



Annual Report

2020 - 2021

GROW |



mental wellbeing programs

About GROW

Founded by Catholic priest Father Con Keogh in 1957, GROW continues to provide free, peer-to-peer groups for people looking for support with their mental health and wellbeing.

In 1954, Con suffered a mental breakdown and was hospitalised. He spent about 10 months in hospital and after being discharged a friend invited Con to attend an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting. Despite not identifying as an alcoholic, he attended the meeting.

Con responded well to the fellowship of the meetings and the AA program. Along the way he met others attending AA who were not necessarily alcoholics but found attending the meetings helped with their mental health. Eventually this group of like-minded friends started to talk about forming a group to meet their own specific needs to help them recover their mental health.

The outcome of this is what we now know as GROW. April 26, 1957 marks the first official meeting of people who were looking for support with their mental health. This group began helping and supporting each other back to good mental health. Back then we were known as Recovery – a name that emphasised the goal and the solution, rather than the problem.

From its very humble beginnings, GROW keeps on developing and expanding across Australia. GROW continues to be a community-based organisation that has helped thousands of Australians with their recovery from mental ill-health.

Our Values



Personal Responsibility

We act ethically and always take responsibility for our actions.



Personal Value

We believe every person has intrinsic value.



Mutal Help

We collaborate and share knowledge, skills and expertise for the personal development of leadership for all.



Friendship

We support each other and act with courage in the best interest of GROW.



Community

We create a caring and sharing community to provide a sense of belonging, social connectedness, and purpose to everyday life.

GROW Australia acknowledges Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



Chair of the Board

Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck

I am so proud of the way in which our staff have responded to new ways of working as COVID-19 has challenged our traditional approach. The transition to an online environment has been embraced across Australia and although we know that some of our Growers opted out in 2020, it has been pleasing to see participation increase again during 2021. Mental health support has been crucial during the past 12 months, and GROW has been able to provide that support.

The early adoption of technology as a means for providing programs in a more flexible manner meant that we had the systems and knowledge in place to move seamlessly to an online format. Nonetheless, we all look forward to meeting in person again in the coming months.

These necessary changes have reinforced the one GROW direction initiated in the organisation some years ago. One GROW however does not mean that the programs offered in each Region, Branch and residential service are identical because we must, and we do, respond to local issues and the priorities of local funders.

I would like to welcome our in-coming directors this year, Sonia de Mezza, Ina Mullin and Virginia Slaughter. Their appointments have brought new knowledge and skills as well as new connections to the Board

and have also increased our geographic representation. My thanks to all directors for their contribution this year, in particular Deputy Chair, John MacIsaac, Treasurer Peter Barker, and the chair of our digital transformation sub-committee, Ian Sloan. Thank you also to Julie Ling who stepped down as Company Secretary at the end of June 2021.

Thank you also to the National Program Team for your dedicated work in reinvigorating our program materials and ensuring that we maintain a quality service across Australia.

Best wishes on behalf of the Board to Dave McLoughlin who has dedicated 30 years to Grow as a volunteer and a staff member. Dave is widely recognised by his peers for his deep knowledge of and commitment to the Grow program which he has generously shared with colleagues. He will be missed, and the organisation is so much the richer for his contribution.

Finally, thank you to our National Chief Executive Officer, David Butt, who has navigated GROW through this past year. We appreciate the challenges you face with both Board and staff spread across the country in a time when opportunities to travel and to meet people are restricted. We look forward to working with you again in the coming year.

Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck



National CEO

David Butt

Another extraordinary year for 2020-21 and yet again GROW staff and volunteers can be justifiably proud of what they achieved.

As we went through various stages of isolation, distancing, and lockdown due to COVID-19 – with states and territories being impacted in different ways – staff and volunteers responded rapidly and supported as many people as possible to continue to participate in the program: this as many groups alternated between eGrow online and face-to-face meetings.

As I write, we are seeing an upsurge in COVID-19 cases in a number of states, with subsequent restrictions and lockdowns being reintroduced, and governments striving to get their populations vaccinated, which appears to be the only lasting solution. But what we have demonstrated over the past 18 months is that GROW is well placed to deal with the existence of COVID-19 and a continuing uncertain future due to what we have learnt about our ability to deliver many of our services online.

Our experience of the pandemic therefore has helped equip us for the impact of any future exogenous factors – bushfires (not a major issue this year albeit the lasting effects of the devastating fires in the previous year linger on for many), floods, and future pandemics – on delivery and access to our services.

It also has highlighted the relatively strong levels of resilience of participants in the Grow program, albeit our surveying also identified much higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and loneliness among participants due to the pandemic. In addition, we have identified that talk about when things “go back to normal” is probably misguided: the old normal is gone and something new has emerged and will continue to evolve.

