Annual Report
2019/20

BERRY STREET

Believing In Children, Young People, Families & Their Future.

Acknowledgement of Country

Berry Street is committed to the principles of social justice. Berry Street acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies and waterways across Australia. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Elders as holders, protectors and educators of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We pay respect to the emerging Elders and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in our care to connect to their cultures, countries and communities.

Berry Street recognises that sovereignty was never ceded and acknowledges the continuing impact colonisation has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to date. We commit to ensuring all staff understand our true history, as an organisation and country, and recognise the importance of acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the lands in which we operate.

"We will strive to provide a service where reconciliation lives in the hearts, minds and actions of all our teams."
— Michael Perusco, CEO

Contents

4	A year of two halves
8	Berry Street snapshot
10	Our flagship evidence-based program — the Teaching Family Model
12	Governance & Leadership
14	Y-Change — a team at the forefront of change
24	Achievements against our strategic goals
26	Towards reconciliation
27	Child Safe and Rainbow Tick
28	The impact of the Berry Street School
29	Empowering young people through ICMS
30	Reflections of a survivor
32	Financial Statements
36	Thank you to all our supporters
38	The Berry Street approach

A year of two halves — Y-Change in conversation with our President and CEO

It's been a year like never before. One that has — in so many complex ways — demonstrated the constancy of change, as well as how rapid change can so brightly shine a light on existing inequality. A time when we're confronted to see the reality of what lies before us and work through some of the most challenging times in our lives.

At the same time — amongst the very real upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects it will continue to have on children, young people, families, and societies the world over — there are glimmers of hope. We've been presented with a time potentially like never before, when all is laid bare, to challenge ourselves and reimagine how we can work together to courageously change lives and shape a new future. This includes a future where — as we believe at Berry Street — children, young people and families are safe, thriving and hopeful.

We believe one of the keys to tackling inequity lies in the hopes, capabilities and lived expertise of young people. But also, that we need to move beyond just listening to young people, and instead meaningfully empower them to take action and effect genuine change. So, this year, our report begins with extracts from a conversation led by Berry Street's Y-Change team with the two of us.

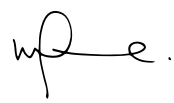
The Y-Change team are young people with a lived experience of socioeconomic disadvantage who contribute their expertise as consultants across the sector, including advising senior management on service design and delivery. The team is at the forefront of change, so we believe there's no better place to start than with the conversations they're leading. Later in the report, the team also contributes a feature section on the work they've been doing to influence social and systems change.

Crisis. Change. Inequity. Opportunity. Hope. Never have these been more important to consider honestly and openly. Because it's clearly no longer about whether we should change and if it's possible. We must change, and it is possible.

We're on the right track. Conversations are being ignited across organisations and across the world. But it's now about how we drive the changes that need to happen, and how we do that with respect and courage. Because our future depends on it.

Thank you to all of you who help us do this.

Dr Joanna Flynn AM
(President)



Michael Perusco
(CEO)

In conversation...

How has COVID-19 and the global uprisings, such as Black Lives Matter and Aboriginal Lives Matter affected you personally and professionally, and what are they making you reflect on?

Michael Perusco (CEO): It certainly has forced all of us to significantly change the way we work and live. Most alarmingly, it's also highlighted the existing inequalities in communities across the world. It highlights that those who are already doing it tough are those that are most impacted.

These movements have also caused me to reflect on the responsibility I have as an individual — and we have as an organisation — to speak up against racism. In our work in particular, to speak directly about issues like the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the out-of-home and child protection systems, which is clearly an outcome of structural racism. It's also enabled us to lead a more open communication process at Berry Street and how we ensure we have no tolerance for racism.

We also know the lockdown measures in Victoria have led to an increase in family violence, and that there are fewer eyes on the children and young people who might be going through difficult times. And we know that has consequences that will be felt for some time to come.

Jo Flynn (President): I agree, and I think it's been fantastic that people in Australia have called it out, and cautioned against people thinking this is something that's happening on the other side of the world. It's not. It's a very present reality here too. I think the coalescence of that and COVID is that hopefully it will make people question their assumptions and privilege and think about the world in a different way.

What worries you most about how everything this year might be impacting on young people?

Michael: I'm worried about young people losing connection with each other and with their families. That they're spending more time alone during a period, developmentally, when they would be most likely to benefit from the exact opposite. I'm also worried about children and young people missing out on education, as well as the economy and the impact it's going to have on young people's employment opportunities.

Most of all, I'm worried about how all of this is going to impact on children and young people who are already doing it tough, because they're the ones who are going to suffer the most. We have to acknowledge this reality and, as a community, put pressure on governments to invest in work opportunities, invest in bridging that education gap and invest in keeping families together safely.

Jo: Yes. Part of the issue is the toll on children and young peoples' mental health due to the lack of social connection, routine and normality, and potentially living in a household where people are getting increasingly stressed — on top of perhaps already being anxious about COVID and what it means for the health of their families. Add to that the fact that many parents have lost their employment and income, and there are potentially tremendous impacts that could last generations.

What does reimagining the service system mean to you, and how does COVID change the way we need to approach this challenge?

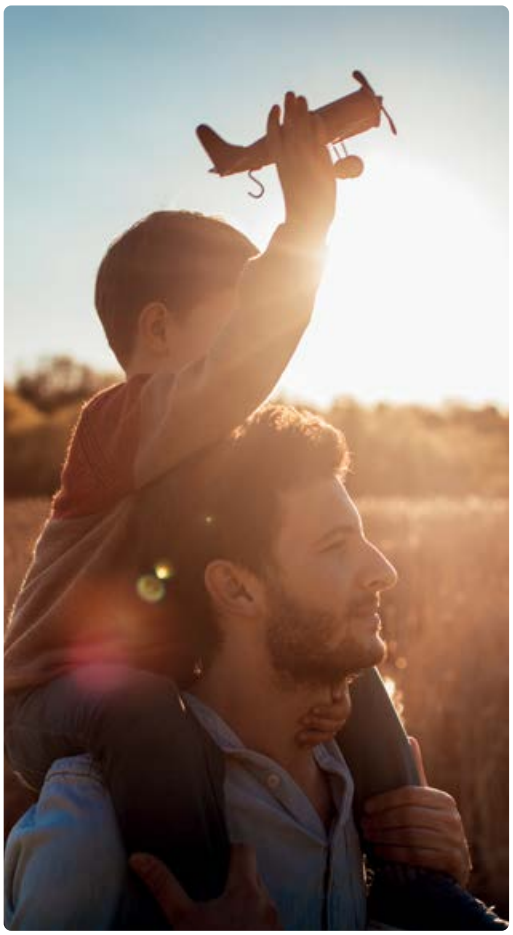
Jo: The first part of reimagining the system is to acknowledge the flaws in the current system, and Berry Street has done that consistently. And then to think about what would make it better. This is where we have to be intellectually honest and rigorous, because there is some evidence about things that help children and young people's outcomes, but there are many things that historically people have done with good intention, but didn't actually know if they would work or not.

