

# 2015-16 Annual Report



Truth Character Friendship



**Grow**

A proven program for mental wellbeing

## Our vision

Grow is recognised for our unique approach to developing leaders in mental health recovery, through mutual help, friendships and community.

## Our mission

To enable people with a mental health condition or illness to take their responsible and caring place in the wider community.

## Our values

Grow's values underpin our approach, and how we work with each other, our Grow members, our partners, and the community.

**Personal responsibility.** We have a duty to do what is right and ethical, and to take responsibility for our actions.

**Personal value.** Every person is valuable and has their unique place in the community.

**Mutual help.** By working together, learning together and sharing experiences, we help one another grow to our full potential.

**Friendship.** Through companionship and leadership, we develop trust and hope, break down barriers and gain the courage to change and grow.

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*For all those people who can't get out of that hole, please be patient, take one step at a time. Hold on to the Grow Group, little steps bring us a long way. Everyone has pain and sadness and we as people can't do it alone. Never be afraid to ask for help.*

**Leesa, Grower**

# Performance at a glance 2015-16



**99%**  
of Growers would recommend Grow to others



**Over 180**  
Grow groups helped over 2,500 people in need

## Of Grow members who have, or are, receiving professional help for their mental illness:



**80%** felt that Grow helped them co-operate with professional help



**71%** felt Grow helped them reduce the need for professional help



**30%** said that they no longer needed professional support

## Of Grow members who have been hospitalised for their mental illness at some point:



**69%** reported significantly less need for hospitalisation



**59%** said they no longer needed hospitalisation

## Of Grow members who had considered suicide:



**76%** felt Grow had helped them overcome suicidal thoughts



**59%** felt Grow had helped them stop suicide attempts



**ISO9001 Quality Systems**  
Achieved quality accreditation



**400 volunteers**



**40,000 hours of volunteering**



**\$1,000,000 value**



## Board Chair

### Leonie Young

I am delighted to report to you after my second year as Grow's Board Chairperson, looking forward, looking back. Looking forward to 2017, as we embark on our 60th consecutive year of Grow services, we plan to strengthen and grow Grow, to increase our efforts and support to individuals, Growers, volunteers and staff across Australia. We have much to celebrate as an enduring grass roots, consumer based organisation. Our achievements are best illustrated by the collection of remarkable personal testimonies of people's lived experiences with mental illness, and their successes.

In order to position Grow for another 60 years, the Board is taking steps to ensure our good governance, policies, HR and IT tools and work practices are fit for purpose and able to support the expanding delivery of Grow's proven self-help and mutual support programs. With Australia's suicide rate at an all-time high of more than 3000 per year and climbing, Grow's model of building resilience and strength through the Grow Program and the importance of offering vulnerable people the hand of friendship, will continue. Grow and its programs have never been more important.

Looking back, I congratulate the vast numbers of staff, volunteers and growers who have contributed to Grow over many years. The numbers amount to many thousands across the country, in every state and territory. Their substantial and tireless efforts have helped Grow to continuously reach out through friendship, supporting people with mental illness to draw on mutual support and self-help, and take steps towards building social networks, aiding recovery, employment, and to join Grow in community service.

Importantly, our active consumer participation model has enabled Grow to retain its relevance since 1957. We have done this through ever-changing community and government mental health priorities. This has occurred through the iterations of early mental health reforms from institutional to community care, with Grow playing a strong role in the evolving national mental health and national suicide prevention strategies, all the while supporting people through their most vulnerable times.

I look forward to the upcoming landmark year with Grow, and to working alongside my colleagues on the Board, with Clare Guilfoyle, our remarkable CEO, and with the staff and members of Grow. I thank my Board colleagues sincerely for their generosity of time and commitment to Grow. I thank our supporters, benefactors and stakeholders, and each of the State and Territory Governments for their confidence and funding.

We welcome the Australian Government's commitment to a 5th National Mental Health Strategy, the ongoing Suicide Prevention Strategy, and to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We look forward to the opportunities and collaborations these revised strategies will bring to Grow so that we can better support our members, families and stakeholders in achieving independence, good mental health and long-term well being.

**Leonie Young MAICD**



## Chief Executive Officer

### Clare Guilfoyle

In Grow, we say we are a community. Our staff, members and dedicated volunteers are the heart of this community and I am very grateful for their tremendous efforts over the past year to support the work of Grow. Thank you also to our wonderful Board for all their support and for providing outstanding leadership, in particular, Leonie Young, our Board Chair.

2015 marked the third year of our anti-stigma campaign, Odd Socks Day. This year hundreds of people registered events to support better mental health and reduce stigma in our communities, workplaces, and homes.

A heartfelt thanks to Grow's branch managers and program staff, whose passionate dedication to Grow allows us to reach out and help people across the country every day and without whom Grow could not move forward.

Thanks to the national office staff who provided support to the many callers who needed help, daily administration of our operations, and provided the marketing support and materials for all our needs.

Thank you to each and every volunteer. You are the cornerstone of the Grow program and the embodiment of our motto, 'truth character and friendship' through your tireless efforts and support.

My thanks to our National Patron, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, our government funders, partners and corporate supporters and the many, many friends of Grow who have fundraised for us throughout the year. Your support is integral to our being able to expand and improve our programs, keeping them free and accessible to Australians across the country.

Our Grower's stories are the heart of who we are. It is their courage and hope for a better future that inspires us to strive each day to change to face of mental illness in Australia. I am proud and honoured to be part of this remarkable and on-going journey, and pleased to be able to share our highlights, accomplishments and plans for the future through this Annual Report.

### Clare Guilfoyle



**Maturity, or mental health, is the goal of the Grow Program. It is the vitality and inner peace of a person who is wholly attuned to reality. We describe the mentally-healthy person as having: a true mind; a strong character, and; a loving heart.**

## What is Grow?

Grow is a national not-for-profit organisation. We deliver Australia's leading mutual-help support program for people with mental illness and have branches in every state and territory. We are passionate advocates for mental wellness.

In 2015-2016 Grow delivered over 180 'general' community-based Grow Groups across Australia to over 2,500 individuals.

Grow offers two residential rehabilitation programs (for those with both mental health and substance abuse issues in NSW and the ACT); as well as prison groups, and services for carers.

Grow also operates a school-based program called Get Growing, for at-risk young people, profiled in this Annual Report.

### History

We have been leaders in mental wellness since 1957 and were established in New South Wales by people people who were drawn together by their first hand experience of mental illness.

In those days, finding safe, effective and community-based services was very challenging with considerable stigma attached to mental illness. To meet this challenge, our founders decided to draw on each other's experiences to help each other recover from their personal circumstances.

