



Playgroup SA
Annual Report
2023/24

Chair's Report 2024

Celebrating 50 years of providing playgroup services to South Australian children and families.

Playgroup SA achieved its 50-year milestone, a testament for the ongoing value of playgroups to children and their families. As our organisation has matured, both in the size and scope of services we now deliver, we look forward to the challenges of the future with confidence.

Looking Back

Looking back 50 years, playgroups first developed in the early 1970s, when parents were the primary beneficiaries. The playgroup purpose was to address social isolation of young stay-at-home mums who were separated from their extended families.

Advances in our understanding of the importance of early childhood development, and with changing social trends, we have moved from an organisation that primarily brought mothers and children together, to one that focuses on the development of young children and the benefits this brings to families and communities. Recent studies highlight that children who attend playgroups are less likely to start school developmentally vulnerable.

Changes in the early childhood sector

The early childhood sector is undergoing significant change at a state and national level. Playgroup SA has advocated on behalf of South Australian children and families in responding to reports and recommendations. We actively considered the recommendations of the South Australian Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care and the subsequent planned introduction of 3 year-old preschool. We are working to ensure our services respond to children's developmental needs and supports their transition into preschool.

We acknowledge the importance of the first 1000 days in the life of a child.

Playgroup SA is working with service partners to develop integrated service systems that are accessible and seamless for parents.

Strengthening the Board's Governance Responsibilities

Following certification by the Australian Service Excellent Standards (2023) the Board has strengthened its governance responsibilities. We completed a Board self-assessment evaluation and developed recommendations to improve our performance.

The Board has progressed the establishment of the Finance and Audit Committee and Governance and Risk Committee. Recruitment to Board vacancies has been achieved and we welcome Tom Veale, Noreen Byrne, and Quentin Crombie as Treasurer. They bring strong leadership and governance expertise which is adding value to the Board's deliberations.

Looking Forward

As we look to the future, we have reaffirmed our strategic plan with four key themes to support the continuity and sustainability of our business in times where families need us more than ever. Our key themes and focus will be:

Play - Children's play as the core moral purpose for our work.

Portfolio - Bringing stakeholders together to increase opportunities for improved revenue and greater interest in investment.

Partnerships - Investing in community transformation through the proliferation of a play culture in all contexts.

Platform - Investing in platform development that integrates all relevant play resources not captured by other entities.

Acknowledgements

The importance of recognising the contribution of our success and outcomes cannot be underestimated. On behalf of the Board, I express our thanks and appreciation for the leadership and tenacity of the CEO Craig Bradbrook and his intrepid team. They have worked over and above the call of duty.

The contribution of the league of volunteers, government and non-government service partners, families and children all add to the work Playgroup SA undertakes.

My special thanks and appreciation to my Board colleagues who are tireless in their commitment and willingness to grapple with the fundamentals of their governance responsibilities. I also express our thanks to Darren Alison for his contribution to the Board during 2022 and 2023.

The Citizens of the Future

The opportunity for every child to participate in unstructured play with other children is the 'beating heart' of our work at Playgroup SA. To achieve this, children need the support of their family and community in a safe environment. Playgroups therefore offer a potentially powerful experience for children and their families. Our children are the citizens of the future, and they deserve every opportunity.



Trish Strachan
Chair
November 2024

CEO's Report 2024

Celebrating five decades of community impact, Playgroup SA continues to evolve and expand its service to better serve the South Australian community

This year marks a significant achievement for Playgroup SA as we celebrate 50 years of operations. To commemorate this special occasion, we hosted a quiz night that brought together nearly 200 guests from our community, highlighting the enduring connections we have built over the decades. As CEO, I am deeply humbled to be in this position and to guide the organisation through this pivotal time in its history. It is a privilege to steward an organisation that continues to make a meaningful impact on children's development, families and communities across South Australia.

Evolution of Playgroup Operations

Operations have evolved significantly since the initial formation of playgroups, which began as a community-driven support network, offering peer-based guidance to families and coordinators. Over time, playgroups evolved and expanded from community-based activities into a valued and structured support mechanism. Paid facilitators were introduced to address specific challenges such as perinatal depression and developmental delays in children. This expansion has enabled playgroups to better support families facing complex needs, including connecting them with essential services. Additionally, playgroups now serve as a platform for delivering child development checks, further enhancing their role in fostering early childhood development and well-being. Today Playgroup SA offers a suite of online and face-to-face learning opportunities available to families and playgroup coordinators.