We believe strongly that supporting children and young people to stay with their families is critical. However, currently, things may already get to a fairly parlous state before those children's experiences come under scrutiny. So this means that often, there's a significant period where nothing happens — a time in which, if a family was supported and helped to learn different ways of relating to their children, and those children were supported — we could keep that family intact and build a stronger foundation. So that's why we're focused on trying to intervene early, before things get to a stage where it's necessary to remove the child so that they're in out-of-home care.

We also know that within the care setting for the child — whether foster care, kinship care or residential care — there are better ways of doing it. There are systems and processes we are keen to introduce and ensure they continue to be evaluated, so that we can build an increasingly compelling case about which things work and how to provide support for young people and families. In turn, this will provide a stronger society and have so many flow-on benefits.

Michael: The only thing I'd add is that the number of children in care has doubled in the last five years — and it's on track to double again in the next five years. That is a shocking potential scenario, and we have to change it.

We have to do this better. And there are a range of ways we can reimagine the service system, but at the moment, the key one for us is ensuring that the system points towards early intervention.



We believe one of the keys to tackling inequity lies in the hopes, capabilities and lived expertise of young people.

Berry Street snapshot

Average length of service: **3.8 years**

Staff: **1,382**

Senior leaders by gender: **26% male, 74% female**

Children's Contact Service: **1**

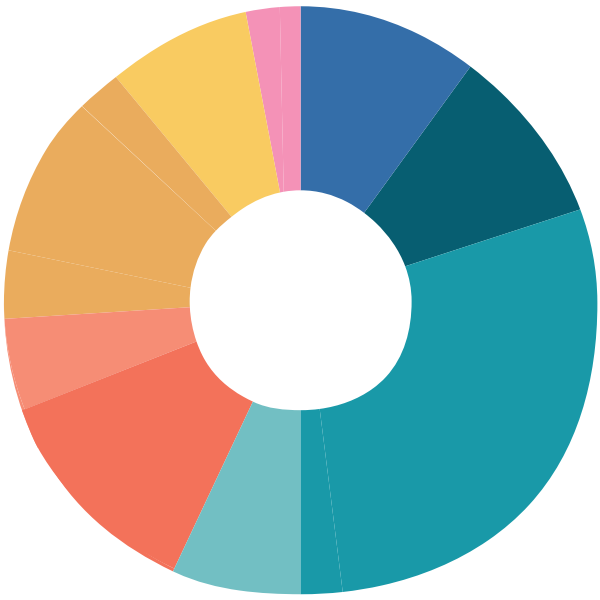
School campuses: **4**

Residential homes: **24**

Foster & kinship carers: **434**

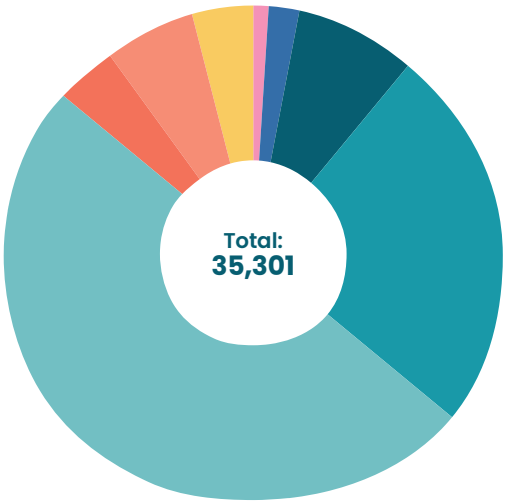
Teaching Family Model homes: **5**

Income by Service Type



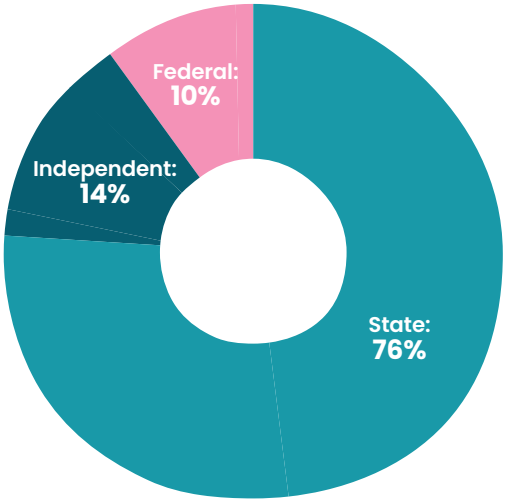
Targeted Care Packages: **3%**
Therapeutic Services: **10%**
Other: **10%**
Residential Care: **30%**
Youth: **7%**
Education: **12%**
Community: **5%**
Family Services: **15%**
Home-based Care: **7%**

Our Service Users



Residential Care: **298**
Foster & Kinship: **716**
Education & Training: **2,224**
Community Services: **9,171**
Family Violence: **18,526**
Youth Services: **1,019**
Family Services: **2,066**
Therapeutic Services: **1,281**

Gross Income by Funding Source



Total Revenue

$106 M
2016–17

$119 M
2017–18

$131 M
2018–19

$144 M
2019–20

Office & School Locations

Northern
Bendigo
Carlton
Eaglemont
Mildura

Western
Ballarat
Flemington
Geelong
Horsham

South East
Noble Park

Eastern
Seymour
Shepparton
Wangaratta

Gippsland
Leongatha
Morwell
Sale

Central
Richmond
Open Place

Our flagship evidence-based program — the Teaching Family Model

Reimagining out-of-home care

All children and young people have the right to feel safe, loved and valued. But for those who have experienced significant trauma, traditional out-of-home care (such as foster and residential care) doesn't always provide the right support. That's why Berry Street offers the **Teaching Family Model**, an innovative way of caring for children and young people in a family-style setting.

Teaching Family Model is an evidence-based, trauma-informed care model. It focuses on caring for and helping vulnerable children and young people build their strengths, problem-solving and leadership skills, so that they can grow in confidence and reach their full potential. Teaching Family Model practitioners receive extensive training, and can help children and young people identify the main triggers that cause them stress and learn how to form healthy family relationships.

So far, we've trained 141 people in a range of specialist program roles since 2017. We're excited about the opportunities this program creates for the young people we work with, and ultimately plan to transition all our Therapeutic Residential Care units to the Teaching Family Model.

Teaching Family Model (TFM) and Take Two

Our Take Two program, run in partnership with VACCA, Mindful and LaTrobe University, is a therapeutic service helping to address the impact of the trauma children have experienced from abuse, neglect or adverse experiences. There is often crossover between the work of TFM and Take Two, including in:

- **Training:** One of TFM's program goals is trauma-informed care so TFM training includes modules designed and delivered by Take Two clinicians. These cover key therapeutic principles, such as how trauma affects brain development, how children with trauma experience shame, what toxic stress does to the body, and how we can help young people self-regulate.
- **Leadership:** Take Two clinicians work closely in a leadership team with TFM consultants and lead practitioners to ensure carers are thinking about where behaviours come from and to support behavioural change.
- **Practice:** In the Southern Region, Take Two has implemented a pilot practice in a TFM home to track each young person's brain development and to help carers to understand how that influences the way the young person needs to be supported. This has resulted in more targeted therapeutic care being offered.

