

2019-2020

# YMCA VICTORIA ANNUAL REPORT



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**This past year has been one of the most challenging years in the Y Victoria's 176-year history.**

We entered 2020 as a nation devastated by the bushfires raging across Australia. Then, as we began to recover from a tragic summer, the global coronavirus pandemic turned everything we had planned, both at work and in our personal lives, upside down.

We are one of the world's oldest community not-for-profits and many of our programs and services operate face to face. Unfortunately, this meant that some of the industries we work in have been among the hardest hit. With 90% of our operations grinding to a halt in March 2020, we sadly had to stand down 90% of our staff until further notice.

When JobKeeper was announced, our payroll, people

and culture and IT teams worked hard to pull off an impressive feat of administering this complex (and life-saving) wage subsidy to thousands of our staff.

Despite such major setbacks, the Y proved itself as a resilient, determined and resourceful organisation. We successfully launched Virtual Y, an online platform where our programs and services adapted to an online delivery model, including fitness on demand, a youth timetable and virtual camping experiences.

## Everything we have achieved is thanks to the dedication and strength of our people.

It hasn't been easy, but we have come out the other side as a stronger, more unified Y.

Putting safety first is always our number one priority, and our commitment to working alongside governments to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect our most vulnerable and support the wellbeing of our people has never faltered. But we know the economic, social and mental health outcomes of a lengthy lockdown have put into sharp focus the inequalities that exist in our societal structures.

We will all feel the impacts of this pandemic for years to come, but it is young people who have been disproportionately impacted. Unemployment is at an all-time high, mental health is at an all-time low. The Y has done everything it can to survive this year so we can be there to support young people and our communities now and in the future, as we move towards recovery. This year

has been unlike any other and the biggest of thank yous go to each and every staff member and volunteer who contributed during this extremely challenging time. Our essential workers in YMCA Children's Programs who provided care for families, our staff who were stood down, our staff and volunteers who put in countless hours online to provide support to the organisation and our communities: thank you.

This annual report covers the financial year of 2019-2020, as well as a few stories that fall outside of this period. After such a big year, we couldn't keep some of the stories from the Y over the last couple of months saved until next year's report, so we have included them in this one.

Please enjoy and thank you for reading.

## A message from CEO Carolyn Morris

**M**y first full year as CEO of YMCA Victoria and Kingswim has been unlike anything I ever could have imagined. The leadership team and I had to make some of toughest decisions of our careers and I am truly grateful for the support of our whole Y community: staff, volunteers, our Board, our local council partners, our customers, members, and participants – everybody who has the Y in their lives and had to make a sacrifice this year for the greater good.

I've been blown away by our people and I truly believe that the Y has come out the other side of COVID-19 stronger. We are now more determined than ever before to support our communities, to support young people, to support those who were left behind as we faced lockdowns, social distancing restrictions and 5km radius travel limits.

The Y is one of the world's oldest and largest social enterprises. We do not rely on government funding, and in normal times only 3% of our revenue is government funded. But without the help we received from the Federal Government (JobKeeper, Early Childhood Education and Care package and transition payments), the Victorian State Government (\$1.6 million funding for Virtual Y), and the concessions granted by our local government partners, we would not be in the stable position we find ourselves in today. For this reason, I want to thank all levels of government for the support we received this year. It truly did save us.

The road to recovery will take time, but I've never been more confident in the role the Y will play for our communities. Mental wellbeing support, opportunities to connect socially, opportunities to participate in sport and recreation; the services the Y provides for the community have never been more vital.

We have embraced innovation and collaboration at the Y more than ever this year, with cross-functional teams working together to design and implement necessary changes. We introduced an online booking system for recreation customers, QR codes for COVID tracing, outdoor exercise programs, as well as organisation-wide COVID-safe practices to keep everybody safe. We also pivoted the way we communicate, centralising our customer calls, building new websites and delivering weekly webinars for all staff and volunteers to stay updated and connected. Our people acted swiftly to ensure we were able to serve our community in this ever-changing environment and I take my hat off to our passionate staff for this, many of whom worked around the clock to get the job done.

Of course, it can be difficult to think back to a pre-COVID existence, but in this report you will find highlights, stats and information that span the financial year of 2019-2020. From the Carlton Baths' Queer Soiree, the support we provided during the bushfires, to launching Virtual Y, I hope you enjoy looking back on the year that was.

After embracing technology in our daily lives like never before, it is fitting that this year's annual report is completely digital for the first time.

I look forward to what the next year has in store, knowing that after this year, the Y is ready for anything.



## A message from Chair of the Board, Peter Jordan

**U**nprecedented. It's probably the most overused word in 2020, but accurately describes the devastating events we as Victorians, as a nation and as a globe have experienced this year.

Before I reflect on the year that was, I want to thank our staff and volunteers. Your hard work and dedication is always inspiring, but this year you have shown incredible resilience and made sacrifices that have helped the Y get through the COVID-19 pandemic. It's hard to put into words how grateful and appreciative I am of you.



I also want to thank and congratulate Carolyn Morris on her first full year as CEO – a year where she, along with the rest of the leadership team, faced extraordinary challenges. Thank you, Carolyn, for your leadership, for helping get the Y through this pandemic and for maintaining empathy and a sense of humour even in the darkest of times.

I'm sure many Australians, like myself, have compartmentalised the last financial year into two parts – before and after the summer bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic. While it's difficult to remember a time before this, it would be a shame not to celebrate our collective achievements and highlight some of the incredible work that we did in the first part of the year.

In 2019, the Y held another successful YMCA Bridge Project Breakfast event, awarded the Victorian Father of the Year, hosted the inaugural THRIVE forum and publically backed young people in their strike for climate change. These are just a few of highlights you will find in this year's report.

When the bushfires wreaked havoc across the country, we opened our doors to CFA firefighters and provided free access to our recreation centres so that the people who fought the blazes could find some respite.

Then in March, our world changed when Australia went into lockdown. As an organisation, we had to respond quickly to restrictions and temporarily close more than 90% of our business. Our priority has always been the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, clients and the community, and this has been paramount throughout the pandemic.

We worked incredibly hard to ensure the Y would survive and, as I mentioned previously, our staff made many sacrifices to ensure the organisation is now in a position to reopen safely and sustainably. Even in this environment, we managed to support young people and our communities through initiatives such as Virtual Y and through innovation in service delivery so that we could continue to safely engage with as many people as possible.

As we look forward, I believe we will benefit from many legacies that we established throughout the pandemic. We have innovated our services and the way in which they are delivered. We have developed new ways of engaging our staff, partners and communities. And, we have strengthened our profile and voice as a leader for young people and healthy communities within our industry and with local, state, and federal governments.

## A message from Chair of the Board, Peter Jordan

*Continued from page 3.*

I believe we will emerge from this pandemic as a stronger and more connected YMCA. A YMCA that will continue empowering young people and positively engaging communities long after this pandemic is over.

Thank you again to our staff and volunteers (I really can't thank you enough), and to my colleagues who sit with me on the volunteer Board of Directors. While this year has been hard, it has been a pleasure to govern such an incredible and resilient organisation with you.



# A message from young Y leader, Jake Alway

Look back at 2020 as a seminal year, where its challenges have tested all of us at times but have also given us the opportunity to innovate, grow and overcome barriers to support the community and its young people.

Without the normal methods of engaging and inspiring young people, the Y adapted to create Virtual Y. Virtual Y is an online community where young people are able to stay connected and have access to health and wellness resources from home. I want to personally thank the Y for advocating and overcoming the challenges of 2020 to still support its many communities, its employees and young people throughout this year's difficulties.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be involved as a fitness instructor for Virtual Y, conducting online fitness classes for users. It was a very unique and exciting experience to still be able to reach and have an impact on our health and wellness members even during lockdown.

I am personally very passionate about creating equal access to exercise and health education opportunities for everyone within the community. This is to empower individuals to live a happier, healthier and more connected life through these services and programs that the Y provides.

This year we saw the One Casey's Men's Shed Fitness Program become runner up in the Fitness Australia Community Program of the year. This Program saw 35 men aged between 60-88 years old collectively lose 28 kilograms and improve their blood pressure, their overall strength and cardio. The participants have become healthier not just from the fitness sessions but also from the educational sessions they received to live healthier lifestyles.