An important initiative for GROW was the finalisation of the Board review of our Statement of Strategic Intent (SOSI). This was delayed due to the pandemic, but the revised SOSI was finally confirmed at the Board meeting in August. Then in February after a strategy day involving several Executive Leadership Team members the Board confirmed a small number of strategic priorities to be pursued by GROW, with the top priority being to maintain and expand our core business – the Grow Program.

The other priorities identified were:

- Expanding the reach of Get Growing into new schools and new markets
- Developing Growing Resilience
- Maintaining and exploring opportunities with GROW’s residential rehabilitation programs.
- Enhancing our fundraising strategies, including revised approaches to Odd Socks Day.



National CEO

David Butt

This is all to be underpinned by staff training and development, and by additional communications and promotions strategies.

This is significant, because it means we can focus on a limited number of priorities – with the Grow Program at the core – and not need to be diverted by developing additional new business ideas.

During the year, we introduced new online supports (based on and linked to the Grow Program) such as Welcome to Grow sessions and Growing Resilience, as well as establishing the Grow Online Community Forum to provide Growers with another way to connect with each other and progress recovery at any time. In addition, podcasts were recorded and placed on the GROW website to share inspiring stories of recovery and help others gain perspective and hope.

Growing Resilience, a six-part peer-to-peer program designed to help people improve their mental health and build resilience in times of high distress, underwent review and redesign to pick up on early feedback, with development of sessions and supporting tools to ensure clarity and responsiveness to different learning styles.

Our vital work in schools through Get Growing was disrupted by the pandemic, as did conducting the Grow program in prisons and the Young Adults Programs, while the residential communities at West Hoxton and in the ACT went into lockdown. However, we ultimately were able to achieve a 40 percent increase in Get Growing courses, and our residential communities maintained high occupancy rates.

Spurred on by necessity, our digital transformation developed rapidly, with new skills, training and development with Zoom and Teams, a restructure and tidying up of the existing SharePoint system, new intranet and revamped website, and adoption of risk management, HR and other systems through Folio, to make them more interactive, attractive, easy to use, and to streamline the services. These were major upgrades to help us better support our Growers and position the organisation for the future.

In addition, work began on Stage 1 of iGrow – a digital application designed for use with Grow groups, to streamline collection of information at the end of meetings, replacing paper forms and manual completion of spreadsheets and the Grow database. This was developed through a codesign process involving some very enthusiastic Growers on the codesign working group.

More than 300 people responded to the Grow Member Survey, with the results once again demonstrating the great value they get from the Grow Program on their journey of recovery. This is highly valuable information when dealing with stakeholders, particularly funders and other organisations we may partner with.

I also enjoyed participation in meetings of the National Program Team where once again they demonstrated their dedication to overseeing the ongoing development and delivery of the Program.



National CEO

David Butt

During the course of the year, we had some important changes at a senior level, with Dave McLoughlin retiring after 30 years with GROW (maintaining he will be coming back as a volunteer), Julie Ling retiring and Rhett Chapman moving to Queensland. My thanks to them and to others who departed for all the positive contributions they made to GROW. Of course, even as people come and go, GROW goes on as it has for the past 64 years, and we were able to recruit some great new people into the organisation which is very exciting.

We continue to operate in an uncertain environment and my thanks go out to all our managers, other staff and lionhearted volunteers who have responded so well to continue to support each other and build strong community.

My thanks once again to the Board and our Chairperson, Lesley, for providing the clarity of strategic direction which emerged over the year – that has been a welcome advance and positions us to focus on a few important things in the foreseeable future.

David Butt

National Program Team Report

A collection of elected volunteers



The National Program Team (NPT) is a collection of elected volunteers from within the GROW organisation who are considered first and foremost GROW leaders. Their development from Grow group members attending groups for their own mental health to volunteer leaders is founded upon demonstrated personal growth to maturity and mental health progress or recovery. It is embodied by their ability to provide leadership to those participating in group meetings through local volunteer teams and leadership meetings. Thereby providing a pathway and encouraging them to similarly take up responsible positions and share what they have gained.

This is designed to, and does, provide hope, inspiration, and a good deal of insight into the development of peer led training and feedback. This helps support and guide groups and teams throughout GROW.

Meeting in person



The highlight and small miracle of the year was the NPT meeting in person (not Zoom). It was great to see old friends again and discuss GROW's long-term direction and growth, in every GROW sense 'an encounter of persons'. It was great to see GROW's volunteer leaders willing to reach agreement on developing new GROW literature and other organisational and program development.

