



**2019-20**

---

# **Annual Report**



# President's Message

***fkaCS* stands before you a stronger organisation after the unique experience of the last 18 months.**

While rebuilding from a period of near closure due to changes in government funding guidelines we started the vital governance task of strategic planning. This was rudely interrupted by the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic and the urgency of adapting to remote working, service delivery and governance.

I am deeply grateful to the Board members, the Executive Director and staff for persevering through this period of uncertainty. And I hail the early childhood sector for continuing to engage with *fkaCS* in the often challenging work of developing and delivering programs that recognise, value and celebrate cultural, linguistic and social diversity.

The Board supported the Executive Director in adapting to the financial impact of the pandemic by establishing a strategic decision-making framework to guide operational decision making during the crisis. In the meantime the Executive Director worked with the Accountant to ensure the organisation received the government sustainability support for which it was eligible.

And all the while, the staff transformed the organisation into one that delivered high quality professional support via diverse media to ensure our work continues even during lockdowns.

Now with strong partnerships and new government contracts the organisation is on a solid financial footing to continue its vital work.

The Board re-engaged with the strategic planning process as the crisis eased and our Expert Sub-Committee came into its own. Hopes of having a new strategic plan to present to the 2021 AGM were deferred due to the invaluable input from our Expert Sub-Committee. Their wise advice helped us to recognise the power of language to help or hinder the broadening of knowledge internally, among our members and in the broader early childhood sector. This advice is informing a deeper discussion to ensure the next strategic plan for *fkaCS* is expressed in clear forthright language that actively supports our purpose – assisting the provision of high quality early childhood services that engage positively with cultural and linguistic diversity.

I look forward to presenting the new *fkaCS* strategic plan in the coming months.

**Barbara Romeril**  
***fkaCS* President**

# Operational Report

**Despite the unprecedented challenges Victoria faced in 2020 (our second year of rebuilding the organisation) we are proud to report that we successfully delivered on all our promises and commitments.**

Some of our highlights include:

The delivery of over 1100 hours of intense, individualised in-program support to kindergartens participating in the Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program. This program is delivered in partnership with Semann and Slattery. The recent independent evaluation and review of the program has demonstrated a clear improvement in practice and outcomes for children and families of Victorian Kindergartens participating in the program.

The development and distribution of 169 language resource kits to kindergartens participating in the Early Childhood Language Program. Each kit contains books and resources to support language learning together with teaching notes and practice suggestions which align the resources to the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

The Design and establishment of the new Early Childhood Language Program Quality Supports Program. Supporting 160 kindergartens participating in the program with webinars, vignettes, communities of practice and individual mentoring via our new online learning space.

Resources were purchased and teaching guides developed for the Multicultural Resource Centre, with support from the Forest Hill Foundation. This includes the aboriginal resource kits designed by Dr Sue Atkinson Lopez based on the 7 narratives of Possum skin Pedagogy; they will soon be available for *fkaCS* Members to borrow.

Over 1500 hours of flexible and innovative cultural inclusion support under the School Readiness Funding menu of evidence informed programs.

This is a credit to the team who worked innovatively and flexibly to transform traditional 'in-program' delivery of our programs to remote

delivery options to ensure that early childhood education and care services received seamless support during periods of social isolation and community lockdowns.

Examples of this flexibility include:

- Redesigning 'in-program' face to face delivery to online programs via the new online learning space.
- Developing online communities of practice and networking opportunities for language teachers
- Designing and delivering online cultural inclusion coaching and mentoring for individual teachers and teams
- Developing online language support options when bilingual workers were unable to travel
- Developing new resources to support multilingual children in learning at home, transitioning back to kindergarten and support for teachers in utilising the learning that occurred at home to support transition to school.

Lastly a heartfelt thank you to the *fkaCS* team members who transitioned between working at home and in the office several times over 2020 while consistently ensuring Victorian early childhood education and care services continued to receive timely, thoughtful and considered support. Thank you also for their commitment to redesigning programs, support options and trialling new ways of working to ensure we delivered the outcomes we had promised and Victorian kindergartens received the support they needed when they needed it.

**Melodie Davies**  
**Executive Director**

# Acknowledgements

## Thank you to...

The **Victorian Department of Education and Training** for their commitment to Victorian Early Years services and children's cultural and linguistic rights.

The **Peter Williams Trust** for supporting the organisation to develop translated material and resources for teachers during the period when children were learning at home and when transitioning back to learning at kindergarten.

The **Forest Hill Foundation** for supporting the Multicultural Resource Centre refresh project. This project will result in additional resources being available for borrowing.

