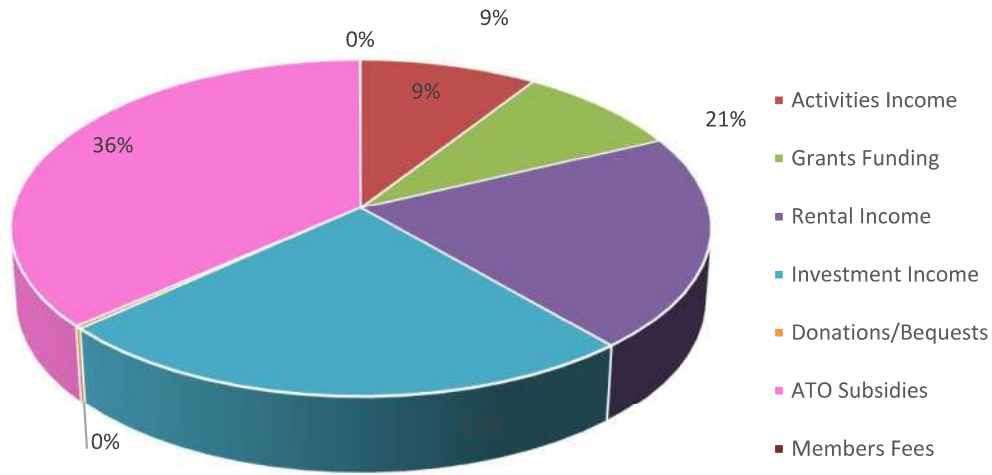


Chelsea McQueen
Vacation Care Educator

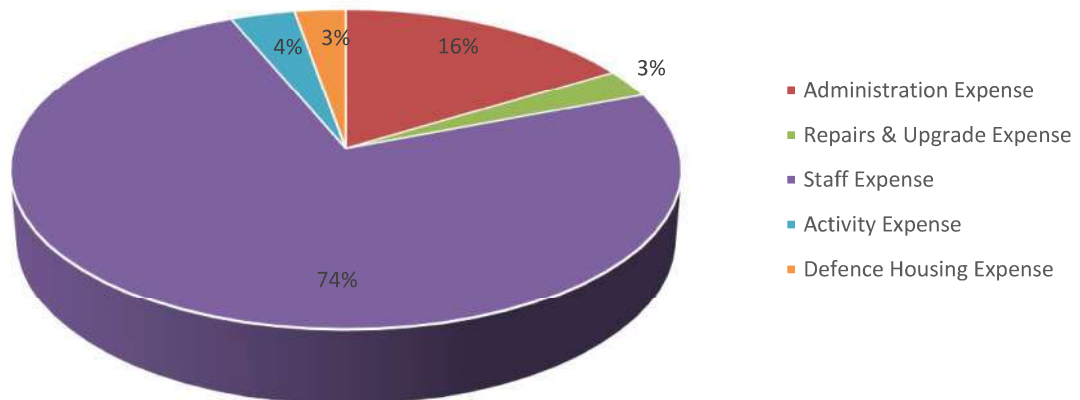


Johnny Bright
Vacation Care Educator

Income 2020-2021





Expense 2020-2021






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