



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Ruth's Women's Shelter is proud to be located on the lands of the Gimuy-Walubara Yidinji People.

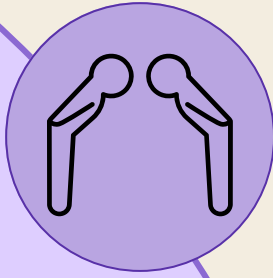
We acknowledge the connection to country through the lands, waterways; and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.



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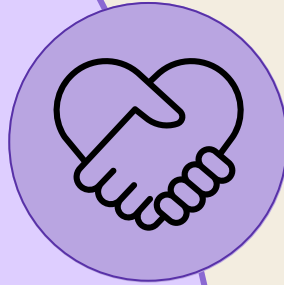
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OUR VALUES



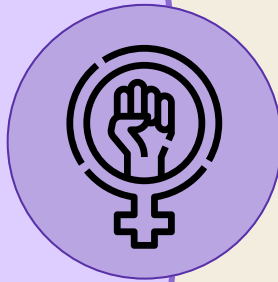
RESPECT

Honouring each individual with empathy & dignity without judgement recognising their inherent worth



SAFETY

Providing a physically & emotionally secure & inclusive environment where clients & staff feel supported, safe & free from all forms of abuse



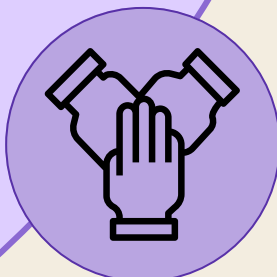
EMPOWERMENT

Build pathways to improve the capacity of clients & staff by empowering them with the tools and resources for self determination



INTEGRITY

To act with honesty & professionalism by upholding the values of our organisation



COLLABORATION

Working collaboratively with stake holders, clients & staff to develop & achieve common goals

RUTHS MISSION

Ruths will provide a safe environment for women and their children experiencing domestic & family violence

RUTHS VISION

To end violence against women and their children

2023-2025 STRATEGIC GOALS

Ruth's Women's Shelter is actively working towards achieving goals in line with our Vision, Mission & Values.



WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS

Increasing support to staff & improving service delivery

Improved communication delivery, training, enhanced supervision and the creation of a Team leader role.
Continuous improvement of case management tools, resources & client support.



PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Influential relationships enhancing the service to our clients & community

Building relationships & securing MOU's for formality. Advocating & collaborating with partner services & collectives through meaningful relationships



EXPANSION OF SERVICE CAPACITY

Increasing service delivery to marginalised groups, increasing capacity & minimising current risks

Increase of service delivery through capital purchase of specific independent living options.
Increase current transitional property portfolio

It was nothing less than perfect. It was home for my son & daughter and I and it was hard and sad to leave. The staff were amazing and went to the ends of the earth for myself and my children, the words thankful and blessed are not enough to describe how I felt whilst there.

Client Feedback - June 2023

I came here in first week of July 2022 and was very scared because of my husband. But RUTHS gave me huge support which I can't explain in words . All staff supported and helped me lot not only economically as well emotionally. I was emotionally very down when I came here. But now I feel big change in myself emotionally because of RUTHS. I get back my confidence because of RUTHS. I learnt stability and independence here. Now I believe in my self which was difficult before . RUTHS GAVE ME NEW DIRECTION OF LIFE . I will be always grateful to RUTHS staff. I begin my new chapter of life because of RUTHS. GREAT RUTHS THANKS VERY MUCH.

Client Feedback - September 2022

OUR SERVICE

Ruth's Women's Shelter has a rich feminist history. In September 1977 Ruth's was founded by Patricia O'Hara, Jean Bleyerveld, Ruth Thomas and Joan Trewern.

FUNDING

Ruth's is funded by the Department of Justice and Attorney General for delivery of Shelter to our clients.

Emergency Relief Funding for clients within the service is provided by Centacare.

On as needs basis, grant funds are received from Community Gambling Fund.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Ruth's is proudly compliant and registered through HDAA in accordance with the Human Standards Quality Framework (HSQF).

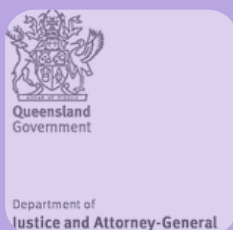
Ruth's upholds a registered charity status with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits commission (ACNC).