Through Elijah's eyes — the best things about his Teaching Family Model home

Elijah* is a 13-year-old who has been living in a TFM house for about a year. Elijah has begun to really settle in to the home, and has shared some of his thoughts about his experience.

"TFM is about:

- **learning skills to help us**
- **having family meetings to decide things about the house**
- **doing different leader roles in the house."**

Some of Elijah's favourite things about living in the TFM home are:

1. **Calming spaces for reflection and focus: his bedroom and sensory room**

With a lime green feature wall, new shelves and drawings on the walls, Elijah's bedroom is as unique as he is. Elijah made the design decisions, giving him a sense of pride: "I love my room because it feels like me and all my things are organised. I like to go in there to be by myself."

There is also a sensory room, a space the young people can use to calm and focus themselves. Elijah uses it to practise the '15 second rule': when he feels upset, he distances himself here for 15 seconds rather than reacting immediately.

2. **A chance to be a leader: chairing the family meetings**

TFM uses family meetings to discuss house matters and grow problem-solving, listening and decision-making skills. Elijah's favourite role is meeting chair, commenting, "I like being chair because we get to decide important things together. I am fair with the others and give everyone the chance to speak."

3. **Receiving praise: being recognised for his achievements**

Routine and consistency are keys to helping Elijah feel settled, and he has been great at following his Daily Plan. When praised for this, he reflected, "When Anita said I had been doing really well sticking to my daily plan, I felt so happy! I tried hard… Especially with going to bed on time."

Lately Elijah has been taking inspiration from this Dr Seuss quote: "You have brains in your head and feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose."

In the voices of young people and their families

From young people

"Yes, they do help me when I need support and even when I get angry with them (like tonight) they don't hold it against me."

"It's better than other places I have lived, there are more rules, I feel safer."

"This has been the best place I have lived."

"They are helping me to get home."

"I know they want what's best for me. You can see it in their faces."

From families

"I like to visit so she doesn't come to my house, it's easier that way. They always offer lunch and make me feel welcome."

"Excellent, superb set-up. Wonderful caring staff, the most stable and loved she has been in a long time."

"I am just happy I get more time with my boy."

"Every time something goes wrong or happens, they have called or let me know straight away."

*Names in case studies have been changed in the interest of protection and privacy.

Board of Directors

We are grateful to our Board of Directors, who voluntarily share their expertise and skills to support us in our work to courageously change lives.

Board Members

Dr Joanna Flynn AM
(President)

Board Director at Ambulance Victoria and Forensicare Victoria.
Former Chair of Eastern Health and Medical Board of Australia.
MBBS, MPH, HonDMedSc, FRACGP, FAICD

Tim Cartwright
(Vice President)

Former Acting Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police. Inaugural Victorian Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (2016 to 2019)
BA (Criminal Justice Administration)
Grad Dip (Public Policy)

Michaela Healey
(Vice President)

Director & Advisor
LLB, MAICD

Joshua Grace-Ware

Management Consultant
BA & MA of Management (ER/IR), GAICD

Steve Gross

Senior Managing Director, Head of Macquarie Impact Investing
MBA, BCom

Dr Karen McLean

Paediatrician
MBBS, MEpid, FRACP

Paul Mann

Chief Financial Officer, Future Fund
BCom, CA, CFAC

Megan Mitchell

Consultant and former National Children's Commissioner
BA, MA(Psych), DipEd, MA(SocPolicy)

Eric Passaris

Partner, Audit and Assurance, Grant Thornton Australia
BEco, CA, CPA, RCA

Changes to the Board

- Dr Jo Flynn AM joined the Board in August 2019 as President; Steve Gross joined in November 2019; and Dr Karen McLean joined in March 2020. Steve has had senior roles in banking and asset management and is now the inaugural Head of Impact Investing at Macquarie. Steve is passionate about families and is excited to bring his varied skilled base to the Board. Karen is a developmental/ behavioural paediatrician and researcher with a special interest in children and young people in out-of-home care. She joined the Berry Street Board because of Berry Street's commitment to supporting children and families living with significant adversity by intervening early in an evidence-based way.
- Two long serving Board members retired in February 2020. Lyn Allison retired after serving on the Board for 11 years including chairing the Berry Street School Committee for four years. Dr David Mushin retired from the Board after 8 years and was a long term member of our Quality and Risk Management Committee.
- Nicole Waldron, Executive Director Epworth Freemasons also retired from the Board in February 2020.

Berry Street extends its sincere gratitude to the significant contribution of all outgoing Board members and wishes them well. We also extend a warm welcome to Jo, Steve and Karen.

Board Committees

This year, in addition to our Finance & Investment and Quality & Risk Management committees, the Board made a decision to introduce a new IT Transformation Committee, to help Berry Street achieve its strategic goal to enhance technology support systems.

Finance & Investment Committee

This committee provides guidance and recommendations to the Board on financial matters, and advises on and reviews the financial management of Berry Street.

Quality & Risk Management Committee

This committee addresses strategic issues relating to quality improvement, safety and risk management, providing risk guidance and oversight.

IT Transformation Committee

This committee oversees the development, review and implementation of Berry Street's Technology Transformation Strategy, and assists the Board to understand technology design, performance and service delivery reports.

A Director chairs each Board Committee, which includes other Board members, external advisors and senior staff. Special thanks to the external advisors who willingly share their time and experience with us.

Patrons

Patron-in-Chief: The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

Patron: Professor Emeritus Sir Gustav Nossal, AC, CBE, FAA, FRS

Executive Leadership Team

Michael Perusco
Chief Executive Officer

Jenny McNaughton
Deputy CEO & Executive Director, Services

Dr Jane Daniels
Executive Director, Organisational Effectiveness

Georgie Dwyer
Executive Director, People and Culture

Tom Pennicott
Executive Director, Corporate Services

Heidi Reid
Executive Director, Strategic Engagement

Y-Change

A Berry Street team at the forefront of change

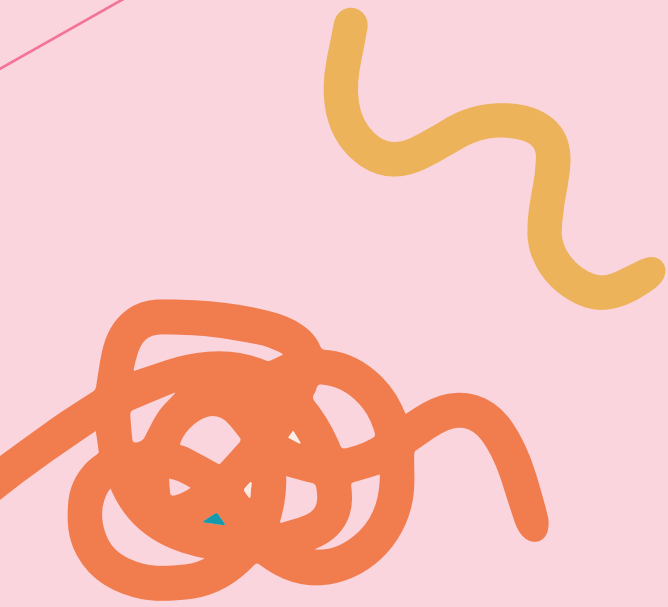


ILLUSTRATION BY NINA SEPAHPOUR

Young people who have experienced disadvantage are the only people who can tell us what a policy looks and feels like when it comes to life. They are key knowledge holders in the search for 'what works' and the understanding of what doesn't, and they must be at discussion and decision-making tables, always. Berry Street aspires to make this a practical reality, not only in our organisation and our work, but in all contexts that are important in young people's lives.