Strategic Advancements

Strategically, Project Einstein facilitated the introduction of Social Work student placements and established a partnership with Nottingham Trent University. This collaboration included training and planning for the integration

of the MAST program into playgroup sessions. Project International saw Playgroup SA host a visiting delegation from Tuvalu, a Pacific Island nation. The visitors participated in playgroup and preschool visits and engaged in discussions with curriculum designers, which were well-received. We look forward to advancing our operations into the future.

Remote working environment

A significant challenge for the team was operating without a physical office or headquarters for the first 9 months of this financial year. During this period, the team adapted commendably to a remote working environment. Despite the challenging circumstances, there was minimal disruption to the delivery of essential services to playgroups and communities across South Australia.

Advancing support for families

Towards the end of the year, Playgroup SA welcomed a new Family Linker role, aimed at supporting families in connecting with disability services and addressing any challenges. This role is a valuable addition to the PlayConnect+ program, which continues to provide essential services to children with developmental differences.

Ready Set Progress

The Ready, Set, Progress program, our unique Child Development Check initiative, continued to achieve significant success throughout the year. The Allied Health team completed 864 Child Development Checks and provided 85 Early Help and Support sessions. The program's success, with the team working at full capacity and programs like playgroups and kindergyms having wait-lists for visits, underscores the community's demand. Its contribution to addressing the first recommendation of the Royal Commission will be critical.

Playgroup SA's 50th year has been one of resilience, growth, and strategic advancement. Despite the challenges of remote work, we have continued to expand our services and adapt to meet the needs of the communities we serve. From welcoming new initiatives such as the Child Development Checks expansion, to strengthening our international collaborations, Playgroup SA remains committed to enhancing the well-being of children, families, and communities across South Australia. As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward to building on our achievements and continuing our vital role in supporting early childhood development and family engagement.



Craig Bradbrook
CEO
November 2024

Significant Partnerships

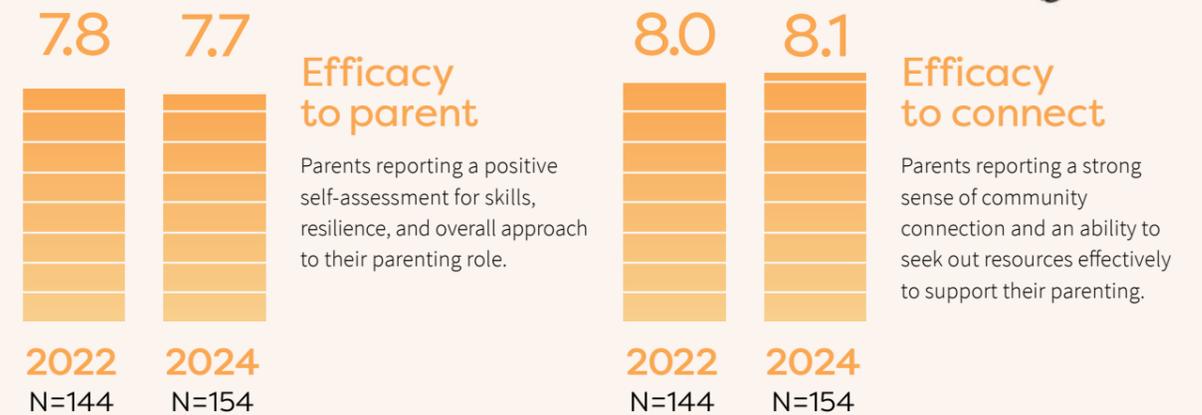
“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

This ethos underpins our ability to deliver meaningful support to the playgroup movement, whether through training, visits, or advocating the importance of play during the first 2,000 days of life. Our success is driven by collaboration with aligned organisations and the trust of our funding and philanthropic partners. We are grateful to all of our partners, both mentioned and unmentioned, whose contributions make this work possible.