SERVICE

Ruth's provided crisis accommodation in a communal setting. Funding is provided for 6 rooms ranging from a single bed and cot to 4 single beds and cot. Facilities are shared including two communal kitchens, playroom, lounge areas and outside areas. All clients are case managed.

OUR PEOPLE

Ruth's is governed by a long standing and supportive Management Committee. Ruth's is operated by a Manager, Team Leader, Finance Officer, Case Managers, After Hours Support Workers and an Admin/Support Worker



PRESIDENTS REPORT

2022-2023 was another busy year for Ruth's Women's Shelter.

Ruth's is committed to providing the best possible services to women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

In order to do this the staff and management committee met to develop our strategic plan for the next five years.

Our strategic plan for the next five years focuses on the following areas:

- Workplace solutions – one goal already achieved is the employment of a team leader, enhancing staff support through additional supervision and coaching;
- Expanding our services to meet the growing demand / Improving the quality of our services;
- Enhancing partnerships and community engagement.

We are confident that our strategic plan and aligned values will help us to make more of a difference in the lives of women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

I would like to thank our donors for their unwavering support and partnership. Your generosity and dedication make it possible for us to provide more than just essential services to women and children who are fleeing domestic violence.

One major highlight for the year was an upgrade and improvement on our Duplex which offers transitional housing for clients. The upgrade consisted of maximising the space from 2 bedrooms to 3 bedrooms, a new kitchen, bathroom, electrical, fences and internal and external paint. This was made possible by the generous public donations we have received over the years. This project was seamlessly delivered by Izzy Constructions and Smiley Fencing.

In addition to this project we were successful in obtaining a Community Gambling Grant for \$35,000 which along with the generous support of our partnerships with Kenfrost Homes and Accor Pullman was able to fund a new kitchen in the Shelter. This new kitchen practically allows for two women to access safely and freely at the same time. This was another successful project completed with Damien and the team at Smith and Sons.

Accor Pullman have formalised a partnership with us to provide clients with employment and their staff with resources for those experiencing domestic or family violence. We are forever grateful for the awareness and support Accor provide to their staff, patrons and our clients.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Access Housing have provided 3 clients with safe accommodation in a specific DV property. This is a fantastic outcome for these families with the chance to move forward with a new life free from violence.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our Treasurer, Daph Curtis. Daph served as Treasurer for 18 years, and during that time, she made significant contributions to our organisation. She was a dedicated and hardworking volunteer, and she will be deeply missed.

The Management Committee is pleased to announce that Nicole Power has been appointed as the new Treasurer of the organisation. Nicole has a strong background in financial management, and she is passionate about the work of the organisation. We are confident that Nicole will be a valuable asset to the Management Committee, and we look forward to working with her to achieve the organisation's goals. We would like to thank Nicole for her willingness to take on this role, and we wish her all the best in her new position.

I would like to thank the wonderful staff, management committee members and our volunteers. Their dedication, energy and skills, continue to make it a great privilege indeed, to be a part of Ruth's and its work in the community.

I look forward to continuing to serve as President of this shelter for the next year. I am proud of the work that we do, and I am grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of women and children.

Tegan Hicks



MANAGERS REPORT

It's an honour to be presenting Ruth's Annual Report for 2023. Domestic Violence is undoubtedly a shattering social issue for many families. Despite there being many groups and individuals working hard to educate, advocate and gain momentum for change there is still a long way to go with regards seeing impactful changes in our systems and policies on a wider community scale. Sherele Moody, an Australian journalist and femicide researcher reported that in 2022, 60 women's lives were lost to Domestic and Family Violence in Australia. This alarming statistic highlights that more than one woman per week is reported to have lost her life at the hands of another. Unfortunately, these are only the reported cases, we are aware that there are many incidents and deaths that go unreported on a daily basis especially within our First Nations, CALD and gender diverse groups within our communities. We are continuously reminded of the importance of our service, and what our dedicated staff offer to the women and children who require safety and support.

The 2022-2023 year was an extremely busy, productive, and evolving period for Ruth's as a service and a team.