Berry Street's Y-Change initiative is a social and systemic change platform for young people with lived experiences of socioeconomic disadvantage. As Lived Experience Consultants, they challenge the thinking and practices of wider social systems through advocacy and leadership.

"Young people at Y-Change have been forced to carry the systemic trauma of systems that have failed them. We seek to break up the power dynamic by investing in young people long-term, ensuring that their lived expertise is at the heart of informing how we think and act."

— Morgan Cataldo, Senior Manager Youth Engagement Berry Street

The team's main aims are to:

1. Challenge and change society's perception of young people experiencing disadvantage as 'limited' because of their experiences.
2. Firmly place young people with lived experience of socioeconomic disadvantage at decision-making, policy-making and change-making tables.

The following pages have been contributed directly by the team.

We're not hard to reach,

Y-Change

Young people who experience systemic oppression are often labelled as 'hard to reach' and 'not engaged'. We at Y-Change intentionally seek to challenge this because we know we aren't hard to reach — spaces just aren't made for us.

We've been constantly hurt, ignored, and let down by systems and services that were meant to protect us and keep us safe. When those systems suddenly turn around and ask to hear our voice and share our opinion, it can come as a real shock.

we're just not invited in

From voices heard to actioning real change — the value of lived expertise

Historically, when young people have been invited to be involved in sector projects, it has been to tell our story and have our voices 'heard', but never to action change ourselves.

Despite having significant knowledge, experience and insight, we have been excluded from meaningful policy reform, systems change efforts and service design — and we are consistently underrepresented at decision-making tables. Y-Change works to tackle this imbalance, centring young people with lived experience and the value their expertise brings.

Shifting power towards meaningful impact

Y-Change offers a platform for young people with a lived experience to impact the sector and influence wider systems change.

It provides access to a professional setting to ensure we are meaningfully involved and can teach others to work alongside young people in ways that acknowledge and respond to power imbalances.

We have started to encourage shifts aimed at welcoming, reaching out to and educating others, advocating, teaching and learning about using lived experience in our everyday work and culture.

We have designed and delivered training and projects to assist people to gain awareness of lived experience, providing tools to better their work and the lives of the young people they care for.

Y-Change

Reimagining the sector —

achievements and moments we're proud of this year

This year, in addition to our advocacy, campaigning and training work, we've reflected deeply on our own lived experiences. We've been developing a shared understanding of how dominant service systems have been damaging, where they continue to let children and young people down, and what opportunities we're excited to be a part of to see our sector reimagined with young people at the forefront.

Here's a snapshot of our journey over the past 12 months.

We made the following submissions

- 'Curing the Sickness of the System', to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.
- 'Homesick. Dreamin' of a house to call home.' to the Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria.

And we were keynote speakers at these conferences and sector events

- The third Asia-Pacific Safe & Together Model Conference, on the importance of partnering with young people to shift narratives around family violence.
- The Generosity Forum, on shining a light on the donor-beneficiary power imbalance.
- A Social Ventures Australia event about the economic case for early intervention in the child protection and out-of-home care systems in Victoria.
- The 2019 Youth Health Conference, where two members of our team presented on The Queer Experience — a project which aims to make mental health care more accessible to LGBTQIA+ young people.

We received standing ovations, invitations to partner in projects and initiatives, and made new friends and connections across our sector.

We were featured in the media

Features included a double-page spread in the Herald Sun about out-of-home care, a piece in The Age about the economic case for early intervention, and a piece for Pro Bono Australia about reimagining the mental health service system.

And we trained professionals in the art of partnering with young people

Our Youth Exchange training goes beyond common youth engagement practice and looks to radically shift towards an exchange process with young people. Through this professional development training, we trained over 100 sector practitioners across Australia.

We influenced systems change initiatives

This work included:

- Playing a key role in the Commission for Children and Young People's systemic inquiry into the lived experience of children and young people in the Victorian out-of-home care system — the 'In our own words' report.
- Having a Y-Change team member nominated as part of the Inaugural Commission for Children and Young People's Youth Action Group.
- Representing young Victorians with a lived experience of family violence on the Inaugural and subsequent Victim Survivors' Advisory Council.
- Nominating Y-Change team members to both the steering committee and core project team of the new *Improving care in residential services* initiative: a partnership between the Department of Health and Human Services, Safer Care Victoria and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.
- Having a Y-Change team member appointed as the co-chair of Victoria's first Child Protection Ministerial Youth Advisory Group.

And we made great strides in our project work

- Radical Creative Minds — a project expressing the issue of family violence through art from young people's perspectives, generously funded by the Bokhara Foundation and Igniting Change.
- The Queer Experience — a project which aims to make mental health care more accessible to LGBTQIA+ young people, with phase one generously funded by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's HEY Grants.
- Unbroken — a project capturing collective insights and coping mechanisms, through short films, to support other survivors of sexual assault and abuse, generously funded by the Victorian Women's Trust.

We said farewell...then hello

We said farewell to Lauren Oliver, the inaugural Senior Advisor Youth Engagement who was at Berry Street for over 10 years. Lauren was one of the first to deeply understand and advocate for lived experience as a form of legitimate expertise. We welcomed previous Project Officer Youth Engagement Morgan Cataldo, who has lived experience of her own, into the Senior Manager role.

Y-Change is now entirely designed, informed, led and run by those with lived experience, bringing the founding group's initial vision to life.

Finally, we strengthened our presence within Berry Street

This year saw great strides towards Y-Change being integrated into Berry Street in a meaningful way.

One of our team members was employed in Berry Street's Organisational Effectiveness team working on quality and audit projects across the organisation — a first for Y-Change.

We had a team member enter into a youth exchange process — or mutual coaching partnership — with Berry Street CEO Michael Perusco. These sessions proved to be a great success and saw a deepening relationship between our team and Michael as he was able to better understand how we operate and who we are as a collective.

Another of our team members designed training around how to support LGBTQIA+ students and delivered it to staff across all four of the Berry Street School campuses. They were also invited to speak at the Berry Street Staff Celebration 2020 about staff values, their work as a Lived Experience Consultant and the importance of meaningful inclusion.

The only lasting truth is Change

**"All that you touch You Change.
All that you Change Changes you.
The only lasting truth is Change."
— Octavia E. Butler**

To us, change means advocating for a better future for children and young people — one that is designed in partnership with them. We want to challenge the ways things have always been done and get people to sit with being uncomfortable, as this is so often where change begins.