Well ahead of their time, the wisdom our founders gained in helping each other to overcome life's challenges and recover from mental illness was carefully recorded and forms the basis of the powerful and unique Grow Program.

This heritage, and our unique philosophy, allow us to take a holistic approach to mental wellness and deliver programs for prevention and

resilience as well as recovery. These programs are cherished by our participants and valued by our partners and stakeholders.

For almost 60 years, Grow and the Grow Program has been the catalyst for remarkable stories of recovery from mental illness and has helped tens of thousands of Australians live better lives.

### The heart of Grow – peer support

At its heart, Grow is a program of mutual-help. Our Blue Book contains the Grow Program's steps to recovery, sound principles for living, and many Grow wisdoms. We provide people with mental illness - or those who are simply struggling with life- transformative tools, friendship and lived-experience support. This support is consistently effective, affordable and accessible. The Grow program is proven to help people claim back their lives and participate fully in society.

### Growers lead the way

Grow sees 'leadership' as fundamental to recovering from mental illness and our volunteers are encouraged to, and take on, significant decision-making roles within the organisation.

Our major fundraising and awareness raising event, Odd Socks Day, aims on reducing stigma and coincides with Mental Health Week. Odd Socks Day continues to gain momentum with hundreds of individuals and businesses helping to help "stomp out stigma" and raise funds for Grow's programs. Please see our Program Spotlight on Odd Socks Day on page 16 for more information.





## Grow's services

Grow operates nationally to deliver a range of services to Australians to promote mental being and help those struggling with mental well being.

### 1. The Grow Group Program

Grow Groups are small, weekly meetings where people who are experiencing mental illness come together to support each other through their challenges.

All are welcome to attend a Grow program. All one needs is to recognise that they need help.

No diagnosis, referral, or eligibility test is required. The Groups are free to attend. Social activities are organised beyond Group sessions to further build supportive community networks.

Grow's program of personal growth is based on changing thinking and behaviour. It offers strategies on how to deal with an emotional crisis, manage feelings, think by reason, take responsibility for one's actions, realise personal worth, and improve relationships. Speaking the truth, and developing understanding, friendship, character, acceptance, confidence, control and love, underpins the Grow program.

Grow Groups are led by recovered and trained 'Growers.' Over the course of each meeting, the group engages in a series of discussions, training interactions and readings that follow a structure and timetable to ensure everyone has an opportunity to share and participate.

The Grow program is complementary to clinical and other interventions. Many Growers have reported needing less clinical interventions and medication due to their participation in a Grow group, helping them to be more self-reliant.

What makes Grow so special is the practical advice and the wisdoms that are discussed every week from a range of literature, developed from the lived experience of members. It forms the basis of what researchers into Grow have called "a layperson's cognitive therapy program". This literature has proven to be of enormous benefit, and can assist with keeping Growers on track with their road to recovery. Social activities are a key feature of the Group and are regularly planned by members. These activities encourage friendships, a network of support, the development of social skills and new interests.

**General groups:** In 2015-16 there were approximately 180 Grow Groups across Australia, including 22 specialised groups. Over 2,500 people regularly attended these groups.

**Prison groups:** Grow delivered a total of eight group programs in prisons in Victoria. Upon release from prison, participants are encouraged to join general Grow groups which support their integration into the wider community.

**Carers groups:** There were six *Grow Better Together* groups delivered in Victoria, designed to support the caregivers of people experiencing mental illness.



## 2. Residential and supported accommodation programs

The Grow Residential Rehabilitation program has been successfully providing a structured rehabilitation service for people with coexisting drug, alcohol and mental health issues for over 30 years. The residential service currently caters for up to 17 adults and is located on a rural farm setting in South West Sydney.

This service receives more than 50 enquiries a week, and currently has a waiting list of approximately 12 months.

Grow also operates supported accommodation for people with a mental illness in NSW and ACT. The accommodation in NSW provides a transition from the Residential Rehabilitation Program. The ACT house provides accommodation and support for up to five residents as they transition to independent living.

### 2015-2016 residential survey results:

- 88% of residents believed that their quality of life had improved since intake.
- 80% of residents Psychological Score had improved since intake.
- 79% of residents Severity of Dependence Scale had improved since intake.
- 90% experienced an improved sense of belonging and connection with the community.
- 82% said that Grow had directly contributed to their recovery.

## 3. Youth programs

Our Get Growing programs are delivered in partnerships with schools and are proving to be very successful by targeting teenagers and younger children who are experiencing difficulties or bullying, or are at risk of, or currently engaging in, self-harm. Given that 50% of adult mental illness emerges by the age of 15, this is a critical area of preventative work. The target age is 10 -18 and runs over a 10-week course for up to 10 participants.

Get Growing develops skills in self-reflection, problem solving, and encourages personal responsibility and resilience, empowering youth with timeless and practical life-enhancing skills and friendships.

Please see more on Get Growing in our Program Spotlight page.



# Who funded Grow?

## Our funders

Grow is predominantly funded by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and through private and community sources. Revenue from both government and the private sector increased in 2015-16FY from the previous fiscal year.

### Government funders

#### ACT

ACT Department of Health

#### New South Wales

Northern NSW Local Health District  
 South Western Sydney Local Health District  
 Southern NSW Local Health District  
 Western Sydney Local Health District

#### Northern Territory

Department of Defence-Family Support  
 Funding Program  
 Department of Health

#### Queensland

Queensland Department of Health  
 Queensland Mental Health Commission

#### South Australia

South Australian Department of Health

#### Tasmania

Tasmanian Department of Health and  
 Human Services

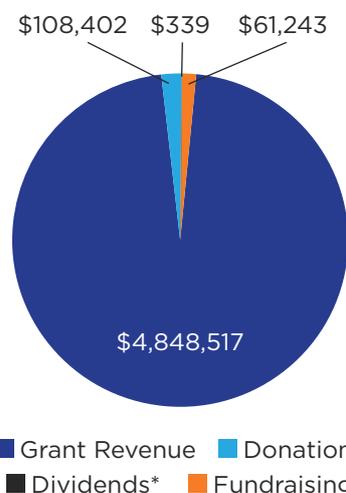
#### Victoria

Federal Department of Social Services  
 Victorian Department of Health and Human  
 Services

#### Western Australia

Mental Health Commission, WA

## Revenue FY15-16



	FY 15-16	FY 14-15
ACT	\$183,711	\$175,928
NSW	\$1,427,276	\$1,401,586
NT	\$204,705	\$196,832
QLD	\$591,266	\$550,000
SA	\$549,848	\$531,272
TAS	\$126,499	\$120,632
VIC	\$950,409	\$917,194
WA	\$814,803	\$801,353
<b>Grant Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,848,517</b>	<b>\$4,694,796</b>
Includes bequests, donations, dividends and fundraising	\$169,984	\$151,054
	<b>\$5,018,501</b>	<b>\$4,845,850</b>

## Community donations

We would like to thank all the individuals, families, businesses, community groups, schools and foundations who supported Grow in 2015-16.