As such the NPT this year was able to perform a thorough review of its group method process and other items as suggested through the recently upgraded continuous improvement system. The NPT is made up of a mix of Program staff and grassroots leaders working together for the common welfare of the whole organisation nationally.

National Program Team Report

The approval of Leadership papers



The NPT was very pleased to approve eight of 12 Leadership papers for consideration as national Program literature. They were approved for general use in all Grow groups and now proudly become part of our collective wisdom. This brings the total for the past two years to 20 newly produced member generated mental health-based Program Leadership papers. We look forward to producing a published version of these for distribution in the next 12 months.

The adjustment of report systems



Over the past 12 months the National Program Team has changed from a quarterly reports system to a four-monthly report system. This was to align with local Branch Program Teams (BPT) and Organiser and Recorder Teams (O&R) own evaluation and reporting periods. The new four-monthly report from BPTs to the NPT covers two cycles of the O&R meeting periods. This allows for greater reflection of local needs and gives a more reasonable period for the NPT to provide feedback and support. Similarly, it allows more time for the local teams to implement the feedback and training needs.

In this way the NPT can ensure needs are being met and volunteer leadership has time to develop and flourish in regional and local areas around Australia.

We will be welcoming new leaders



We believe the success of this approach has been evident and we will be welcoming new leaders to the team from previously unrepresented areas in 2021/22.

Grow Groups

Our program is a 12-step program of personal growth, mutual help and support. The Grow Program is all-inclusive and draws on many principles for mental, social and spiritual health. At each meeting, members share about how they came to GROW and how they are exploring self-improvement strategies on their road to recovery.

Grow Groups are free of charge and there is no need to have a referral or a doctor's diagnosis. Members can choose to remain anonymous. Our meetings take place in a safe, caring and confidential way, whether the meetings are face-to-face, or online, known as eGrow Groups. Our members meet weekly and follow the Group Method.

At each meeting, GROW members will have opportunities to share any of their life challenges or issues and first-time members may choose not to speak or share.

During the reporting period we had 1251 Grow Group meetings across regional and metropolitan Australia.

As we move through the unknowns of the COVID-19 pandemic our face-to-face groups were moved to an online environment as restrictions changed day-to-day across Australia.

Volunteers



Without our volunteers
Grow Groups would not
be able to operate.

Growers



The number of people
attending Grow groups
across Australia.

Our eGrow Groups run the same as Grow Groups. The only difference is the meeting takes place via Zoom and the program is offered online. Launched in 2017, eGrow allows our members to still take part in a path to recovery without attending a physical Grow Group. Over the course of each meeting, the group engages in a series of discussions following the same structure and format as a face-to-face meeting.

Get Growing

The Get Growing program during this reporting period has continued to build on the previous years' work and has proven that peer-to-peer based mental health support in face-to-face format is highly desirable to both schools and institutions, and the students themselves.

Get Growing is a specialised mental health program for school aged participants aged from 11 to 17 years old. This program has been developed around GROW's proven program to meet the needs of young people, where early intervention can help to prevent and provide non-clinical peer to peer therapy.

The program runs over 10 weeks where Grow's program of mental health is taught to the students with a new topic to build on their expanding knowledge base each week, including:



Resilience



Feelings



Friendship



Problem solving



Safety



Personal value



Strengths



Goals



Stress



Dealing with a crisis

Get Growing

Often the only or most visible help available to young people is for those who have severe crisis and urgent needs. Get Growing goes beyond this and also targets young people who may be at risk and need to address their feelings of overwhelm, anxiety or social isolation. It can help prevent or minimise mental health issues before their mental health declines or reaches crisis point.

Despite the presence of COVID-19 restrictions, Get Growing facilitators were able to run 30 10-week group programs face-to-face in schools or youth centres during the reporting period. This represented a 42% increase from the previous reporting period.

This means onsite peer-to-peer mental health support is being delivered to more at-risk students than ever before by GROW across the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. Get Growing will be expanding into Victoria in 2021/22 and will also be piloted in northern NSW.

To accommodate this growing program and its significant potential to improve the mental health of young people nationally, GROW Australia has made an investment to further develop the program. Work has commenced on a facilitator training program which includes e-learning modules. This ensures that those who deliver the program have been trained to the highest level. GROW Australia has also worked with academics to improve our data collection for the program.

Get Growing continues to expand each year, as does the program development, ensuring that the best possible program is going to market.



**Tree of Strengths from
Get Growing participants.**

Growing Resilience



During the reporting period we were challenged to adapt and think differently. One of the new programs GROW developed was a COVID-19 response program called Growing Resilience.

The program attracted funding from Queensland Health which enabled us to further develop the program into a comprehensive offering.