When you have been through hardship and trauma at a young age it forces you to grow up quicker than you're ready for.

Through our lived experiences, we can see just how much change is needed and how harmful systems and services can be to children and young people.

Change can be a constant struggle. Pushing for the things that urgently need to change can sometimes feel like you're saying the same things over and over, but no-one's listening or doing anything. We know systems change is not instant. It is slow, and we have hope that through advocacy, campaigning, and reimagining systems, meaningful change will eventually happen.

We want to change the way lived experience is seen and valued and create a shift in valuing 'non-typical' knowledge and experiences. This involves challenging people's assumptions and the ways in which they see young people who experience socioeconomic disadvantage.

Change to us is the start of something. All of our work is so focused on the end-goal that we often forget how the process of moving towards that change is just as important. **Real change isn't always inspirational, and this assumption often blocks us from advancement into real reform**.

Finally, change requires us to shift our thinking, which is an uncomfortable but important process. It requires us to leave the failing yet familiar systems we've built and seek out new, better places — until we need to move again.

Y-Change

What needs to urgently change

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."
— Henry Ford

There is not enough representation of young people with lived experience and young people in positions of real power.

The current Victorian State Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Youth is a middle-aged Caucasian woman. At a federal level, the current Minister for Youth is a 62-year-old Caucasian male who is also the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians. They haven't been young people for a long time, but are expected to talk about issues that are affecting young people today and advocate on behalf of them.

We don't say this to point fingers at individuals, but to point out how structures of power often maintain that those tasked as official spokespeople often have no direct, personal experiences of or investment in the people they are speaking on behalf of.

We also need to urgently address the inadequate support of children and young people in out-of-home care and the need for lived experience representation to be more broadly and deeply integrated throughout the sector. Although many children and young people in care have been profoundly let down by our service system, it's crucial we recognise that these children and young people continue to thrive despite the system failing them. It is equally important for us to celebrate their strengths, capabilities and survival.

The failings of out-of-home care cannot be looked at in isolation to other issues that intersect with it, such as family violence, homelessness and mental ill-health. Everything is interconnected and we must begin to focus our attention more closely on the often overlooked impacts of intergenerational trauma on children and young people.

These themes — as well as other specific recommendations for improving Victoria's mental health service system for the young people who use it — are expanded on in 'Curing the Sickness of the System', our July 2019 submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Finally, we also need to urgently look at the current debate around the age of criminal responsibility in Australia. By putting children and young people in punitive systems such as youth detention, we are retraumatising the very children who have already been traumatised. We need to shift our focus towards community support and prevention rather than punishment.

Y-Change continues, as ever, to work for these and other crucial changes across our sector.

Morgan Cataldo (Senior Manager Youth Engagement)
Shakira Branch (Y-Change Project Administrator)
Artemis Munoz
Beanz
Dylan Langley
Emilie Oraylia
Geordie Armstrong
Janelle Graham
Kaitlyne Bowden
K.C.
Kirra-Alyssa Horley
Madelaine Smales
Mikayla Ramm
Paige Glover
Tash Anderson

Strategic Plan 2019–2022

For over 140 years, Berry Street has adapted to a changing world, and we will continue to adapt to achieve our vision and purpose. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic required us to significantly adapt our ways of working. Despite the challenges, we were able to continue to run our essential services, as well as make strides towards achieving our four strategic goals.

Our vision

Together we will courageously change lives and reimagine service systems.

Our purpose

We believe children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful.

Goal 1: Reimagine the Future

We will work with others to reorientate the child and family system towards early intervention and prevention

The child protection system in Victoria is under incredible pressure, with the number of children and young people in out-of-home care growing at an unprecedented rate. This demand is leading to increasing risks for children who cannot live safely at home. To reduce this number, we must reorientate the system towards early intervention and supporting families to stay together safely.

Key achievements

- We undertook major advocacy work for early intervention to address the crisis in the Victorian out-of-home care system. Together with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, we released independent research that made a clear social and economic case for targeted early intervention. It showed that by investing $150 million each year:
  - 1,200 children would be prevented from entering out-of-home or residential care every year.
  - Another 5,800 children and their families would be supported to become stronger and safer together.
  - Victoria would save $1.6 billion over 10 years.

  A subsequent update to this research showed how the impact of COVID-19 would deepen this crisis and reiterated the need for urgent investment.
- We made a submission to the Inquiry into the adequacy of Newstart and related payments: Our submission highlighted that adequate social security payments are critical to ensuring parents and families can focus on addressing the complex issues they may face.
- Our formal submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, building on our preliminary submission in August 2019, called for increased investment in well-targeted, evidence-informed early intervention services; better connected, more responsive and more effective mental health and child protection systems; and stronger system and workforce capability across the mental health and child protection systems to intervene early and effectively to prevent the cycle of disadvantage.

Goal 2: Make an Impact

We will use the best knowledge available to deliver contemporary models of practice and measure their impact

Our operating environment is always changing, as are the needs of those we work with. To get the best outcomes and ensure we create positive and lasting change in the lives of children, young people and families, we must continually review and update our approach and learn from research and evaluation globally.

Key achievements

- With continuing positive results, we expanded the Teaching Family Model (TFM) into more of our Therapeutic Residential Care units. TFM focuses on caring for and helping vulnerable children and young people build their strengths, problem-solving and leadership skills, so that they can grow in confidence and reach their full potential. We've now trained 141 people in TFM since 2017, and plan to ultimately transition all Therapeutic Residential Care units to the model.

- More schools implemented our Berry Street Education Model (BSEM), a whole-of-school transformational program providing training, curriculum and strategies to engage and support students who've experienced trauma. In 2020, 1,050 schools implemented BSEM, and 7,538 people were trained in the model.
- Berry Street is at the forefront of specialist family violence provision with its operation of the Orange Door in Heidelberg completing its first full year of operation. In addition, the team worked hard with our partners in the pre-commencement phase of the Orange Door Central Highland and preparations for a third in Hume Moreland also got underway.
- We established Berry Street's new Quality Governance Committee, as well as new Quality, Risk and Knowledge and Outcomes portfolios. We also implemented new Quality and Risk, Compliance and Policy Frameworks.
- We developed, and received endorsement of, Berry Street's first Reconciliation Action Plan.
- We put everything in place to launch Multisystemic Therapy (MST), a community-based program for 12–17-year-olds who have recently entered or are at risk of entering out-of-home care. MST is an intensive, evidence-based family and community-based program focused on supporting young people who are presenting with severe challenging behaviours.
- Berry Street's Take Two successfully implemented the Restoring Childhood program — an early intervention program to support infant, child and adult victim survivors of family violence.

Goal 3: Support Our People

We will value our people and support them to ensure that together we courageously change lives

This year has been extraordinary for many reasons, not least because of the courage, teamwork and care demonstrated by our people in their work. From delivering residential care to children and young people, providing education and training, through to supporting survivors of family violence, they've shown extraordinary care and courage throughout the pandemic.