I deeply appreciate every experience and opportunity that the Y has presented me from starting as a member four years ago at YMCA Casey ARC, to now leading the Health and Wellness Program at Casey RACE. It's been an amazing journey with so many incredible experiences along the way which have improved my leadership skills and positively shaped the values I live by. I have been fortunate enough to experience first-hand how the Y proudly believes in the power of inspired young people.

The full extent of the lockdowns on our communities this year is unclear with all dimensions of the health and wellbeing industry being affected. What I do know is that the Y will be there, as committed as always, to continue to empowering, supporting and inspiring young people throughout the times ahead.

Now, we need to continue to come together as an organisation, to make progressive change and inspire young people into the next generation - like how the Y has inspired me and so many more of its staff to challenge ourselves to achieve more, empower us to make a positive impact on our communities and become the future leaders of tomorrow.



# The curveball that was COVID-19

**W**hat a curveball 2020 has been. The pandemic has had enormous repercussions across the world, from the devastating public health effects, economic downturns and mental health struggles.

## Overall at YMCA Victoria

A major effect of the pandemic was that we had to reduce our physical services. Being in lockdown for months meant that we had to find new ways of reaching our young people and the communities we serve. As part of this effort, we launched Virtual Y and released the #YWeAreHere campaign (watch the video below).

Due to our reduction in services, 90% of our staff (permanent and casual) were stood down or de-rostered - this reached 5,054 out of 5,582 in May, 2020. At the time of writing (November 2020), the number of staff who have returned to work has reached 2,700 and rising. Many staff who have remained working throughout the pandemic worked reduced hours during lockdown.

Thankfully, during this time many of our staff were supported by JobKeeper. Of those who have been stood back up, 115 were reinstated to work on Virtual Y (funded by the Victorian Government).

# COVID-19 curveball: Kingswim

We operate 20 Kingswim sites across Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Canberra. Before COVID-19, the number of swimmers enrolled peaked at 29,300 in February 2020.

All Victorian centres have been closed since 23 March, which means approximately 14,500

swimmers haven't been able to attend their lessons for the majority of the year. Additionally, no school swimming lessons have run since Term 1, 2020.

Fortunately, centres were able to reopen in New South Wales, Queensland and Canberra in June and July 2020. This has seen 6,430 swimmers return to the pool, with occupancy

levels continuing to increase and feedback on safety and hygiene has been very positive. Our interstate sites have also completed two school holiday programs since reopening.

We've had no confirmed cases within any Kingswim site, and therefore no closures since reopening.

## How we adapted

Our Kingswim team launched an online 'Activity Hub' for at-home activities and resources for swimmers and families.

We created an online training module for Swim Teacher Accreditation.

We adapted to changing COVID-19 restrictions, with operational measures such as temperature scanning, QR codes for contact tracing purposes and continuous cleaning being implemented.

When sites reopened, we extended our operating hours to allow for density limits and to meet the demand for swimming lessons.

## Our advocacy

Kingswim are represented on the newly formed Victorian Aquatic Industry Alliance, which advocates for governments to focus on the importance of swimming lessons and the heightened risk of increasing drowning as we head into summer.

## Road to recovery

Since reopening in the start of Term 3, interstate centres have grown a collective 1,017 new swimmers (growth of 16%) and centres are currently now back to an average of 87% of pre-COVID enrolments.

# COVID-19 curveball: Children's Programs

Our essential service throughout the pandemic was YMCA Children's Programs.

It goes without saying that our passionate educators have had a tough year, working as an essential worker in a challenging environment. The support they provided, and continue to provide, to families has been second to none, and each and every Children's Programs employee should be proud.

We operate over 70 early childhood education and care services. Of these, we have 18 Early Learning Centres, 27 Before and After School Programs and 28 School Holiday Programs. In the last financial year, 228,613 children attended our services. In addition, we manage the hiring of community spaces at 11 local partner primary schools.

During COVID-19, we temporarily closed two Early Learning Centres and five Outside School Hours Care programs due to a positive COVID-19 test. All sites were back open and safely operating within a week of the closure.

## How we adapted

Our amazing educators provided remote learning to children staying home, through tools like Zoom and Story Park.

Within the centres, we adapted to the new COVID-normal, with temperature checking, limiting people on site, and the ceasing of incursions and excursions.

## Our advocacy

The Y became a founding member of the newly created Outside School Hours Council of Australia to advocate for the OSHC industry.

We also advocated to both the State and Federal Government for financial relief when JobKeeper ended for the sector.

## Support we received

The government's Early Childhood Education and Care relief package supported both our Early Learning Centres and OSHC programs, as well as the Transitional Payment Package and the additional viability support payment.

We also received the following support:

- Community Child Care Fund – Special Circumstance Grant
- JobKeeper (until it ended for this sector)

- Recovery Package
- Vacation Care Grant.

We are incredibly thankful for the support we received for our Children's Programs, without it we would not have been in a position to provide important child care services for families. With all this support, we have been able to survive the year and while we saw a reduction in occupancy during lockdowns, we are seeing occupancy levels rise as we transition to COVID-normal.



Image: YMCA Children's Programs early learning centre.

# COVID-19 curveball: Recreation

The recreation sector in Victoria is one of the hardest hit in the country. It has been a long and challenging road for our recreation staff, some of which have not worked since March.

## Lockdown 1.0

In March 2020, at the beginning of the first lockdown, every Y-managed recreation site (55 sites across 22 local government areas – excluding seasonal outdoor facilities) were closed immediately and completely.

## Restart 1.0

A few months later in June, we were able to open in Victoria for a brief period as lockdown restrictions lifted. 29 centres opened under tight government restrictions including maximum group sizes and density quotients. This included pools for lap swimming, group fitness, health and wellness, tennis and skate parks. Stadiums remained closed, as did gymnastics, community halls, crèches and cafés within our facilities.

## Lockdown 2.0

When lockdown 2.0 happened in early July, all Victorian sites were closed again.

## Restart 2.0

As of November 2020, we are in Rec Restart 2.0 with restrictions slowly lifting. Outdoor pools and outdoor fitness were the first to reopen, with different restrictions across metro Melbourne and regional Victoria.

## Meanwhile in South Australia...

The Y-managed South Australian Aquatic and Leisure Centre was the first pool to reopen in South Australia, first with squad swimming and swimming lessons, then health and wellness and fitness groups. SAALC has remained open throughout the pandemic and has more than 50% of swim lessons and memberships reactivated.

## Customer demand

As pools reopened, we experienced extremely high demand from our customers. We implemented an online

booking system, requiring customers to pre-book before coming in to swim laps, and ensuring we could manage capacity limits. At times pools booked out within minutes of calendars being released. Occupancy has been at 100% across very limited spaces, which has both been fantastic to see and challenging as many people missed out initially.

As density limits relax, customer anxiety has reduced as more spaces have become available, making it easier to secure a booking.

## How we adapted

We found ways to pivot to online fitness, most notably on our Virtual Y platform, where our fitness instructors tried their hand at delivering classes to the camera for the first time. Customer feedback has been that Virtual Y has enabled members to continue a routine with the Y instructors they know and love.

Before this, we partnered with Les Mills On Demand to provide

free access for all Y recreation members, as well as staff and volunteers across Australia. This led to 25,000 registrations, 15,000 of which were in Victoria.

When centres reopened, we implemented new COVID-safe measures to ensure all our visitors feel safe. We have also made significant changes to timetabling across sites providing the most popular classes to meet customer demand.

## Our advocacy

The Y has been involved in a lot of advocacy for the recreation industry throughout COVID-19. Through the Victorian Aquatic Industry Alliance (which included Swimming Victoria, Aquatic and Recreation Victoria and Fitness Australia), we advocated for a clearer path to recovery for our industry. Partnering with other organisations in the recreation industry has meant we have an aligned and supportive voice at the decision making tables.