These donations helped Grow with community outreach, our Odd Socks Day campaign, information technology, special member activities, and prison and carer program support. We thank the many local community organisations across the country that supported Grow throughout the year through events and awareness raising activities.

Our Growers are integral to raising awareness about Grow in the greater community and we thank them for their passion and devotion.



*Our goal over the next five years is to increase the proportion of private sector funding and support for our life-changing services.*

**Clare Guilfoyle, CEO**

## Our generous supporters and friends

(Includes cash, in-kind, community grants and Trust and Foundation contributions)

### Nationally

Cover-More Insurance  
MAX Solutions

### ACT

Ikea  
Federal Government Department of Science  
Young Lawyers of ACT

### Queensland

A Place to Belong, West End  
Centacare Cairns  
Church of the Resurrection Bridgeman Downs  
Crestmead Community Centre  
CWA Roma  
Deception Bay Baptist Church  
Excel Care Rockhampton  
Grill'd  
Floresco Ipswich  
Gympie Community Health Centre  
Impact Skills Centre Bundaberg  
Kedron Community Church  
Mental Awareness Foundation  
MIFNQ  
Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre  
Presbyterian Church Sandgate  
Queensland Mental Health Alliance  
Rockhampton Community Health  
Southside Chamber of Commerce  
St Andrews Anglican Church - Indooroopilly  
St Patricks Church Mackay  
The Community Focus Association  
Maroochydore  
Yeppoon Community Centre

### New South Wales

Dubbo Mission Australia  
Epic  
Lifeline Lismore  
Mental Health Coordinating Council  
Northern Rivers Community Foundation  
Rex Airlines  
St Vincent De Paul Men's Refuge  
Stockland  
Viva Energy

### Northern Territory

Carers NT  
MIFANT - Mental Illness Fellowship Australia NT  
NT Department of Defence  
Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition  
TEMHC - Top End Mental Health Consumers

### South Australia

Community Benefit SA  
Mental Health Coalition of South Australia  
MOSH House  
Office for Volunteers  
Red Faces  
Safe-in-Oz  
SOS Yorke (Stamp Out Suicide Yorke Peninsula)  
Southern Football League  
Speak Up/Kylena Vigus

TelethonSA  
Westpac

### Tasmania

Flourish  
Mental Health Council of Tasmania  
Richmond Fellowship of Tasmania  
Wellways

### Victoria

ARAFEMI Victoria (Association for the Relatives and Family of the Emotionally and Mentally Ill)  
Carers Victoria  
Centre of Excellence in Peer Support  
Church of Christ, Footscray  
Corrections Victoria  
Frankston Xavier Church  
Positive Living Centre  
Tandem

### Western Australia

Connect Groups  
Headspace  
Joondalup Police Academy  
MercyCare  
MIFWA - Mental Illness Fellowship of Western Australia  
Partners in Recovery  
RISE  
Western Australia Association for Mental Health  
Workpower

## Pro bono support

A very special thanks to our pro bono legal supporter, Clayton Utz who provide invaluable support on trademark issues.

## Odd Socks Day donations

We continued to grow awareness and support of our national anti-stigma campaign, Odd Socks Day. Grow is grateful for the generosity of the broader Australian community who registered events and raised funds in the lead up to and throughout Mental Health Week and beyond.

In its third year, registrations from over 453 businesses and hundreds of individuals across Australia helped us raise awareness about how stigma affects people with mental illness and what we can all do to make a difference.

Harnessing traditional and social media channels, Odd Socks Day raised over \$22,000 in 2015 - double the funds from the previous year! We will continue to build on this important campaign, and look forward to report on even better results in 2016-17.

# Patrons and partners

Grow would like to thank the notable individuals, organisations, local councils and Members of Parliament who supported us by referring people in need, and promoting our activities and community work to their staff and networks.

We are extremely fortunate to have **His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia** as our National Patron. His Excellency has been a wonderful ambassador for Grow and continues to don odd socks on Odd Socks Day and support our campaign through his Facebook page. His Excellency narrated and stars in a video about Grow's work which continues to be viewed and shared on our social media channels and visitors to our website. His Excellency is passionate about the mental well being of all Australians and we would like to thank him and his wife, Lady Lyn Cosgrove, for their commitment to Grow.

Thank you to our state and territory patrons and supporters:

- Her Excellency Professor the Honourable **Kate Warner AM - the Governor of Tasmania**
- The Honourable **Elise Archer MP**, Speaker of the **House of Assembly**, Tasmania
- **Vickie Chapman, MP, Member for Bragg**, South Australia
- **Katrine Hildyard, MP, Member for Reynell**, South Australia
- **Joe Kelly, MP, Member for Greenslopes**, Queensland
- **Ken Vowles, MP, Member for Johnston**, Northern Territory
- **Nicole Manison MP, Member for Wanguri**, Northern Territory
- **Sandra Kanck**, Former Member of the Legislative Council of South Australia and Democratic Party Minister

We also thank **Peter Fitzpatrick, AM, JP** who has been a Patron of Grow Western Australia since 2014. Peter walked with our Growers and members of the community at our WA Walk-A-Thon in 2015 to support our branch activities there.

We would like to thank **Max Solutions** for mobilising their staff across the country to participate in and donate to our 2015 Odd Socks Day campaign. Thanks also to **Cover-More Insurance** for supporting the early development of **e-Grow**, our virtual Grow Group, that will go live in the 2016-17 financial year.

Thank you to the **peak bodies** in the mental health sector who promote our activities and our Odd Socks Day campaign to their staff and networks. A special thanks to:

- **The Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck**
- **Tim Marney**, Western Australian **Mental Health Commissioner**
- Our sector friends, **Georgie Harman**, CEO of **Beyond Blue**
- **Frank Quinlan**, CEO, **Mental Health Australia**
- **Lifeline**, who work alongside Grow to support the well being of all Australians and refer our services to those who would benefit from the Grow Program.
- **The Mental Awareness Foundation** and **Tudor and Wesley Vasile**, who have been generously supporting Grow Queensland's activities since 2012 through their **Walk For Awareness** fundraising event.

