

THE POWER OF PLAY



DOUBLING OUR IMPACT BY

2027



Our organisation is dedicated to ensuring that play is a central, accessible, and responsive vehicle for fostering the well-being of children, families, and communities. In 2022 we set a goal to double our impact by 2027, and through targeted intervention, increased funding by partners and Government and continued support from our dedicated team and volunteers, we are well on our way to realising this ambitious goal.

Our approach is built on a solid foundation of a community-driven brand, high-quality programs, and a focus on growth and sustainability. With an emphasis on digital engagement and data-driven decision-making, we continue to leverage the power of play to create meaningful, long-lasting impacts in the communities we serve.



Connecting Communities for 50 years+

OUR STRATEGIC GOAL

DOUBLE THE IMPACT

By 2027, we will double our impact with an engaged membership of over 100,000.

Our Vision

For every child and family to have a place in their community to connect, learn, and belong.

Our Purpose

Playgroup NSW leads and delivers programs and services that strengthen child development, nurture parent and carer wellbeing, and connect communities.

Our Values

Act with integrity: Put child and family wellbeing at the heart of our work, and be honest, accountable, and show respect.

Balance work and play: Be goal focused, mindful of people's wellbeing, and contribute to a positive team culture.

Lead change: Seek and encourage learning, innovation, and greater positive impact.

Embrace inclusivity: Be collaborative, seek to understand, and celebrate diversity.

Our Programs

We deliver our purpose through our flagship program areas:

- Parental Capacity Building
- Pathways to Pre-School
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Universal & Community Led
- PlayBaby (Pre-Natal + 0-12 months and mental health)
- Disability & Inclusion
- Timeless Play: Intergenerational
- Culturally & Linguistically Diverse
- Rural & Remote

Our Priorities

WE ENSURE PLAY IS INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND PROPORTIONATE TO THE DEGREE OF NEED

For our children, families & communities, we will:

- Strengthen parent and carer capacity and support through responsive, targeted and connected services.
- Positively impact child development, creating equal opportunity for education, health and wellbeing, and pathways to early learning.
- Create equal opportunities for all children and families to connect, including intergenerational, diverse communities and people with disability.
- Work towards Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, with culture, country, and spirituality at the centre of services.
- Create environments and structures that protect children, so they are safe and free from harm.

WE EXPAND IMPACT THROUGH COLLABORATION

With our partners, we will:

- Be a leading voice and contributor in the development of the early years sector.
- Represent the needs of members and our community to government and other key stakeholders.
- Provide integrated and inclusive services that drive value and leverage the strengths of all partners.
- Deliver culturally appropriate services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and organisations.
- Support an Australia-wide network to increase reach and impact.

WE ATTRACT, SUPPORT, DEVELOP AND ENGAGE OUR TEAMS AND VOLUNTEERS

Our people create and enable our success. With them, we will:

- Ensure culturally safe, diverse, and inclusive environments.
- Cultivate flexible, supportive, collaborative experiences.
- Provide opportunities for development, progression, and satisfaction.
- Be agile to plan and scale as needed.
- Deliver on our commitment to Aboriginal, disability and inclusion employment.
- Encourage a culture of innovation across the business.

Our strategy is underpinned by a continued focus on our foundational capabilities:

