

Because every child needs a champion.

Barnardos vision is to ensure children and young people are safe, happy and thriving in their families and communities. Our delivery of services for Western NSW includes local government areas of Dubbo Regional, Warren Shire, Warrumbungle Shire, and Mid Western Regional.

“Barnardos Playgroups connect me with other parents and children, which helps me feel supported”

- Comment from a playgroup parent

The challenges our clients face

The lack of infrastructure for families in rural and remote areas creates intersectional complexities in our communities. Connecting to specialist supports to address cost of living, housing affordability, unemployment, childcare, mental health, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic and family violence often leads to continuing cycles of intergenerational disadvantage.

How we help

Supported Playgroups and Family Capacity Building highlight our work with parents, carers and children to enhance their relationships in a supportive learning environment, increase their skills and confidence, and develop valuable social and family support networks. Facilitators amplify the importance of play for children to learn and understand/make sense of the world they live.

WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

Family Functioning

People are supported to have close and healthy relationships with immediate family members. Parents, carers and children enhance their relationships, increase their skills and confidence, and develop valuable social and family support networks.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Parents, carers, children and young people experience improved social and emotional wellbeing. Children and young people have hope and enthusiasm for their future. Children and young people are building resilience skills.

WHAT WE DO

During financial year 2023/2024, our TEI Services engaged with a total of 7,733 clients through more than 1,621 sessions, serving 1,672 individual clients. The nature of our client services included various categories: Community Engagement (359), Family Capacity Building (1,347), Education, Skills & Training (1,276), Information, Advice, and Referral (456), Intake & Assessment (227), Indigenous Community Engagement (410), Indigenous Social Participation (68), Material Aid (452), Mentoring & Peer Support (32), Parenting Programs (714), Social Participation (632), and Supported Playgroups (3,446).

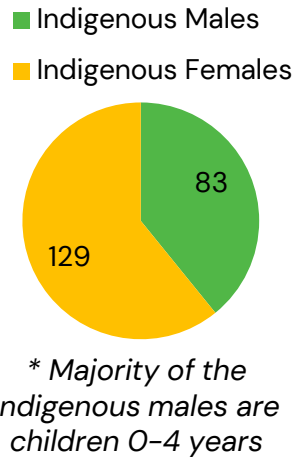
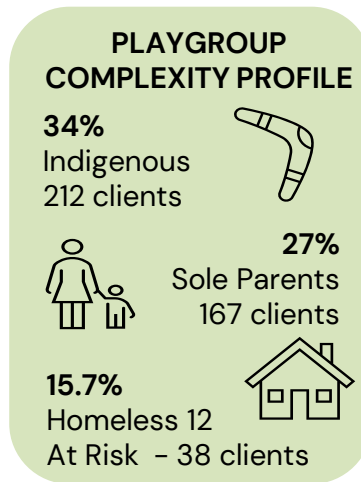
This report specifically highlights our work with 622 clients involved in Supported Playgroups (601) and Family Capacity Building (310), which included support for 271 mothers or caregivers, 32 fathers or caregivers, and 252 children aged 0-4 years. Our services were delivered across multiple locations, including Wellington, Geurie, Mumbil, Stuart Town, Warren, Coonabarabran, Baradine, Mendooran, Mudgee, Kandos, and Gulgong.

Supported Playgroup

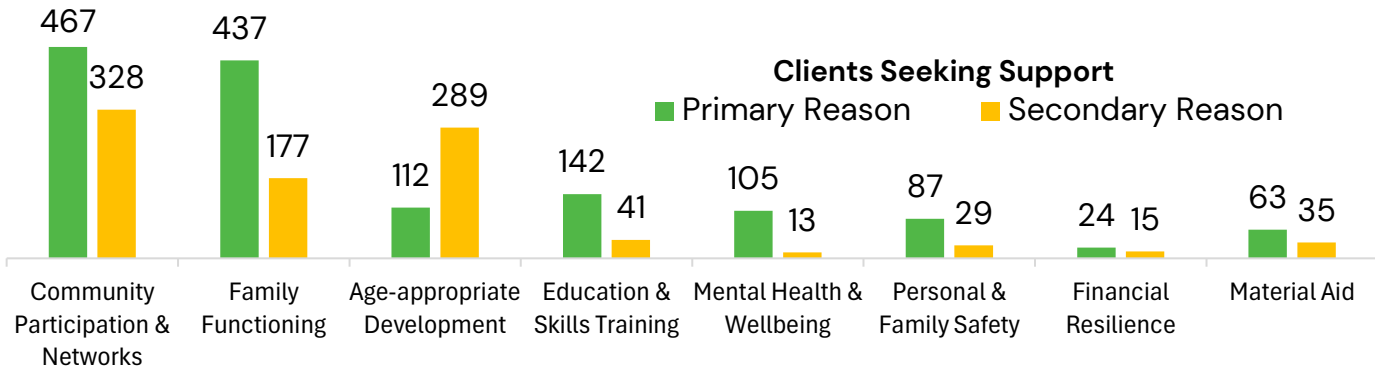
| Clients supported | Sessions delivered | Client Engagement |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 601 | 294 | 3,446 |

Family Capacity Building

| Clients supported | Sessions delivered | Client Engagement |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 310 | 533 | 1,347 |



In the Supported Playgroup and Family Capacity Building program, our largest group consists of 212 Indigenous clients, which includes 65 children. Additionally, we provided support to 167 sole parents, 23 young parents (47% of whom are Indigenous), 12 families experiencing homelessness, and 38 families at risk of homelessness.