Thanks to **Red Faces** Variety Night for its continued and generous support of our South Australia branch activities





*For almost 60 years, Grow's peer support and personal development programs have helped everyday Australians on their road to recovery from mental illness.*

**Grow National Patron,  
His Excellency General the Honourable  
Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth  
of Australia**

# Program spotlight



## Odd Socks Day 2015 – 6 October

Odd Socks Day is Grow's major awareness raising campaign that kicks off Mental Health Week. It's a fun and light-hearted approach to supporting mental well being, raising awareness about the issues surrounding mental illness and "stomping out stigma" which is the greatest barrier to people seeking help.

The theme "because anyone can have an odd day" helped bring to light that anyone at any time can be affected by mental illness or struggling with their mental health.

On Odd Socks Day, we encourage Australians from all walks of life to wear odd socks to

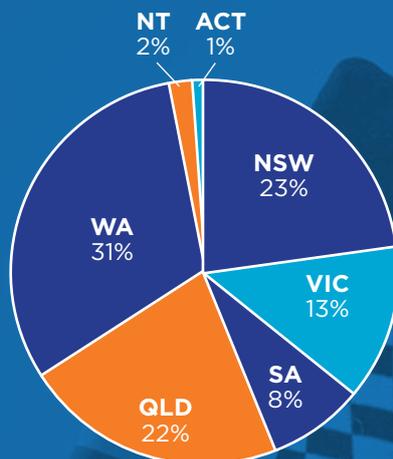
support their family, friends and workmates who might be feeling isolated. By starting a nationwide conversation about mental health and learning the facts about mental illness, we can all make a difference.

### Growing registrations

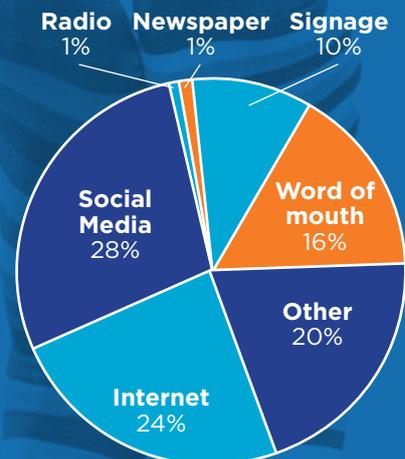
2015 represented our third year of the campaign and it continued to go from strength to strength.

Over 450 events were registered across Australia. Each of our state branches were well represented.

State-by-state share of registered fundraising events



How people discovered the campaign in 2015



## Growing donations to support our community programs

In 2015 we almost doubled our donations through Odd Socks Day events and donations from just over \$14,000 in 2014 to over \$22,000 in 2015. This is attributed to the dedicated work of our Grow volunteers and staff as well as a robust social media campaign that inspired Australians across the country to pull on their odd socks and support this important campaign.

We had over 170,000 unique impressions on our Odd Socks Day Facebook page, an increase of 70,000!

We look forward to bringing you the results for Odd Socks Day 2016 in our 2016-17 Annual Report.



# Performance: Our impact

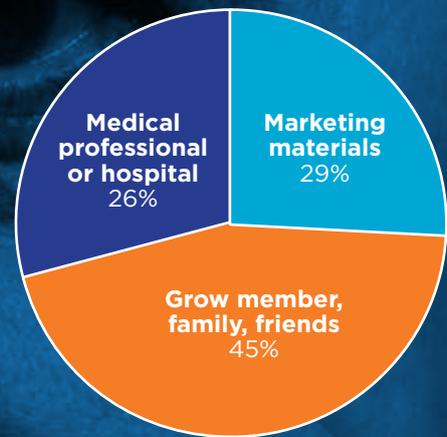
In 2015-16 Grow delivered over 180 Grow Groups. Of these, 163 were general groups and approximately 22 were specialised groups that target audiences such as youth, carers and those in residential services and prisons.

Almost **400 volunteers** supported our work, hundreds of social events were organised, and hundreds of phone calls were made to members by members to keep the community connected.

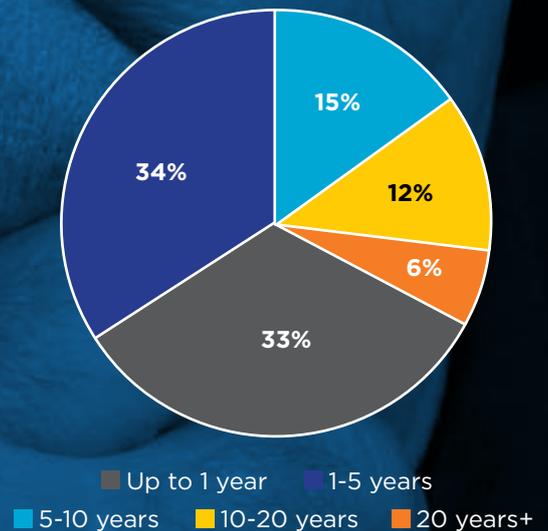
**Over 2,500** people attended Grow groups during the 2015-16 year on a regular basis, receiving support to overcome their mental illness and life challenges.

The 2015-16 Grow Annual Survey was distributed to Grow members and received a 50% response rate. The results showed strong performance across our services.

How people are referred to Grow



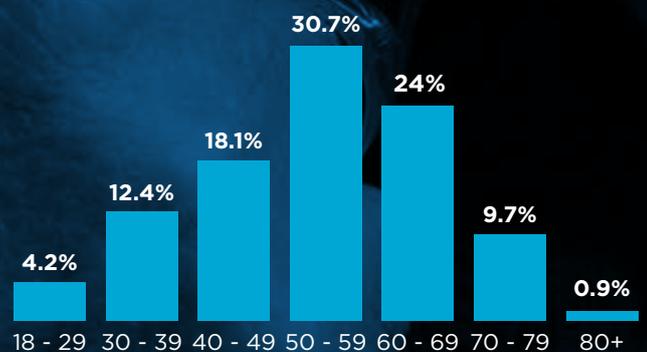
Length of time in Grow



**99% of Growers would refer Grow to others**

- an enviable result for any organisation. This statistic highlights the effectiveness of the Grow program.