- The Shelter finally reached the completion of the child safety gates and security upgrades that were required for fire compliance. This was a very lengthy interruption to our service over several years. In February 2023 we were finally able to welcome back children between 1-5 years old.
- As mentioned there were two other major projects completed this year
- In March 2023 we maintained our accreditation within the Human Standards Quality Framework (HSQF), successfully completing our maintenance audit.
- In May 2023 Ruth's was invited to attend the first Shelter Forum in many years. This was a fantastic opportunity to connect with other Queensland shelters, learn, plan and network.
- In 2023 Ruth's facilitated a strategic planning day. Having a collective focus on the direction of the service provides clarity, vision and purpose for all staff, committee members and related parties. Collectively, new values were identified, strategic goals were highlighted with the alignment of our long standing vision and mission statements.

MANAGERS REPORT

- With ever increasing demands on the service to continuously improve, grow and expand the need for a team leader was identified. We have recently welcomed Patimah who brings a wealth of Team Leader experience to our team. I have no doubt that her role will be one that will enhance the support to our team, processes and practices.

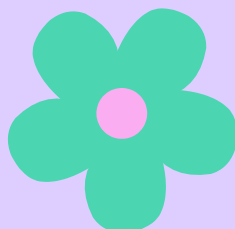
Despite the service having many periods of interruptions, when operating at capacity the referrals have been high with the complexity of clients ever increasing. I want to personally recognise the case managers and support staff who show up and are dedicated to empowering and supporting all women and children who enter the service. Our many clients who continue to engage, report back and touch base after leaving shelter is testament to the work we do.

Nurturing and enhancing our community partnerships is vital to the growth and support of our service. I wish to acknowledge the professionalism and support that is offered through our network, sharing of knowledge, expertise and leadership is invaluable – so thank you to The Women's Centre, Warringu, Cairns Regional DV Service, the High-Risk Team, Access Housing and NQ Women's Legal Service.

A heartfelt thankyou to the management committee for always backing me and supporting the growth and future trajectory of Ruth's. The devastating loss of Daph was sudden and shocking, there is no doubt that she will be remembered for her lengthy contribution to our organisation. Thankyou to Nicole for stepping in and supporting myself and Natalie through another successful and seamless financial audit.

With a large focus on domestic and family violence in the public space, there are emerging initiatives and opportunities to grow and evolve. Honouring Ruth's mission in providing a safe and supportive environment for women and children experiencing domestic or family violence, we aim to minimise the gaps and improve accessibility to safe accommodation.

Honouring all women who show courage when taking the leap into Shelter....
"Courage is not having the strength to go on; it is going on when you don't have the strength" *Theodore Roosevelt*



Emalee Anstee

TREASURERS REPORT

The organisation has been granted a clean audit report for the 2022/23 financial year, which is a testament to its robust governance procedures and systems.

The Department of Justice and Attorney General Shelter Grant and the Shelter Enhancement Funding Grants continue to be the main source of funding. However, there was a slight reduction in funding revenue due to the Hub's closure. Despite this, community support and donations remain strong and rental income has been consistent.

There was a 5.51% decrease in total revenue (\$1,139,002 – 2023; \$1,205,528 – 2022).

To ensure continual business improvements are achieved, Ruth's undertook the maintenance HSQF Audit with HDAA in April this year. There were significant upgrades to the security systems, an upgrade to the 20 year old system. Management committee training and the strategic planning day were completed enhancing the skills and service goals.

By the end of the 2023 financial year, all Grants were either fully utilized or had minimal remaining funds. The unspent amounts will be used this coming financial year which will support the deficits felt with the increase costs of living and expenditure.

Total Expenditure saw a decrease of 10% (\$978,898 – 2023; \$1,088,001 – 2022).

Ruth's maintains a strong balance sheet, boasting \$954,061 in cash and cash equivalents, with minimal liabilities.

From a financial standpoint, Ruth's is in a sound position. We remain committed to delivering essential and valuable services to those who rely on our support.

In my tenure as treasurer, albeit brief, I am profoundly grateful to our dedicated team, led by our Manager, Emalee. Their unwavering commitment and support towards the clients we serve is commendable.

Our financial operations are well-managed. The auditors have made no significant changes to the figures we presented. This speaks volumes about the efficiency and effectiveness of our financial management.

Nicole Power



STAFF REPORT

2023 has seen an end to the pandemic and a return to somewhat normal operating conditions for staff and clients alike.

