



ANNUAL REPORT

20
24

The
KIDS
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
AUSTRALIA

DISCOVER • PREVENT • CURE

At The Kids Research Institute Australia, our vision is simple – **happy healthy kids.**

We bring together community, researchers, practitioners, policymakers and funders, who share our mission to improve the health, development and lives of children and young people through excellence in research.

Importantly, we want our research applied so it makes a difference.

Find out more at thekids.org.au



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The Kids Research Institute Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters of Australia. We also acknowledge the Nyoongar Wadjuk, Yawuru, Kariyarra and Kaurna Elders, their people and their land upon which the Institute is located and seek their wisdom in our work to improve the health and development of all children.

Cover image: Dr Sebastien Malinge and Chloe Buckingham from the WA Kids Cancer Centre.

This page: Charlotte Patterson and her mother Laura West. The Kids researchers have unlocked the genetic mystery of the rare disease Charlotte was born with.

FOREWORD



Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM and Naomi Flutter

The past 12 months has been a period of extraordinary change for The Kids Research Institute Australia. We have a new name and brand, appointed a new Chair and launched our new Strategic Plan which we believe will deliver research outcomes with more impact, quicker, to kids and families. We are excited too, to have announced one of the most significant funding commitments for Australian medical research – with \$135 million committed to children’s cancer research in Australia.

At the same time, after reporting two consecutive deficits, we have worked hard to operate efficiently and manage costs, to enable us to post a modest profit in 2024. This helps set up the Institute for a financially sustainable future: a key pillar of our Strategic Plan.

Research Reimagined

In August, the Institute was proud to launch our blueprint for the next decade. Research Reimagined 2025–2035 is an unashamedly bold vision to do research differently, by finding solutions to the biggest problems facing kids and families to change young lives for the better.

Research Reimagined is a strategy that redefines the ‘who, what and how’ of a research institute. As an organisation, we have vowed to take responsibility for driving research outcomes to where they have impact, as well as establishing a pipeline of breakthroughs for tomorrow. We recognise the opportunity for research that comes from working with others to identify the major challenges facing children and to tackle them systematically, often starting with the endpoint in mind.

At its heart, the strategy is about collaboration and partnerships with those who share our vision including kids and young people, families, our local, national and global research partners, corporate sponsors, and our philanthropic and wider community.

Think of the kids

Coinciding with the launch of our Strategic Plan, the Institute unveiled our new name and brand – The Kids Research Institute Australia, or simply, The Kids.

The name reflects the significance and breadth of the research we are undertaking to deliver even more impactful outcomes for children and young people.

Reflecting The Kids’ commitment addressing the inequity of the health and wellbeing experienced by Aboriginal kids and families, the new brand encompasses an Indigenous theme of family, country and culture.

Created in consultation with Aboriginal staff, the design elements portray a story of strength, where healthy kids are influenced by strong healthy families and communities, and by their Country. Patterns in the brand that reflect these themes include the desert, river, ocean and forest. Stars link Country to all parts of Australia.

While no longer using the word Telethon in our name, we’re delighted that The Kids remains a major beneficiary of the Channel 7 Telethon Trust. For more than 58 years, Telethon has generously supported The Kids – investing in our people, facilities and capabilities – and we know that its support has improved the health and happiness of kids throughout Western Australia.

WA Comprehensive Kids Cancer Centre

During the year, we were thrilled to announce one of WA’s biggest ever philanthropic gifts to transform children’s cancer research and treatment by improving outcomes for kids with cancer and discovering more effective and less toxic treatments.

The Stan Perron Charitable Foundation committed an incredible \$135.5 million over ten years to a multi-partner collaboration with The Kids and Perth Children’s Hospital (PCH). The Perth Children’s Hospital Foundation and the University of Western Australia will also contribute to the initiative.

This game-changing donation will turbocharge the research and work already being undertaken at PCH and the Institute, with sustainable long-term funding to allow staff to develop cutting edge laboratory and clinical research.

With its vision for all kids with cancer to survive and thrive, the WA Comprehensive Kids Cancer Centre will ensure WA children with cancer won’t have to leave the State to access the best treatment options.

Research translation

The Kids’ research continues to have a profound impact on children and families, in Western Australia and beyond.