Playgroup SA's Impact

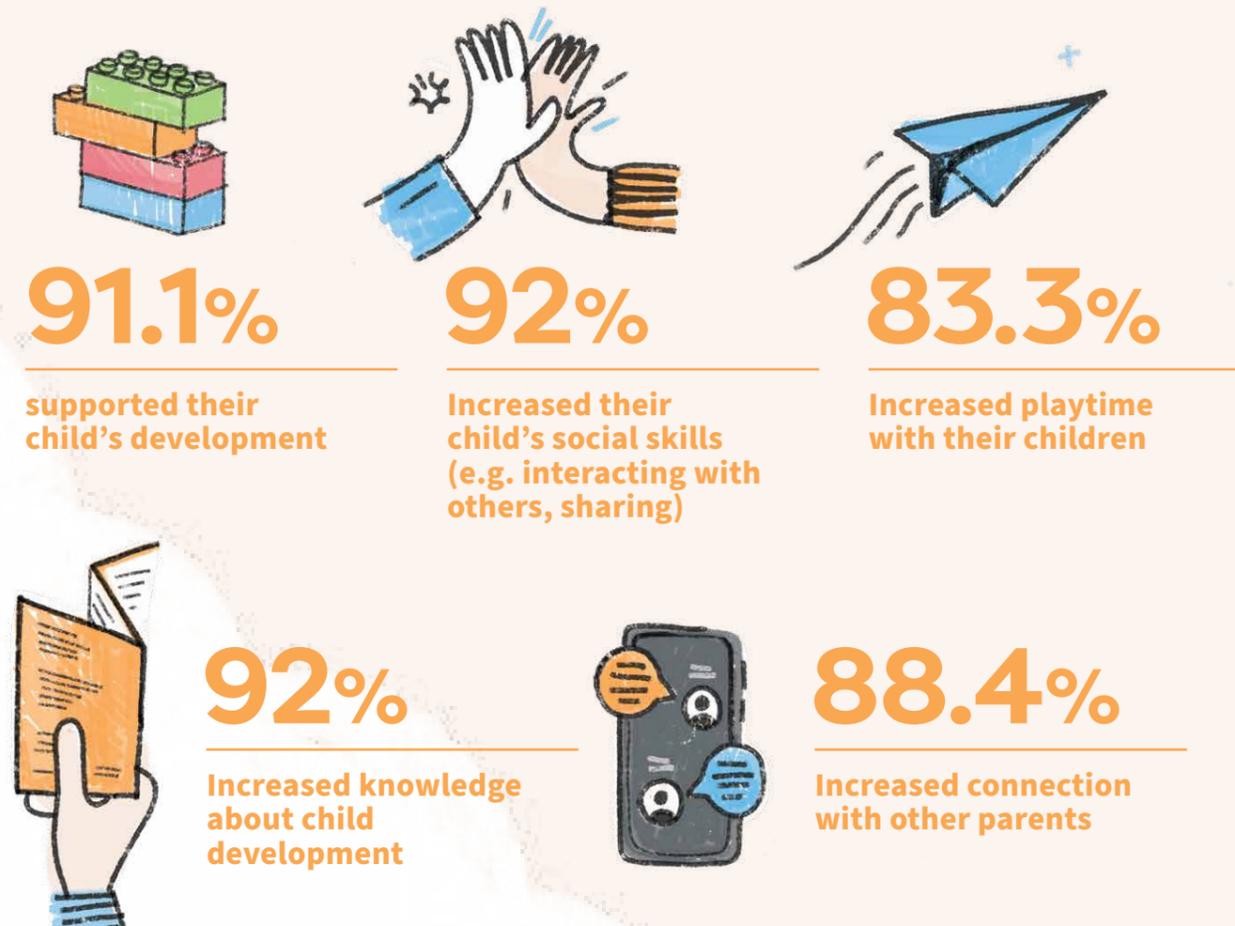


Results from the Parental Efficacy and Empowerment Measure

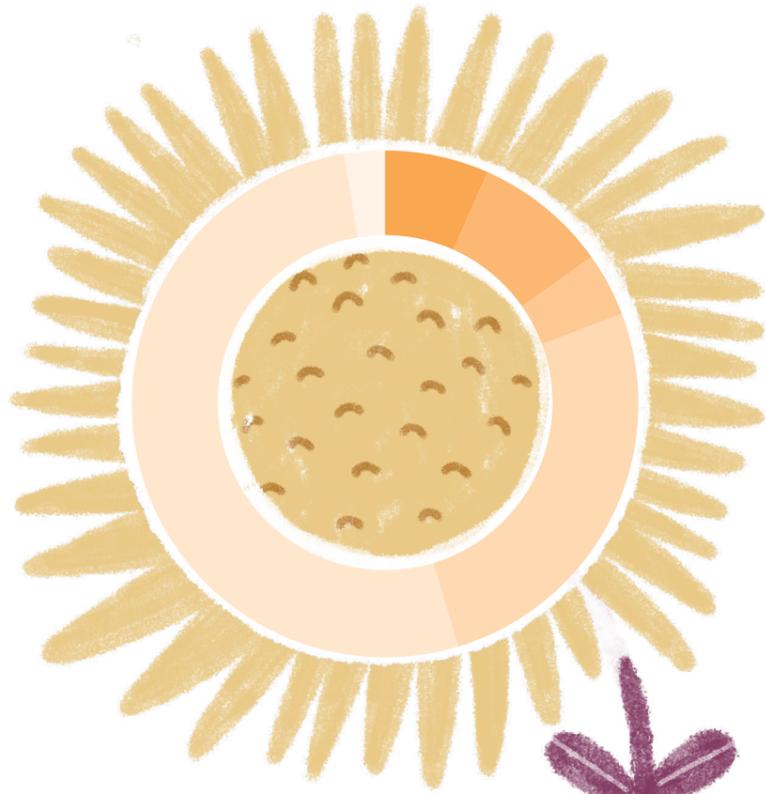


Annual Playgroup Survey

Attending playgroup has led parents to report the following positive outcomes:



Playgroups in South Australia



● Regional	6%
● Metropolitan	9%
● Intergenerational	4%
● Organisational	26%
● Department for Education	52%
● Supported Playgroups	3%

134

Organisational

33

Regional

33

Supported playgroups

265

Department for Education

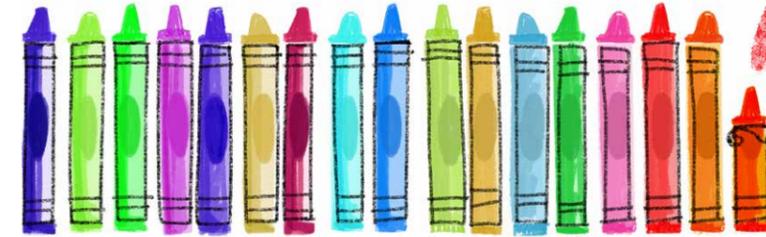
44

Metropolitan

21

Intergenerational

Family Enrolments



1653

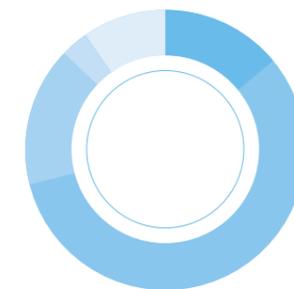
Parents attending playgroups



2145

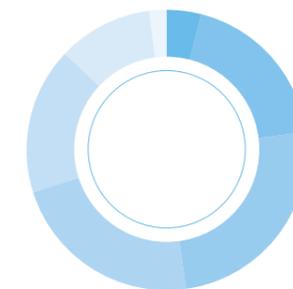
Children participating in playgroups

Ages parents/ caregivers



● 20-29 years	14%
● 30-39 years	57%
● 40-49 years	16%
● >50 years	3%
● No DOB	10%
● <19 years	0%

Ages children



● 0-12 months	4%
● 1 year	19%
● 2 years	25%
● 3 years	22%
● 4 years	17%
● 5+ years	11%
● No DOB	2%

Demographics

84

CALD Families

29

First Nations Families

Supported and Specialist playgroups

Playgroups Sessions per week

PALS	3
PlayConnect +	5
Peep Learning Together program	3

Pt Augusta

Supported playgroups	3
Peep Learning Together program	2
Parenting programs	2

6

Regional supported playgroups

9

Metropolitan playgroups

Family Enrolments and Demographics of specialist and supported programs



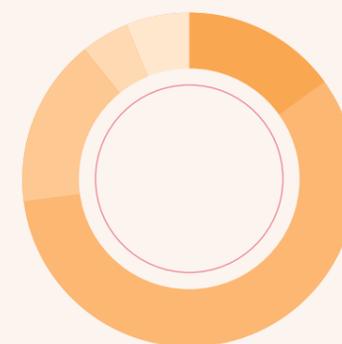
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Parents attending playgroups

