

*I wish to be a princess
at a fairytale ball*

Savannah, 6
rhabdomyosarcoma

2019-2020
ANNUAL REVIEW

A year of kindness

Make-A-Wish[®]
AUSTRALIA

*I wish to become a powerful mermaid
and meet my mermaid friends*

Jazmyn, 6
post meningococcal syndrome



Contents

3	<u>Message from our Chairman</u>	15	<u>Individual giving</u>
4	<u>Message from our CEO</u>	17	<u>Community Fundraising</u>
5	<u>The year that was</u>	18	<u>Philanthropy</u>
6	<u>Exceptional Wish Journeys</u>	20	<u>Make-A-Wish in the community</u>
8	<u>People & development</u>	23	<u>Smart technology</u>
9	<u>Volunteers with impact</u>	24	<u>Financial overview</u>
10	<u>Recognising our volunteers</u>	25	<u>Our board</u>
12	<u>Business partnerships</u>		

*This report is interactive to demonstrate
the impact of the year's achievements -
which are only possible thanks to the
support of our incredible #WishForce.*

*Click on  play symbols and [hyperlinks](#)
for more information.*



A message from our Chairman

It has been a remarkable year to say the very least, with the upheaval caused by the global COVID pandemic continuing to pose significant challenges for the operation of so many organisations throughout the world.

I find it difficult to convey in words just how proud I am of our entire team of volunteers, staff and supporters who have continued to work tirelessly to ensure that Make-A-Wish Australia has navigated its way through these challenges in such a responsible and successful way.

The Financial statements demonstrate the manner in which the potential financial risks arising from the pandemic have been mitigated. When ultimately allowed to do so, we will have strong capacity to grant so many of those wishes which have been forced to be kept on hold until physical restrictions permit.

Beyond the financials, our ability to maintain support for our wish families whether through enhanced anticipation activities or simply by reaching out to show we care has resulted in so many responses of gratitude again reinforcing the importance of our mission and objectives.

Our congratulations and gratitude once again go out to our fabulous CEO Sally Bateman and all the leadership team. From a management perspective, this past year has in many ways been a constant journey into unknown territory, and the ability to both adapt to often constant change and lead others around you to do likewise has been consistently evidenced by our staff and volunteers throughout this period.

The high levels of collaboration between the Board and leadership team has also provided an important basis for measured and strategic decision making. The commitment of everyone to attend constant meetings, particularly in the early stages of the pandemic where so much was uncertain and our response plans were evolving rapidly, is acknowledged and so appreciated ultimately helping us to be in such a positive position today.

During this period, we have been fortunate to recruit two new directors to the Board namely Sarah Saville and Steve Billingham in March 2021 and we welcome them both again. Russell Evans stepped down from the Board in May last year having completed his 6 year term, but has continued to be a member of the Finance Committee during this further period.

How the world rebounds from here remains difficult to predict at present, but we are as well placed as we can possibly be to granting significant numbers of wishes again when the environment allows us to do so.

My thanks again to everyone for your continuing efforts and support.

Stephen Sharp
Chairman





A message from our CEO

At Make-A-Wish, we are in the unique position of bringing amazing people together to create unforgettable experiences for children facing life-threatening illnesses. As an organisation who receives no ongoing government funding for our wish program, we rely on the kindness and generosity of the community.

This year, it's fair to say we have been absolutely astounded by the depths of this kindness and generosity. In a year that saw both the devastating impacts of bushfires followed by a global pandemic, our supporters didn't waver in their commitment to helping children with critical illnesses. Our partners and community fundraisers looked to new and different ways to continue to deliver joy in the community.

As an organisation, our ability to 'make the impossible possible' stood us in good stead to face the challenges of the dual health and economic impacts of a COVID year. While the first half of the financial year saw us making great strides on our three year strategic plan, the second half showed us just how unpredictable life can be. In the face of ongoing uncertainty, collectively we had to move quickly to ensure all of us at Make-A-Wish could safely continue to deliver positive impacts for our wish kids. The second half of the year clearly looked a little different than we imagined it would. But our commitment to ensuring our wish kids and their families remained our top priority never wavered.

Over the past six months, our wish and volunteer teams had to develop new processes and procedures to ensure that our wish children could continue to be supported. We were able to lean into our improved technology foundations to ensure minimal disruption as our Melbourne team worked through over 100 days of lockdown.

We challenged ourselves to think in different ways to raise vital funds. This resulted in valuable new ideas and initiatives, many of which will become a key plank of our future initiatives.

By the end of the 2019-2020 financial year and in the face of such disruption, our activities looked a little different. We emerged though, unwavering in our desire to ensure that the wish kids who are waiting not only see their wishes realised, but that the wait has been more than worth it.

I'd like to acknowledge and thank each and every Make-A-Wish employee and volunteer for their outstanding commitment and dedication this year. Whilst we know the year ahead will continue to be unpredictable, we can all take great comfort that we are well placed to meet these challenges. If 2019-20 was the year where the community's kindness came to the forefront, I look forward to 2020-21 as being one of pure possibility. Our wish children and their families deserve nothing less.

My best wishes,

A handwritten signature of Sally Bateman in white ink. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Sally' being more prominent than the last name 'Bateman'.

Sally Bateman
Chief Executive Officer



Unique. Inspiring. Extraordinary.

Each and every day, Make-A-Wish Australia brings amazing people together to grant inspirational, life-changing wishes for children with a critical illness. Wishes are designed to complement medical treatment, to support families and to empower sick children with hope and joy when they need it most. For everyone involved, wishes have a remarkable impact, well beyond the wish itself.

We are always guided by our values, which include:



Innovation



Collaboration



Fun



Sincerity



Honesty



Community

The year that was...

In many ways, our 2019-2020 Annual Review tells a story of two halves – the great progress achieved between September 2019 and March 2020, and then the quite dramatic COVID changes that followed, requiring a rethink of our usual operations and moving many of our initiatives online.

While we continued to build the foundations of our strategic plan, we very quickly adapted our systems, processes and collaborative mindset in response to the ever-changing and unpredictable conditions.

As per the previous year, the key focus areas that we saw as being crucial to achieving our vision, and which are highlighted throughout this plan, are:

- Exceptional Wish Journeys
- Volunteers with Impact
- People and Development
- Financial Stability
- Smart Technology

Throughout it all, we kept our mission front of mind - to grant the wish of every eligible child. While the COVID crisis delayed around 200 wishes this year, we were still able to deliver wishes and give hope and joy to 241 seriously ill children and their families and support more than 700 children as they move through the various stages on their wish journey. We are so grateful to our wonderful Wish Force of volunteers and supporters whose dedication and kindness during a challenging year made these special moments possible.

We are proud to share this year with you.



Exceptional
Wish Journeys



Volunteers
with impact



People &
development



Financial
stability



Smart
technology

Exceptional Wish Journeys

Make-A-Wish is the only Australian charity focused exclusively on granting wishes. In such a difficult year, it continued to be our absolute privilege to create special moments for our wish kids to remember.