In 2024 our scientists, together with the Undiagnosed Diseases Program at PCH led a

complex five-year experiment which cracked the code of a genetic mystery and paved the way for faster, more accurate diagnoses of the most rare and unknown diseases affecting children.

A large-scale Australian skin study led by The Kids and Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations halved the rate of skin infections experienced by Aboriginal children in remote communities, a crucial first step in reducing life-threatening illnesses caused by untreated skin sores.

We established a First Nations Childhood Cancer Research team, charged with understanding why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have worse outcomes and poorer tolerance to cancer treatments.

More than two decades of research, modelling and collaboration to develop safe and effective RSV immunisations led to the nationwide, Federal Government funded roll-out of an RSV immunisation program for pregnant women and newborns.

Our ORIGINS project, Australia’s biggest longitudinal study following the health and wellbeing of children from conception through to childhood, welcomed its 10,000th participant.

And we launched a new trial, aimed at boosting pre-school aged children’s activity levels across 700 Australian childcare centres. It is anticipated up to 80,000 children will benefit from the Play Active program.

Animal openness agreement

In 2023 the Institute became a signatory to the Openness Agreement on Animal Research and Teaching in Australia, reflecting our commitment to transparency and accountability in all parts of our research involving the use of animals.

Under the agreement, we report annually on our actions to uphold the commitments in this agreement. Between August 2023 and August 2024, The Kids developed a dedicated web page providing information about animals used in our research, our commitment to the Openness Agreement, and our ethics and quality standards relating to animal use.

We now ensure media and promotional material relating to research involving animals refers to the Openness Agreement and our website, which was updated to provide members of the public direct email access to ask questions of our animal ethics and communications teams.

The Kids is committed to ensuring all staff feel confident in talking about animals in research and we held collaboration workshops and staff forums to facilitate this goal.

Financially sustainable future

After two consecutive years posting a deficit, we are pleased to report the Institute has recorded a profit of \$10.8 million in 2024.

While this result is positive, we cannot be complacent about the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation as the sector continues to face significant economic, legislative and compliance challenges.

Operational spending constraints implemented across the Institute in 2023 contributed to the positive 2024 financial results, which were also supported by better investment returns and infrastructure support from the State Government's Research Infrastructure Support program.

We will continue to exercise financial discipline, maintaining a financial performance what allows The Kids to realise the vision of our Strategic Plan and achieve far-reaching impact on the biggest problems facing kids and families.

Looking ahead, the focus for The Kids is to deliver our bold research agenda including a pipeline of breakthroughs that deliver impact for kids and communities, while operating within evolving compliance and regulatory settings, continuing to meet the goals of our funders and ensuring long-term financial security.

Our People

In 2024 we said farewell to our Deputy Executive Director and Director of Research, Professor Catherine Elliott, after nearly five years in the role. Professor Elliott made a significant contribution to the Institute including helping the Executive team navigate the impact of the pandemic on our organisation, playing a key role in our people review and Athena Swan gender equity journey, driving our partnership with the Child and Adolescent Health Service and leading our Science Leadership Committee.

We welcomed Donna O'Hara to the Executive team as Chief Operating Officer, who joined us from the Harry Perkins Institute, bringing a strong understanding of the research sector. Ms O'Hara replaced Colin Smith who left the Institute to take on the role of Chief Executive Officer at Lotterywest and Healthway in Western Australia.

Over the 12 months, many of our researchers were recognised for their outstanding contribution to

improving the lives of children and families. Notably, Dr Mary Brushe was honoured at South Australia's Science Excellence and Innovation Awards for her work revealing the link between screen time exposure and toddlers' language development, and Dr Pam Laird was named a joint winner of the Early Career Scientist of the Year at the WA Premier's Science Awards.

Tuberculosis expert Dr Kefyalew Alene was named the Association of Australia Medical Research Institute's 2024 Rising Star and Professors Chris Blyth and Asha Bowen were elected Fellows of the esteemed Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.

Our Board

In 2024 we farewelled Julie Bishop and Fiona Drummond. Fiona retired from the Board after nearly seven years, including five years as Chair of our Finance Committee. Fiona was also a member of the Institute's Remuneration and Nomination Committee. Her dedication to The Kids and this role, including her support for fellow Board Members and the Executive Leadership Team, is greatly appreciated.