Key achievements

- We recognise that our employees do amazing work, courageously changing lives. We are proud to have negotiated a competitive Enterprise Agreement that supports our diverse workforce with above-award wages, sector-leading leave entitlements and employee benefits.
- We delivered 160 facilitated workshops, 4,500 hours of online and virtual content, as well as an out-of-home care hub, a leadership hub and a staff wellbeing hub to support our people through the uncertainty. We also encouraged pathways to higher learning, with 40 staff approved for study leave, 54 staff completing their Certificate IV in Child Youth & Family Intervention and 40 staff studying their Diploma of Community Services.
- Almost overnight in March, the majority of staff were enabled to work from home with technology, equipment and ergonomic support. The safety of our staff delivering essential services was top priority as we developed continuity plans, addressing the immediate needs of more vulnerable staff and scenario-planning for potential positive COVID-19 results.

Goal 4: Future Growth & Sustainability

We will be sustainable and responsive, build on our brand and form partnerships to better meet client needs

Our fourth goal sees us continuing to build our brand, forging partnerships and diversifying and growing our income streams so that we can better meet the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families. This year, we continued making great strides toward this goal.

Key achievements

- We launched our new brand, which reflects our belief that children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful. It is this belief that truly unites our staff and ensures that together, we can courageously change lives.
- We secured generous philanthropic investment to fund a range of initiatives, including Berry Street's Early Intervention Strategy, the BSEM Collective Leadership Model, and our Positive Memory Bank, which enables special experiences for young people.
- We were able to quickly mobilise philanthropy to support COVID-related emerging needs. This included funding for licences to enable technical communications for case workers and vulnerable children and families in social isolation or lockdown, and — in response to the rise in family violence — to establish the Mother Infant Village in Ballarat, a residential program for mothers and infants fleeing violence.
- Our other supporters, including our dedicated regular givers, our community fundraisers and our corporate partners also continued to give generously to support Berry Street at such a critical time.
- We launched our new Technology Transformation Strategy. The strategy, which is overseen by our new IT Transformation Committee, sets out a roadmap for enhancing our technology support systems.

We are grateful to our loyal philanthropic donors. This year, a number of them surprised us by more than doubling their giving during this critical time. We also thank and welcome the philanthropists new to Berry Street.

Towards

In the spirit of reconciliation, Berry Street continues its journey of truth-telling, learning about the historical injustices experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and working to address current injustices, all while celebrating the great strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

In February 2020, Reconciliation Australia conditionally endorsed Berry Street's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), a Reflect RAP. A RAP is a strategic document that supports an organisation's business plan and provides a clear framework and steps to drive and transform cultural change, so as to turn goodwill into real action. Organisations that implement RAPs measure their progress through annual reporting to Reconciliation Australia, reflecting their commitment and accountability in the provision of culturally safe and respectful services.

Berry Street was due to launch this first RAP across six locations in April and May of 2020. However, due to the unforeseen COVID-19 global pandemic, the launch was put on hold. This decision was made in consultation with Reconciliation Australia and Berry Street's Walking Together Group.

But while the RAP launch had to be postponed, the focus on reconciliation continued. We have continued the conversation regarding current injustices, with a focus on racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We've also hosted educational events and engaged staff in Cultural Safety and Respect training. We've published external statements regarding our stance on the Black Lives Matter and Aboriginal Lives Matter movements, and how these important movements have laid bare existing inequities that we must continue to work against.

We launched Berry Street's first Addressing Racism strategy in July 2020. The strategy supports staff to understand, unpack and reflect on white privilege, racism, anti-racism and allyship and is another important step on our reconciliation journey.

Berry Street recognises that all people have a right to live a life free of racial discrimination, and supports an organisation where reconciliation lives in the hearts, minds and actions of all our teams.

Sarah Dawson
Senior Manager,
Aboriginal Service Development

Child Safe

Berry Street is committed to upholding the Child Safe Standards, a set of minimum standards for organisations providing services to children. This year we started work on phase 2 of our action plan to ensure compliance. Work has included:

- Developing seven new Child Safe projects. These focus on the following areas:

1. Practice risk, including how incident data is reviewed, analysed and reported, and risk management across the organisation.
2. Communications around complaint and feedback systems for children, young people and carers.
3. Enhancement of home-based care assessment processes.
4. Child Safe Champions within the Berry Street School.
5. Enhancing support and management systems.
6. Strategic planning and volunteers.
7. Disability.

Other work this year included:

- Director of Quality, Carol Scarpaci, was designated the first Child Safe Officer at Berry Street.
- Reviewing all Berry Street policies and procedures through a Child Safe lens.
- A new child safety email inbox for staff and carers to ask questions or get support about child safety (this does not replace required channels for reporting of child neglect or abuse).
- An annual internal audit of how we apply the Standards, following initial self-assessment two years ago, overseen by the Office of the Child Safety Commissioner (now the Commission for Children and Young People).

Rainbow Tick

Berry Street strives to be truly inclusive of all LGBTIQ+ people in all of our work. As such, this year we undertook several initiatives as part of Rainbow Tick accreditation — a program for organisations committed to safe and inclusive practice and service delivery for LGBTIQ+ people — as we work towards accreditation for Berry Street's Family Violence Services. Work included:

- Redeveloping the Berry Street Service Statement to ensure specialist family violence service provision and support to people who are members of the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Reviewing our website and service collateral to promote inclusive practice and access to our Family Violence Services.
- Training and development for staff in assessment and engagement of LGBTIQ+ service users.
- A review of all Berry Street policies to support LGBTIQ+ staff and service users.
- Participation in the Midsumma Festival Pride March and the ChillOut Festival.
- Development of an inclusive practice guide.

The impact of the Berry Street School

The Berry Street School is a specialist independent secondary school with four campuses, in Noble Park, Morwell, Shepparton and Ballarat. Students at the school may previously have had significant gaps in schooling or presented with behavioural and social problems at school.

Student story snapshots

Meg* has experienced significant challenges in her life, and as a result sometimes acts in a way that can put herself and others at risk. She currently lives in residential care and has spent time in secure welfare too.

Now at the Berry Street School, Meg is learning positive ways to regulate her behaviour, including playing a focus game, kicking the ball with a teacher, or going for a walk.

She now enjoys school and can articulate just how much. On the last day of term 2, Meg commented that she would come to school all holidays if it were open!

Jake* has experienced mental health difficulties and lived in out-of-home care. At the Berry Street School, he has shown persistence and increasing maturity.

Despite having had periods of disengagement with school, Jake's attendance is now much more regular. He is working on a Certificate III in Business — after finishing a Certificate II last year — while also finishing Intermediate VCAL.

Jake now communicates openly with more staff and has expressed the importance of education, observing that he would not previously have been able to achieve in class what he can now.

In their voices

From students

"This is the best school I have attended. Before, I was always kicked out of every class. My teachers here want to help me learn."

"I now love reading because I can choose the books that interest me and share my passion with others."

"I feel supported at school. I can complete my work knowing that my teachers want me to succeed."