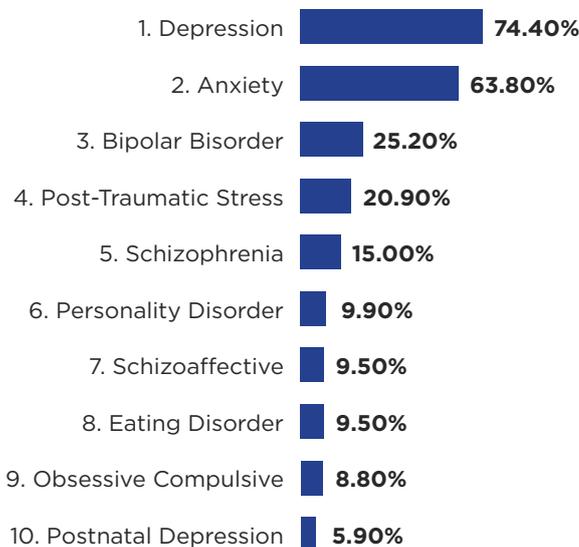
Age profile of Growers



## What keeps Growers coming back to Grow?

Knowing Good People Helping People  
 Community Thinking Growth  
 Learning Improve Program  
**Support Friendship**  
 Fellowship Meeting **Grow**  
**Problems** Advice Life Social  
 Interaction Seeing Friends Commitment  
 Mental Health Acceptance Able  
 Nice People **Group** Recovery

**85% of Growers have been diagnosed with at least one mental illness. The 10 most common are:**



## Professional treatment

- **91%** of Growers have received professional help for their issues at some point.
- **65%** are currently receiving professional help.
- Of those who have, or are, receiving professional help:
  - **80%** felt that Grow helped them co-operate with professional help.
  - **71%** felt Grow helped them reduce the need for professional help.
  - **30%** said that they no longer needed professional help with Grow's help.

## Hospitalisation

- **55%** of Growers have been hospitalised for mental illness at some point.
  - Of these, **69%** reported significantly less need for hospitalisation as a result of Grow.
  - And **59%** said that they no longer needed hospitalisation as a result of Grow.

## Suicide

- **76%** of Growers have had thoughts of suicide at some point.
- **35%** have attempted suicide.
- **51%** of told their Grow group they were contemplating suicide.
- **76%** felt Grow had helped them overcome suicidal thoughts.
- **59%** felt Grow had helped them stop suicide attempts.

## Changes in approach to life for Growers

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>91%</b> I use what I learn in Grow in my everyday life | <b>82%</b> I am able to think objectively               |
| <b>89%</b> I am developing my emotional maturity          | <b>80%</b> I have a good sense of my own personal value |
| <b>87%</b> I feel part of the community                   | <b>80%</b> I am looking after my physical health        |
| <b>84%</b> I feel able to take charge of my own life      | <b>80%</b> I am developing my spiritual maturity        |
| <b>83%</b> I am confident of attaining good mental health | <b>78%</b> I am connected with the broader community    |
| <b>82%</b> I feel hopeful about the future                | <b>77%</b> I am improving my problem relationships      |

## Performance: Finance

In the 2015-2016 Financial Year, Grow received the majority of its funding from each State Government and we have been fortunate to have current multi-year contracts with South Australia, Northern Territory, Victoria and Tasmania.

Over \$22,000 was raised through private donations to advance our national anti-stigma campaign, Odd Socks Day, double from the previous year. It also supported volunteer training and development and Grower activities such as weekend retreats which helped build Grow community capacity, leadership and inclusion, and our specialised programs such as the Grow Prison Programs and Carer Support Programs. See page 12 for a breakdown of our government vs community fundraising and a state-by-state breakdown.

Grow also dedicated internal funds to advance and improve our Get Growing program - an important and growing service that is empowering vulnerable young people to be more resilient and connected. Get Growing was delivered in the Northern Territory and South Australia.

Our volunteers make a significant financial contribution to our organisation by committing an average of two hours per week. This equates to 40,000 hours per annum which would have an in-kind value of approximately \$1,000,000.

Grow is very grateful for the ongoing pro-bono support of legal firm, Clayton Utz. This in-kind support provides significant savings to the organisation and is instrumental in helping us with all trademark related matters.

Additionally, the Board of the Sydney Parklands Trust has provided Grow with a generous reduction in the rent for our residential program in West Hoxton, NSW. The funds we save through this reduction are put back into the service - supporting activities, maintenance and programmatic improvements to our residents.

A full copy of our audited financial statements are available to view on our website, [www.grow.org.au](http://www.grow.org.au)

## Volunteers



### 40,000 Hours!



### = \$1,000,000 in kind



*Volunteering at Grow has been a very fulfilling part of my life and the atmosphere is always warm, friendly and nurturing, I highly recommend it to everyone*

**Vicki - Grow Volunteer**



# Performance: Operations

The Grow Annual Report provides an overview of Grow's activity during each 12-month period (July-June).

In the 2015-2016 Financial Year, Grow employed over 65 staff and was supported by approximately 400 volunteers. We are supported by a distinguished Board of Directors who assess the overall direction of our business. Our strategy and activities are overseen by our CEO, Chief Operating Officer and National Program Manager.

Grow's community undertakings are directed and evaluated internally by Branch Managers, Field Workers, Group Organisers and volunteers representing approximately 180 Grow Groups nationally.

Operational activities include research coordination, finance, public affairs, ICT, marketing and communication.

In 2015-2016 Grow continued to advance and improve its organisational operations

## Innovation

We are pleased to report an exciting, new virtual service direction in development to reach people in need who cannot reach us, called eGrow. Please refer to our What Needs To Grow page 28 for a spotlight on this program.

## National quality accreditation

Grow has maintained, through an external audit process, its accreditation and certification for ISO9001 Quality Management and the National Mental Health Standards. Grow is committed to providing consistent, quality, and excellent service and program delivery standards. We are grateful to our staff, Growers and volunteers for helping us achieve these results year on year.

## New evaluation of the Grow groups

One of the key conclusions of a commissioned research paper, "Mutual Support in Mental Health Recovery", was that Grow needed to establish a clear set of measurable outcomes. Grow personnel undertook a comprehensive review of the methodology that evaluates the group quality and compliance with the Grow Group Method and developed a new Group Evaluation methodology accordingly.

In 2015-2016, The Grow team in South Australia trialled the new methodology to assess its viability and acceptance to Growers. As a result, the national roll-out of the new evaluation has commenced.

## Review of Information and Communication Technology capacity

In 2015-2016, Grow began the process of reviewing the capacity and capability of its Information and Communication Technology. This will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practice as well as improve efficiencies, and will be implemented in 2016-2017.

positive change, self-value, acceptance, resilience

## Get Growing: A pathway to well being for young people

### The challenge

The need to belong and fit in is acutely important for young people. Daily pressures related to body image, social status, instability in the home, poverty, illness, alcohol or substance abuse, and domestic violence can lead to isolation, coping issues, depression, disengagement, anxiety, bullying and self-harm.