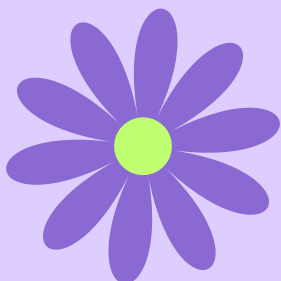
Disruptions due to major renovations and safety issues have been successfully managed and completed, and have made a positive improvement to the functionality and ambience of the shelter.

Another year has seen some changes in staff – casual support workers Kathrine and Rhiannon, and Vendela our house support worker, have moved on to different career roles. Whilst we have welcomed Holly, Maria and Patimah.

We are as always, grateful for the ongoing commitment and support of the rest of the staff: Emalee, Bronwyn, Virginia, Erin Marlene, Natalie, Emiline, Sara, Helen, Ange and lastly Emily, who will be off on maternity leave and returning in 2024.

Ruth's continued commitment to support staff with their professional development training ensures staff have the knowledge and skills to support our clients on their journey through our service, whilst also providing valuable opportunities to engage and network with other service providers. Staff participated in Lifting the Lid, Reclaim the night 2022, First Aid training, cyber awareness, and Work Up courses.

Staff also participated in some great team building events such as paddle boarding and Pinot and Picasso, and are continuously supported with access to Centacare Employee Assistance Program.



Tarice Hipperess

Ruth's provides an amazing service to clients and the staff are passionate and caring to their clients. The staff and management have welcomed us in to the service and assisted with investigations where possible including supporting clients.

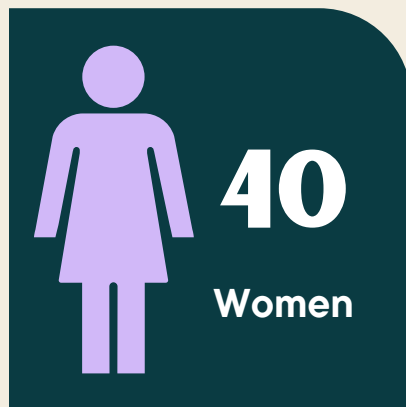
Service Evaluation from Sector Partners - June 2023

I love working with Ruths however the sector generally has too many gaps. A lot of clients cannot access shelter due to a lack of spots available, lack of funding, lack of appropriate funding and a lack of suitable options for different client stories/set ups. Shelters are generally very underfunded. They serve such an important role in communities, have such dedicated people working in them and need to be funded better. Thanks Ruths for all that you do!

Service Evaluation from Sector Partners - June 2023

SERVICE DELIVERY

2022-2023



37%

Identified as
Aboriginal or
Torres Strait
Islander (ATSI)



14%

Identified as
Culturally and
Linguistically
Diverse (CALD)

31

Average number of
days in shelter

276

Longest Stay in
Shelter

10

Countries
represented

SERVICE GAPS & IMPROVEMENTS

Service delivery was majorly interrupted From July 2022 to June 2023. This was a result of vital upgrades required to the Shelter regarding fire safety and security. After 2 years of no child safety gates in February 2023 we finally were fully operational to all ages of children.

9%

Of unassisted clients were declined based on a risk assessment

17%

Of unassisted clients were Not experiencing Domestic and Family Violence

38%

Of unassisted clients were due to renovations

18%

Of unassisted clients Disengaged

104

Unassisted Clients

18%

Of unassisted clients were due to No Vacancy

26

weeks of interrupted service due to renovations

1

Renovation of Transitional Duplex from 2 bedroom to 3 bedroom.

3

Major works including kitchen, flooring and security



The wonderful ongoing support of community donations ensures that Ruth's can maintain the transitional properties, meeting the minimum housing standards.



Thankyou to the local team at Izzy Constructions and Smiley's Fencing for their seamless, efficient work on the Duplex.



The duplex received a complete facelift including new kitchens and bathrooms, enclosure of an external door to create a third bedroom in each, new fences, full internal and external paint and electrical upgrade.



The benefits and pathways that the transitional properties provide the women and children is beyond measurable.

THANKYOU

Through the support of our community partners, Accor Pullman International, Kenfrost and the Community Gambling Fund - Ruth's was able to renovate the 20year old downstairs kitchen.

Another successful and professional renovation experience with Smith & Sons Cairns.