"This is the perfect school for me, I feel supported and valued."

"I found my best friend at school."

From parents and support workers

"Despite a few scrapes, you have become a completely different girl this year since attending Berry Street. It is the perfect school for you."

"I am so happy to see my child's personal and academic growth during the past two years."

"I have never seen my girls do so well academically, or even want to attend school before."

From teachers

"A lovely moment was when we shared the news to [a student] and his dad that he had experienced 12 months' growth in his reading in six months. There was a loud "well done, son!" from Dad and a definite happy tear in Dad's eyes. They were both beaming with pride."

"A huge part of the Berry Street School is the crossover with other Berry Street programs, like Take Two, ICMS and residential care. It means we've got this incredible bank of resources to help support our young people in a more coordinated, holistic way."

*Names in case studies have been changed.

Empowering young people through ICMS

Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS) provides support to young people with high needs. ICMS often work in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage, with intergenerational cycles of poverty, violence and significant trauma impacting many of the young people they work with.

Young people can often enter ICMS in a state of crisis, and case managers apply a range of skills to build a relationship with, advocate for and provide the right support for the young person. This might involve helping the young person maintain relationships, facilitating contact with their networks, helping in their interactions with the justice system, engaging with legal services, and supporting them to understand and navigate other systems and processes.

ICMS seeks to empower young people away from their trauma — towards a sense of safety, and a feeling of support. To feel engaged in the social world they are part of, and to begin to trust in connectedness. They support young people towards their early adulthood, helping them work towards feeling that they are able to pursue a better life.

Positive outcomes for Zac*

Zac, who's just turned 15, is a vibrant, energetic and engaging young person with a wicked sense of humour. However, he has also experienced significant trauma, and navigates life with intellectual disability and a complex family situation. As a result, Zac can sometimes have violent outbursts and act towards others in a way that can make relationships difficult. It can also make it challenging to get Zac the right ongoing care and support.

ICMS has worked intensively with Zac to break through some of the constraints and barriers he is experiencing. They have coordinated support across several areas — from life-skills and independence to education, social and medical needs — while ensuring that support considers ability, disability and complex trauma. NDIS planning, child-protection and behavioural support have also been considered.

While COVID-19 has caused things to be a bit more challenging for Zac lately, he has still made some great strides since being involved with ICMS. He's now been in the same residential care unit for almost a year, which is a big success and gives him more stability and the opportunity to develop connections and trust with the staff. At school, he is more engaged than before, expressing that he wants to go to school and wants to learn. Finally, he's also re-engaged with his family, recently seeing his dad for the first time in 10 years.

Reflections of a survivor

The following reflections were written by a mother and family violence victim-survivor being supported by Berry Street's Northern Specialist Family Violence Service. Due to the violent and abusive behaviour of her then-partner, the victim-survivor, who was pregnant, had fled her home with her four young children. They had entered a women's refuge for a period and were then homeless, before being referred to Berry Street.

The family violence team partnered with the victim-survivor to liaise with magistrates, the federal law court and the Department of Immigration, as well as obtain transitional housing, apply for income support, and link the children with education and therapeutic supports. This brave mother now has her full driver licence and is almost finished studying English, and the children are attending school, love their regular swimming lessons, and are all active members of their local soccer and basketball clubs.

The following piece has been translated from the contributor's native language, and she has consented to its inclusion in this report. We thank her for her contribution.

To Appreciate.

When a mother comes through the resentment and anger.

The groups responsible for the safety of the mother come together when the police are supportive and send women to domestic violence services.

Where they welcome you with a home that is safe, and they invite you with their sweet words and welcome you with joy.

They kindly ask you what they can do for you.

Berry Street and their trained staff, who have the qualifications and knowledge.

When they write things on paper for you, it is a promise they will help you to the highest level of achievement.

To take you to the clouds, for mothers and their children, to support them to move forward.

Mothers and children become the first priority, they are sworn to do this.

So, my appreciation is for all the women who have relieved me from the resentment.

Kate, Kelly, Tara, Kerrie, Katie, Rachel, Sophie, Suzanne and Bree are valuable people.

So, thank you to all of you.

And what I am saying to all of the mothers is to send them a word and tell them never go back, never regret what happened, don't remember what happened, because today is our day and you have to welcome a new life and become the winners of life forever.

The last thought belongs to this great country, and I wish Australia success.

Financial Statements

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 $	2019 $
Revenue		
Revenue	144,294,927	130,665,135
Other income	90,292	481,042
Total revenue	**144,385,219**	**131,146,177**
Expenses		
Program expenses	(120,044,732)	(107,017,365)
Fundraising expenses	(5,460,792)	(6,757,810)
Strategic Initiative expenses	(5,302,487)	(5,363,352)
Administration and Infrastructure expenses	(14,219,456)	(14,414,530)
Civil claims and Redress Scheme expenses*	(5,799,900)	(336,145)
Fair value losses on financial assets	(1,108,260)	-
Total expenses	**(151,935,627)**	**(133,889,202)**
Deficit before income tax	**(7,550,408)**	**(2,743,025)**
Income tax expenses	-	-
Deficit for the year	**(7,550,408)**	**(2,743,025)**
Other comprehensive income	**-**	**-**
Total comprehensive loss for the year	**(7,550,408)**	**(2,743,025)**
Deficit attributable to members of the entity	**(7,550,408)**	**(2,743,025)**

* The increase in expenses for Civil claims and Redress Scheme expenses in the 2019/20 financial year is due to the establishment of a provision as a result of the decision by the Board to sign-up to the National Redress Scheme in October 2019.

The above Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income is an extract of the full audited financial statements which are available on our website **berrystreet.org.au**

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020

	2020 $	2019 $
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	13,694,065	9,581,837
Trade and other receivables	2,063,112	3,925,579
Other assets	4,962,529	2,234,271
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	**20,719,706**	**15,741,687**
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Financial assets	30,451,298	37,932,205
Property, plant and equipment	12,251,670	10,362,275
Right of Use Assets	16,720,017	-
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	**59,422,985**	**48,294,480**
TOTAL ASSETS	**80,142,691**	**64,036,167**
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	15,488,900	18,623,560
Contract liabilities	4,147,511	-
Lease liabilities	4,486,938	-
Short term provisions	7,849,947	5,733,262
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	**31,973,296**	**24,356,822**
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Lease liabilities	12,793,201	-
Long term provisions	4,723,234	1,475,977
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	**17,516,435**	**1,475,977**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**49,489,731**	**25,832,799**
NET ASSETS	**30,652,960**	**38,203,368**
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	27,000,421	34,550,829
Reserves	3,652,539	3,652,539
TOTAL EQUITY	**30,652,960**	**38,203,368**

The above Statement of Financial Position is an extract of the full audited financial statements which are available on our website **berrystreet.org.au**

Statement of cashflows for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 $	2019 $
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from operating activities	154,206,189	138,131,551
Interest received	107,342	346,468
Dividends received	445,498	349,231
Payments to suppliers and employees	(148,413,664)	(144,462,063)
Lease payments for short term leases	(1,112,368)	-
Lease payments for leases of low value assets	(662,006)	-
Net cash from / (used in) operating activities	**4,570,991**	**(5,634,813)**
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	119,859	2,514,489
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(2,546,441)	(1,654,122)
Proceeds from sale of investments	12,876,746	3,618,075
Payment for investments	(5,859,189)	(5,608,292)
Net cash generated from / (used in) investing activities	**4,590,975**	**(1,129,850)**
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Lease payments (principal and interest)	(5,049,738)	(43,105)
Net cash used in financing activities	**(5,049,738)**	**(43,105)**
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held	**4,112,228**	**(6,807,768)**
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	9,581,837	16,389,605
Cash at the end of the financial year	**13,694,065**	**9,581,837**

The above Statement of Cash Flows is an extract of the full audited financial statements which are available on our website **berrystreet.org.au**

Thank you

Berry Street wishes to extend our most sincere gratitude to the organisations and individuals who have supported us over the year, including our community fundraisers and corporate sponsors and the research, educational and philanthropic partners who so generously support our work.