Our partnership with **Semann and Slattery** continues with the awarding of the extension to the Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program, the Early Childhood Language Program: Quality Support Program and the new Early Childhood Teacher End to End Career Supports and Early Learning Networks Support Program. Thank you to Colin, Anthony and Bernadette for putting their trust in the organisation.

**Karla Coombes**, who is retiring from the *fkaCS* Board after 10 years of commitment to the organisation. Karla has supported the organisation

through a change in CEO, various changes in funding and service delivery, and several Board compositions. We sincerely thank Karla for her dedication and support of *fkaCS* over the last 10 years and acknowledge her invaluable contribution to supporting the growing stability of the organisation.

The **Early Childhood Language Program (ECLP) Quality Support Program Steering Committee** supports the delivery of the ECLP Quality Support Program and provides us with valuable expertise and guidance in the delivery of our support to Kindergarten teaching in a language other than English.

- **Victoria Tanner-Dench** – Expression Australia
- **Michael Randall** – Department of Education and Training
- **Vaso Elefsiniotis** – Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.
- **Dr Anne Kennedy** – Early Childhood Education Consultant
- **Dr Yvette Slaughter** – University of Melbourne
- **Anthony Semann** – Semann and Slattery
- **Colin Slattery** – Semann and Slattery
- **Kylie Farmer** – Modern Languages Teachers Association of Victoria

## Congratulations to...

**Action on Aboriginal Perspectives in Early Childhood - 'Possum Skin Pedagogy'** for receiving a HART Award for *Work Driving Systemic Change*. Action on Aboriginal Perspectives in Early Childhood (AAPEC) is a collective of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal early childhood professionals committed to embedding Aboriginal perspectives in early childhood services with a focus on local Victorian cultures. *fkaCS* provides administrative support to AAPEC and is an active participant in the group.

**Dr Sue Atkinson Lopez** for her Order of Australia. Sue, a Yorta Yorta woman, is a leading voice on Indigenous identity and conceptualising Aboriginality in Early Childhood Education and Care. Her ongoing commitment to social justice and embedding aboriginal perspectives in early childhood is evident by her extensive volunteer work including establishing and chairing AAPEC, as the author of *Possum Skin Pedagogy* and as an active member of *fkaCS*' Expert Sub-Committee.



## Board of Management

**Barbara Romeril**  
President

**Julie Brooks**  
Secretary

**Melinda Ackerman**  
Vice President

**Dianne Kearney**  
Board Member

**Janis Lateef**  
Honourary Treasurer

**Karla Coombes**  
Board Member

## Expert Sub-Committee

**Amanda Sparks**  
Committee Member

**Helen Walker Cook**  
Committee Member

**Carolina Cabezas**  
Committee Member

**Janet Williams-Smith**  
Committee Member

**Claudine Lam**  
Committee Member

**Dr Sue Atkinson Lopez**  
Committee Member

## Sub-Contractors

This year we would like to thank the following subcontractors who supported *fkaCS* in our work:

**Fay Muir**  
ECLP Quality Support Program Mentor

**Dr Sue Atkinson Lopez**

**Kylie Farmer**  
ECLP Quality Support Program Mentor

## Staff

**Melodie Davies**  
Executive Director

**Emma McGrath**  
Special Projects Coordinator

**Angela Ditchmen**  
Professional Learning & Mentoring Lead

**Gordana Stojanoska**  
Operations Manager

**Angelique Bromley**  
Mentor & Coach

**Jade Fraser**  
Pedagogy & Practice Consultant

**Ashley Howden**  
Pedagogy & Practice Lead

**Jacqueline Constantin**  
ECLP Quality Support Program Mentor

**Audrey D'Souza Juma**  
Special Projects Coordinator

**Ron Holmes**  
Project Lead

**Barbara Farrington**  
Finance Officer

**Dr Siobhan Hannan**  
ECLP Quality Support Program Mentor

**Barbara Lew**  
Librarian, Multicultural Resource Centre

**Thomas O'Connor**  
Projects Administration

**Ellysha Nestler**  
Pedagogy & Practice Consultant

**Victoria De Paoli**  
Project Support Officer

## Donors & Friends

*fkaCS* would like to thank donors and friends for their ongoing generosity and support.

## Bilingual Workers

The following Bilingual Workers provided language support in the 2019-20 financial year...