During the course of the financial year, we supported over 700 children at various stages of their journey. Whilst COVID brought considerable challenges, particularly for the kids who wished to travel, our team and dedicated volunteers worked to increase anticipation activities, and provide much needed resources to support the children impacted by these necessary COVID changes.

From March to September, we saw children meet (socially distanced) mermaids, receive barbie doll houses, video gaming computers and puppies they called their best friend, open a room full of toys and have a fairy backyard makeover - in all, 62 wishes delivered safely during this period and with a touch of magic.

Throughout this time, we also saw incredible acts of kindness from many of our partners and suppliers. Where possible, they donated resources and goods-in-kind to ensure these wishes could be delivered where restrictions allowed.

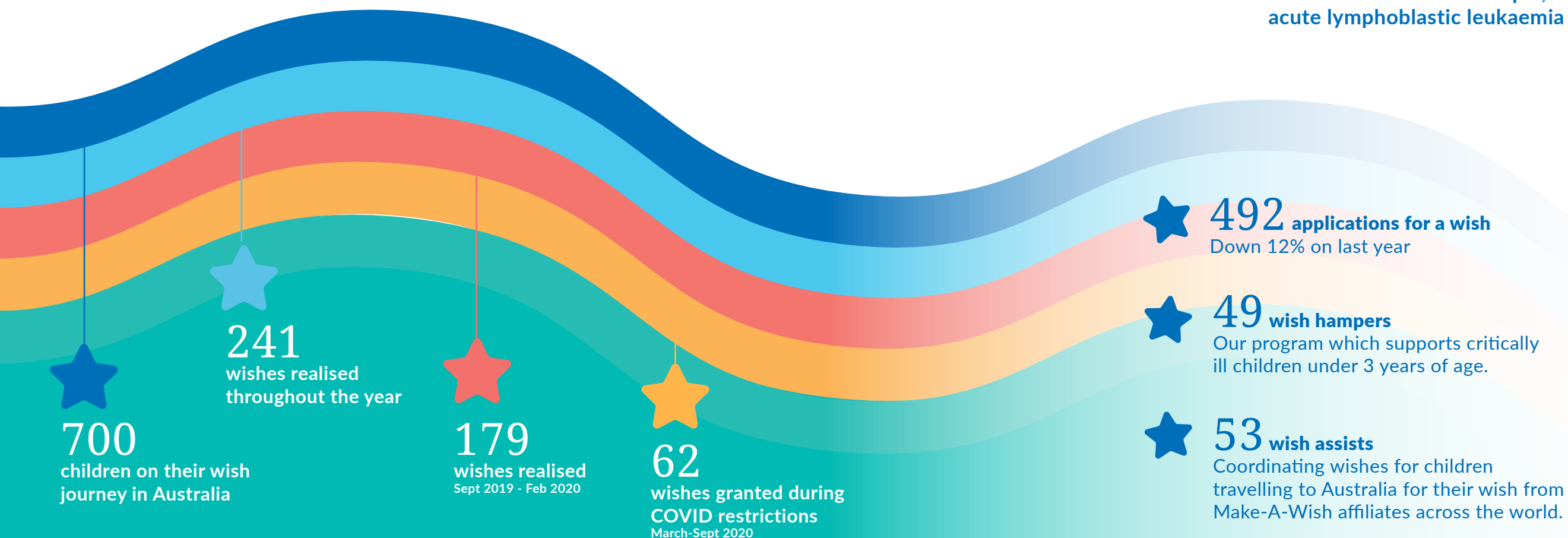
While each state in Australia has required different levels of COVID restrictions in line with the changing health advice, our team developed new communication channels and flexible systems to accommodate the changes in the external landscape.

And, most importantly we worked to ensure that as COVID conditions ease and Australia finds its new normal with 2021, we are in the position to bring many more smiles and moments of joy to our wish families.



*I wish for my own
Barbie dreamhouse*

Maple, 4
acute lymphoblastic leukaemia



I wish for a Jack Russell puppy called Wish

Chloe, 11
idiopathic pulmonary hypertension



Chloe's Wish

It was when she was 15,000 km from home that Chloe's life changed forever. As she prepared for lunch with her family on Christmas Day 2018 in Texas, Chloe had a massive seizure and was rushed to hospital.

She stayed in hospital for five days where she was diagnosed with the heart condition, idiopathic pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Chloe's heart was about five times the size it should be.

Kerryn said Chloe's condition was "an old person's disease" and very rare in young people like Chloe, who was just 8 years old at the time.

"She is just so resilient, and whenever I said 'you have to do this' she always went 'OK mum,'" Kerryn said.

Her wish was to have a puppy, which would be a best friend and something to cuddle.

"She wanted a little companion to cuddle, to sit beside and give her that bit of comfort when she's home," Kerryn said.

Chloe's wish day followed a lot of anticipation activities involving Make-A-Wish volunteers. "The volunteers took Chloe shopping two months ago and let her choose whatever she wanted for the puppy. Bed, toys, bowl," Kerryn said. "They made Chloe feel really special."

Chloe named her puppy Wish after Make-A-Wish and Kerryn said the night before the pup's arrival she was "pretty pumped".

Kerryn said Chloe began bonding with Wish from the moment they met. "She just had a big smile on her face when he arrived," Kerryn said.

"I think he'll make a huge difference," Kerryn said. "Having a pup encourages her to get outside with him and take him for walks."

Kerryn said she was overwhelmed by what Make-A-Wish and its volunteers – particularly Volunteer Team Leader Simone Green – have done.

"I think you don't really know until you're in the situation of your child getting a wish how much care and involvement comes from the volunteers and the Wish team. They really took time to get to know Chloe and what she was after." -- Kerryn, Chloe's mum

"You don't expect it, you just fill in the forms. But what we got is that really personalised experience for her and for us."





People & Development

In an unpredictable year of uncertainty and change, ensuring our employees and volunteers felt supported, informed and safe at all times was paramount.

We began the year focused on employee engagement and continuing to build our collaborative culture. Our October 2019 quarterly pulse check showed our metrics had improved in nearly all areas as compared to the previous engagement survey.

When COVID-19 hit, we transitioned quickly and effectively, providing employees with regular updates on COVID-related developments, technology and equipment, and safety guidelines as they began working from home. We introduced Daily and Weekly virtual dial ins which the CEO hosted, and made sure our Volunteers had timely information as COVID conditions continued to change at both a state and national level.

We provided extra support by ensuring managers had regular discussions with their teams and provided access to external providers of mindfulness, meditation and yoga. We ensured that all employees had EAP details easily at hand during the unique and challenging times.

The impacts of COVID impacted our community fundraising significantly. As a result we had to restructure these teams, and also change our ways of working. We set up new streams to focus on areas most likely to rebound quickly, and redeployed our people where possible through secondment opportunities.

In April 2020 we conducted another pulse check which included questions around the Make-A-Wish response during COVID-19.

- 98% agreed they knew what they needed to do to keep safe and healthy during the pandemic
- 96% felt they were receiving timely communications from Make-A-Wish about the pandemic

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Volunteers with impact

Make-A-Wish is not just an organisation that lives and breathes in Wish HQ in Melbourne. Make-A-Wish exists within the heart and spirit of the community, in townships and cities all over Australia.