This is borne out in the current statistics - which are alarming - and include:

- One in four young Australians currently has a mental health condition.
- 50% of lifetime cases of mental health disorders start by age 14 years.
- Suicide is the biggest killer of young Australians and accounts for the deaths of more young people than car accidents

Where do young people turn to when their lives are in turmoil? Most often they turn to their peers. Research indicates that peer-based support can be perceived by youth as a credible source of help and is more acceptable than mainstream support services.<sup>2</sup>

### Early intervention is key to life-long mental wellness

Grow developed the Get Growing program because adult Growers consistently tell us that if they had access to the Grow Program when they were young, their lives would have been completely different, and they would not have become so unwell.

### The Get Growing Program

Get Growing is an in-school program based on the adult Grow Program and tailored to appeal to, and meet the needs of, young people. Youth identified as 'at-risk', aged 10-18, join a supportive group where they build friendships and gain practical life, coping and social tools to develop resilience and self-esteem. We partner with and deliver in schools because the school environment is familiar and generally considered "safe" by young people.

Get Growing is facilitated by a trained youth worker and is conducted over 10 weeks, in groups of approximately 10 children or youth. As part of the group, young people talk about their problems and work on strategies together to achieve positive changes in their lives. They support each other through difficult times, helping to break the isolation and stigma so prevalent in youth culture. Young people learn they are not alone and are capable of changing their lives, a critical catalyst for open communication and proactive problem solving.



*Get Growing made me realise that hitting people wasn't the solution*

**Get Growing participant**



*Get Growing taught me to handle my anger and to ask for help when I needed it*

**Get Growing participant**

### Funding

Grow relies on external funding to be able to provide Get Growing free of cost to participants and schools.

The cost to deliver the 10-week program in a school is \$3,500, which includes two youth workers, materials and evaluation. Setting our sights on securing private sector funding, we aim on developing advanced program supports such as: Apps for Smart Phones and tablets, age appropriate resources, traditional and digital marketing and communication materials, and a university defined program evaluation.

### The Get Growing impact

Courses delivered in 2016 were measured for efficacy:

Issues identified by students	Get Growing helped with this issue
Worrying	88%
Talk about things that are worrying you	75%
Feeling sad	88%
Feeling angry	63%
Learn how to not get angry	63%
To like myself better	88%
To make new friends	88%
Learn why people bully	75%
Learn more about myself	88%

### Program expansion

During 2015-2016 Get Growing was delivered to vulnerable young people in mainstream schools, and youth services in the Northern Territory and South Australia. We will be begin piloting Get Growing in Queensland in 2016-2017.

**Source1:** Beyond Blue / ABS National Survey of Mental Health and Well being: Summary of Results 2007

**Source 2:** Australian Department of Health report: Mental Health of Young People in Australia

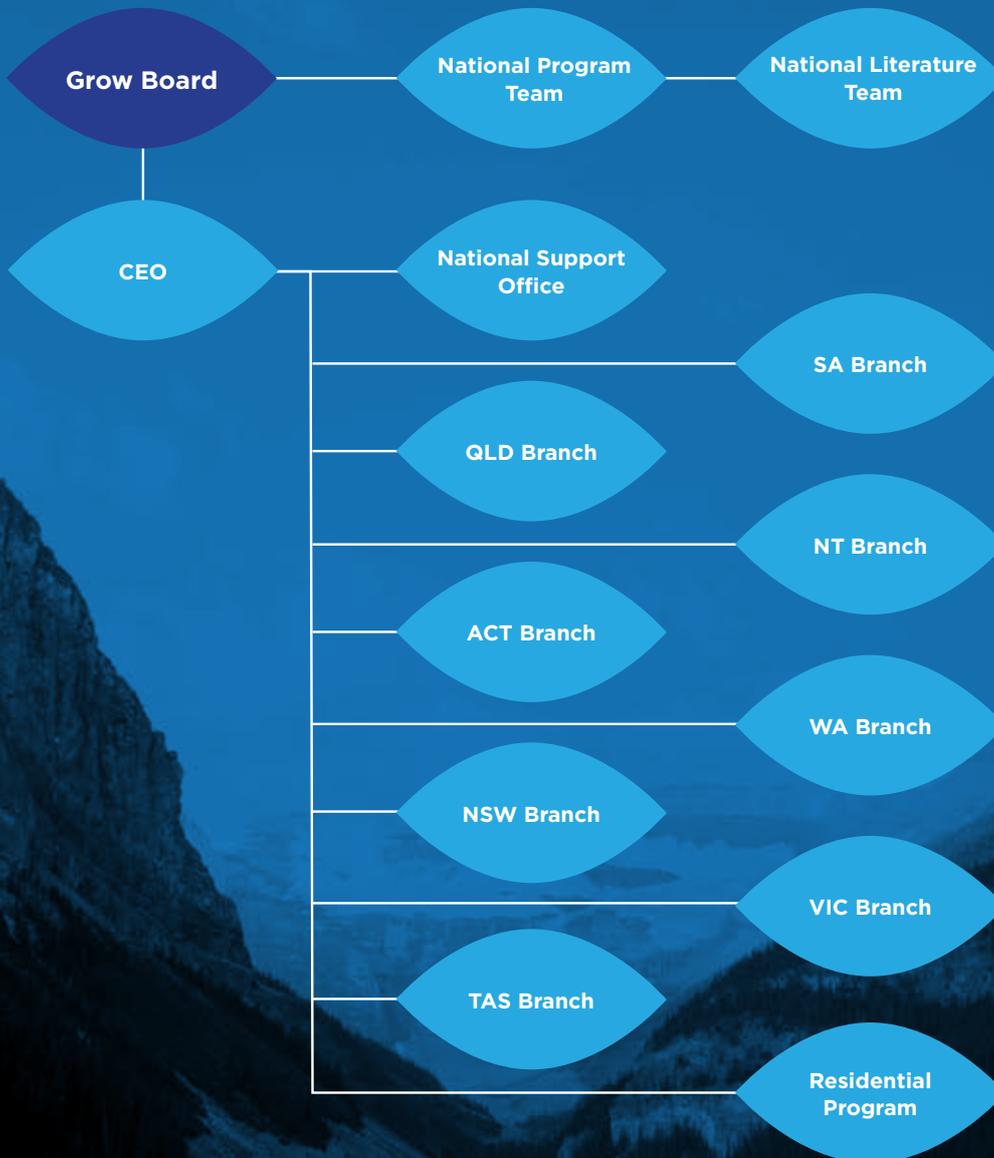


*Get Growing helped me understand different areas of my life and that I can stand up to people in a healthy and positive way*

**Get Growing participant**

# Our governance

## Corporate structure



## National Program Team structure and purpose

The National Program Team (NPT) is comprised of seasoned Growers nominated by each state. Its key purpose is to ensure the Grow Program is delivered and developed in line with the needs and aspirations of the membership. As a subcommittee of the Board, the NPT provides advice and support to the Board on

key governance issues and reviews and advises on the delivery of the Program throughout the country, leadership training and the development of Grow literature. It is supported by the National Program Coordinator who is part of the National Support Office.