# COVID-19 curveball: Recreation

*Continued from page 8.*

## **Support we received**

JobKeeper has been of enormous support for our recreation staff and has meant we can pass on the benefit to our council partners. It has also enabled us to progressively bring back staff who are receiving JobKeeper to work on planning and development to prepare for reopening.

We also received wonderful support from our council partners, who trusted us to manage the management and operating costs of recreation centres during the closure periods.

## **Road to recovery**

Gyms are one of the last areas to reopen under the government's roadmap to recovery and we know that we will continue to operate under strict restrictions for some time. We've experienced high demand

from customers, booking out places in group fitness and lap swimming. We must acknowledge, we will operate at a reduced capacity for some time.

The Y would once again like to thank our recreation staff and council partners, as well as our members and casual visitors throughout this time. Despite the challenges we've had to, and will continue to, overcome, the positive attitude and support shown by you all has been incredible.

We really look forward to the day when we can welcome back the community to our much-loved recreation centres without heavy restrictions in place, and to welcome back all of our staff who are so passionate about the recreation industry.

# COVID-19 curveball: Camps

**Y**MCA Victoria proudly manages five camps in Victoria on behalf of the State Government of Victoria including: Anglesea Recreation Camp, Camp Manyung, Howmans Gap Alpine Centre, Lady Northcote Recreation Camp and Mt Evelyn Recreation Camp. We also manage Phillip Island Coastal Discovery Camp, and our very own Lake Dewar Lodge.

Our camps deliver programs to over 82,000 Victorians every year, 70% of which are school aged children. This year has not been an easy one for our campsites, with closures beginning even before COVID-19 due to direct fire threats or smoke haze during the summer bushfires.

In March, all campsites closed again, with regional sites only reopening in October and metropolitan sites to follow.

## Sport and Recreation Victoria management contract

We have been operating five camps on behalf of the Victorian Government for the past 15 years and are thrilled to have been awarded the renewed long-term contract until 2041!

This news could not have come at a better time - in the middle of lockdown with all campsites closed. We are so pleased to have secured the management contract and the opportunity to support school groups and communities as we reopen and recover from COVID-19 closures.

With so many children missing out on camp experiences this year, we cannot wait to welcome children back to YMCA Camps and provide outdoor recreation, adventure and opportunities to connect to the environment, their friends and themselves once again in 2021 and beyond.

## How we adapted

With all campsites closed for the first time in history, our camps teams had to get creative. How could we continue to provide camping experiences virtually?

Our wonderful teams launched the Outdoors and the Environment section on Virtual Y to keep children engaged at home and in the classroom. With features like a virtual walk through the YMCA Anglesea Recreation Camp's Indigenous Trail or how to create your own map – the online education enabled children to keep engaged with outdoor and environmental education at camp. All the while supporting the Learning Framework delivered to each group at YMCA Camps.

## Road to recovery

Our camps provide the opportunity for people to connect over multiple days, participating in activities that

promote fun and healthy interactions that create skills and bonds for life.

We are confident that camps will rebound strongly, with many of our metro customer groups holding onto their bookings until the last minute in case restrictions had eased so they could attend. Where restrictions had not eased, they were quick to rebook to another date to ensure their groups could get back together at camp.

Our customers continue to tell us that attending camp is important for their groups to connect, rebuild their support networks and cultivate a sense of belonging.

As with most parts of the Y, our camps have struggled with the closures, but we continue to focus on reopening and reconnecting our people and our communities.

# COVID-19 curveball: Disability Services

**A**t the Y, we strive to ensure programs and services across all of our sectors are inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities. We also own and operate a specialist Disability Services Adult Day Centre in Macey Heights, and run respite and camping programs. Combined, these programs deliver over 190,000 hours of direct support to people with disabilities and their carers each year.

COVID-19 lockdown measures in March meant the closure of community venues, meaning we were unable to offer our community-based and camping programs. Similarly, social distancing and self-isolating measures impacted the demand for and our ability to provide specific services. This resulted in the temporary cessation of our services.

When restrictions began to ease in June, we began to transition back to services, with focus on services provided at the Adult Day Centre. At that stage, the community-based facilities and campsites we access remained closed, as did our in-home services.

## How we adapted

Our teams were extremely quick to adapt and establish ways they could continue to engage and support participants at home.

The team at Macey Heights developed and introduced ‘Virtual MaceY’ – where participants are able to directly Zoom into the daily activities at the centre, connect with their peers and join in on a range of programs. This service has been received extremely well with near 70% of participants who were not physically at the centre engaging virtually. All have indicated they are keen to recommence full services as soon as possible; with many indicating they would like a mix of face to face and virtual program options in the future.

Our camping team developed a virtual camping and connection program – delivered through Virtual Y and aimed at keeping our campers

connected with each other and our staff team throughout lockdown. This has been very welcomed and hugely successful with 100% of our camper participating in one or more of these virtual sessions.

## Road to recovery

We are taking a phased approach to the reinstatement of services, with prioritisation given to our Adult Day Centre participants with more complex behavioural and support needs. Approximately 50% of staff have been able to return to work so far, with the other 50% remaining on stand-down. We have an extensive COVID-Safe plan in place and are confident that the phasing will continue as community facilities open and we can recommence community, camping and in home programming.

# COVID-19 curveball: Youth Services

**Young people are at the core of everything we do at the Y, and every one of our sectors, services and programs contributes to the impact we have on young people in a variety of ways.**

As one of the largest employers of young people in Australia, we provide employment opportunities, support and development pathways for thousands of young Victorians each year.

Our youth programs include:

- **Youth Hubs** in metropolitan and regional Victoria, where we provide hundreds of young people with a physical space, diverse programming and a range of face-to-face supports that help each young person develop ownership and control of their individual mental, physical and emotional health in order to live happy and fulfilling lives.
- **YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament**, where teams from schools across Victoria are given

the opportunity to stand up in Parliament and have their voices heard. The program, which includes residential learning aims to educate, empower and encourage young people to take an active role in their community by contributing the views of their electorate at a state level. As a key component to this, The **YMCA Youth Press Gallery** is made up of young passionate journalists who cover stories of the YMCA Victorian Youth Parliament throughout the year.

- The **EVOLVE program**, a school-based program that develops Grade 6 students' capabilities in social and emotional intelligence to support them as they prepare for Year 7.
- **YMCA Bridge Project**, which supports young people who've been involved with the criminal justice system to help them get back on their feet. By working directly with young offenders at Ravenhall Prison, we provide education, support and training opportunities that

help young-offenders get ready for employment. On successful completion of the program, many of these young offenders are given the opportunity to work in our social enterprise – YMCA ReBuild.

- **YMCA ReBuild** is a building and maintenance social enterprise, employing disadvantaged young people who have offended or who are at risk of offending. Our dedicated managers and crew leaders work with these young people to train, mentor and supervise them – ultimately reducing recidivism and support these young people to become positive members of society.
- Our **Future Leaders** program, provides professional development training aimed at emerging leaders who have made a positive contribution to their local Y and are looking to develop a career within the organisation.



Image: The 2020 YMCA Youth Press Gallery in an online Zoom training session.

- **Uno-Y**, aimed at 70 young staff and volunteers within YMCA Victoria each year, is an intensive program of self-reflection and personal development designed to transform amazing young people into exceptional leaders.

When the COVID-19 lockdown measures took hold in March 2020, the majority of these programs could not continue in the face to face format they are designed for. Our Youth Services team (excluding YMCA Bridge Project and YMCA Rebuild who were able to continue to operate as an essential service) were placed on temporary stand down.

# COVID-19 curveball: Youth Services

## How we adapted

It was immediately obvious that young people stood to be some of the most heavily impacted by COVID-19, with many facing job losses, isolation, increased levels of anxiety and depression, and for some, increased risk of homelessness and self-harm. Although we were unable to continue with our programs and services as we knew them, we were very quick to establish how we could best resource and support the needs of young people in the COVID-19 environment – and as a result our team were back to work and busier than ever as we worked to convert to virtual programming.

In late April 2020 we were successful in obtaining \$1.6m from the Victorian Government and \$150k from VicHealth to establish Virtual Y an online platform delivering a range of live and on demand youth programs, fitness, nutrition, health and wellness, skill development and family based activities to support the mental health and wellbeing of young Victorians and the communities in which they live.