Our volunteers on the ground in those communities continue to inspire those around them.

In October 2019, to support our inspirational volunteers, we held our biennial volunteer conference titled '48 hours of Inspiration' with 160 delegates attending. The convivial event occurred at a pivotal time allowing Make-A-Wish staff and volunteers to work together to lay a collaborative foundation underpinning our strategic goals.

Fortunately, the positive engagement, open dialogue and shared learnings garnered from the event stood us in good stead to weather the challenges ahead.

In 2020, the key challenge for our volunteer team was to create a new 'Make-A-Wish normal' in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We redefined what it means to be a volunteer, analysing our structure and finding flexible ways of volunteering. This meant ushering in a new era of volunteering in some communities like Adelaide, where additional branches were launched to support the expansion of our work in the region.

Throughout this period of change, we worked hard to ensure our volunteer community could continue to have impact in different ways. We implemented a COVID safe framework and provided updates often.

Whilst 'in-person' activities were paused, our volunteers transitioned to digital led initiatives including online branch meetings and home visits for the first time, enabling them to stay connected. Their enthusiasm for finding online ways to raise funds achieved great results with two national raffles, Facebook fundraisers, and trivia nights. One of our volunteers even made her own face masks to sell with all proceeds going to Make-A-Wish.

As might be expected, we paused ongoing volunteer recruitment with our key focus on supporting our existing volunteers through this difficult period. Despite this, our program continued to grow with over 183 new additions to the Wish Force, and pleasingly our retention rates remained at high levels.

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue developing our digital capabilities with our volunteer network in order to capture wishes more efficiently. We're also pleased to be rolling out a new storytelling volunteering program in collaboration with John Curtin Leadership Academy to support volunteers in telling the unique and inspirational stories of our community.





Recognising our volunteer superstars

30 years of service in 2020

Debbie Robison - Wangaratta branch

25 years of service in 2020

Patricia Apps - Adelaide branch

Lindy Irwin - Adelaide branch

Allana Wilson - Hobart branch

Wendy Cochrane - Launceston branch

Margaret Bray - Gold Coast branch

Vale Patricia Apps

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Patricia Apps on Dec 7, 2020.

Patricia was an outstanding and much-loved volunteer with the Adelaide branch for more than 25 years. We are deeply grateful for her dedication and commitment to Make-A-Wish and for the joy she brought to so many children and families over many years.

Our heartfelt condolences to Patricia's husband Tom, and their family.



Pulse Survey Results

Due to COVID, we paused our annual Engagement Survey and replaced it with a shorter pulse survey.

The full Engagement Survey will return in April/May 2021.
Pulse survey highlights include:

99%

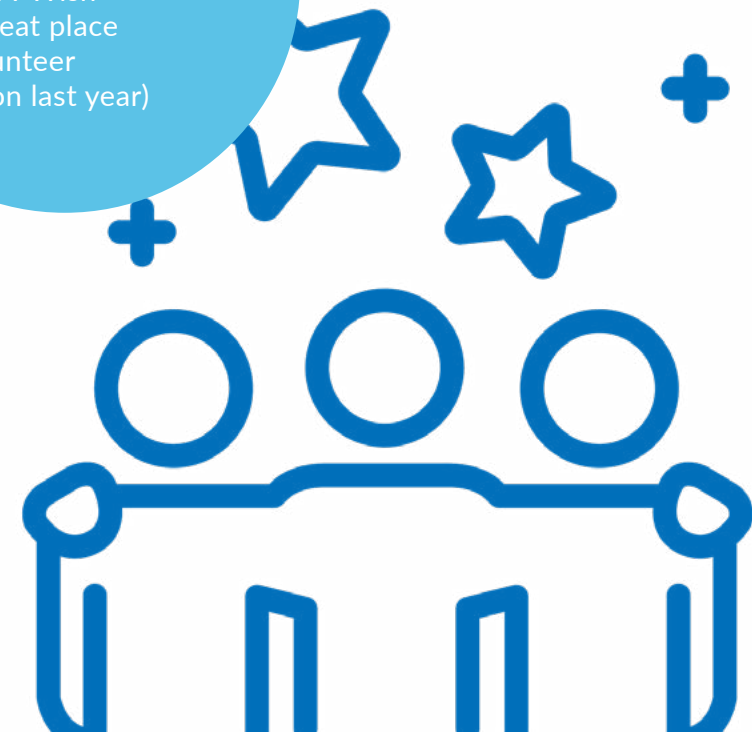
are proud to volunteer with Make-A-Wish
(+1% on last year)

98%

believe Make-A-Wish really allows them to make a positive difference
(+4% on last year)

95%

would recommend Make-A-Wish as a great place to volunteer
(+3% on last year)



*I wish to have a party at the beach
with my favourite princesses*

Priya, 6
acute lymphoblastic leukaemia



Priya's wish

Priya had just come home from a party at her daycare centre when a little red dot on the back of her hand and a bruise on her leg changed everything for the family.

Nisha and husband Jay – both doctors – were immediately troubled and the family went straight to the hospital.

In a matter of days it was confirmed, 3-year-old Priya had acute lymphoblastic leukaemia.

“A port was inserted within a couple of days and the chemo started,” Nisha said. “There was not a lot of time for us to process.”

The stress was enormous and seeing their little girl lose her full head of hair was “emotionally challenging”. Some rare complications also made the treatment difficult.

When Priya underwent two years of chemotherapy including an intense six month period, it was the movie Frozen which proved to be a valuable distraction.

Mum Nisha stopped working so she could care for Priya, often sleeping at the hospital on weekends.

But Priya was able to keep positive, watching and singing along with Elsa and the other characters of Frozen. Priya's wish was simple, she wanted to be a princess and have a princess party.

And after crossing off days on a calendar for 17 weeks, her wish day finally arrived.

Priya arrived at her party in a limousine and the first thing she saw was the unicorn she had wished for. With her fellow princess pals, she danced and sang all afternoon.

And what did Priya think of her day? “Best day ever!”

Priya still has check-ups but it's the memories of her wish day that will stay long past the appointments.

“They are memories to last a lifetime. She won't forget it and we won't forget it, that's for sure,” Nisha said.

“I don't think we can thank Make-A-Wish enough. They are really changing lives and helping people like her and families like us.” -- Jay, Priya's dad

“As parents it's been really amazing seeing her like this and being able to enjoy this,” Jay said.





💰 Business Partnerships

Make-A-Wish business partnerships are as unique as the wishes we deliver.

As an organisation on the frontline in communities across Australia, our national footprint expands with every business that joins the Wish Force. In 2019-2020 we saw that creativity isn't limited to our wish program alone, it also manifests in the inspirational ways our partners bring their support to life.

Our team supercharged their operation this year, redefining our business offering and expanding our range of corporate-focused offerings.

As everything shifted to the virtual world for a few months, we saw innovation in every area, as our partners and supporters demonstrated their ongoing commitment to generating much-needed funds for the vital wishes we were still able to deliver. They were quick to adapt their planned in-person fundraising initiatives to online activities and we were pleased to see these opportunities embraced outside of the traditional face to face setting.