Growing Resilience is a free online program for people who are experiencing mental ill-health or distress in daily living brought on by life events – in particular Coronavirus pandemic and the social, emotional and financial hardships associated with it.

The program is run over six one-hour Zoom sessions, facilitated by one of our experienced program workers. Participants are encouraged to share their stories and challenges in a supportive and structured peer-to-peer format that is safe, caring, and confidential.

The program is adapted from and incorporates wisdoms from the Grow Program. It is a simple way to introduce participants to the Grow Philosophy and the concept of peer support, often for the first time. The six topics covered in the program are:

- ➔ Live in the now and hope for the future.
- ➔ Managing loss and gaining perspective.
- ➔ Feeling overwhelmed.
- ➔ Managing feelings during stressful times.
- ➔ Exercise as a mental health medicine.
- ➔ Managing healthy relationships.



We had over 150 registrations for the program when it was launched and received positive responses from those who participated in the program. Many had their first experience with GROW, and others reconnected with the work we do. We achieved a 32.5% conversion rate from registration to attendance and 85% of people attended more than one session.

Feedback from the sessions include:



Thank you, Georgia, for another great session last night, such a valuable way to spend an hour looking after oneself! know that the 4 Stabilising questions do come from the book. I am now more keen than ever to bring GROW back to Roma ... I am a great believer of the program!



Just wanted to say a big thank you for your dedication, compassion and support you provide us in guiding us through these sessions ... Be it known how important and helpful you have been to me personally via these sessions ... You have certainly made a difference to me and all of us in the group.

We look forward to building on the work the team achieved during this reporting period.



Residential Rehabilitation Program

The Grow Rehabilitation Program has been successfully delivering a bespoke, structured rehabilitation service for clients with a dual-diagnosis - co-existing drug, alcohol, and mental health issues for more than 30 years.

The long-term therapeutic rehabilitation centre, situated on six acres of pristine farmland in Hoxton Park, is like no other in NSW. Here, clients get the opportunity to work on themselves, and on the farm alongside various animals in an open, calm, relaxing environment.

The centre works with both male and female clients varying in age with the average stay being between six to 12 months depending on the individual needs of the client.

Using the Grow Program as the foundation of all we do, our unique methods and knowledge of long-term recovery allow us to provide a service that is adaptable to individuals first and foremost with mental health issues and further services if an individual presents with the co-morbidity of alcohol and drug dependence, or dual diagnoses.

Combined with the Grow Program, the centre is essentially run as a therapeutic community, meaning a participative, group-based approach to long-term mental illness, personality disorders and substance use disorders.

Throughout a client's stay at the centre, they will progressively work through three key stages of the program, combined with daily Grow Groups and specific focus groups where they collectively share their struggles and ways to overcome them in a therapeutic setting.

Weekly activities within the rehabilitation centre include swimming/gym and exercise classes, bootcamp, library visits, pizza night, movies and much more.

Our staff are specifically handpicked with backgrounds ranging from lived experience, therapy, counselling, specialised case work and trauma management.

Unlike other rehabilitation centres, Grow has a key focus on after care for our clients. We do this in several ways, the first being our implementation of the Transition House. The transition house located 10 minutes from GROW offers a four-bedroom residential setting where after graduating from GROW, clients can then enter the Transition House to aid their transition back into the wider community.

**“ Once a Grower,
always a Grower ”**

This offers freedom and responsibility to our clients while still being connected to GROW and other Growers. For those not entering the transition house, GROW offers aftercare by establishing clear and defined exit strategies, relapse prevention planning and continued access to Grow groups within the centre.

During the reporting period, and after COVID 19 restrictions eased, both the centre and the Transition House are running at full capacity with an extensive waitlist.

ACT Residential Rehabilitation Program

Grow House in the ACT provides a safe and inclusive space for up to five people, supporting both male and female clients of varying ages to work on their mental health and substance use disorders. Residents usually stay for nine to 12 months as they develop the skills and confidence they need to function and participate in society.

Using the Grow Program as the foundation of the program, we provide a service that is adaptable to individuals with the co-morbidity of alcohol and drug addiction, or dual diagnoses.

Residents participate in Grow Groups during their stay and are required to complete program study, where they are set activities that encourage them to examine their own personal experiences and thought processes.

The basis of the groups and activities is strongly linked to the GROW 12 step program of recovery.

While staying in the centre, we also encourage residents to attend AA/NA meetings to further bolster their recovery.

We also provide access to external education materials such as the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network's Self Advocacy Training, a selection of PeerZone mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug education units.

Other structured activities include exercise, gardening, and communal meals. The house is operated under therapeutic community principles, and residents are expected to support each other during their stay.