Within six months from launch we achieved our goal of 10,000 registrants, and had delivered over 120,000 individual sessions. Our impact analysis tells us that Virtual Y is achieving its intended outcomes and

successfully supported users to feel more connected, experience improved mental and physical health and reduced feelings of isolation throughout lockdowns. Throughout the lockdown period, Virtual Y gave us the opportunity to provide work to over 110 staff from across all areas of the Y. That's 110 team members who would otherwise have been stood down – many themselves being young people.

Our Youth Hubs joined together and leveraging Virtual Y were able to remain connected to their local young people.

Being the essential service it is, YMCA Bridge Project and YMCA ReBuild teams continued to absolutely thrive in supporting more young people in the justice system than ever before.

Our YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament team embraced change and converted the entire program into digital form, culminating in a 'Virtual Youth parliament', which included a 5-week online training program, online Bill development meetings and stakeholder engagement opportunities. The program came to a close with a Virtual Closing Ceremony on September 29 where 18 bills were presented to the Victorian Minister for Youth and Community Sport, the Honourable Ros Spence.

Although a very different experience for participants and the volunteer-led taskforce, this significant achievement ensured that the 2020 cohort did not miss out on a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn about and participate in the Australian Parliamentary system on matters that are important to them.

## Our advocacy

Through advocating for the need to support young people during the pandemic, the funding we received to deliver Virtual Y meant we were able to adapt to supporting young people virtually, when face to face was not an option.

We also participated in the YACVic roundtable with other peak youth agencies in the establishment of a COVID-19 recovery plan for young people.

## Road to recovery

While we currently remain focussed on re-adapting Virtual Y to compliment the Y's sectors and service offerings as they reopen, we are looking forward to re-introducing many of our face to face programs and services (and maybe even some new ones!) throughout 2021.

# Virtual Y: Supporting young Victorians and the community



Image: Young girl using an iPad.

Prior to COVID-19, the majority of the Y's programs and services across aquatics, camping, children's programs, recreation and youth services were delivered face-to-face – particularly within youth services. Like many organisations, the Y had to rapidly change the way in which we interacted with our communities and how we provided our services when Australia entered the first lockdown in March 2020.

The Department of Health and Human Services provided \$1.6 million funding for the Y to support the physical and mental wellbeing of young Victorians at a time when young people needed it most. With the grant,

the Y launched Virtual Y – a free, interactive online platform that brings YMCA products and services into the living rooms of all Victorians (not just existing customers or participants).

Virtual Y offers everything from online group fitness classes to virtual camping adventures, and perhaps most importantly, an online youth space where young people can learn and connect with their community. The platform also shares interactive sessions on our social media channels, such as Y-Solation, which is a weekly live stream that aims to help young people stay connected during lockdown.

When the platform launched in June 2020, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive and registrations steadily grew. However, as the pandemic continued and Victoria entered a second lockdown, the Virtual Y team ensured that the content was relevant and connected to users.

"There's so much on offer at the moment, so we need to make our content meaningful for our

customers and the broader community to combat digital fatigue," explained Fiona Kriaris, who is a Health and Wellness Product Manager at the Y and supported the launch of the fitness side of the platform.

"That's why after launching the platform our focus shifted to getting customer data and responding to it. Since the beginning of October, we've tracked our content and so far we've delivered more than 90,000 sessions and over 9,000 people have registered in the last 12 weeks, across Australia and in fact the world."

By responding to customer needs, Virtual Y is actively supporting the mental and physical wellbeing of its users, with 83% of people saying Virtual Y helped keep them active during lockdown and 81% saying the platform supported their mental health and wellbeing.

"I have loved the online fitness classes during COVID-19. As a person who lives alone, they have not only helped my physical fitness but also my mental

wellbeing. As a shift worker I have been able to do classes every day which I have not been able to do at the YMCA due to the times they are run," said one user.

The Y is committed to ensuring our programs and services are accessible and inclusive for all. An ongoing review and evaluation process that assesses accessibility against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines is in place for Virtual Y. Within weeks of its launch, the platform was assessed as being 70% compliant with an AA rating. We continue to work towards a 100% rating, ensuring Virtual Y is accessible to everybody including people with disabilities.

Virtual Y will continue to expand and evolve over the coming months, and will be a product that will be around long after the COVID-19 pandemic is over. Not only have YMCA customers reaped the benefits from the online programming, but also people in regional areas and those who don't live close to one of the Y's physical spaces are benefiting from the content.

# JobKeeper: How we supported our staff during the pandemic

Like many other organisations in Australia and around the world, YMCA Victoria was heavily impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. JobKeeper saved us. It's thanks to our Federal Government's wage subsidy program that we were able to survive and rebuild.

But for an organisation our size, it wasn't easy to administer. Here's how we handled the challenge of implementing JobKeeper.

## How YMCA Victoria was affected by COVID-19

With over 6,000 staff and volunteers, we deliver services at more than 150 locations every day – including camps, community recreation and sporting facilities, swimming pools, children's programs, as well as youth services.

In March 2020, we had to make the very difficult but necessary move to protect our staff and members by closing our non-essential physical spaces and

buildings, in line with the state government's directives. This included closing all recreation centres, camps and offices. Our only service which remained open throughout the lockdown were our YMCA Children's Programs Early Learning Centres to provide child care for essential and permitted worker families.

This meant that our business was significantly impacted financially, and as a result, we had to stand down approximately 90% of our workforce.

## The introduction of JobKeeper

Thankfully, in April 2020, Australia's Federal Government brought in a new initiative: JobKeeper. Eligible organisations would be provided with government funding of \$1,500 per fortnight for each eligible member of staff.

At the Y, we knew this wage subsidy would be vital for thousands of our staff. However, there were a variety of challenges in relation to implementing this.

## The challenges of implementing JobKeeper

### *Eligibility and managing expectations*

We knew how important JobKeeper was for our staff. Our first set of challenges included managing expectations of when payments were to be made. The JobKeeper initiative was announced to the public before having passed through parliament. We needed to wait for the initiative to pass into legislation so we didn't make payments prematurely.

In addition, in order for YMCA Victoria to receive this funding, we first had to be deemed as an eligible organisation by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The ATO was of course inundated with requests from businesses around Australia and as a result, there was a waiting period to receive confirmation that we were eligible.

Staff were naturally eager for these payments to start as soon as possible, but we needed these

external factors to be confirmed before moving onto the next steps. To ensure full transparency and trust, we increased our communication with staff – by holding frequent webinars with CEO Carolyn Morris, other executives, and the General Manager of People and Culture and by sending out multi-channel alerts via SMS, emails and social media.

### *Logistics – managing the data*

Fortunately, we were eligible for JobKeeper. Then came our second set of challenges: the logistics of staff actually applying for JobKeeper.

We needed a way to collate all our relevant staff data; deem which staff were and were not eligible; communicate this with each staff member; get eligible staff to submit individual applications; and finally, to collate all applications to enable systematic payment by our payroll team.

# JobKeeper: How we supported our staff during the pandemic

What we needed was eligible staff to nominate themselves for JobKeeper in an automated and simple way. Over 3,000 staff were eligible. That's a lot of data to sort through and a lot of staff to help.

## How we implemented JobKeeper

### The solution

We used 'PowerApps' – a tool from Microsoft's Power Platform. This would allow us to simplify what staff had to do to nominate themselves for JobKeeper. The solution was led by YMCA Victoria's Head of IT, Shane Riddle and Microsoft partner Barhead Solutions.

Through PowerApps, we built a webpage that generated a unique and secure URL for each eligible staff member. We then emailed all eligible staff asking them to nominate themselves for JobKeeper. The email included a dynamic link to their unique URL. Staff clicked this dynamic link, which led them to a JobKeeper nomination

form that was prepopulated with their individual details. Staff then simply completed the outstanding information required before submitting the form with a digital signature. This then matched the submitted data back to the relevant user account, to enable our HR and payroll teams to process the payments.



Image: YMCA staff sitting together talking.