Strong support

As we head into our 35th year, The Kids Research Institute Australia is proud of its extensive community of supporters, donors, research participants and corporate, government, Indigenous and local partners.

We are committed to partnership and collaboration and are honoured to walk alongside an extended community of allies, who value our research and help us to ensure it is translated into policy and practice for the benefit of all kids and families.

Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM
Executive Director

Naomi Flutter
Chair

THANK YOU JULIE BISHOP

In 2024 we farewelled the Hon. Julie Bishop who stepped down as Chair after five years, to allow her to focus on her critical role as the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy to Myanmar.

Ms Bishop oversaw a period of significant growth at the Institute, helping to position The Kids as one of Australia's most successful medical research organisations.

During her tenure Ms Bishop's unwavering advocacy for child health research saw the establishment of the Julie Bishop Early to Mid-Career Female Researcher Award, which provided recipients with her financial and mentoring support.

This gift led to the creation of the Illuminate Awards, connecting our philanthropic community to our early to mid-career researchers to support their research ambitions. Since its launch we have had 29 awards and raised more than \$760,000 under Ms Bishop's tenure. Of course, she also personally drove significant fundraising efforts, supporting many major and varied research initiatives.

Ms Bishop's leadership and governance expertise helped to steer The Kids through many milestones during her tenure, including the transition to our home at Perth Children's Hospital, our rebrand and the early development of our Research Reimagined strategic plan.

We note our sincere thanks for Ms Bishop in her time as Chair and for her unwavering and long-term commitment to The Kids.

In July, business leader Naomi Flutter replaced Ms Bishop in the role as Chair. Ms Flutter is the Executive General Manager, Corporate Affairs at Wesfarmers, with an existing strong connection to The Kids through our Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases.

With a business background, Ms Flutter brings a personal and professional interest in Indigenous health and education to the role.

One of her first roles was to launch the new brand with our key stakeholders.

Now steering The Kids as it embarks on its new strategic plan, Ms Flutter is focussed on relationships with partners, accelerating impact for kids, driving efficiency, ensuring corporate and research governance of the highest standard and transforming our operating model to help unlock capabilities and deliver stronger outcomes.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Hon. Julie Bishop, Chair (until June 2024)

Chair of the Board, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chair, Remuneration and Nomination Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chancellor, Australian National University; Chair, King's Trust Australia; Trustee, The King's Trust Group Company; Global Board of Advisors of the Council on Foreign Affairs; Director, Julie Bishop and Partners; Patron, Shooting Stars; Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations on Myanmar.



Naomi Flutter, Chair (from June 2024)

Chair of the Board, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chair Remuneration and Nomination Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Council member Scotch College Perth; Executive General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Wesfarmers Ltd.

Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM

Executive Director, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member, Finance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member, Risk and Compliance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member, Commercialisation Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chair, Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) WA; Member, National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC); Member, Viertel Foundation Medical Advisory Board (MAB); Member, Sydney Institute for Women, Children and their Families, Advisory Board; Member, Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance (KAHRA) Board of Directors; Member, Executive Committee, SAVAC (Global GAS Vaccine Consortium).



Fiona Drummond (until October 2024)

Chair, Finance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member, Remuneration and Nomination Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; EY Managing Partner - Western Region and Assurance Partner; Fellow, Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand; Fellow, Financial Services Institute of Australasia, Member Australian Institute of Company Directors; Fellow, Leadership WA program; Former Board Member, United Way WA.



Jane Muirsmith

Chair, Risk and Compliance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member Remuneration and Nomination Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Non-Executive Director, Water Corporation; Chair, HealthDirect Australia; Non-Executive Director, Australian Finance Group; Non-Executive Director, Cedar Woods Properties Limited; Member, UWA Business School Ambassadorial Council Fellow, Executive Director, Lenox Hill; Graduate, Australian Institute of Company Directors; Former President, Women's Advisory Council to the WA Government.



Ed Bostock

Chair, Commercialisation Committee; The Kids Research Institute Australia; Member Remuneration and Nomination Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Former Chairman, Wespine Industries Pty Ltd; Managing Partner, Anchorage Capital Partners.



Professor Jozef Gecz
Member, Risk and Compliance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Honorary Chair, Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation for the Prevention of Childhood Disability; Professor of Human Genetics, Adelaide Medical School, University of Adelaide; Fellow, Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences; Fellow, Australian Academy of Science; Founding Fellow, Faculty of Science of RCPA; Scientific Board Member of PCDH19 Alliance USA, PCDH19 ONLUS, Italy and FOXP1 Foundation.