As residents progress through the program, they are given more responsibility and are encouraged to take part in activities that will facilitate their return to meaningfully contributing to society. This could be enrolment in courses at Canberra Institute of Technology, where there is an opportunity to apply for a scholarship that will allow a recipient to study for a Cert IV in Community, Alcohol & Other Drugs, or Mental Health studies. Where appropriate, we will look to link residents with relevant agencies which may provide work experience through volunteer or part-time roles.

In the closing months of the year, we developed and implemented a new structure and program to better suit the needs of our clients and the facility.



Specialised programs

Young Adults



Our Young Adults Program encourages and supports people aged 18-35 with their mental wellbeing. It utilises the same key elements of the Grow Program but with a tailored method which encourages young adults to further develop their own personal resources, friendships and supports to overcome barriers they are experiencing.

Along with GROW material, groups use Ted Talks, YouTube clips, podcasts and articles to assist in learning and discussions. With a strong caring and sharing community in and outside of meetings, members organise a variety of social activities that are held weekly and monthly (dinners, coffees, meetups, games nights, movie nights, mini golf etc.).

This program is operated by GROW Vic/Tas. Due to COVID-19 only one group in Caulfield is currently running. During the reporting period we had 228 participants attend.

Carer Program



Our Carer Program, Grow Better Together, encourages and supports caregivers of people experiencing mental illness. It utilises the same key elements of the Grow Program encouraging carers to further develop their own personal resources, friendships and supports to overcome barriers they experience as part of their caring role. During the reporting period we had one group in Nunawading, Victoria, with 45 participants attending.

Specialised Programs



Prison Programs

GROW Victoria has been delivering the Grow Program to both Langi Kal Kal Prison near Ballarat and Hopkins Correctional Centre near Ararat for more than a decade. This expanded on the service provided to Port Phillip Prison and two other Victorian Corrections facilities.

The unique closed-group setting allows for support for many whose mental health trauma began much earlier than their incarceration. It is widely recognised that a large number of inmates have mental health and wellbeing challenges. The Grow Program allows the prisons to offer regular mental wellbeing peer support aimed at providing self-improvement strategies to recovery and readiness for transitioning out of prisons. The Program draws on GROW's lived experience / peer support model, in that group members support each other in managing in a custodial setting and in preparation for returning to the general community.

While the delivery of the Program has been impacted heavily this year due to COVID-19, resulting in the groups going into recess for most of the year, participants remain highly engaged and ready for its return. The Langi Kal Kal group has met over recent months as COVID Safe restrictions allowed. They have currently divided into two groups that meet alternative weeks. This allows for all members of the group to attend meetings that are capped at 10 individuals.

The Program structure operates similarly as in general Grow groups, in the sense that they have elected Organisers and Recorders and have monthly regional meetings. The Vic/Tas Western region has held regional meetings at Langi Kal Kal with a number of leaders from the general Grow groups attending.

A lot of effective leadership is developed in the groups. Twelfth step support between meetings is a strong aspect of the GROW communities in their respective custodial settings.

Growers contribute to the writing of material for Leadership meetings. A number of Growers have also written and shared their testimony, some of which has found its way in the latest Vic/Tas Testimony Booklet.

The Program within these custodial settings can provide significant resources for member's wellbeing. A current development is scoping the setting up of an online transitional eGroup for those Growers coming back into the general community.

Odd Socks Day 2020

Odd Socks Day is GROW's major awareness raising and fundraising campaign and kicks off Mental Health Week across the country.

It's a fun and light-hearted approach to supporting mental wellbeing, raising awareness about mental health issues and starting a national conversation about mental wellbeing.

On 9 October 2020, GROW delivered its seventh annual Odd Socks Day. It took a different look this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic making face-to-face meetings difficult and focussing primarily on a social media and online campaign.


We partnered with Odd Sock Mob, an Adelaide-based company who only sell odd socks. For every pair of odd socks purchased during October 2020, Odd Sock Mob donated \$1 to GROW.

On the day, we were inundated with event photos posted to social media using #osd2020 from fitness centres in WA, after school care centres in QLD, SA Ambulance Service in SA through to aged care facilities in NSW. We thank everyone who participated, started a conversation about mental health issues, and raised some much-needed funds for GROW. During the month of October, our social media presence grew significantly with the Odd Socks Day Facebook reaching more than 10,000 likes.



Personal Testimony

An extract of Sam's story of growth, recovery and personal change

 The Grow program has fundamentally improved the quality of my life and assisted in progressing my recovery from mental illness more than anything I have tried in the last 30 years.