We were delighted that despite the challenges, the passion, dedication and kindness of our Corporate Supporters, Community Champions and Goods-In-Kind partners continued throughout 2020 to ensure enhanced anticipation and wishes (where possible) could be granted throughout the year.

Some of the highlights throughout the year included:

- Qantas' involvement in Dylan's wish (see over)
- Hungry Jack's support of Jacinta, Lailah and Levi's wishes (with the help of their network)
- Barry Plant Real Estate's annual *Wishtober* campaign
- Seed Heritage's annual gift wrap campaign
- sass & bide's annual necklace campaign
- Officeworks 'Give a little, change a lot' campaign
- Blooms The Chemist's golf day
- King Cotton extending its long-term support with additional bins
- Hills Limited launching their inaugural 'Step Out for Make-A-Wish' virtual challenge
- Tarocash consistently raising funds through in-store donations, despite restrictions and store closures.
- Isagenix pivoting to run all their events online, including their most successful Make-A-Wish month to date.
- Celebrating the continued commitment of White Wings and CSR to sponsor our national fundraising campaign, *Bake A Wish* for the coming two years.

Major Partners

This year we have seen the incredible power of strong partnerships. We are grateful to our Major Partners that have a shared dedication to helping change the lives of families facing unthinkable challenges and a strong commitment to embedding Make-A-Wish into their business culture.



Official Partners

Our Official Partners provide generous support and collaborate with Make-A-Wish to bring more wishes to life, making a life-changing difference to kids in their community.

- Austbrokers Countrywide
- Barry Plant Real Estate
- Disney
- Hallmark Cards
- Hertz
- Hotondo Homes
- Hyundai Help for Kids
- King Cotton
- On The Run
- sass & bide
- Seed Heritage
- Tarocash
- Qantas Loyalty
- White Wings

Our relationship with oOh!media remained strong as they continued to provide access to their retail and road network to help create awareness and engagement of campaigns including Bake A Wish, Gift A Wish, Wishes are Waiting and Dylan's wish.

Corporate Supporters

- Better Living Group
- Plants Management Australia
- QBD Books

Community Champions

- DJ Creations
- Hello Plumbing
- Hills
- LMCT+
- REMAX
- Special Children's Christmas Parties
- Officeworks
- Vantage Fuels
- Wrights

Goods-In-Kind Partners

- AirBnB
- Arnold Bloch Leibler
- FibreHR
- Hertz
- Hyundai Help for Kids

*I wish to be a superhero
and save Perth Airport*

Dylan, 11
septo-optic dysplasia



Dylan's wish

Dylan, a 12-year-old from WA, has been battling septo-optic dysplasia since he was born but that has never slowed him down. Dylan loves superheroes and when the incredible volunteers from Perth branch first met Dylan at his home, they said he knew exactly what his wish was.

Dylan loves planes and talked at length about being able to fly, so when our friends at Qantas heard about Dylan they thought they would be able to help his wish 'take-off'.

The team at Qantas partnered up with our wish team, working hand-in-hand for over six months to bring this wish to life. The wish effect was in full swing as amazing organisations like BP, Network Aviation, the AFP, and Perth Airport joined the Wish Force, delivering the epic superhero showdown of Dylan's dreams.

In the run-up to the wish, Dylan received news reports of unexplained 'freezings' happening right across Australia. At Make-A-Wish we were inundated with videos and images from businesses, community groups and supporters across the country who sent in their evidence of the Ice Man on the loose. Ice Man's suspicious tag was also appearing on oOh!media billboards in metro areas across the country. So of course we had to let Dylan know that it was time to get into training.

In anticipation of his wish, Dylan had a number of superhero tasks to complete. All designed to keep him positive and excited and focused on his future adventure.

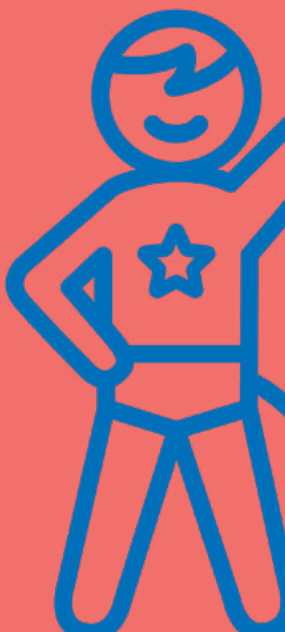
Dylan arrived at Perth Airport to find a trail of frozen passengers, crew and ground staff that all needed Dylan's super X-ray warming power to save them from Ice Man. After thawing out all the passengers aboard the Qantas Link plane, Dylan got to work on helping the plane to fly.

After a brief flight around the skies of Perth, Dylan returned to the tarmac for his final showdown with Ice Man. He was then invited to the Qantas lounge to celebrate with his friends and family.

"Dylan's confidence has grown and grown throughout the experience. He will always be a superhero"

**-- Lorraine,
Dylan's mum**

The level of support for Dylan's wish was unprecedented and Dylan felt the love and encouragement from total strangers across the country, who took the time to show that they cared about his wish.





I wish to learn more about trains and go on a new kind of train.

Alec, 11
Ewing sarcoma



I wish for a black pug puppy to be my best friend

Grace, 8
cerebral palsy diplegia

Over 3,000 new donors joined our Wish Force

More than \$1.6M was raised through individual donations

More than \$4.4M was raised through monthly donations

💰 Individual Giving

The unwavering support of our individual donors was clear in 2019-2020.

Despite the impact of the Australian bushfires and a global pandemic, our supporters remained engaged and committed to helping our cause, in any way they could. It is a testament to the kindness and generosity of our loyal and valued supporters that they continued to donate during such a challenging time for all.

We are so thankful that our wonderful donors continued to show their support and belief in the power and impact of a Wish Journey for children with life threatening illnesses. Through our fundraising appeals, our donors support helped incredible wishes like Alec's wish for a train experience, Grace's wish for a puppy to be her best friend and Savannah's wish to have a fairytale ball.

Following the success of last year's digital crowdfunding campaign, we ran a second crowdfunder in 2020 featuring Ruby, whose wish to meet her illustrator heroes at VidCon came true in 2018. Ruby worked with us to design a special t-shirt inspired by her own Wish Journey. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of the community, we were able to raise enough funds to produce 1,000 t-shirts in kids and adult sizes. The t-shirts are available for purchase on our online Make-A-Wish Shop with all sale profits going towards making more wishes like Ruby's come true.

"I like the feeling my donations are making a difference for children battling serious illness."

"It's good to see the joy that it brings to those families who are experiencing these events in their lives when their child is sick."

"Having children yourself makes you realise how important this organisation is and I am very blessed to be a small part of it."



*I wish to be a princess
at a fairytale ball*

Savannah, 6
rhabdomyosarcoma

Savannah's wish

Melissah remembers clearly the moment when she found out her daughter had cancer. She had taken 17-month-old Savannah to the doctor after she'd been feeling unwell.