### Manual solution vs automation

Had we used a manual solution, for example, by emailing out a static PDF form to all staff, this would have meant we received nominations from those who were ineligible as well as incomplete forms. This would

have had to be sorted through manually for thousands of nominations, which would have required more staff time and delayed our response in what was already a tight deadline (we had turnaround time of just two days to comply with the ATO's deadline and get eligible staff onto the pay cycle to ensure they get paid for the month).

These delays would have meant our staff would suffer more hardship. But we were determined to help and with JobKeeper, there was hope.

By choosing to automate our processes, we were able to ensure that we received as many staff responses as possible. By keeping the process simple for our staff and having forms pre-populated, this reduced the time it took for staff to complete their information, which removed a barrier to submission. This solution was also more secure by only allowing eligible staff to nominate themselves and reduced the potential for human error. This also reduced admin

hours and therefore saved us costs.

Most importantly, it enabled us to support our staff and keep going.

## What we learnt

Ultimately, JobKeeper has been a lifesaver for our organisation. Using an automated solution enabled our organisation to support staff with the JobKeeper payments they needed.

Not only did using this technology allow us to help our staff by automating the process, but we were able to meet tight deadlines, make our data more secure, reduce human error and save costs.

This solution by Barhead Solution even won the the 2020 Microsoft Partner of the Year for Social Impact.

This has highlighted the value of having an agile and digitally-savvy culture to all of us at the Y – something many organisations are having to adapt to amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

# The Australian bushfire season: How we did, and will help

The end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020 in Australia was not a time for celebrating the New Year as we normally would. The country was being torn apart by the bushfires sweeping the nation. The loss of life, wildlife, property and nature is still difficult to comprehend.

Many of our staff, volunteers, centres and sites were impacted by the fires and those who may not have been nearby will always remember the thick smoke that lingered over cities and towns, making the air unbreathable and the reality of those closer to the fires even more unthinkable.

The Y is not an emergency relief organisation, but we did what we could. And, like the role we played after Black Saturday, we will be there to support families and communities – it's what we do best.

During January and February, we offered free access to all Y-managed recreation facilities to CFA firefighters for some well-deserved respite and leisure.

YMCA Phillip Island Coastal Discovery Camp offered emergency accommodation for those affected, we continued to pay staff who were volunteer firefighters when they took time off work to fight the fires, and we altered outdoor programming and closed outdoor pools due to poor air quality to ensure community safety.

While COVID-19 may have delayed plans to help bushfire-affected communities recover from the atrocities experienced over the summer of 2019-20, we are committed to helping these communities in any way we can as we work together towards recovery.

Our thoughts are with all those who were affected by the bushfires in 2019-20.



Image: CFA firefighter using a hose on smoking fire.

## #YWeAreHere for young people

In May 2020, all YMCA associations across the country banded together to warn against the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on young people, launching the #YWeAreHere campaign.

With most of our doors closed and face to face interactions at a standstill, we knew it was important to remind young people that we were still there for them and their communities.

Young people are disproportionately impacted by the unemployment levels, mental health issues and social disconnection caused by the pandemic. As an organisation that has always stood with young people, we know that the Y will play an important role in supporting them during and after the pandemic.

“Young people continue to provide solutions that can ensure our post pandemic recovery. Our focus on ensuring the voice of young people reaches decision makers and transforms into true



Image: #YWeAreHere campaign image featuring young people from across the Y.

intergenerational leadership for this country is key,” said Carolyn Morris, CEO YMCA Victoria.

The #YWeAreHere campaign features Y young people from across Australia delivering a short but important message. The campaign reached a large audience, thanks to over \$225,000 worth of free advertising donated to the Y by Channel 10, Channel 7 and a number of major daily newspapers in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, Hobart and the Northern Territory.

# Jimmy's Youth Wellbeing Sanctuary Teenage Girls Retreat

When Indie, 16, attended the Teenage Girls Retreat for the first time, she was inspired to make changes in her life that would improve her mental and physical wellbeing. After a year of implementing these changes, she returned to the retreat the following year, determined to continue her journey while supporting and helping fellow participants.

The Teenage Girls Retreat is a five-day program run by YMCA Southern Peninsula Youth Services that offers a range of workshops and activities to help participants build confidence, increase self-esteem and develop strategies to navigate the challenges of their teenage years. The retreat doesn't provide counselling or prescribe medication. Instead, it focuses on teaching preventative strategies to help manage unhelpful thoughts and still the mind.

"When I went to the first retreat a year ago I wasn't eating well, I didn't exercise and I wasn't sleeping well," explained Indie.

"The retreat taught me so many different ways to look



Image: Participants during the Teenage Girls Retreat

after myself. I began to see that people supported me and wanted me to do well, which made me want to become the best version of myself. Over the past year, I have actually been doing the things I learnt and now I feel like a completely different person."

Jeanette Horsley, YMCA Peninsula Youth Services Manager, created the vision for the retreat eight years ago, and for the last three years, it has been funded by the Johnstone Family Foundation and prior to that the George Hicks Foundation. The funding removes financial barriers for attendance and provides opportunities to girls who would otherwise be unable to participate.

"Offering a safe, consistent and

nurturing space for teenage girls to reveal and explore their physical and mental health challenges is one of our core retreat aims. Routine, time and love support the many activities we include in our five-day program. The changes from simply being heard - something we all need - is often extraordinary and the courage we observe in the girls inspiring," said Jeanette.

The Teenage Girls Retreat is only one of the many ways in which YMCA Peninsula Youth Services engages and supports young people living on the Mornington Peninsula. Having opened the doors to a new purpose-built youth space named Jimmy's in December 2019, Jeanette and her team of passionate staff have expanded their services to provide activities, experiences and opportunities for all young people.

When Jimmy's had to close its doors due to COVID-19, the team quickly pivoted to providing wholesome and uplifting content across their social media channels, including

live yoga sessions and virtual aromatherapy classes. While the content provided connection for the young people in their community, the team at Jimmy's wanted to do more to help those who are struggling throughout this pandemic. So they partnered with their local IGA to deliver care packages and meals to young people and families in need.

Hannah O'brien who is a staff member at Jimmy's said the deliveries gave her a chance to connect with the young people who usually visit the space.

"This pandemic has produced a lot of negatives. However, what it has shown is just how resilient our Y service, community and young people are in a time of crisis," said Hannah.

While the pandemic is not over, the team at Jimmy's will continue supporting their local community where they can. Once doors can reopen, young people living on the Peninsula will once again find a safe space at Jimmy's where they have the support they need to feel empowered and have their voices heard.

# YMCA Bridge Project Breakfast: Empowering young people through employment

The YMCA Bridge Project supports, trains and mentors young people from the justice system, helping them cultivate a meaningful life and find stable employment with external organisations or with YMCA ReBuild.

The program holds an annual YMCA Bridge Project Breakfast to connect business leaders and government officials with the work they do, as well as connect young people with employment opportunities. In 2019 the sold-out event attracted over 400 people, who breathlessly listened to two young participants, Cam and Rav, share their personal stories of how the YMCA Bridge Project and YMCA ReBuild helped them.

## Cam

Cam shared his story in a short video. When Cam was in Ravenhall Correctional Centre, he joined YMCA ReBuild where he learned the skills needed to become employed by the program once he got out.

## Rav

YMCA Bridge Project participant Rav, whose father was in the police force, braved the stage in person to share his story of how you don't have to come from an abusive home or troubled upbringing to go down the wrong path.

When Rav attended high school, he started getting into trouble and hanging out with the wrong crowd. He went from being a grade A student to being kicked out of school at the age of 15. Things only got worse from there, and his decisions eventually led him to being incarcerated at Ravenhall Correctional Facility.

For the first few years in prison, Rav was in denial but after an incident that almost cost him his life he decided it was time to turn his life around.

"Before I knew it, I had an interview with YMCA ReBuild... I never thought I would be employed within a month and a half of coming out of prison. The crew leaders at ReBuild are



Image: Attendees at the 2019 YMCA Bridge project Breakfast.

patient and supportive, and they would challenge me by giving me responsibilities," said Rav.

After nine months, Rav regained his confidence mentally and physical and the YMCA Bridge Project put him forward for a position in construction at Winslow. He has been able to mend the broken relationships with his family, and now spends time with them regularly.