<b>Anna Kim</b>	<b>Humaira Hussaini</b>	<b>Nyabora Yuel</b>
<b>Biak Thangnet</b>	<b>Enthadah Yute</b>	<b>Simerpreet Karir</b>
<b>Bindu Santhosh</b>	<b>Lay Ooi</b>	<b>Stephen Riek</b>
<b>Dabessa Gemelal</b>	<b>Luisa Chiu</b>	<b>Suzan Bsisou</b>
<b>Di Song</b>	<b>Maria Chiu</b>	<b>Usha Shenh</b>
<b>Dilkushi Sureshkumar</b>	<b>Marina Rowan</b>	<b>Wei-Lin Mai</b>
<b>Eang Kang</b>	<b>Michael Garang</b>	<b>Xiaobei Ye</b>
<b>Elizabeth Ajjel</b>	<b>Michelle Szeto</b>	<b>Yasaman Rezaei</b>
<b>Guleser Yilmaz</b>	<b>Najmeh Tamaddoni Nezhad</b>	<b>Zahida Baarini</b>

...with the following languages spoken:

Amharic	Hakka	Nuer
Arabic	Hazaragi	Oromo
Arabic (Sudanese)	Hindi	Punjabi
Bahasa Indonesia	Hokkien	Russian
Bahasa Melayu	Japanese	Shanghainese
Burmese	Karen	Sinhala
Cantonese	Karen (Pwo)	Tamil
Chin Hakha	Khmer	Tetum
Dari	Korean	Turkish
Dinka	Malayalam	Urdu
Farsi	Mandarin	

## Life Members

<b>Dr A. Kennedy</b>	<b>Mr I. Renard</b>	<b>Mr T. Rush</b>
<b>Ms B. Pasqua</b>	<b>Mr J. Emerson</b>	<b>Mrs. G. Johnson</b>
<b>Ms D. Rundle</b>	<b>Mr L. Cox</b>	<b>Mrs P. Montgomery</b>
<b>Mr and Mrs G. Kelso</b>	<b>Dr P. Clarke OAM</b>	<b>Ms H. Moorhead AM</b>

# 2019-20 Snapshot

## Multicultural Resource Centre

Thought bubbles containing:

- We're Going on a Bear Hunt [Punjabi]
- Floppy [Chinese]
- The Giant Turnip [Russian]

Icons for:

- MOST POPULAR BOOKS (stack of books)
- MOST POPULAR BOOKS (open book)

Shelf display containing:

- MOST POPULAR STORY BAGS (yellow bag)
- Noni the Pony (blue tag)
- Barfia and Mayia (purple tag)
- When Frank was Four (teal tag)
- 1875 RESOURCES BORROWED (with bar chart)
- 67 (on a box)
- OUTREACH PARCELS SENT! (on a box)