Nicole O'Connor

Member, Commercialisation Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; National Director for Mining, Utilities, Construction & Engineering, ServiceNow; Former Non-Executive Director, Remsense; Former Regional State Lead Public Sector, Amazon Web Services; Director of Research Services and Systems, Curtin University; Former General Manager Western Australia, SAP; Former Member, Advisory Board, Faculty of Business & Law, Curtin University; Former Member, Fremantle Primary School Board; Graduate, Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Hon. Ben Wyatt

Member Finance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Non-executive Director, Woodside; Non-executive Director Rio Tinto; Non-executive Director, West Coast Eagles; Non-executive Director, Perth International Arts Festival; 'Member, Advisory Committee, Australian Capital Equity' Former WA State Treasurer.

Professor Brendan Crabb AC

Member Finance Committee, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chair, Australian Global Health Alliance; Chair Pacific Friends of Global Health; Member, Brain Cancer Research Advisory Committee; mRNA Victoria Scientific Advisory Board; Member, Advisory Board, Gene Technology Access Centre (GTAC), Victoria; Member, Scientific Advisory Board, Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, UK; Adjunct Professor, The University of Melbourne; Adjunct Professor, Monash University; Former Member NHMRC Council (2015-22); Former President AAMRI (2012-14); Fellow of Australian Academy of Science (and Chair of SC9 Fellowship Committee), Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, Director and CEO, Burnet Institute.