"Not everyone in prison is a bad person, they just make mistakes.

Employment gives young people something to strive for... I encourage you to give young people like myself the opportunity to turn their lives around. Just like I did."

Speaking about such sensitive matters takes a lot of courage, and is a testament to the program in displaying how the success stories of the YMCA Bridge Project are keen to give back in whatever way they can – even if it includes public speaking in front of hundreds of suits!

# #SchoolStrikeForClimate The Y backs young people on climate change

**A**t the Y we believe young people always have and always will change the world for the better.

In September 2019, thousands of Australians across over 100 locations took part in the global School Strike for Climate, demanding stronger action on climate change. Young people led this action across hundreds of countries, taking part in some of the largest environmental protests in history.

The science is clear, and concerned young people mobilised to send a message to government, businesses and the community about the need for immediate climate action.

Leading science including work by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows we have 12 years to try and limit a climate change catastrophe. Another UN report from IPBES shows that over a million species currently face extinction.

These are, rightly, major concerns for young people.

This very real ecological, economic and humanitarian crisis affects us all.

The Y stands for empowering young people and believes in their right to be heard on issues that affect them. That's why we backed young people in being heard at the Global Climate Strike.

We know that action speaks louder than words. We supported the young people who chose to attend the rally and continue to back young people in their fight for climate action.

## When young people are inspired, they are powerful.

To support young people being heard on climate change YMCA Victoria took a number of steps:

- Surveying young people to

gauge their level of climate change understanding, their commitment to making personal changes that will mitigate climate change and their expectations of local state, national and international leaders to address climate change mitigation;

- Utilising the information provided in the survey to increase the impact of YMCA Victoria programs;
- Promoting the views of young people by disseminating the

survey results to the UN and all levels of government;

- Providing access to quality climate change information to assist young people in understanding climate change.

The Y's commitment to the environment, sustainability and climate change continues to grow and evolve, with the implementation of environmental strategies and programs across the organisation.



Image: Students protesting with signs at the School Strike for Climate.

# Helping a community in crisis Derrimut Early Learning Centre

**Y**MCA centres are more than just physical buildings and services, they are also community hubs that aim to meet the needs of each individual community. When a suburb or town is struggling, the Y can provide a safe space and connection to help, with leaders and staff compassionately working behind the scenes.



Image: YMCA educator reading with a child.

Derrimut is one of the ten most vulnerable communities in Victoria. It's a place with high rates of people experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, drug abuse and child neglect. It's also a place of polar differences, where \$1.2 million mansions and commission houses are neighbours.

When Shea Quirk began working at the Derrimut YMCA Early

Learning Centre two years ago, she was confronted with a community in crisis. Shea heard many heartbreaking stories of domestic violence and family hardship, so she decided something needed to change and rolled up her sleeves.

Shea transformed the centre into a community hub in a matter of months, developing strong partnerships with Drummond Street Family Services, Safe Steps, The Hunt Club (Community Development for Brimbank) and Community Housing Victoria (which services housing for vulnerable families). She also sourced vouchers for the local Coles to donate to families in immediate crisis.

These partnerships led to the creation of a 'Meal and Music' night, which provided Y families a safe space to talk to support services, community BBQs, 'Care and Connect' sessions and frequent coffee catch-ups at

the centre. For isolated mums in difficult situations this offer of a free coffee can be life-changing.

"There was a woman in an abusive situation, who couldn't leave the house and was drug affected. Through the coffee catch-ups she received help, enrolled in TAFE, the kids are coming to the centre and she got emergency housing.

"In six weeks she was a totally different woman," she said.

Shea says she is 'just doing her job', but ask anyone who works with Shea and they easily praise this incredible woman, who cares deeply for the community.

Derrimut YMCA Early Learning Centre occupancy grew from 42% in January 2019 to 87% in September 2019, with many of the families coming from vulnerable homes and looking for a safe environment for their children.

# THRIVE #OnlyWithTheY

In September 2019, over 175 industry leaders, council partners and YMCA staff from across the nation met to attend the THRIVE #OnlyWithTheY forum. They celebrated the Y's successes and explored how they could continue to create positive outcomes in communities in the future.

"The THRIVE forum was a platform to celebrate, learn, and connect with our common goal of making people healthier and more connected," said Fiona Kriaris, Health and Wellness Product Manager and THRIVE event coordinator.

Attendees heard from YMCA Victoria and Kingswim CEO, Carolyn Morris, who celebrated the organisation's focus on creating future leaders and encouraging innovation before industry leaders shared their ideas on the future of health and wellness.

Keynote speakers Michelle Bridges and Mack Horton each shared their inspirational journeys. While panel



Image: Y leaders with Mack Horton and Michelle Bridges in front of a #OnlyWithTheY sign.

discussions brought together aquatics and recreation leaders to present ideas on the influence of technology on the fitness industry, the importance of aquatic safety and the need to extend the definition of a gym from 'four wall spaces'.

YMCA inspired young people, Melissa Watson and Isabelle Ferreri spoke about global and local YMCA experiences, providing an insight into the future of the organisation through their eyes.

Attendees left the event inspired by the high calibre of presentations from a diverse range of speakers and motivated to utilise the knowledge in building healthier and more connected communities.

# Victorian Father of the Year 2019 and 2020

Each year, YMCA Victoria and the Victorian Father's Day Council together coordinate a state-wide search for its Victorian Father of the Year. Children, partners and community members are able to nominate a dad or father figure they believe deserving of the award and recognition for the exemplary role model they are to the young people in their lives.

In 2019, Chris Youngman was awarded the honour at the Melbourne Town Hall.

The 36-year-old Drouin production planner gave up work to look after his baby boy who was battling cancer. His story is one of sacrifice, determination and strength against staggering adversity. It is about an ordinary dad, who constantly puts the needs of his family before himself. And despite the hardships

and unknowns the family faces, he counts himself as incredibly lucky.

In 2020, Stephen Curran was awarded the honour, but of course, things were a little different and the event was held virtually on Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Presented by the Lord Mayor Sally Capp, it was a moving ceremony where Stephen and his daughter Sarah spoke from their kitchen, her two brothers sitting behind them.



Image: Stephen Curry holding his Victorian father of the Year award with his three children.

# Queer Soiree Inclusion is more than a rainbow banner

**Carlton Baths is more than just your regular recreation centre. It's a place where equality and inclusion is at the forefront of everything they do – making it a true community hub for all inner north residents. To celebrate their community, Carlton Baths hosted their second sold-out Queer Soiree event as a part of Midsumma Festival in February 2020.**

Over 400 people attended the inclusive event, which featured live performances from LGBTQIA+ artists, stalls from sport clubs and support services, and a special exhibition basketball game hosted by Bushrangers Basketball –



Image: Players taking part in a mixed basketball exhibition match.

Australia's largest LGBTIQA+ basketball club. The basketball game showcased Carlton Baths' new mixed basketball rules that promote inclusion for gender diverse players.

"The atmosphere, the feeling of safety and inclusion is never an accident. It takes incredibly hard work, good governance and a determination to get it right... Alex (the event organiser) and the Y have demonstrated that from day one, and we are very proud to call Carlton Baths home," said Stella Lesic, Founder of the Bushrangers.

"Inclusion is more than a rainbow banner."

Alex Jovanovski, Sport and Community Engagement Coordinator at Carlton Baths, organised the event with help from his passionate team. Together they coordinated poolside performances from The Beastie Girls, The Gaze and Memphis LK, as well as a water ballet routine by The Clams. Apart from enjoying live music and performances, attendees



Image: Attendees watching a water ballet routine performed by The Clams.

could also swim in the 25m outdoor pool, participate in group fitness classes, and seek information and advice from support services.

"The Queer Soiree simply marked an annual celebration of tireless work completed by the Carlton Baths team to provide a safe and inclusive space for all people in our community," said Alex.

The feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with one person stating, "I felt so

safe and comfortable at the pool, which I usually don't. I would like to feel this way at every pool, rather than this be the exception. More events like this would be amazing," commented one attendee.