However, it took a series of doctor appointments followed by an ultrasound to ultimately reveal the tumour. What Melissah quickly discovered was the tumour was an aggressive form of cancer in Savannah's bladder. Treatment had to start immediately.

Savannah's treatment lasted a year, but when intensive rounds of chemotherapy failed to remove the tumour, doctors decided surgery was the only option. "(The hardest part was) just seeing her go through that treatment each time, all the needles and chemo and getting very sick all the time," her dad Sean said.

"Little children shouldn't have to go through that," Melissah added.

Finally, doctors removed Savannah's tumour in a life-saving surgery lasting almost three hours.

Helping Savannah get through her stints in the hospital was an iPad gifted to her by another family. Melissah said she watched "anything with princesses in it".

So when the time came to nominate her wish, it was easy: Savannah wanted to be a princess and go to her very own fairytale ball.

Savannah wanted a fairytale ball to beat all the fairytale balls she had ever seen on her screen. She wanted to wear a purple princess dress, play fun party games and arrive at the ball in a horse-drawn carriage - with her brother escorting her dressed as Prince Charming.

Together with our friends, Make-A-Wish not only brought Savannah's wish to life, but made it happen in a castle with a unicorn!

"It was a beautiful day, it was fantastic and we would never have been able to give her something like that on our own." -- **Melissah, Savannah's mum**

Melissah said memories of Savannah's wish were helping the family get through the COVID-19 pandemic, and that Savannah was always looking at photos of her fairytale ball. She also recently shared them during 'Show and Tell' at her school.

"There are lots of keepsakes," Melissah said. "We are very grateful. Thank you to everybody involved."



💰 Community Fundraising

For our Community Fundraising team, 2019-2020 was really a year of two halves. The year started brilliantly with the Noosa Triathlon in November 2019 and resulted in our 100-strong Team Wish raising an incredible \$137,000. Some of our community supporters who put their hand up to help us include:

- **Chris R** - our Bendigo branch president who took on his fifth Noosa Triathlon. Our thanks also to the Richardson family who put on a post-race BBQ for our athletes.
- **Chris P** - our highest fundraiser with more than \$12,000 raised. Chris' daughter received a wish and we're so pleased to hear she is doing well.
- **Nick** - who had a wish kid in his class in the 90s and was so inspired he chose to fundraise for Make-A-Wish 20 years later.
- **Jess** - one of our wonderful volunteers from Central Sydney branch. Jess competed in honour of her late sister Lizzie who was granted her wish to visit Italy with her family in 2011. This year, Jess recruited two family friends and together they raised \$12,000.
- **Darryl** - who signed up three weeks before the event and started his training at the same time. Not only did he finish the triathlon, Darryl raised \$5,000!

Another successful fundraiser was the Essendon Fields 2020 Golf Classic held at King Island last February. A big thank you to Air Adventure, Essendon Fields and all the golfers who were involved in this fantastic event which raised almost \$20,000 to help make more wishes come true.

Unfortunately, the positive start to the year was not destined to continue, and by March, many of the planned community fundraising events were postponed or cancelled due to the pandemic.

This included golf days, gala balls, trivia nights, fun runs and events such as Bays' Wish, Foam Fest, Bake A Wish and the Great Coffee Challenge. This was extremely disappointing news for many of our hardworking volunteers and community supporters.

Despite the challenging circumstances, remarkable spirit was shown by our dedicated Wish Force. Many events were moved online with new ideas and virtual fundraising activations taking place including:

- Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce Virtual Grand Final Lunch featuring Carlton coach David Teague as guest speaker and raising close to \$4,000
- Facey Industries Virtual Charity Cup featuring golfer Nick O'Hern and wish ambassadors Hamish and Claude Nelson as guest speaker. A total of 60 people joined this Zoom event and over \$20,000 was raised.

Our volunteer branches also held online raffles, trivia nights, and even a Trash and Treasure which not only helped to raise vital funds for Make-A-Wish but also provided an opportunity for connection between family and friends.

And for the first time, Make-A-Wish HQ held its own national raffle - it was such a great success that a second raffle was held, with both raffles raising almost \$90,000. Thank you to our incredible volunteers who got behind the initiatives and promoted the raffles in their communities.

Philanthropy

Our generous philanthropic supporters gave nearly \$1.6M this financial year through major gifts, grants and bequests, to bring hope and joy to children with life threatening illnesses.

Long-term supporters for nearly 20 years, the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, gave \$100,000 to grant urgent wishes to critically ill children in Western Australia. We thank Elizabeth Perron for continuing her father's generous legacy in partnering with us to help children in WA.

We are grateful for a generous grant of \$158,500 from Perpetual this year to grant wishes in Victoria. The IMPACT fund represents the generosity of our community through Perpetual clients and we are proud and thankful for their support.

During a year in which many aspects of life were uncertain, we were staggered by the thoughtfulness and kindness of those who left a legacy of impact. These generous supporters left an incredible \$1M to change the lives of critically ill children and their families. A legacy of hope and joy we are thankful for.

Our sincere thanks to all of our philanthropic supporters for helping to make so many wishes come true.

See the impact of your generosity



"It was overwhelming the amount of effort that Make-A-Wish and Sydney Trains put into it".
-- Peter, Alec's dad

I wish to learn more about trains and go on a new kind of train.

Alec, 11
Ewing sarcoma

We'd like to thank and acknowledge the generous support we received from:

Maxine Bowness
Julie-Anne Sheppard
Stephen Sharp
Jill Tilbury
Yvonne Mee
Nathan Kelley
Roseanne Amarant
Peter McLachlan
Andrew James Schreuder Foundation
Annie Rose and Andrew Lazar Foundation
Channel 7 Telethon Trust
CommBank Foundation
Daly Family Foundation Pty Ltd
DANCOM Builders Pty Ltd
Donald Tyler Foundation
Epstein Charitable Foundation
Gaudry Gift
Lago Cold Stores Pty Ltd
Perpetual Trustees
Woodend Foundation
The Harry Secomb Foundation
Isobel Hill Brown Charitable Trust
Pierce Armstrong Trust
Quinn Femelle Private Ancillary Fund
Richardson Family Foundation
Robert and Christine Henshall Foundation
Snamrekka Charitable Trust
The Andrew & Geraldine Buxton Foundation
The Orloff Family Charitable Trust
The Stan Perron Charitable Foundation
Van Diemen Foundation
G Brooke Hutchings
Estate Late Paul Edward Dehnert
Peter Robert Bauer Memorial Fund



*I wish to spend the day
with my friend Batman*

Rory, 5
disseminated glioneuronal tumor

Rory's wish

Rory doesn't think of his tumour when he puts on a Batman costume.

His wish was to hang out with the real Batman for the day.

Wish mum Gemma knew something was amiss with her 4 year old son, Rory. He was unsteady on his feet and he would take himself to bed at 9am for a nap.

Gemma and husband Josh took Rory to their GP, and then to Geelong Hospital where fluid was discovered on Rory's brain.

Diagnosed with a disseminated glioneuronal tumour, Rory had spinal surgery within a few days to decompress the tumour. What followed was 68 weeks of chemotherapy.