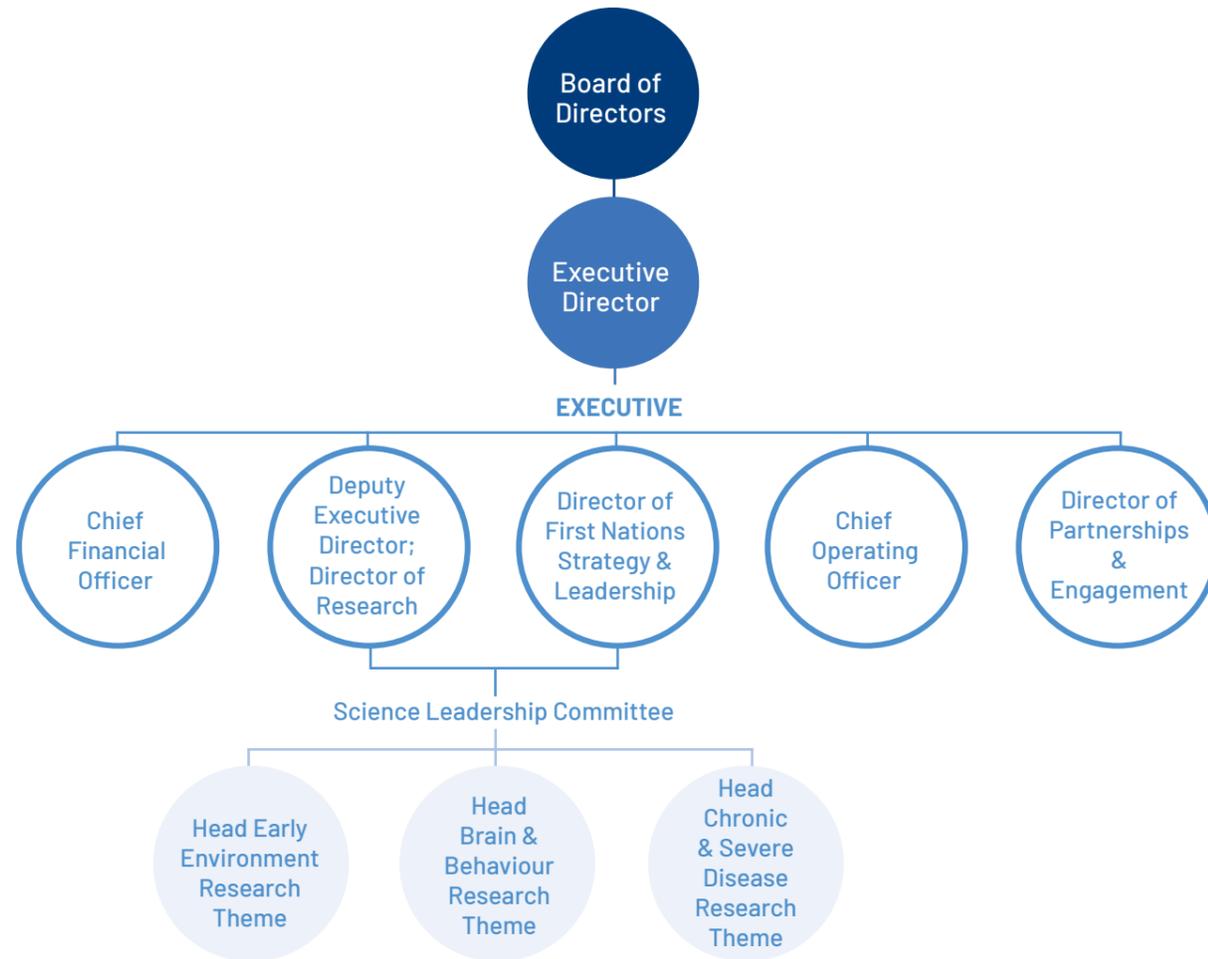


Adam Maxwell
Company Secretary, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Chief Financial Officer, The Kids Research Institute, Australia.



Helen McLean
Company Secretary, The Kids Research Institute Australia; Senior Lawyer, The Kids Research Institute Australia.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



SCIENCE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Science Leadership Committee oversees the strategic direction of the science and research undertaken at The Kids Institute The Kids Research Institute Australia. It is the primary decision-making body for the organisation's science and research.

Pictured (L-R): A/Prof Glenn Pearson, Prof Liz Davis, Prof Catherine Elliott, Prof Jane Pillow, Prof Ben Jackson.



EXECUTIVE



Professor Catherine Elliott
Deputy Director; Director of Research (until December 2024)

Professor Elliott commenced as the Director of Research at the The Kids Research Institute Australia in 2020. Her leadership role brings people together to work collaboratively to elevate our research excellence to improve the health and development of children. Prior to starting at the Institute she was the Professorial Chair of Allied Health and Kids Rehab at Curtin University and the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

Professor Jonathan Carapetis
Executive Director

Professor Carapetis is the Executive Director of the The Kids Research Institute Australia. He is also an infectious diseases consultant physician at Perth Children's Hospital and a Professor at The University of Western Australia. He holds qualifications as a medical practitioner (MBBS), specialist paediatrician (FRACP Paediatrics), specialist infectious diseases physician (FRACP Infect Dis), and specialist public health physician (FAFPHM).



Associate Professor Glenn Pearson
Director of First Nations Strategy & Leadership

Associate Professor Glenn Pearson is a Nyoongar man and the Director of First Nations Strategy and Leadership at the The Kids Research Institute Australia, which is located on Nyoongar Whadjuk boodjar. A member of the Executive Team, his position leads the implementation of the Institute's Commitment to Aboriginal Children and Families (2020-2023) Statement. A trained primary school teacher, he has 15 years of experience in senior positions within the Australian and State Governments.



Adam Maxwell
Chief Financial Officer

Adam Maxwell was appointed as Chief Financial Officer of The Kids Research Institute Australia in early 2023 following a seven-year tenure in the same role at Rocky Bay Limited, one of Western Australia's leading disability service providers. His ability to assist organisations through change is extensive and he was instrumental in helping relevant stakeholders to navigate through the once-in-a-lifetime revolutionary change that the National Disability Insurance Scheme has brought about.

Donna O'Hara
Chief Operating Officer

Donna O'Hara brings a wealth of experience and expertise in healthcare operations and strategic leadership to The Kids. Her previous role was Chief Operating Officer at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, where she made significant contributions over three years. With more than 15 years of executive experience spanning healthcare, education, and community sectors, Donna has a proven track record in directing corporate services, community engagement, and employee services.



Elizabeth Chester
Director of Partnerships & Engagement

Developing and deepening relationships with community, donors and funders, policy makers and practitioners is core to increasing the impact and sustainability of our research at The Kids Research Institute Australia. Elizabeth has responsibility for the fundraising and philanthropy, communications, marketing, government and community engagement functions at the Institute, as well as the support functions for Indigenous research. A journalist by profession, she has worked with the Institute for more than 20 years using her extensive experience in media, advocacy and stakeholder relations.