We identified a total of 2,934 reasons why clients sought our support. The data reveals a substantial local demand for access to Community Networks, with the primary areas of need being: Community Networks (765), Family Functioning (614), Age-Appropriate Development (401), Education & Skills (182), and Mental Health & Wellbeing (118).

OUR OUTCOMES

579 clients, representing 93%, completed the SCORE surveys. This is an illustration of our investment in rapport building with clients to engage in assessment of our services.

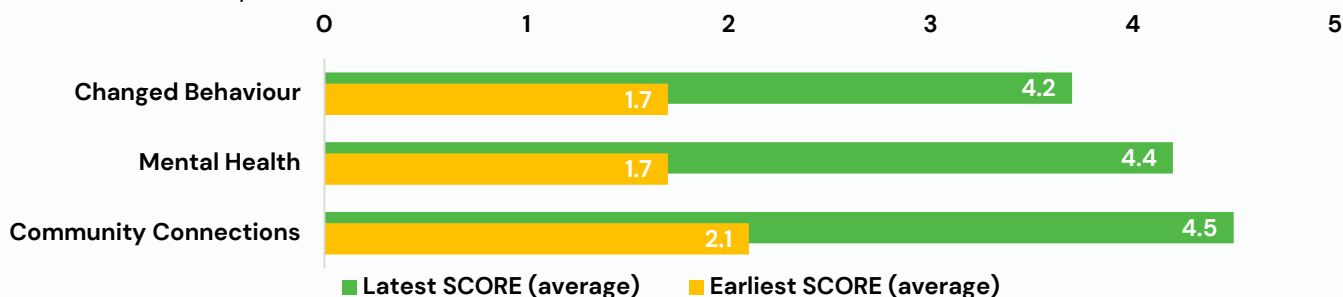
Highlights



Supported playgroups and Family support within small regional communities can address the lack of access to mental health services. The impact of these programs is demonstrated by substantial positive changes in mental health outcomes, with Family Capacity Building scores improving from 1.1 to 4.0 and Supported Playgroup scores increasing from 1.7 to 4.3. This data underscores the significance of early intervention, socialisation, and fostering a sense of belonging within these communities.

| Family Functioning | Mental Health | Age-Appropriate Development |
|---|--|--|
| 79% clients improved | 100% clients improved | 98.5% clients improved |
| <i>"I like that I can ask for help with anything"</i> | <i>"Playgroup is a regular excuse to get out of the house and socialise with others. My kids love it."</i> | <i>"Great routine and structure. Great variety/activities, that cater to all interests and age groups of children"</i> |

SCOREs use a 5-point scale.



Learning Point



Our data indicates we are engaging with 271 mothers/caregivers and 32 fathers. Observationally, it appears that fathers are more inclined to participate in playgroup sessions held in local parks. Increasing engagement with fathers in Supported Playgroups and Family Capacity Building is crucial for fostering connections and emphasising their vital role in their children's lives. By promoting healthy relationships with their children, partners, and the community through play, we can effectively implement the Safe & Together model of support that we provide.

4.1/5

I am better able to deal with my issues



579 clients

GAYLES STORY

Gayle

- Gayle is 28 years Old
- Single Mum
- Identifies as Aboriginal
- Gayle has two daughters 5 and 1 year old
- Couch surfing due to relationship breakdown



Gayles Journey through our services

Gayle had left an unhealthy relationship and was couch-surfing at a friend's home with her children. Gayle started attending Supported Playgroups. She formed a connection with the Barnardos Worker. Information and Referrals were sourced for Gayle and the children's well-being. Gayle and her children have now sustained a private rental. She is engaging with relevant FDV services, engaging still with Supported Playgroups, and participating in a FDV healing program.

Gayle has so far, participated in 22 sessions, including initial intake and assessment. 2 Family Capacity Building. 5 Supported Playgroups. 4 Parenting Programs. 1 Material Aid. 4 Indigenous Social Participation. 5 Information, advice and referral.

When asked Gayle was asked, "What do you like about this service?", she responded, "Everything!"

What's changed for Gayle ?

Gayle has engaged with relevant FDV services. She is no longer in the relationship that affected her family functioning. She and her daughters are safe and have sustained a private rental. Provisions were provided for the family in the home. Gayle attends regular Supported Playgroups for her wellbeing. Gayle has formed some healthy friendships through the playgroup. Gayle has also been supported with her daughters' enrolment to preschool and childcare and Gayle has been given techniques to support her children's emotional needs. Gayle is also currently engaging in a Barnardos Women and FDV Support group.

Evidence of significant changes Gayle has experienced from Barnardos engagement include positive shifts in Personal and Family Safety 1.5 to 4.9, Mental Health, Wellbeing and selfcare 1.2 to 5 and Community Participation and Networks. 1 to 5.

"My Barnardos Worker was always supportive with everything, and I can turn to her in times of need for any type of help"