Philanthropic Partners

- Adrian and Candice Field
- Australian Communities Foundation
- Australian Philanthropic Services Foundation
- B B & A Miller Foundation
- Barr Family Foundation
- Bell Charitable Fund
- Bokhara Foundation
- Brian M Davis Charitable Foundation
- Brian Watson, AO & Edwina Le Maistre
- Brown Family Foundation
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Delron Foundation
- Elizabeth Lewis-Gray
- Gaudry Foundation
- Graham & Judy Hubbard
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
- Jacobsen Family Foundation
- James Kelly
- James N Kirby Foundation
- JBWere Charitable Endowment Fund
- Jo & John Grigg
- Johnson Family Foundation
- Keith Chenhall Charitable Trust
- Macquarie Group Foundation New South Wales
- Malcolm & Pat Chestney
- Margaret S Ross, AM
- Mark Boughey
- Michaela Healey
- Newsboys Foundation
- Nigel & Patricia Peck Foundation
- Peter & Lyndy White Foundation
- RobMeree Foundation
- Rosemary Robertson
- Springboard Endowment
- Susan Esselmont and Jon Grant
- The Andrew & Geraldine Buxton Foundation
- The Antipodean Family Foundation
- The Baker Foundation
- The Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust
- The Goodman Family Foundation
- The Hoffman Foundation
- The John and Betty Laidlaw Legacy
- The Johnstone Family Foundation
- The Kelly Family Foundation
- The Scobie & Claire MacKinnon Trust
- The Williams Fund, a sub-fund of Australian Communities Foundation
- Vanraay Family Fund, a sub-fund Australian Communities Foundation
- Virginia Morrison
- Ward-Ambler Foundation

Community Fundraisers

- Berry Long Run
- Berry Street Masonic Support Group
- Diamond Valley Sports & Fitness Centre
- Gerties Opportunity Shop
- Joe Lewis
- Noel Langford
- Officeworks Ltd
- Polish Association of Ballarat
- Rotary Club of Balwyn
- Soroptimists International of Shepparton
- Wolfrunners Inc.

Corporate Supporters

- 101 Collins St
- ANZ
- Autumn Care Properties
- Coca-Cola Amatil (Aust) Pty Ltd
- EnergyAustralia
- Hyundai Motor Company Australia Pty Ltd
- ISPT Pty Ltd
- KIA Motors Australia Pty Ltd
- Latrobe Health Services
- Lonsdale Solutions
- Melbourne and Olympic Park
- Myer — Southland
- Riverside Company
- Simply Energy
- The Athlete's Foot Shepparton
- The Good Guys
- Windsor Management Insurance Brokers

Gifts in Wills

- Estate of Erwin Fabian
- Estate of Joyce Isobel Gillespie
- Estate of L I Roach
- Estate of Lindsay James Baldy
- Estate of Maisey Jean Sandilands
- Estate of Margaret Green
- Estate of Philip G Madder
- Estate of Robert Charles Edward Simpson

Groups & Organisations

- AFL
- BADAC (Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-op)
- Ballarat Community Health
- Ballarat Mental Health
- Centacare
- Child and Family Services
- City of Darebin
- Communities That Care
- Department of Education & Training
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Justice
- Family Safety Victoria
- Institute of Positive Education Geelong Grammar School
- Our Place and the Julius Coleman Foundation
- Positive Education Schools Association
- Positive Schools
- Salvation Army Homelessness — Ballarat
- School Focussed Youth Service
- Social Ventures Australia
- Teacher Learning Network
- Uniting
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)
- Victoria Police
- Women's Health Grampians
- WRISC

Schools, Universities & Institutional Partners

- Catholic Education Brisbane
- Catholic Education Melbourne
- Catholic Education Western Australia
- Department of Education Brisbane Metropolitan
- Department of Education New South Wales
- Department of Education Tasmania — Interagency Student Support
- Department of Education Victoria
- Griffith University
- Inclusive Education Practices Group Project — Darwin
- LaTrobe University — Department of Occupational Therapy and Social Work and Social Policy,
- Mindful — Centre for Training and Research in Developmental Health, The University of Melbourne
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- New South Wales Primary Principals Association
- Queensland Association of State School Principals
- South Australian Department of Education Trauma Aware Schools Initiative
- University of Melbourne Graduate School of Education
- Victoria University

Berry Street wishes to extend a sincere thank you to all those who assisted with the successful transition of the Open Place service to Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV). The passion and commitment of Open Place staff meant that Forgotten Australians continued to receive the support they deserve.

The Berry Street approach

We believe children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful. To see this purpose come to life, there's an approach we take that encompasses everything we do.

This approach describes the way we work together and alongside our service users to deliver the best possible outcomes.

Here's how we do it.

We Relate

This is the way we respect, support, build and strengthen our relationships with service users, staff, government, sponsors, donors and partners, as well as each other. We listen. We forge strategic partnerships. We collaborate to make an impact.

We Innovate

This is the way we combine insights and evidence with practical experience, whether as clinicians, practitioners or operational staff. We develop new ideas and solutions, we look to be more efficient and scalable, and we integrate to drive a better experience for our service users. We adopt an innovative mindset towards everything we do.

We Advocate

This is the way we seek and inspire change, challenge social injustice and inequity, and influence change in public policy for system reform and better outcomes. We seek change towards what we believe in and feel deeply about based upon courage, respect, integrity, accountability and working together.

We believe in people.

We believe that children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful. As one of Australia's largest independent family service organisations, this belief is the heartbeat of our organisation. It defines our purpose, reflects our 140-year history and guides our future.

It is a belief that unites our staff, inspires our partners and donors, and enables us to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people we work alongside.

We also challenge beliefs. We do not accept social injustice, inequality, or system failure. We will always question, inquire, and advocate. Together, we seek change towards what we believe in based upon our values of courage, respect, integrity, accountability and working together.

Above all, we see, hear and respond to the experiences and voices of those with whom we work to make a positive impact on their lives.

BERRY STREET

Believing In
Children,
Young People,
Families &
Their Future.