I was born into a family in crisis, with an alcohol dependent mother, a brother who died prematurely from muscular dystrophy and a father who struggled to support us as a single parent. I was a strong child, out of necessity, however, began to feel anxious and depressed shortly after my brother passed. I was 21 years old and already had a heavy, daily drinking problem, following in my mother's footsteps. My first severe panic attack occurred at work in a supermarket, when it overwhelmed me, and I collapsed to the floor. I came to in the hospital under sedation, wondering what happened. My decline had begun.

I continued to drink on a nightly basis and more heavily on the weekends, it seemed to control my anxiety and depression effectively. I was still high functioning during the weekdays and held down a successful career in grocery retail management that would last for 30 years.


I began to feel as though my colleagues knew I had a problem and by 2017 I was compelled to leave the company and became unemployable. Drinking became my new full-time job and I soon wound up in hospital with complications from an abdominal hernia.

The alcohol and drug department interviewed me, and it was decided that I either enter a rehab for a period of 12 weeks or perhaps face the possibility that I may expire from alcohol dependency.

As I detoxed it became clear that the alcohol was merely a symptom of the underlining issues of anxiety and depression. I needed to find out why I felt this way all the time and deal with those problems once and for all if I were to have a chance at life again.

The Fieldworker for GROW Katherine, came to the centre to deliver a session on what GROW is and what it could offer the residents, and one thing got my attention straight away. Unlike other 12 step programs GROW did not employ a deity to explain away fictional concepts, it used reason and truth.

I decided to organise a group of interested people to attend the next Grow meeting and ask the centre to drive us there in the centre's bus. There were nine of us. Needless to say, the three members were surprised to see us all piling out of the bus that night. By the end of the meeting there was hugs all around and I had made the commitment to return the following week.

At my next meeting I made it my goal to learn the meeting method and I was asked to deliver my personal story for the group off the cuff. A little daunting at first but once I got going it was hard to shut me up. I began to feel as though I belonged in Grow. 

Personal Testimony Extract

“As time went on, I began volunteering my time to assist a Grower with a suicide prevention stall at the local shops and began to feel progress through my contributions.

The progress I have made in the past year is nicely summed up with Step 11 *We Grew Closer to Maturity*, which I feel I have and still am, and I am now able to credit myself for. Step 2 is likely the most important piece of program that I've grown comfortable with, *We Firmly Resolved to Restore Order In Our Lives And Cooperated With The Help We Needed*.

It was only a short two years ago that I would never have contemplated asking for help or accepted any offers of help. I wouldn't answer phone calls, reply to messages or emails, or even answer a knock at the door for that matter.

I have resolved that helping others is a key piece of program that assists my personal growth as much as the person I'm helping.

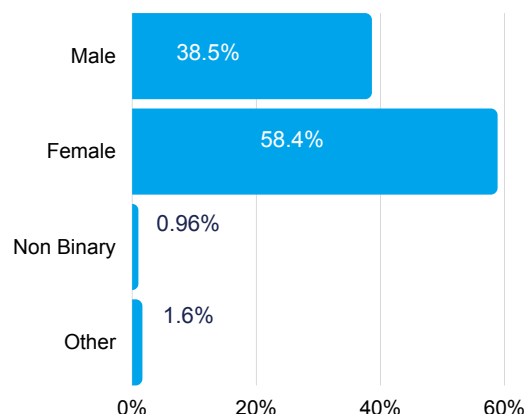
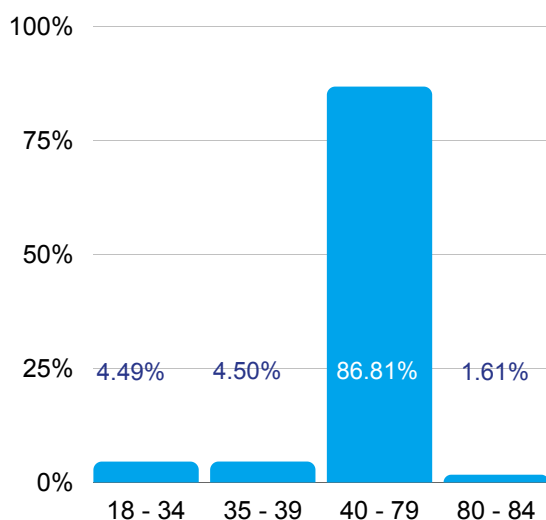
Finally, the glue that sticks all this together for me is “the comforting paradox” “Mostly, when things go wrong, they're meant to go wrong – so we can outgrow what we have to outgrow”. I translate this to mean that I can be grateful for things going wrong, as these times are learning experiences that bring me closer to maturity.”