### National Program Committee Members 2015 - 16 FY

- Brendan Barry (Chairperson) (WA)
- Angela Dalu (NSW) / Neville Bradbury (as of 16 June 2016)
- Barbara Peach (Ind.)
- John Mclsaac (Board Rep)
- Elizabeth Kolaitis (National Program Co-Ordinator)

## Board of Directors



### Chairperson Leonie Young – Full Year

Leonie has had a 25 year national leadership career in the public and not-for-profit sectors in Australia, including implementing and leading Australia-wide health, mental health and primary care reform strategies as a successful CEO, Board Director, NGO leader, State Manager and public sector executive. Leonie's former role as CEO of Beyond Blue provides exceptional insight into the mental health sector.



### Treasurer Kathryn Harrison – Full Year

Kathryn has over 25 years' experience in the community services sector working with more than 60 community organisations and managing a range of mental health programs. Kathryn was appointed to the Board as our Queensland member. Kathryn is also Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.



### Steve Bailey – Full Year

Steve is a registered psychologist, currently working at Macquarie University and who has been working with people with dual disability and dual diagnosis

for more than 25 years. Steve was appointed to the Board in October 2010 as our Residential Rehabilitation member.



### Garry Halliday – Full Year

Garry has a Bachelor of Social Work and a Graduate Diploma in Family Counselling and has recently retired as the Chief Executive Officer of the

Northern Territory Carers. Garry was appointed to the Board in May 2013 as our Northern Territory member.



### Colleen Hosking – Full Year

Colleen is a recently retired partner at Ernst and Young and is a Chartered Accountant (ICAA) and a Registered Company Auditor. Colleen is

also a member of the Finance and Audit Sub-Committee. Colleen was appointed in to the Board in August 2008 as the NSW member.



### John MacIsaac – Full Year

John is a consulting engineer in the mining sector. John has participated in the Grow community since 2006.

John was appointed to the Board in August 2011 and our Victorian member. John is also Deputy Chair.



### Lance Skelton – Full Year

Lance is a marketing and advertising consultant as well as a Grower, Lance was appointed to the Board in November 2010 as an Independent member.



### Ian Sloan – December 2015 – June 2016

Ian has 25 years' experience in business and technology working with government, private business and other, not for profit organisations.

For the last 13 years Ian, has been the Managing Director of DSBS, an IT Consulting, Contracting and Talent Sourcing company based in WA and Canberra. Ian is also the Chair of the ICT subcommittee.



### In Memory

We mourn the passing of **Doug Gowers** in 2016, former Board Member and long term supporter, mentor, and Grower. Vale Doug.

# The Grow community

As we grow, we recognize the importance of having friends who are authentic and genuine - people who love, respect and support us. Having a community around us is important for many reasons - and means we are not alone in the world. Community supports us to get through the tough times and, conversely, allows us to care for and help others in their time of need.

The 'Grow Community' is the name we give to the social and mutual-support network that enfolds our members, or 'Growers'.

This friendship network is crucial for people with mental illness as the isolation so often associated with it presents a serious barrier to recovery.

Grow provides this network by delivering a caring, sharing community that instills a sense of belonging and self-worth to our members.

In Grow Groups, people share their experiences in a safe and welcoming environment and are approached with kindness, trust and understanding. Members also gain profound wisdom through our "Blue Book" (A Program of Personal Growth), which contains practical strategies to deal with the vagaries of life and

strategies to develop a strong sense of personal value and care for others.

Growers are strongly encouraged to stay in touch with each other outside of Group. They attend social events, community days, weekend retreats and more to keep the community strong. Event planning keeps members connected and engaged and Growers are an integral part of the planning.

Volunteerism is the backbone of Grow group's operations and continuing success. Volunteer Growers engage in training, mentorship and leadership development which helps in their recovery as well as contributing to our vibrant and inclusive Grow Community. One of the key aspects of the Grow program is the active participation of the Growers who take on roles within the organization as part of their own recovery and are vital to the success of the Grow Program.

These carefully-fostered friendships and support networks help break down debilitating isolation and gives Growers hope and optimism for a brighter future.



#### Image:

Growers spend a weekend together at Bindoon, WA to help reduce isolation, encourage responsibility and give members a break from their usual surroundings and stresses. Lifelong friendships are often developed at Grow social events.



# Leadership activates mental wellness

Since Grow developed its program in 1957, taking personal responsibility and developing personal leadership qualities has been a critical part of the Grow journey to mental wellness and recovery. Leadership is seen as a core way for members to take back control of their lives, rather than allowing mental illness to dictate their future. These leadership roles also allow Growers to give back to others and to share their learnings and recovery with newer members who are in need of hope, guidance, inspiration and friendship.

Grow volunteer leaders are given extensive training to ensure they are able to effectively lead others within the Grow community. During 2015-16, we had hundreds of Growers volunteering their time and efforts and taking on the mantle of leadership.

Grow provides multiple leadership opportunities for its members and these roles are carried out with passion and dedication. In fact, our long-term Growers have the opportunity to 'grow' into high-responsibility volunteer roles and a number are now formally employed by Grow or have gained new work-relevant skills.

Examples of leadership opportunities available to Growers include:



*I had been on the roller coaster of mood swings. I needed help. I ended up being admitted to a clinic at the age of 37, broken down. I was given a label of being manic depressive. Grow gave me the tools to work on myself. I find Grow has everything for me and I have come a long way in five years.*

*During this time, I have grown by taking on the roles of Recorder and Organiser in Group and have built up my leadership qualities. I have broadened my growth by attending Training Weekends, Leadership Meetings, Workshops, Organiser and Recorder Meetings, Grow socials, group outings, working bees, car-boot markets, group visiting and supporting others. I am very enthusiastic to keep going.*

*Through this, I have made very close friendships with Growers from other groups and now have a lot of good friends. My marriage has become strong again and, as a family unit, we have closeness and harmony and are very proud parents.*

**- Greg (NSW)**



# What needs to grow?

As we move into our 60th year of growth, we have set some ambitious goals for the end of 2018 as part of our Strategic Plan 2014-18:



**Double the number of people involved in Grow**



**Be recognised as a successful and proven mental health program by 1 in 3 Australian adults**

## How we will achieve these goals:



### Secure broader streams of funding

The implementation of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)* and the Australian *Fifth National Mental Health Plan Draft* will likely impact how Grow will be funded in the future. We must ensure Grow's programs will continue to operate and thrive beyond these changes.