Whenever he was well enough, Rory – who is “full of personality” according to his mum – would dress up as Batman, Superman or even a policeman. But it was the caped crusader he really wanted to meet.

Batman's friend would drop into Rory's house in the lead-up to his wish day giving Rory a toy bat and a Batman suit.

Rory and his family flew up to Sydney to meet Batman, just two weeks after Rory finished chemotherapy.

Batman and Rory hung out at 'Wayne Manor' and even had surprise visits from Wonder Woman, Cat Woman and policemen.

Gemma said being able to interact with Batman was the best part of Rory's day.

“Rory is more about the people than the things. But he and his brother did love the fact Batman gave them presents. That was a big highlight.”

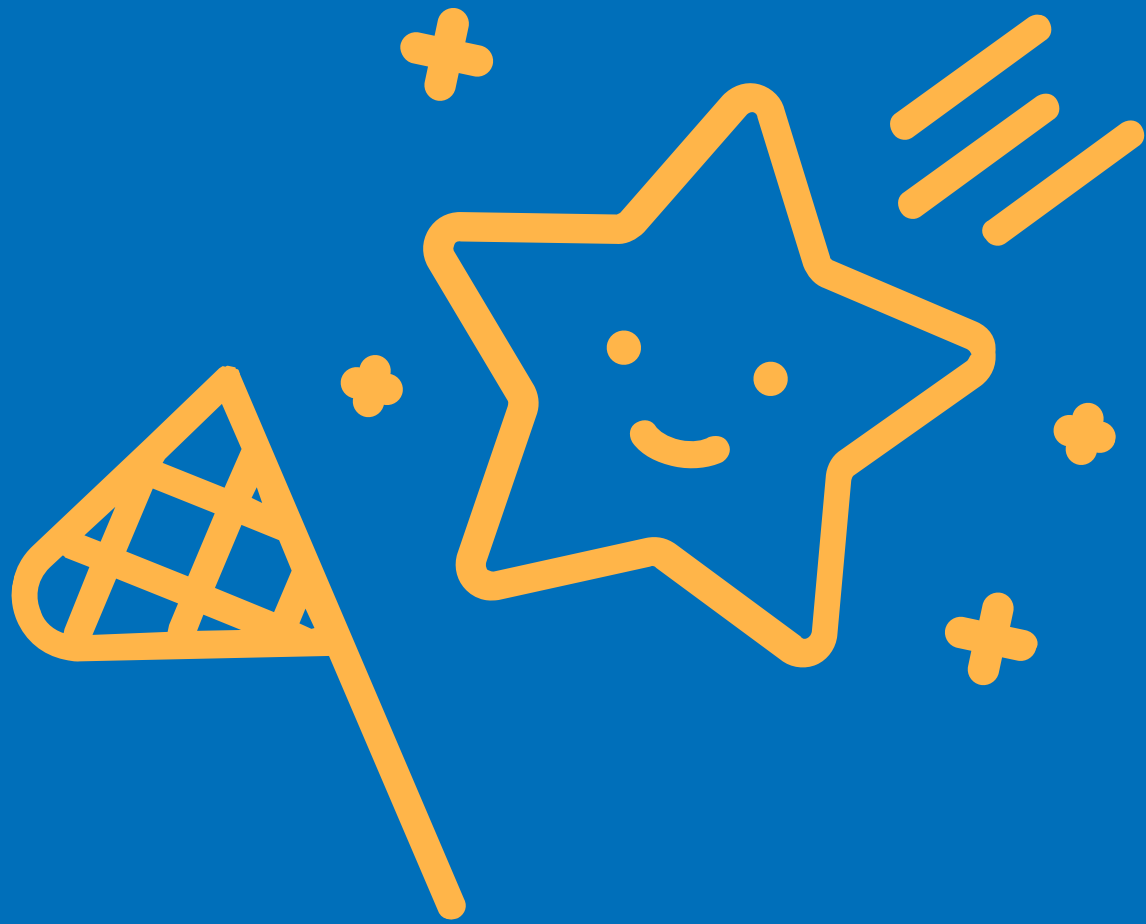
“This will definitely stay with him. We have talked about it since and he will recount all the things Batman talked about.”

“I just want to say how grateful and thankful the whole family are for the experience we were given. I know it was Rory's wish but all four of us were made to feel very special and very well looked after and we can't say thank you enough for that.”

-- Gemma, Rory's mum

Gemma said the wish day was a boost for the whole family.





Make-A-Wish in the community

In December 2019, Make-A-Wish was incredibly proud to place among Australia's most reputable charities. For the second consecutive year, we were placed in the 'Top 20' list of most trusted charities, moving up the rankings from 16th to 13th.

The RepTrak Charity study measures the reputations of a benchmark set of the largest Australian charities each year, based on ACNC revenue data.

Sharing possibility and hope with the community

A great example of sharing possibility and hope with the community this year was generated by our partners at Ooh!media. During the first COVID lockdown, Ooh! made the decision to deliver hope through their visual advertising space in cities and towns across Australia.

Ooh! chose the Make-A-Wish campaign 'Wishes Are Waiting' as one of their signature messages of hope and possibility to promote during that period – helping to raise awareness of our cause and ensuring wish kids remained visible to supporters during lockdown.

Our relationship with Ooh!media continues to ensure that Make-A-Wish is front of mind across Australia throughout the year. Their support has been vital to ensuring we continue to grant wishes.



Wishes in the media

Through a turbulent year, Australian audiences were still captivated by the wish community's kindness and the joy of seeing a wish come true. From 2019–2020, wishes continued to be shared by the media reaching a much broader national audience. Despite the reduction of wishes being fulfilled, interest in wish children and their stories remained high, achieving more than double the media reach of the previous financial year.

Our 'Wishes are Waiting' campaign raised awareness about how COVID had impacted our wish program. With at least one wish affected every day in Australia between March and September 2020, more than 200 kids were waiting to receive their wish.

As part of the campaign, we shared stories on our website, social media channels and with the media. Various news outlets covered the campaign via TV and radio interviews as well as print and online articles, resulting in a media reach of over 52.6M.

We are grateful to the wonderful team at Wrights for their continued support and tireless efforts in raising awareness about our wishes and campaigns through national media.



Wishin' and hopin'

HOW KIND HEARTS ARE KEEPING ALIVE THE DREAMS OF OUR MOST SERIOUSLY ILL KIDS



Our digital footprint in 2019-2020

151K visitors to our website
26% increase from last year

89% increase in engagement from last year
(likes, comments, shares)

4% audience growth

1M increase in the number of impressions
(the number of times our content is displayed to users)

*I wish to go on a
fishing trip with my family*

Torin, 13
quadriplegic cerebral palsy

Torin's Wish

Torin was so close to going on his fishing wish in Tasmania that he could almost feel the fish nibbling at his line.

The 13 year old's trip was called off at the eleventh hour because of COVID-19. "He was just so sad. He wasn't angry, he just sat there and wept," mum Beth said.