At the Y, we believe in inclusion and equality for all people, regardless of age, gender, ability, religion or sexuality, and Queer Soiree is a great example of why inclusivity matters.

# Men of Moreland Building healthy masculinity in the City of Moreland



Image: Men of Moreland participants sitting together on the grass.

**M**en who live in Moreland and the neighbouring northern suburbs of Melbourne are increasingly experiencing low physical health, poor mental health and social isolation. To combat this issue, Active Moreland launched Men of Moreland with 21 participants after the success of City of Casey's Men of Doveton program.

Through the promotion of physical wellbeing, mental health and social connectedness, Men of Moreland aims to challenge traditional gender stereotypes through the exploration of topics

such as nutrition, gambling, mental health and mindfulness, respectful relationships, gender equality and prevention of violence against women.

Each Monday evening of the program, participants take part in some form of exercise facilitated by Active Moreland trainers and representatives from the Coburg Football

Club, aiming to improve physical wellbeing. The second half of the session focuses on improving mental wellbeing through presentations, workshops and discussions led by community influencers, clubs and services, including Gamblers Help, HeadSpace Glenroy and Carlton Football Club.

Louisa Caldwell, Active Moreland Community and Engagement Director, coordinates the Men of Moreland program and when the program ended, she was inspired by the participants' willingness to

learn, be honest and step out of their comfort zone.

"I learnt a lot from them, and while many of the conversations we had weren't easy, they were conversations that needed to happen and should happen a lot more," said Louisa.

At the end of the program, the participants celebrated their journey at a graduation ceremony with friends and family. Two participants, Nathan and Blair, shared their stories of how the program impacted them. For Nathan, Men of Moreland helped him not only learn how to cook a nutritionally balanced meal and how to exercise, it also challenged his view of masculinity.

"The most profound change for me from Men of Moreland is how I would define masculinity... I now define masculinity as something that comes from within. For me it's finding the confidence to be the man that I am, to love him and be the best version of that man. I owe it to Men of Moreland for helping me find him," said

Nathan.

Blair shared a similar story. After enduring financial hardship and experiencing health issues, Blair found himself in a downward spiral. However, he slowly picked himself back up and decided to join Men of Moreland.

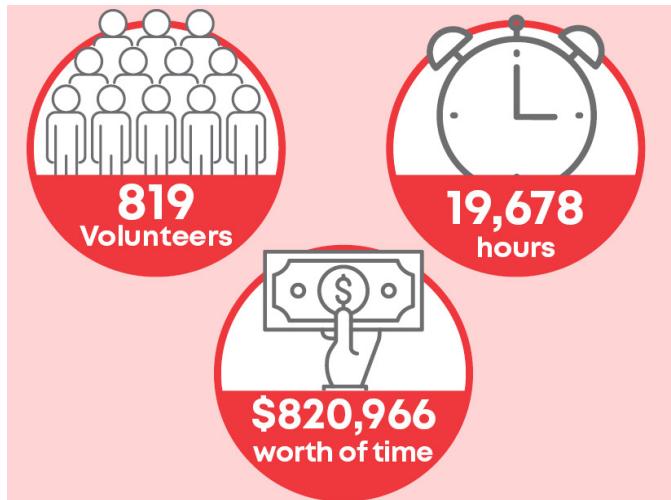
"This program taught me to not give up, to be a better man, to stand up and be a better leader in my family and the community. I am in a better mental space as a result of participating in Men of Moreland, and my fitness and health has improved," said Blair.

"I honestly believe that this kind of initiative should be rolled out and run in every community across the country. There are many men out there who would greatly benefit from the topics, lessons and storytelling that came out of the Men of Moreland nights."

After the success of the first Men of Moreland program, the Active Moreland team are excited to create more programs like this in the future.

# Our impact

Whilst the Y's reach has been impacted by COVID-19 this past year, our programs and services have still impacted the lives of thousands of Victorians. Here's a snapshot of what we achieved in 2019-2020.



## ◀ Staff and volunteers

In the year 2019-2020, we employed 5,582 staff, with 44.5% under the age of 25.

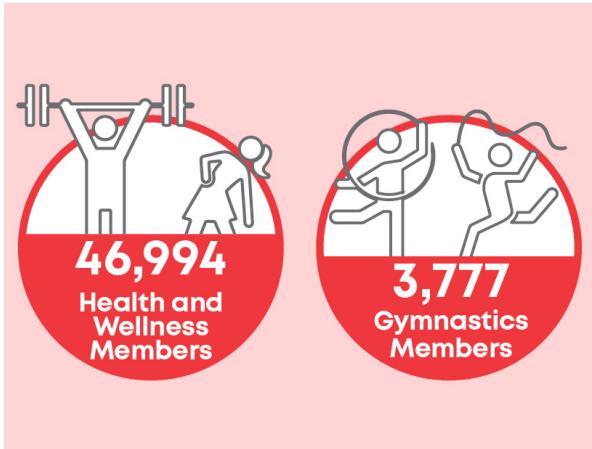
Our 819 volunteers gave up 19,678 hours this year, and while this is invaluable to us, that amounts to an incredible \$820,966 worth of time our dedicated volunteers provided.

## Youth and skate programs ▶

Our YMCA Youth Services programs and skate parks engaged over 21,000 people.

Of the \$10,781,279 we spent to help people in need, 96% was spent helping young people and children across Victoria.



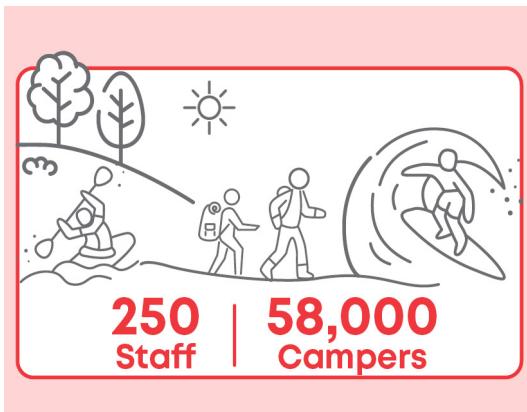
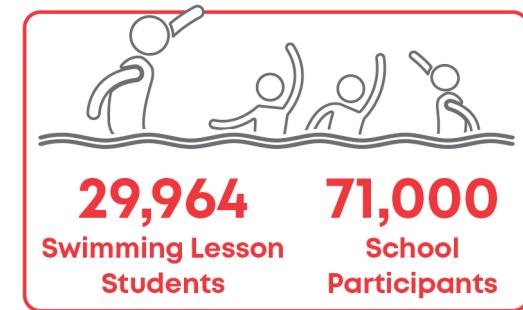


## Healthy living and fitness

Across our aquatic and recreation facilities, we had 46,994 health and wellness members and 3,777 gymnastics members.

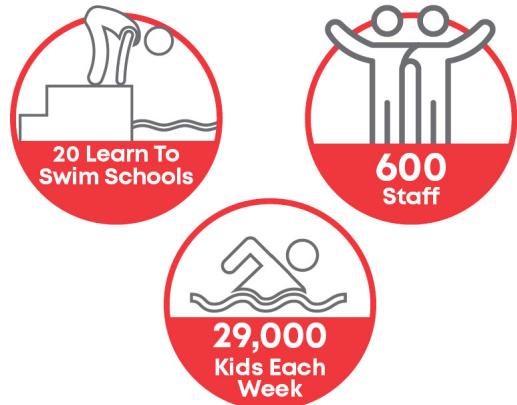
## Aquatics and swimming

We had 29,964 swimming lesson students at our sites and 71,000 school participants through our school YMCA Swimming Lessons program.



## Camping

We employ 250 staff across our seven YMCA Camps, where 58,000 campers attended in the last year.

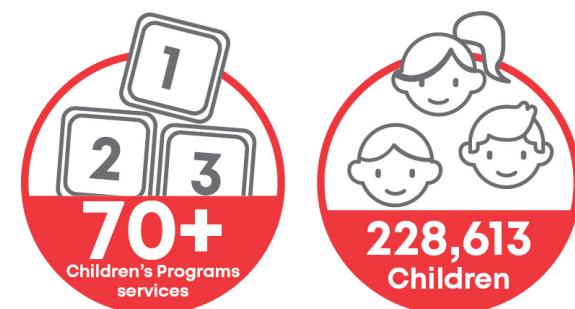


## Kingswim

Kingswim operates 20 Learn to Swim Schools across Victoria, Canberra, New South Wales and Queensland, and employs more than 600 staff. Prior to the pandemic, Kingswim taught more than 29,000 kids each week to be competent and safe in and around the water.