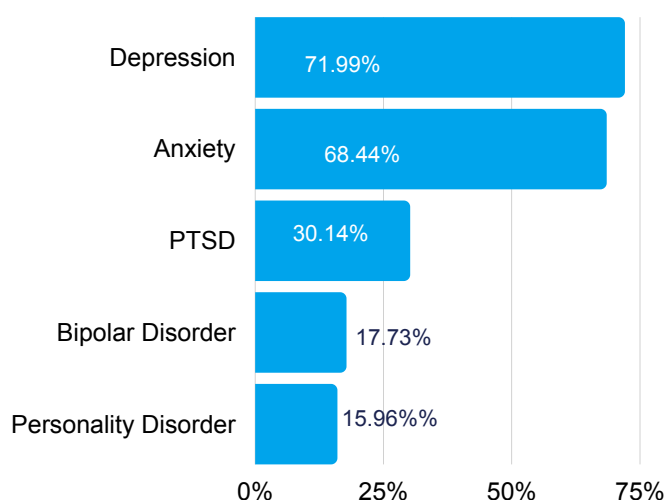
2021 Member's Survey

GROW's annual member survey is our regular pulse check for our members. The results show us a clear picture of our members, and how they use the Grow Program on their pathway to good mental health.

Who comes to GROW?

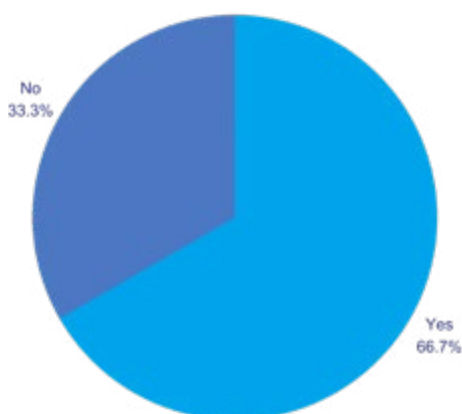


Health Profile

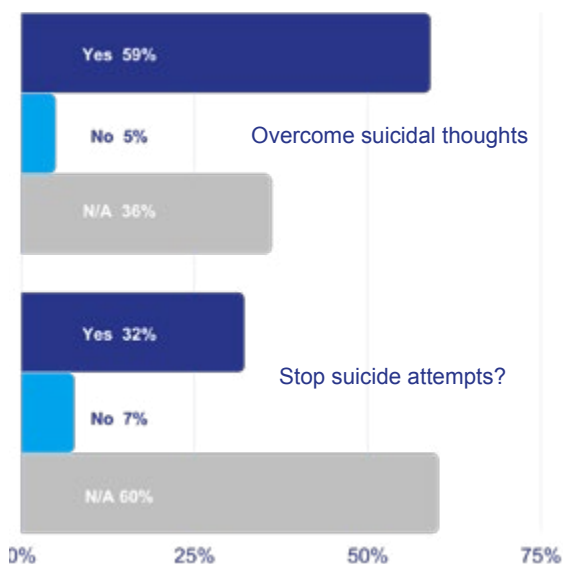


2021 Member's Survey

Have you experienced thoughts of attempting suicide?



Has GROW helped you overcome thoughts of suicide?



Impacts of GROW groups



91%

GROW Program has helped you to co-operate with professional help while under treatment



79%

Members report that the Grow Program has prevented the need for further hospitalisation



28%

No longer need professional help



69%

Reduced the need of professional help



55%

Members have been hospitalised for their mental illness



83%

Members report that the Grow Program has reduced their need for hospital admission



51%

Members report that the Grow Program helped them gain employment



43%

Members state that GROW has helped reduce their need for prescribed medication

96%

of respondents said they would refer GROW to others

2020/2021 Financial Year

GROW is predominately funded by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, and through private and community sources. Funding from both government and private sectors increased during the 20/21 financial year. The main reason was the COVID support in the form of COVID grants from the Queensland funders as well as the Commonwealth JobKeeper payments for all our states to support our staff. Our major funders:

ACT

ACT Government Health Directorate

TAS

Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services

NSW

Northern NSW Local Health District; South Western Sydney Local Health District; Western Sydney Local Health District; James Frizelle Foundation

SA

SA Department of Health

NT

NT Department of Health

VIC

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

QLD

QLD Department of Health

WA

Mental Health Commission, WA

Commonwealth Government

JobKeeper and cash flow boost payments.