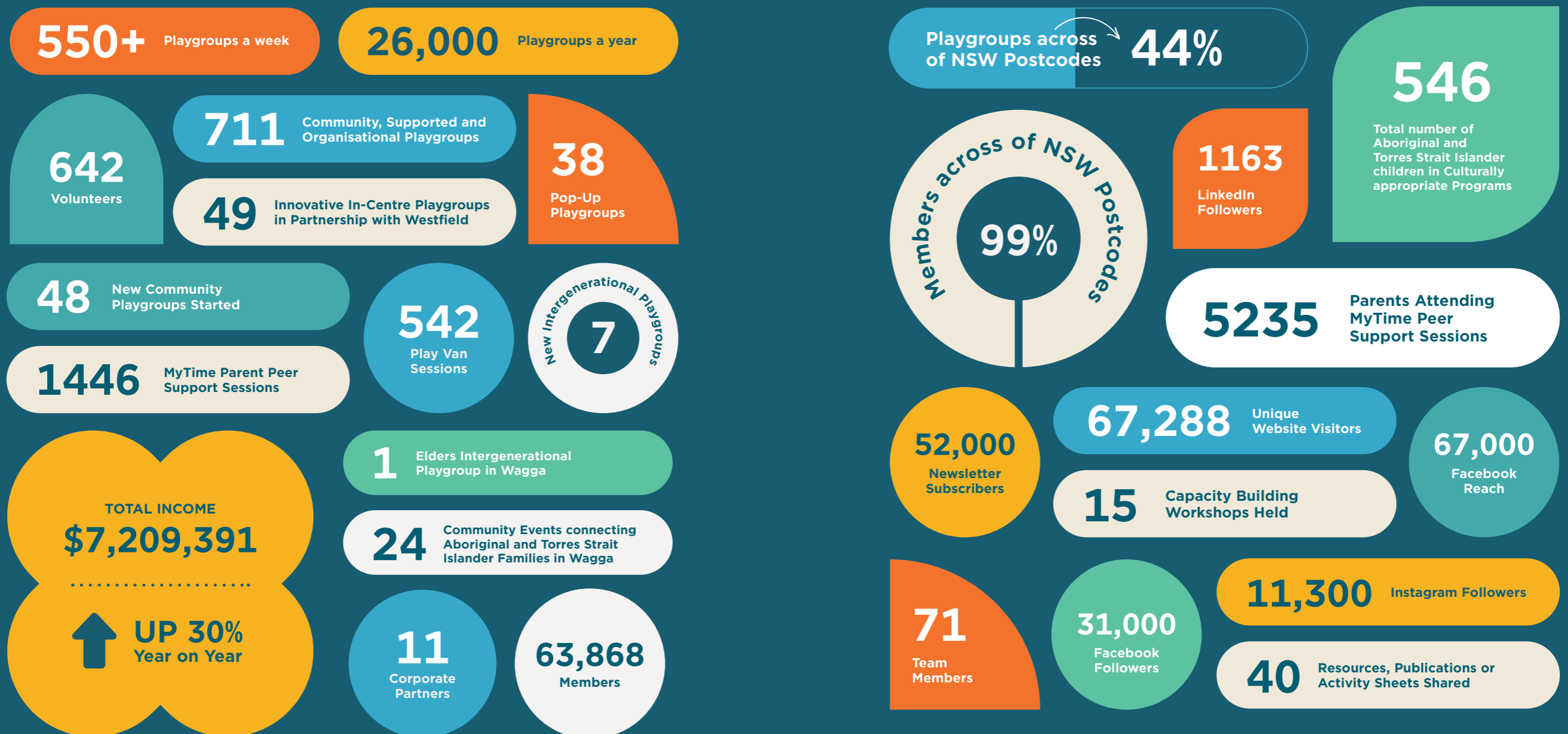
- 1** A buzzing, community-centric brand
- 2** Quality programs & impact measurement
- 3** Growth & financial sustainability
- 4** Digital engagement & data maturity

2023 - 2024

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



Key achievements, milestones, and impact metrics for the year.



Playgroup NSW Supported Programs & Playgroups

Playgroup NSW has been supporting and connecting families for over five decades through a range of Playgroups and Parent and Carer Support Groups facilitated by either volunteers or trained employees.

COMMUNITY PLAYGROUPS

Volunteers run Community Playgroups and comprise most Playgroups affiliated with Playgroup NSW. These groups cater to various children and families, from babies to school age and are run by local volunteers who best understand what their community requires from a Playgroup. There are also Community Playgroups that cater to a range of families looking for something specific, such as Baby Groups or language-specific groups.