This new kitchen is now two in one. It provides enough space with the duplication of appliances to allow two women in the kitchen at a time with ample space to cook, clean and provide for themselves and their children.

This kitchen services our two disability access rooms downstairs and is designed with wheelchair accessibility.



IN MEMORY - LIFE MEMBER

DAPHNE CURTIS 1948-2023

I first had the privilege of meeting Daph in 2005 when she joined the committee of Ruth's Women's Shelter as our Treasurer. She held this position until a month before she died, a total of 18 years in the role. Ruth's today is in a sound financial position and much of this due to her dedication to the books, the staff and the Shelter. Daph had the amazing ability of remaining calm in all aspects regarding Ruth's and its healthy financial situation was due to her being a meticulous and competent treasurer.

The members of the committee are very close in our commitment to Ruth's and all are proud of how we work so well together as a team. Daph was a pivotal member in this group and we were fortunate enough to have many, often hilarious, social functions which brought us together on a more personal level. (Think of the Bingo!) The remainder of the staff were included in these events and via laughter and "girl talk" we established friendships along the way which were highly treasured by us all. Daph's calm persona and gentle demeanour showed us all the depth of her inner strength and ability to remain calm despite adversity, even in her final weeks of life. She was loved by us all but never so much as she loved her family, who she spoke of often and with great pride.

Julie and I had the pleasure of meeting her daughter Dani a couple of weeks before her passing and I must say she is a chip off the old block and devoted to her Mum. We didn't meet her brother Steve but understand he also, is devastated by her passing.

We will remember her fondly and will be forever in her debt.

Caio Bo



Written By: Sue Wells & Julie Hosking

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT.

Ruth's works tirelessly to build community partnerships and support networks. The clients benefit greatly from the ongoing community support be it clothing, material items, cash donations, vouchers or fundraising. All efforts are appreciated.

Accor Hotels - Pullman Cairns

Adam Procriv
Alarna Hodges
Alice O'Connor
Amelia Stone
Andy Behrndt
Baby Bunting
Bank of Queensland
Bed Bath & Table
Bently Park College
BIG W - Giving Tree
Bryony Haggart
Cairns Golf Club
Cairns Orthopaedic Clinic
Cairns Regional Council -
Mayors Christmas Appeal
Cath Bakkum
Catholic Diocese
CDC Water Street Child Care
Claude Bluost
Clem Morfuni
Clifton Beach Markets
Coles Earllville
Community Corrections
Containers for change
CPO Redlynch
CrossFit Kantok
Cuc Franics
Cynthia Harris
Danielle Riethmiller
Edge Hill Tavern
Edward Barber
ESCABAGS
Felicity Agnew
FNQ Law Association

Frankie Bayly (Margot Bayly)

Gary Lui
GDA Constructions Pty Ltd
Gillian Vastenhout
Glammed and Glitized Charity
Glenn McMaster
Goods 360
Grilld
Hannah Chapman
Heart Recruitment
IGA Community Chest
J Diehm & Chris Payze
Jerry Tucket
Jilinda Lee
Joanne Culanti
Joy Burton
Julie Hartree
Junko Godwin
Kaija Kautto
Kath Machen-Baxter
Kay Rivers
Kelly Geddes
Kenfrost
Laura Harris
Laurie Pritchard
Lendlease
Lions Club Marlin Coast
Lions Ladies Auxilliary
Lorena Bouwman
Loving Hope Bears
Macallisters
Manisha Peiris
Mark Seles

Marlene Lang

Mary McGuinness
Myer Cairns
Nick Masasso
NRMA Parks and Resorts
OMF Cairns
Patrick Donald
Perhaps Book Club
Philippa McDonald
Piccones Community IGA
QAS - Queensland Ambulance
Service
Red Cross
RizeUp
Rose Cunnane
Rosemary Higgs
Roxanne Doyle
Scott Sheppard
Sharlene Blakeney
Sharon and John Chisholm -
'Wheely Wild Runners'
Share the Dignity
Sheila Williams
Smithfield Shopping Centre
St Mary's Catholic College
St Monica College
Suzanne Rath
SZU-YU OU
Tara and Maya Hike for DV
Trinity Beach Sports Club
Vicki Lange
Wasabi Barbie
Women in Construction
Zephyr