Sales Revenue	FY 2020/2021	FY 2019/2020
Major Grants	\$5,128,738.00	\$5,231,564
Government Subsidies	\$1,011,200.00	\$302,000
Other Grants	\$489,077.65	\$12,186
Fundraising	\$5,184.00	\$20,915
Donations	\$125,594.00	\$71,353
Interest Received	\$9,380.00	\$46,394
Other Income	\$64,460.00	\$124,785
Board & Lodging	\$383,898.00	\$351,191
Total Revenue	\$7,217,531.65	\$6,160,391

Board of Directors



Dr Lesley van Schoubroek – Chair

Lesley is well known in the mental health sector. Lesley was the inaugural Mental Health Commissioner in Queensland. She has also held the position of Executive Director Transformation for the Mental Health Commission in Western Australia.



John MacIsaac – Deputy Chair

John has worked as a consulting engineer for more than 30 years in the minerals industry. He has participated and volunteered in the Grow Program in various roles since 2006 and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors



Peter Barker – Treasurer

Peter is a senior finance executive with significant domestic and international experience. He is the CFO and Company Secretary of multinational engineering, scientific and international development company, Cardno Ltd.



Sonia Di Mezza – Director

Sonia is a solicitor and human rights lawyer. She is the CEO of the Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Service in Bendigo, Victoria. She has set up and managed human rights projects in Pakistan and Sudan; worked as a Resettlement Consultant for the UN High Commission for Refugees in Lebanon; worked in India promoting the rights of child labourers; and as a refugee lawyer in Australia. Sonia holds a Master of International Law, majoring in human rights law.

Board of Directors



Heath Fereday – Director

Heath has more than 10 years of experience in working with the Grow Program and more than seven years of experience in Program and Consumer Leadership roles within GROW. Heath is the Chair of the SA Branch Program Team, a member of the National Program Team and is an active member of the GROW community. Heath was nominated to the Board by his peers.



Mark George – Director

Mark has been a member of the GROW community since 2016 and enjoys the opportunities that GROW offers for friendship, leadership, and connection. Mark is the Deputy Chair of the Vic/Tas Branch Program Team, representing Tasmania. Mark is also a member of the National Program Team. Mark was nominated to the Board by his peers. Mark resigned from the Board in July 2021.



Jeremy Morse – Director

Jeremy is a Business Performance Analyst at Anglicare Southern Qld. He was the Financial Accountant and Analyst for Anglicare Tasmania, and during the NDIS trial period, he oversaw the transition of contracts into funding under the NDIS.



Ina Mullin – Director

Ina has more than 20 years' experience in stakeholder engagement and communications. She is Director of Engagement and Communication at the National Mental Health Commission after holding business development, brand management and public relations roles at a variety of NFP mental health service providers. Ina holds a Master of Arts in Communications Management, an Executive Master of Business Administration, and a Bachelor of Arts (Hons).

Board of Directors



Steve Ryan – Director

Steve has had extensive exposure across the public, superannuation, union and not-for-profit sectors. He has held roles as a secondary school teacher, Queensland Teachers' Union President, a trustee of the QSuper Board and a director of QInvest.



Virginia Slaughter – Director

Virginia is a Professor and Head of the School of Psychology at the University of Queensland. A developmental psychologist by training, Virginia's own research focuses on social and cognitive development in infants and young children. In her 25-year career as an academic, Virginia has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles and chapters, three edited volumes and a first-year psychology textbook. She is the recipient of several teaching awards, including University of Queensland Teaching Excellence Award (1999) and an Australian Award for University Teaching. Virginia is a Fellow of Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.



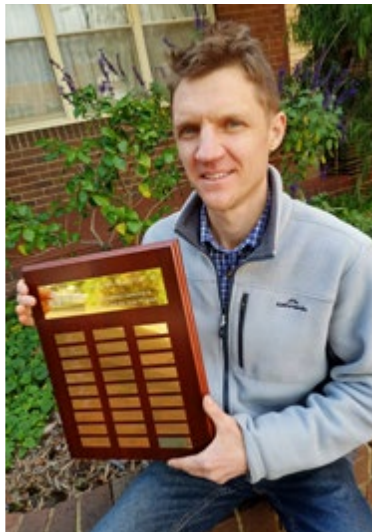
Ian Sloan – Director

Ian is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has extensive experience in business and technology. Ian has worked with government, private business and a range of not-for-profit organisations. Ian is the Managing Director of DSBS IT Consulting and Contracting.

Photos from the year



NCEO David Butt speaks to Libby Trickett about young people's mental health



Rob G from Victoria wins the Con Keogh award



Ballina Branch receiving a CommBank Community Donation



SA Organiser and Recorder training weekend



NT Growers out for a Christmas celebration



NCEO David Butt with David Southwick Member for Caulfield at the Victorian Open Day



Growers in the NT enjoying a catch up



GROW Australia
Mental Wellbeing Programs

www.grow.org.au

1800 558 268