BABY AND FIRST-TIME PARENT'S GROUPS

Baby Playgroups cater to families with a child up to 12 months of age, offering babies a wide variety of early learning experiences and giving parents and carers a safe space to discuss ideas, challenges, and the joys and frustrations of parenting.

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SUPPORTS

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START STRONG

Start Strong Pathways program helps provide educational support for young children prior to preschool enrolment, strengthens the engagement of children within these services and helps promote the importance of early childhood education to parents.

PALS

Play and Learn Supported (PALS) Playgroups provide developmentally appropriate play and learning opportunities for 0-6 years of age of all abilities. Activities are co-designed for families where children with a disability get exposure to 'mainstream' cultural, arts, sporting or recreational activities. It's a great place to connect with others to increase children's skills and enhance families' understanding of disability and inclusion within the community.

PLAYTOGETHER

PlayTogether sits across all programs within Playgroup NSW to support children and families with a disability and/or developmental delay to participate in community Playgroup settings. This is achieved through training, workshops and webinars to build the capacity of educators, service providers and industry experts, as well as the provision of a toolkit of resources to support this learning. One-on-one family support is also provided to families to overcome barriers to participation and inclusion.

TIMELESS PLAY INTERGENERATIONAL PLAYGROUPS

Timeless Play Intergenerational Playgroups bring together three generations – seniors, children and their parents. Interacting with seniors adds a new dimension to the Playgroup experience for children and can be incredibly enriching for those who don't have access to spending time with their own grandparents.

MYTIME

MyTime organises peer support groups for parents and carers of children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical conditions. It provides face-to-face and online peer support for parents and carers, with a facilitator for parents and a play leader for preschool-aged children. The group caters to Parents or carers with a child up to age 18 who require a higher level of care than other children.

PLAYCONNECT +

PlayConnect+ Playgroups are for families of children with disability and/or developmental concerns from birth through to eight years of age. Children do not require a formal diagnosis or referral to attend. PlayConnect+ is a Playgroup for the whole family, and siblings and carers are also welcome and included at PlayConnect+.

SUTHERLAND SUPPORTED PLAYGROUPS (SSPG)

SSPG offers indoor and outdoor play activities and experiences that embrace the strengths, interests and emerging skills of children aged 0-5 years. Our qualified early childhood educators provide a nurturing and stimulating environment that supports children's growth and learning during their early years through intentional teaching and role modelling. Families also receive information to build confidence in parenting by connecting them with services and resources that support their children's development and overall well-being.

ABORIGINAL SUPPORTED

Aboriginal Supported Playgroups play an important role in connecting Aboriginal families to their culture while offering family and parental support. These Playgroups are an opportunity to connect with others in their community and offer families linkages to other services and resources, while acting as a stepping stone to early learning and preschool. The program is delivered by dedicated Aboriginal educators who strive to bridge the gap and increase equality in education, wellbeing and health outcomes for young Aboriginal children and their families.

LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE GROUPS

Language-specific and Culturally Diverse Groups Playgroup NSW has a long tradition of supporting culturally and linguistically diverse families and, at present, supports local communities by offering Playgroups, which cater to over 20 different languages and cultures in Playgroups across NSW.

Sutherland Supported Playgroups



We surveyed parents who attend the Sutherland Supported Playgroups, to learn more about how our Supported Playgroup currently supports them and to look at ways in which we can improve. A few testimonials that were shared:

"I feel really lucky to have such a wonderful community-based service that is free and accessible supports my son's development and looks after me as a mum."

"The support provided helps to strengthen my knowledge and skills as a parent in a fun, nurturing environment"

"Playgroup is teaching me some cultural parenting ways that otherwise would be impossible to discover"

"They are a great sounding board for when I'm worried about something or have a question about my son's development. No question is too silly for them (and I've asked a few silly ones...)"

"Playgroup provides valuable information on what the current ideas are around child development, health and management. The advice is always delivered in a caring, professional way without judgment"

"We always have a laugh and I leave feeling happy to head home, feeling like I have been out in the world and have connected with other adult."