Over the next year, Grow will focus on establishing long-term, private-sector funding streams to enhance services beyond the scope of current government support. This means developing a robust, multi-channel platform for fundraising and securing new corporate partnerships and donations.

Private sector funding will be instrumental in helping us with ongoing training and leadership programs, sector-recognised research and evaluation, building academic and social sector partnerships, and establishing new and diverse Grow Groups and activities.



### Next generation branding and marketing

With increased funding, Grow will look to refresh its branding and marketing materials to provide clear messaging across our programs and services. We will develop engaging digital and social media platforms, contemporary Grow Program literature as well as focus on strengthening our internal organisational culture and matrixes to better support the Grow community.

Grow will continue to improve and centralise readily-accessible and reliable activity data that will inform decision making about our organisation and group work.



### Sector partnerships

With Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and Local Hospital Networks (LHNs) set to allocate funding to local mental health services, Grow will need to develop robust outreach methodologies and materials that will build strong partnerships at the regional level. We aim to be part of an integrated community approach that will provide people in need with clear pathways to the appropriate services.

Additionally, we will look to build partnerships with academia, and the capacity of our patrons and board members to develop strategic relationships with businesses, government agencies and key individuals who can help us meet our goals.



### Reducing stigma

Our well-established, national anti-stigma campaign, Odd Socks Day, provides Grow with opportunities to establish strategic working partnerships with leaders in the mental health sector. These leaders may work with us to raise awareness of the impact of stigma and discrimination in our homes, schools, communities, and workplaces.



## Innovative growth projects: focus on youth and virtual support

### Get Growing

See our feature story on our Get Growing youth program on page 24 for more information.

### eGrow

We are embarking on a new era for the Grow Program and will soon begin piloting virtual Grow Groups in Queensland to people who are not able to access a face-to-face group program particularly those in rural and isolated areas.

The new virtual Group system, trialled as 'eGrow' will use video conferencing technology, provided by JamVee, that will be accessed through smart phones, tablets and computers, to provide a virtual group experience. eGrow is an exciting innovation for Grow with the potential to substantially increase our reach to hundreds more individuals across the country.

The trial is being funded by the Queensland Mental Health Commission. It will be formally evaluated by the University of Queensland's Centre for Online Health. We will have data available on its viability in 2017. Watch this space!

# In the words of Growers

*"Then the best thing that ever happened to me came about. It was suggested that I join a Grow group. That first meeting will live in my mind forever...the sheer relief to be set free and accepted by another person was the beginning of a journey.*

*Early in my time at Grow, I told the Group that if only my husband would change and not be so angry, it would be easier. I was told that the only person I could change was myself and then he might change as a result. This proved exactly right, as I changed he also changed. I found the best in life and love and happiness was ahead of me and it continues to be!"*

**Grower - Sonja**

*"My life has been the best I can remember thanks to Grow. Why would I ever want to go back to the old way of living - of agony and violence? Now because of the commitment I have to Grow, I have a new way of living."*

**Grower - David**

*"Grow is a marvellous organisation and has given me some wonderful help. I use the Program to read daily, and the weekly meetings are now part of my life. I can turn to the Blue Book at any time to give me a lift or message to help. And gradually I am learning bits by heart, but it takes time, like anything new, so perseverance is essential! I can thoroughly recommend the program to any prospective member, so thank you for helping me, and guiding me back to a new, different and more meaningful life."*

**Grower - Faith**

*"Grow teaches people a path towards being good and ordinary, and true friends to others. It is full of love, but not just a weak love that simply accepts faults and failings, but a strong love that confronts and corrects maladjustments. I now have hope for the future. I am still working hard on myself and will be for some time yet, but I have come to feel that each day I am growing closer to maturity."*

**Residential Grower - Ben**



*"The flow on from just one person grasping the wisdom of the Grow Program is amazing when you think of it. The effect on families, friends and everyone they come in close contact with, feels the effects."*

**Grower - Anonymous**

*"When the psychiatrist diagnosed me I told him about Grow. He said that he could see how useful Grow had been for me and that he did not need to see me again. He encouraged me to keep up the good work and recommended various books and resources. However, it was Grow that gave me the resources to manage the syndrome (Asperger's Syndrome) and lead a normal life."*

**Grower - Michael**

*"My life is worth living. I am a healthier, happier and more worthwhile human being thanks to the wonderful Grow Program."*

**Grower - Pat**

*"My Group asked me to be responsible, to come regularly, to come on time and to come prepared. Who would have ever thought being unable to commit is just one way we never grow up? I needed to be firm with myself and others in my world. This was a meeting I was committing to go to - on time. In addition, unless another more vital and true need came up, I would attend that meeting on time and prepared. It was a real step for me, leaving behind my childish ways of following impulsive feelings and always allowing others to be the responsible ones."*

**Grower - Anonymous**

*"I was in bad shape, I had attempted another bout of suicide and then one day I was walking through the shopping centre and I came across a pamphlet that had the word Grow written on it, and the words, Anxious, Depressed and Alone? I could relate immediately to all three. I decided to phone the number at the Grow House in Narrabundah. A lovely voice answered. I am convinced to this day her voice saved my life. Here I am, five months later. I live in the Residential. It is great, we have a fantastic fieldworker and I am so happy. My life is getting back to what it used to be. I am successfully holding down a casual job and my personal/family/friend relationships have never been better! I am actually enjoying life again and it is great! Three words: "Grow, Grow, Grow!"*

**Residential Grower - Kelly**





# State branches

## **Toll Free Information Line**

1800 558 268  
(weekdays, 9am to 5pm local time)

## **National Support Office**

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**Email:** national@grow.org.au

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## **Lismore Office**

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## **Grow Community Residential Rehab**

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In 2017 Grow will Celebrate  
— *60 Years* —

We have helped over 60,000  
Australians achieve better mental  
health through the power of  
**Truth, Character and  
Friendship**

Please join us on our remarkable journey:  
[www.grow.org.au/60thbirthday](http://www.grow.org.au/60thbirthday)

”

*Whatever my current physical, mental, social or spiritual condition, I am always a human person and equal in value to every other person. I am always valuable and my life has a purpose. I am a connecting link between persons and I have my unique place and unique part in humanity.*



A proven program for mental wellbeing

**National Support Office**

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