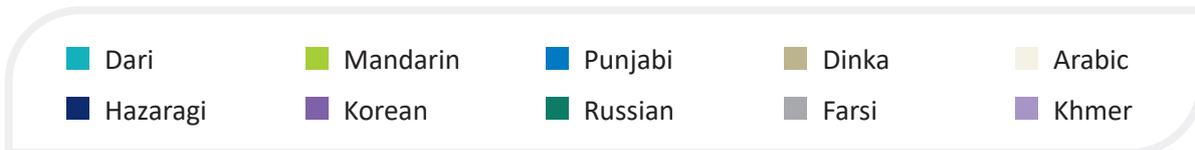
## Community Language Support

**108** COMMUNITY LANGUAGE WORKERS EMPLOYED\*

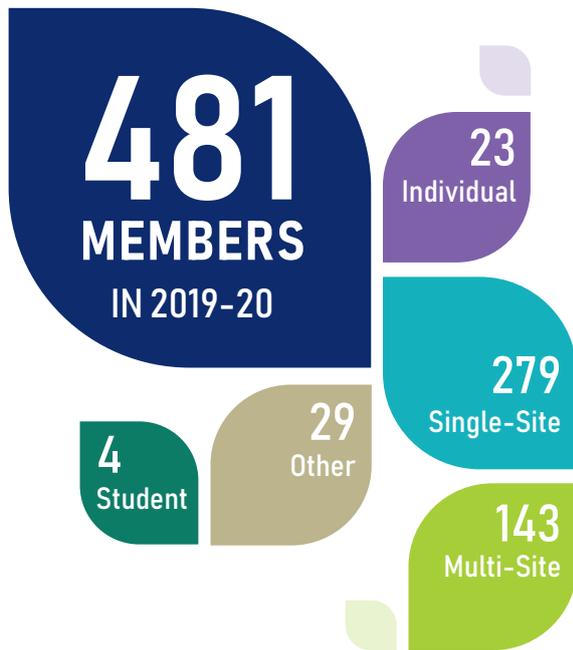
\*At 31 December 2020

**604** HOURS OF LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROVIDED

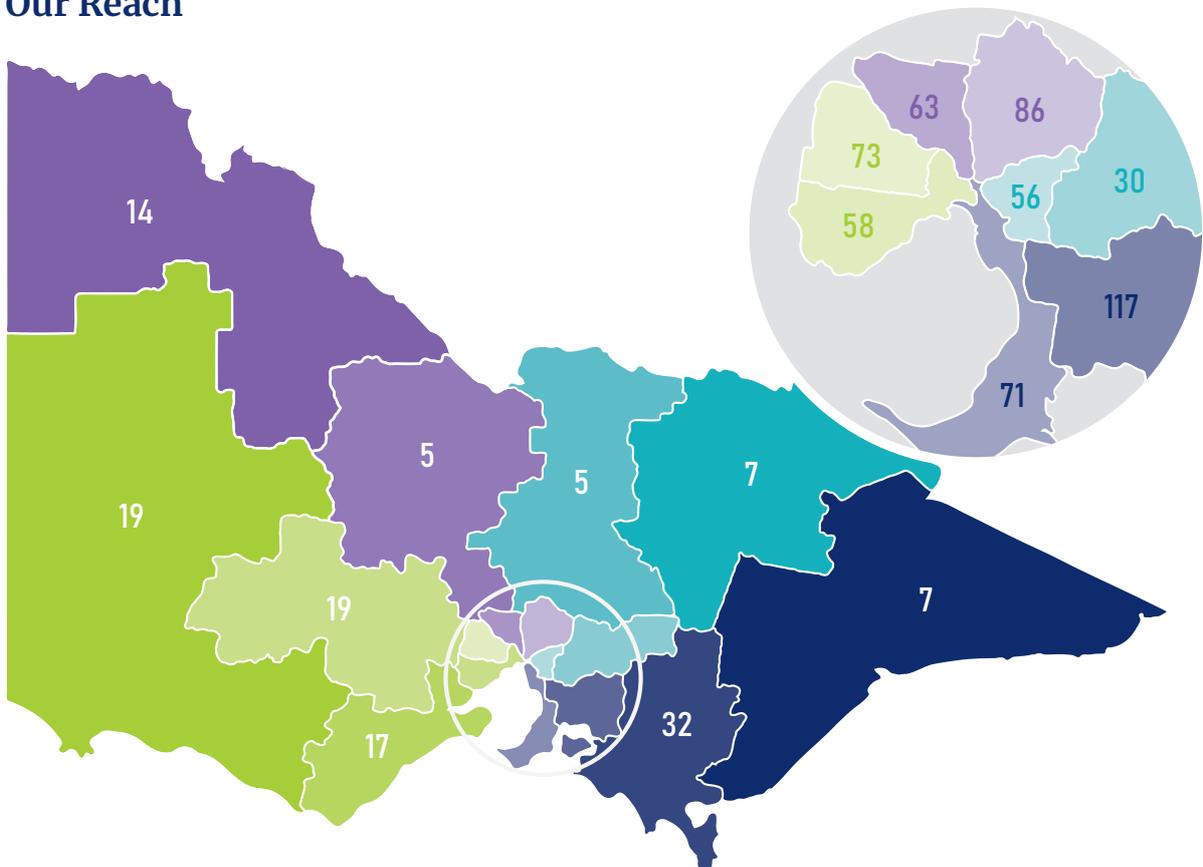
**ACROSS 51 SITES**



## Membership & Engagement



## Our Reach\*



\*Excludes ECEC services who engaged with us electronically via phone and email during the 2019-20 Financial Year.

# Treasurer's Report 2020

**Important notice:** Information used in the following table is highly summarised and extracted from the full detailed financial statements of *fka* Children's Services Inc. ("*fkaCS*") for the eighteen months ended 31 December 2020. For a complete understanding of the financial performance, position and cash flows of *fkaCS*, the full financial statements should be referred to. The full statements also include a description of the accounting policies adopted by *fkaCS*, explanatory notes and the independent auditor's report. The full financial report is available for download at [www.fka.org.au](http://www.fka.org.au) or on request from *fkaCS*.

**Change of financial year:** In November 2019, the association changed its financial year end date from 30 June to 31 December. This report is the first financial report since the change of financial year. The report covers an eighteen-month transitional financial period from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2020 required to align reporting with the new financial year end, after which the association will revert to a twelve-month financial year commencing 1 January 2021.