## Children's Programs

We operate 51 Children's Programs facilities. Of these, we have 18 Early Learning Centres, 26 Before and After School Programs and seven School Holiday Programs. In the last financial year, 228,613 children attended our early learning services.



# Financials and fundraising

## Financial summary

In the past year, we opened up two Early Learning Centres in Wyndham Vale and Tarneit and the Board made the strategic decision to exit out of the retirement living sector during the year.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was significant, not only financially but also on our customers, suppliers, council partners and staff. For the year ending 30 June 2020, YMCA Victoria had a consolidated net deficit of \$88,479.

BALANCE SHEET	Current year 30 June 2020	Prior year 30 June 2019 (restated)
Current assets	38,802,358	20,427,512
Non current assets (1)	84,197,882	56,052,242
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>123,000,240</b>	<b>76,479,755</b>
Current liabilities (2)	53,881,102	33,834,154
Non current liabilities	42,479,256	15,340,652
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>96,360,358</b>	<b>49,174,806</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>26,639,882</b>	<b>27,304,948</b>

### NOTE:

- (1) Non-current assets include right of use asset of \$44.9m, adoption of new accounting standard AASB16 in FY20.
- (2) Current liabilities include a loan of \$6.7m for Aquatic Education (prior year non current), and lease liabilities of \$7.7m, adoption of new accounting standard AASB16 in FY20.
- (3) Non current liabilities include lease liabilities of \$40.2m, adoption of new accounting standard AASB16 in FY20.

## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



## WHERE THE MONEY WAS SPENT



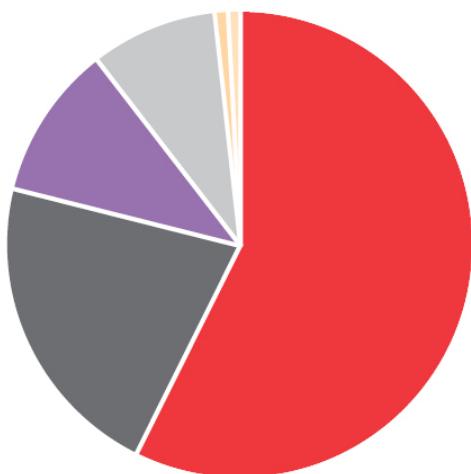
# Financials and fundraising

## Fundraising overview

Fundraising plays an important role in contributing to our benevolent spend commitment and this year, YMCA Victoria raised \$925,340 through fundraising activities. To help support the communities in which we operate, \$10,781,279 was spent on providing programs and services to people in need.

### HOW FUNDS WERE RAISED

■ Major gifts	57.40%
■ Grants	21.39%
■ Major events	10.71%
■ Local YMCA activities	8.84%
■ Bequests	0.76%
■ Workplace giving	0.51%
■ Individual giving	0.39%



### Terry Mitropoulos donates \$60,000 to YMCA Victoria

Terry Mitropoulos is passionate about the work the Y does and believes that health and happiness should be within everyone's reach, regardless of difficult situations. After being diagnosed with a brain tumour and being told he would never walk again, Terry started his long journey of recovery at his local YMCA centre through YMCA Open Doors. With the help of his personal trainer, Terry gradually regained movement in his legs.

To give back to the community that supported him, Terry decided to do the Walk and Shine fundraiser where he walked 786km from Adelaide to Melbourne. From the money he raised, he donated \$60,000 to YMCA Victoria that will be used to support mental health programs at the Y.

Thank you Terry, the Y is incredibly grateful for your support!

# Entities

## **The Young Men's Christian Association of Victorian Inc**

ABN 81 174 456 784 / A0026728G

Community non-profit charity providing support to the community

## **Victorian YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd**

ABN 75 092 818 445 / ACN 092 818 445

Offers recreational and childcare services across the state

## **YMCA Aquatic Education Ltd**

ABN 88 151 552 322 / ACN 151 552 322

Provision of learn to swim programs offered under the King Swim brand

## **YMCA Aquatic & Event Services Ltd**

ABN 16 148 092 148 / ACN 148 092 148

Management of the South Australian Aquatic & Leisure Centre on behalf of the SA government

## **Victorian YMCA Accommodation Services Pty Ltd**

ABN 94 081 270 706 / ACN 081 270 706

Management of student accommodation

## **Victorian YMCA Youth & Community Services**

ABN 42 858 439 742 / A0046043N

Ensures benevolent access to programs and services for people in need

## **YMCA Camping Limited**

ABN 77 606 062 793 / ACN 606 062 793

Management of camping facilities

## **Activating Communities Ltd**

ABN 31 619 359 590 / ACN 619 359 590

Retirement Living – project sold during the year and entity no longer trading

# Partnerships

The Y's incredible work could not be done without generous support from our contributors in the community, especially in the past year. Whether you're an individual, a charitable trust or foundation, a corporate sponsor, a council partner or government partnership - we are so grateful for your support.

Thank you to all those listed below. We rely on contributions from people like you to continue our vital work in the community.

By donating to or partnering with YMCA Victoria, you are helping to support local people who are doing it tough, giving them access to our life-changing programs and services. We appreciate your support in helping us give everybody the chance to be healthier, happier and better connected to their community.

## Top contributors

- Amber Infrastructure and International Public Partnerships
- Casey Demons
- Daryl Logan
- Grill'd Malvern
- Jill Elaine Sullivan
- Maria Lui
- Paypal Giving Fund Donation
- Piranha Health Foods
- RACV
- Rye & District Community Financial Services Ltd
- Terry Mitopoulos
- The Russell Foundation
- The Salvation Army
- Walker Books Australia

# Partnerships

## Partners

- AFL SportsReady
- APD Projects
- Arena REIT
- Australian Childhood Foundation
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
- Brimbank Lifestyle Properties Pty Ltd
- Canberra Airport
- Carlton Football Club
- CERES Sustainability Hub
- Community Child Care Association
- Cypcil Pty Ltd
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Premier & Cabinet
- Early Childhood Australia
- eWater Systems
- Family Planning Victoria
- Fitness & Lifestyle Group (Fitness First and Goodlife)
- Golden Luke Pty Ltd
- Gowrie Victoria
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service
- IPAN - Deakin University
- KIDDO
- Learning Communities Victoria
- Lendlease Real Estate Investments
- Modern Teaching Aids
- Nutrition Australia
- Parents' Voice
- Parliament House of Victoria
- Ravenhall Correctional Centre
- Sport Australia
- The Obesity Collective
- Trend Well Investments Limited
- Tymorn Property Pty Ltd
- VicHealth
- Victorian Electoral Commission
- Victorian School Building Authority
- Zoos Victoria

## Government and industry

- Government of South Australia
- Life Saving Victoria
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Victoria State Government

# Partnerships

## Local government partners

- Banyule City Council
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- Baw Baw Shire Council
- Benalla Rural City Council
- City of Boroondara
- City of Casey
- City of Greater Bendigo
- City of Greater Dandenong
- City of Melbourne
- Darebin City Council
- Frankston City Council
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Knox City Council
- Manningham Council
- Maribyrnong City Council
- Moira Shire
- Monee Valley City Council
- Moreland City Council
- Mount Alexandra Shire Council
- Murray River Council
- Nillumbik Shire Council
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- South Gippsland Shire Council

## Grants

- Australian Government
- Australian Multicultural Community Services
- Bass Coast Community Foundation
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- Benalla Rural City Council
- Boroondara City Council
- City of Greater Dandenong
- City of West Torrens
- Department of Education - Community Child Care Fund Program
- Department of Health
- Department of Social Services
- Move it AUS - Participation
- South Australian Sports Institute
- Sport Australia
- Tomorrow Today Foundation
- Victorian Government