Severely disabled, Torin found it hard to understand why the trip had to be postponed. The only way Beth could explain it was to say the plane was broken.

"I told him it would happen one day but he doesn't quite get it," Beth said.

Torin's challenging medical journey started before he was even born.

Beth contracted cytomegalovirus (CMV) while Torin was in utero. The CMV then led to a brain disorder known as polymicrogyria (PMG).

What it meant was that Torin was born deaf, cannot speak, has cerebral palsy, autism and can only use his left arm.

"It was only at 11 months when we started putting it all together," Beth said. "We know he won't live forever, and we are fully okay with that but, yeah, it pulls at your heartstrings when you think about it."

Torin loves planes and fishing. When he sees planes in the sky, he stares at them. He also has a fish tank in

his bedroom and loves watching big fishing videos on YouTube.

After Make-A-Wish volunteers visited Torin to get an idea of his wish, the wheels were put in motion for a Tasmanian fishing trip with his family, which includes four siblings.

As COVID-19 put the brakes on Torin's trip, the Make-A-Wish community began focussing on how to keep him engaged.

They reached out to Robbie Alexander, a renowned fishing YouTuber and Make-A-Wish volunteer. Robbie knew he could help and got straight to work creating a special video for Torin, reassuring him his wish will eventually come true.

Beth said the video had lifted her son's spirits.

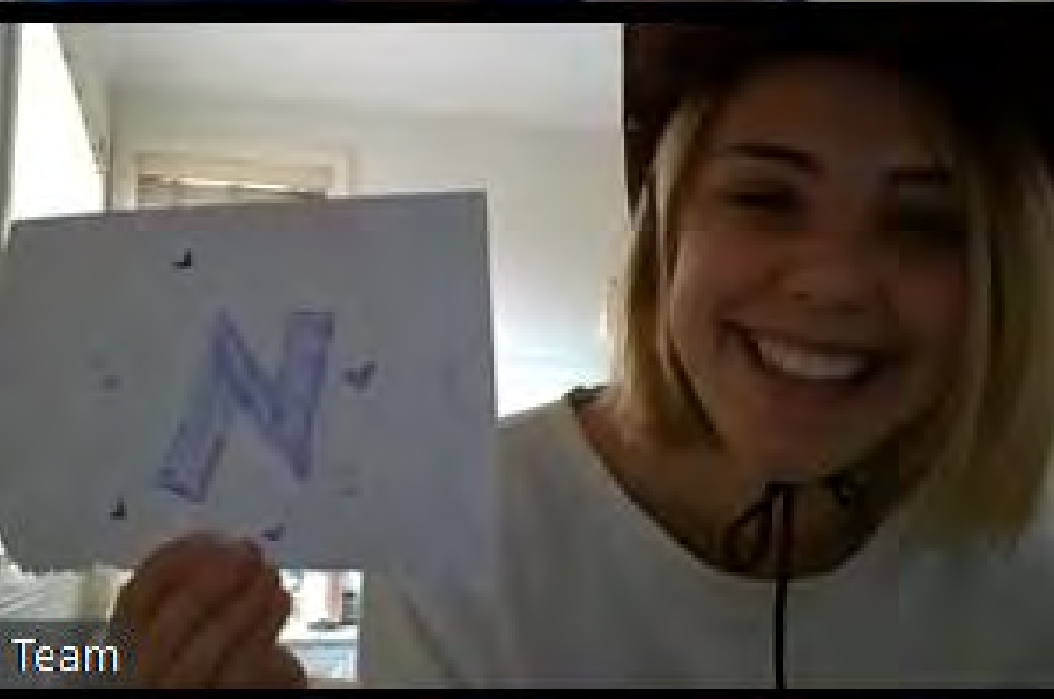
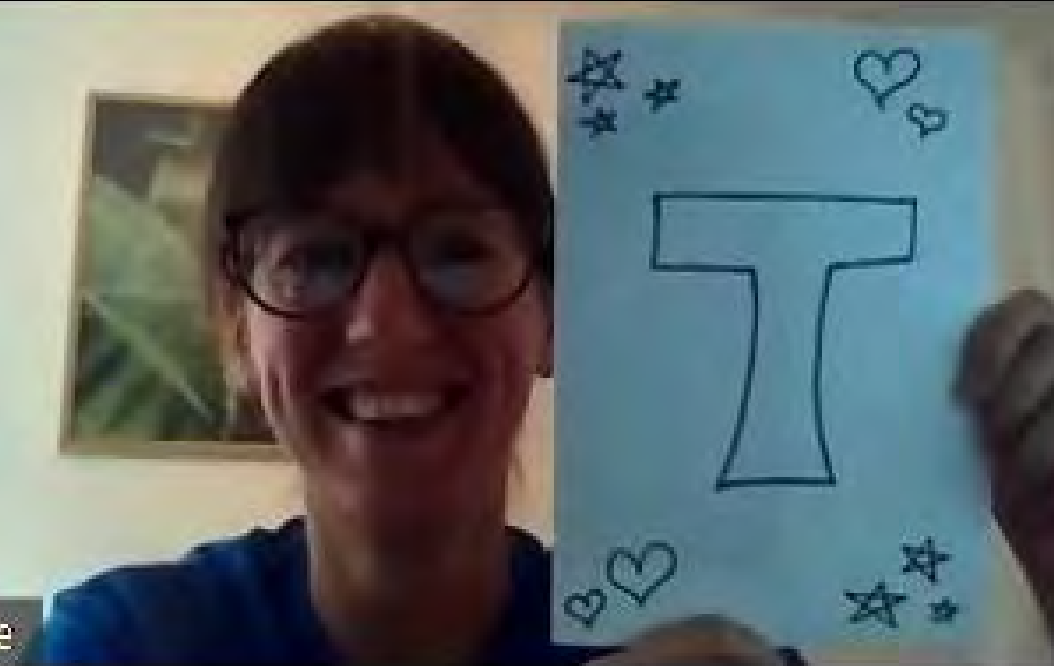
"I just showed Torin the video, and he was rapt. He was AMAZED he kept using his name. So cute. Such a beautiful gesture".

"Especially during this isolation how hard it's been for him, he needs to get out and live some life at the moment because he's really struggling,

"Make-A-Wish has just gone above and beyond. When this (wish) happens, I'll be indebted to them forever."
-- Beth, Torin's mum

Watch Robbie's
special video
for Torin





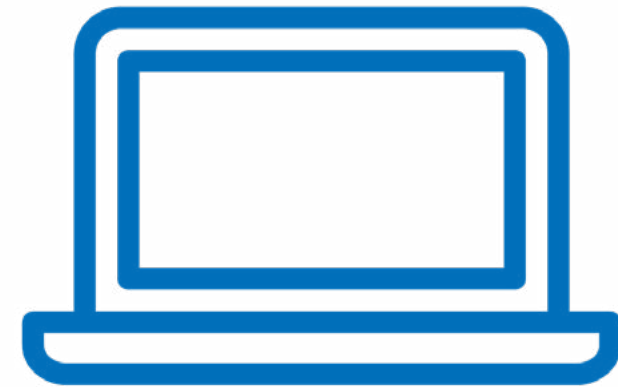
Smart Technology

In 2019-2020 we continued to prioritise the modernisation and security of our core technology infrastructure. We upgraded our desktop and server fleet and operating systems, network hardware and links, and fully migrated to a new platform for communication, collaboration, telephony and document storage.