The Annual Member Survey

Playgroup NSW proudly has 63,868 members, including parents, families, carers and volunteers. As part of our continuous improvement, each year we ask our members for feedback on their Playgroup experience to ensure we continue to evolve and meet their needs. Here's some of the findings...

92%

would recommend Playgroup NSW Playgroups to other families with young children

96%

say attending Playgroup has increased their connection with other parents

95%

say Playgroup has increased their participation with people and services in their community

97%

say Playgroup has benefited them in their parenting role

98%

say Playgroup has supported their child's development

98%

say Playgroup has increased their child's social skills



"We are never more fully alive, more completely ourselves, or more deeply engrossed in anything than when we are playing."

- Charles Schaefer

What our members shared with us...



“Getting a reason to leave the house rather than being stuck indoors with no social interaction has helped my mental health and my children love somewhere new to play and socialise.”



“My Playgroup experience has been overwhelmingly positive. The environment is nurturing and inclusive, fostering a sense of community among the children and parents. The activities are well-organised and engaging, promoting both fun and learning. Overall, it’s been a wonderful opportunity for my child to socialise and develop new skills in a safe and friendly setting.”

“Playgroup has made me a better parent.”

“Moving to a sheep station with my partner then having our daughter with special needs and being even more isolated was very hard but having the one day a week to get out of the house and just sit on the grass and share a cuppa and a laugh with the girls in town does lift my spirits as they are always keen to listen or share thoughts or experiences without judgement and we usually always end up grabbing lunch together down at the pub or cafe so it really makes a day out of going to town.”

“Playgroup is a great place for adults and children to come together socially to learn and have fun. I have made friends with other parents and my son has friends he will have for school and beyond.”

“I experienced the Playgroups is very healthy for me to enjoy every single moment of playing with my daughter that’s take me out of my depression. Also it’s very healthy for her to discover new places new friends and new things.”

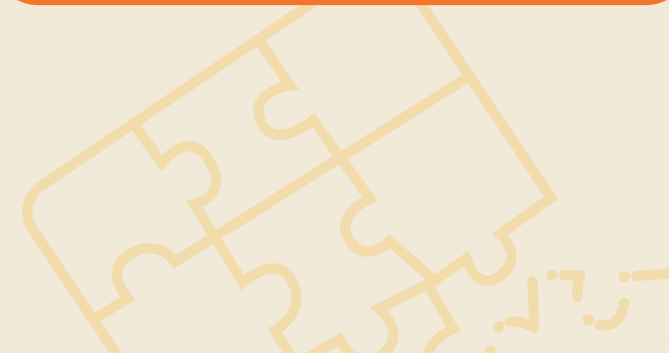
“I am honestly so grateful for Playgroup as it has supported my daughter’s holistic development, encouraged her to build and nurture new friendships, given me so many new ideas for playtime as well as new foundations for relationships with other parents, and it is an experience my daughter absolutely loves. I absolutely love watching her happy little face as she checks out all the new activities and interacts with her new friends, it’s the highlight of my day.”

“Playgroups have helped me to not feel isolated, it has allowed me to celebrate my daughter with her development and made me feel supported by the community when sharing the difficulties of parenting. It has stimulated my daughter with activities I would not have thought of. It also give her the opportunity to socialise, share and see how others (adults) treat each other.”

“Playgroup has been an excellent experience for myself and my child. Interacting with other local families is a fantastic part of our week!”

“Without the interactions of the locals (friends of friends and parents themselves already connection new parents) and local services from the area (mission Australia and Playability) visiting the Playgroup, my entire life and parenting experience would be entirely different as I was in a very unhealthy relationship and with the knowledge and support gained through Playgroup I was able to leave the relationship and begin recovering.”

“Playgroup has only just started back up locally after 2 years, and it’s been a great experience. My daughter really enjoys going, and hoping to be able to take both my girls regularly.”





www.playgroupnsw.org.au

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