Financial Summary	18 Months to December 2020 \$	12 Months to June 2019 \$
<b>Financial Performance for the period</b>		
Income	1,889,461	896,890
Expenditure	(1,834,549)	(709,131)
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>54,912</b>	<b>187,759</b>
<b>Financial Position at end of period</b>		
Assets	1,897,669	1,047,816
Liabilities	(1,075,809)	(274,879)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>821,860</b>	<b>772,937</b>
Reserves	512,406	518,395
Retained Surplus	309,454	254,542
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>821,860</b>	<b>772,937</b>
<b>Cash Flows for the period</b>		
Net cash flow from operations	901,719	198,299
Net cash flow from investing and financing activities	(206,895)	(13,389)
<b>Net change in cash held</b>	<b>694,824</b>	<b>184,910</b>
<b>Cash available at beginning of year</b>	<b>802,795</b>	<b>617,885</b>
<b>Cash available at end of year</b>	<b>1,497,619</b>	<b>802,795</b>

This report references *fkaCS*' financial results for the eighteen months to 31 December 2020. The eighteen-month period is a transitional reporting time frame due to the change in *fkaCS*' financial year end date (see note above).

The period to 31 December 2020 was one of notable and relatively fast-paced change for *fkaCS*, reflecting the organisation's continued evolution and growth path from the prior year (as foreshadowed in last year's report), moderated by the unforeseen impact of COVID-19 on operations. Overall financial activity was substantially up on recent years. This was the result of required operational adjustments in response to increased service demands, mainly from new funding and service agreements in relation to early childhood language program support and kindergarten quality improvement programs, and a substantial ramp up in school readiness funding program activity.

Despite the underlying growth, operations in 2020 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including for the effect of government restrictions. This led to a temporary decline in income generation and revisions to scheduled activity and methods of service delivery. The drop in income was offset by government COVID-19 financial assistance (totalling \$270k, including Cash Flow Boost and JobKeeper support), which the association qualified for and gratefully received during the period. This allowed the organisation to retain its operating capacity and continue to provide support services where possible.

Activity levels were gradually restored in the latter stages of the year and have continued to return to normalised levels in line with improvements in the operating environment. The association has also continued to invest in its capacity to deliver flexible services and respond to future disruptions.

Overall, for the period, *fkaCS* earned income of \$1.89 million and incurred expenditure of \$1.83 million, for a net surplus result of \$55k (prior year result: surplus of \$188k, which included the impact of a one-time bequest). Income was generated relatively equally from government grants and subsidies \$904k and other non-government sources \$985k (fee for service activity, philanthropic contributions, memberships and other income). Expenditure was characterised by general growth across most categories, in support of the expanded operations.

Given the operating result, *fkaCS* was able to consolidate its financial position at year-end, with

assets at \$1.9 million and liabilities of just under \$1.1 million, for a net assets / total equity position at 31 December 2020 of \$822k (30 June 2019: \$773k). Cash holdings were relatively high at \$1.5 million (30 June 2019: \$803k), with the increase mainly reflecting the holding of significant prepaid grant funds received during the period, which are restricted for future program use. The level of net assets continued to provide a reasonable buffer against risk and afford the association the capacity to underwrite its operations.

*fkaCS'* operations are expected to further increase in the new financial year, for continued service delivery requirements and anticipated additional activity, mostly associated with current and forthcoming funding / service agreements. Though operational risks remain, including in relation to COVID-19, the association believes that it has a sound underlying financial position, with reasonable cash reserves and relative operational certainty for the medium term through planned and prospective growth.

Once again we would like to extend our thanks to Robert Pisano, Principal Consultant, RFP Business Services for continuing to support and guide us through this transition. Robert's financial expertise in working with small not-for-profit community owned organisations, coupled with his understanding of our social purpose has equipped us to make wise and careful decisions as caretakers of our member's funds.

On behalf of the board, I sincerely thank our Executive Director Melodie and the whole *fkaCS* team who have continued to work tirelessly towards supporting our sector, implementing a sustainable service delivery model, and building the level of overall funding to provide increased organisational stability and capacity to respond to changing service needs, against the backdrop of ongoing funding uncertainty and a challenging operational environment. We also extend our gratitude to our partners and members for their continued support and commitment in working as one with us to deliver the highest quality outcomes for children and families.

**Janis Lateef**  
**Honorary Treasurer**



*fka* Children's Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the strength and resilience of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities.

---

© *fka* Children's Services Inc. 2021  
18 Harper Street, Abbotsford VIC 3067  
03 9428 4471 | [fkacs@fka.org.au](mailto:fkacs@fka.org.au)  
[www.fka.org.au](http://www.fka.org.au)