This upgrade allowed increased mobility across all devices and a smooth transition for staff to work remotely from home due to COVID restrictions. We also focussed on promoting our digital platforms and capabilities to support the transition from in-person events, campaigns and cash donations to digital equivalents for our volunteers, donors and supporters.

As one of Australia's most trusted children's charities, we are committed to sustainably managing our operations, which extends to ethically managing the equipment lifecycle. We continued to strive ahead in becoming a paperless office and sending our old equipment to recyclers and refurbishers to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

Thanks to Officeworks for providing archive boxes, tape and bubble wrap to support our office move, and a scanner to help us manage our mail remotely.



Thanks to Human Pixel for helping us improve our wish application technology capability.

Financial overview

In the 2020 Financial Year, Make-A-Wish Australia reported a surplus of \$0.4 million to 31 August 2020.

Our income for the year was \$11.5 million (a 21% drop from 2018-2019) while expenses also dropped to \$11.1 million (23%).

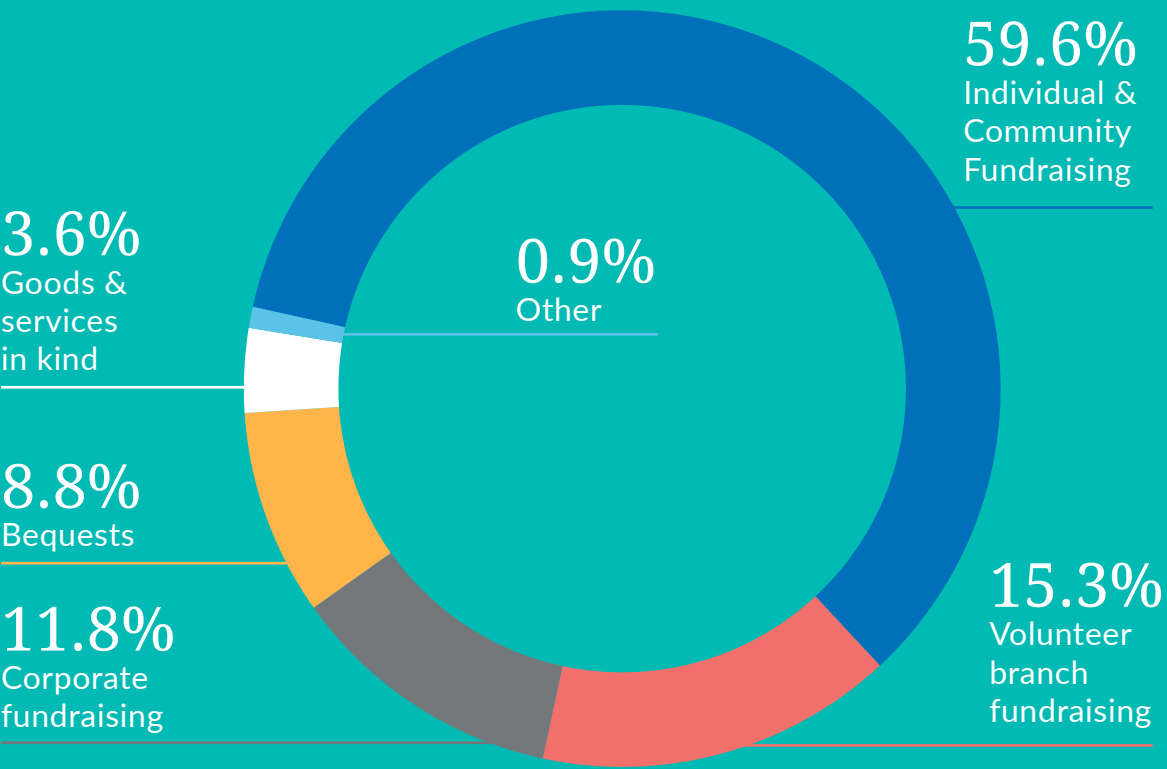
In a challenging time impacted by the economic uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully navigated our way to end the financial year with a surplus – largely due to managing our cost base and qualifying for the Jobkeeper payment scheme.

Our ability to deliver wishes safely has also been greatly impacted by the pandemic, particularly given its unpredictable nature. With over 800 children currently waiting for a wish, we are re-evaluating our current structure and processes to find creative ways of granting more wishes. While it's challenging to plan our wish program, particularly travel wishes, in advance at this time, our priority for the year ahead is to grant as many wishes as possible, when and as it becomes safe to do so.

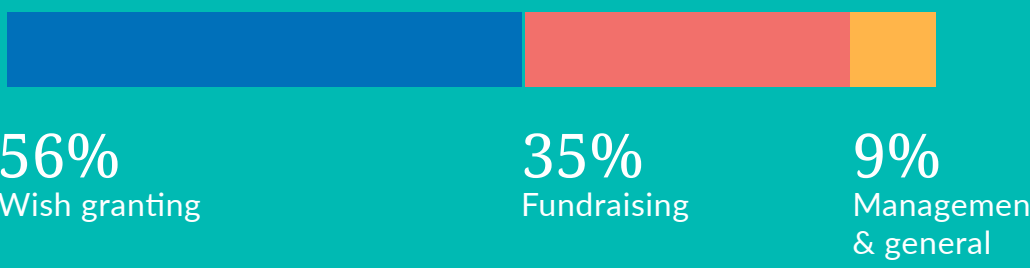
We anticipate there will be ongoing impacts of COVID-19 in the long-term future as we set about rebuilding our wish program. Our aim is to continue strengthening our financial position in order to expedite our waiting wishes, manage our current applications and grow our wish program in the years ahead.



Where our funds came from



...and how we used it



Thank You

In a year like no other, we extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the amazing collective of passionate people, businesses, local communities and volunteers that support Make-A-Wish.

Your patience, resilience and positivity continue to shine through in the face of challenging and uncertain times. You help us bring wishes to life for children and families who need hope and joy now more than ever.

Thank you for being a valued member of our Wish Force. We could not do it without you.

Our National Patrons

Robyn Moore
Melissa Doyle

Our Ambassadors

Mack Horton
Zac Mihajlovic
Fraser Ross
Noah Barlow
Owen Bowditch
Abbey Dutch
Grace Favelle
Zoie Moore
Hamish Nelson
Claude Nelson
Archie Schiller
Niamh Sullivan



*I wish to spend the day
with my friend Batman*

Rory, 5
disseminated glioneuronal tumor

Our Board



Stephen Sharp
Chairman



Sally Bateman
Chief Executive Officer



John Armstrong
Deputy Chairman



Sarah Saville
Treasurer



Amanda French
Volunteer Representative



Russell Smith
Volunteer Representative



Melinda Geertz
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Steve Billingham
Board Member



Dr Margaret Little
MBBS, FRACP, PhD
Board Member



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