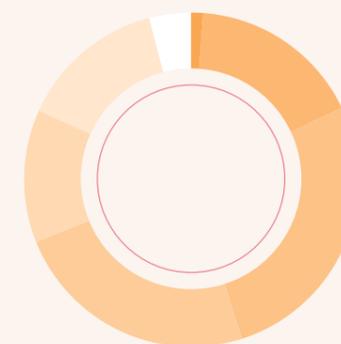
327

Children participating in playgroups

Ages parents/ caregivers



Ages children



Demographics

16

CALD families

42

First Nations families

Ready, Set, Progress

Child Development Checks

864 Child Development Checks were completed in playgroups and other community based programs.

- Developmentally on-track 51.4%
- Required monitoring 22.2%
- Required further assessment 24.8%

864

Child development checks

85

Children have attended Early Help & Support sessions with the team

130

Information sessions

28%

of the families from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background

Treasurer's Report 2024

For the period ending 30 June 2024 (FY24), the Playgroup SA Incorporated (Playgroup SA) annual financial statements have been prepared by William Buck. Nexia Edwards-Marshall (Nexia) continued their role as auditors for the FY24 period, noting Nexia provided an unmodified audit opinion. The full set of financial statements will be published on the ACNC website in due course, and in the meantime, a summary is presented here.

Throughout the FY24 period, Playgroup SA continued to provide support for community playgroups, delivered Child Development Checks at playgroups and provided other community-based early childhood activities. In addition, training and development was delivered both online and face to face, with advocacy work also continuing. All activities carried out during the period have aligned with contractual requirements.

The result for the FY24 period was a net loss of \$78,578 following a surplus of \$125,706 in the previous financial year (FY23). The loss was largely attributable to the timing of grants received in advance. Furthermore, and following a detailed review and analysis of Playgroup SA's grants in advance, the FY23 comparatives were adjusted to reflect an amount of \$91,868 that was incorrectly recorded as contract liabilities and should have been recognised as revenue for the year ended 30 June 2023. Notwithstanding the FY24 loss, the financial health of Playgroup SA remains strong, with net assets of \$488,398 as at 30 June 2024.

Looking ahead, the focus for Playgroup SA will be to continue to ensure sustainability of the organisation, including to maximise the value for its enrolled families, registered playgroups and broader South Australian communities. Furthermore, the Board and Management will continue to assess revenue opportunities as well as seeking efficiencies where appropriate, noting this work will be supported by the newly formed Finance and Audit Committee.

With this in mind, for the period ahead (FY25), the Board has approved a balanced budget, with a modest deficit of approximately \$20K having been forecast, though at the date of publishing this Report, a small surplus is more likely.

	2023-24 \$	2022-23 \$
Profit and Loss		
Grant income	1,933,084	1,523,388
Memberships	49,307	59,398
Interest revenue	18,545	15,328
Other income	6,671	4,584
Total revenue	2,007,607	1,602,698

Administrative expenses	(315,804)	(278,199)
Occupancy expenses	(5,881)	(13,033)
Employment expenses	(1,590,318)	(1,065,052)
Membership and program fees	(166,113)	(120,708)
Finance costs	(8,069)	-
Total expenses	(2,086,185)	(1,476,992)

Surplus/(deficit)	(78,578)	125,706
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	2023-24 \$	2022-23 \$
Balance sheet		
Assets		
Cash & equivalents	1,115,609	1,294,783
Trade and other receivables	333	99,036
Other assets	60,054	25,932
Total current assets	1,175,996	1,419,751

Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	16,154	19,966
Right-of-use assets	257,421	-
Intangibles	-	12
Other assets	-	33,000
Total non-current assets	273,575	52,978
Total assets	1,449,571	1,472,729

	2023-24 \$	2022-23 \$
Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	100,042	135,295
Contract liabilities	502,648	699,824
Lease liabilities	88,960	-
Employee benefits	96,025	70,634
Total current liabilities	788,035	905,753

Non-current liabilities		
Lease liabilities	173,138	-
Total non-current liabilities	173,138	-

Total liabilities	961,173	905,753
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Net asset/equity	488,398	566,976
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Playgroup SA

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