At The Kids, Donna leads a dynamic team responsible for managing our state-of-the-art research facilities based at Perth Children's Hospital, as well as overseeing critical functions like human resources, ICT/security, and the Bioresources Facility. She plays a pivotal role in managing contractual arrangements, enhancing risk management practices, and spearheading strategic initiatives to advance our mission in paediatric health research.

35 YEARS OF THINKING OF THE KIDS

In its simplest form, science is about asking questions and finding answers. But it's what we do with those answers that really make a difference. For 35 years, The Kids Research Institute Australia has been changing the lives of children and young people for the better.

SARCOMA



World-first immunotherapy gel applied inside wound after removal of solid tumours showing promising results in reducing recurrences



HEALTHY SKIN

Developed national healthy skin guidelines to guide diagnosis and treatment of skin sores, scabies and fungal infections

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS



Game-changing early intervention program for children showing neuro-development delays

INFANT LEUKAEMIA



Survival improvements of 50-80% using new immunotherapy in combination with standard-of-care chemotherapies



EAR INFECTIONS

Nasal therapy to prevent childhood ear infections – which are the major cause of childhood hearing loss

CYSTIC FIBROSIS



Led paradigm-changing discoveries that lung changes can be detected early in CF, changing life trajectories with early interventions

RHEUMATIC FEVER



Developing a diagnostic test for RF instead of current diagnosis based on clinical features

RSV



Took part in two game-changing trials investigating a world-first RSV immunisation for babies.

Our epidemiological research helped identify best immunisation targets for Australian-first immunisation program for babies

VACCINES



Conducted pivotal trials that contributed to the licencing of more than 10 childhood vaccines

STREP A VACCINE



Leading the world in developing a platform to accelerate vaccines for Strep A

PLAY ACTIVE



Evidence-based program of physical activity for childcare centres launched nationally

EARLY YEARS CENSUS



Led the development and adoption of first national census of early childhood development

RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE



Developed a blueprint for eliminating RHD in Australia

CEREBRAL PALSY



Developed the first cerebral palsy register in Australia

CHILDHOOD BRAIN CANCER



Led trans-Tasman clinical study to validate a new diagnostic test for kids with brain cancer to better understand genomic characteristics of tumours



SUICIDE CLUSTERS

Spatial epidemiology used to identify suicide clusters



CYBERBULLYING

Developed Beacon – a cyber safety app for parents



AUTISM

Key role in the development of national guidelines to assess and diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder in Australia



CHILD DISABILITY

Broke the mould for how quality of life is measured in intellectual disability



RARE AND UNDIAGNOSED DISEASES

Pioneering genomic interrogation tool integrated into a national initiative, aiming to elevate diagnostic rates for rare diseases to over 70%



TYPE 1 DIABETES

First in Australia to introduce insulin pump therapy to children with diabetes. Now at the international forefront of trials of an artificial pancreas



PERIOPERATIVE CARE

Developed chewable tablets giving children sensation of a full stomach to reduce stress of fasting before surgery

MALARIA



Using cutting-edge geospatial modelling to track and monitor malaria to inform control interventions, policies and programs



FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

Developed and implemented a diagnostic tool for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in Australia



FOLATE

Helped discover that folic acid in a mother's diet before and during pregnancy helps prevent neural tube defects



RESPIRATORY DISEASE

Demonstrated the important role of safe sun exposure and Vitamin D during pregnancy for the development of a baby's lungs, brain and bones



VAPES

Found the majority of e-cigarettes contained known lung toxins and potential carcinogens



SUPERBUGS

Opened WA's first phage manufacturing facility which could see patients battling antibiotic-resistant superbugs have access to life-changing therapies



SCREENTIME

World-leading study found toddlers exposed to screentime at home are hearing fewer words and making fewer vocalisations



VIRTUAL WA

Developed a digital replica of the State to inform public health policy on matters including asthma, obesity and suicide

OUR IMPACT

 **27**
Clinical trials
logged in 2024

 **75**
Non-clinical trials
logged in 2024

 We submitted
317
grant applications

 Awarded
\$50.2 million
in research funding

 Researchers received
83% of the funding pool from the
WA Child Health Research Fund

 Our work was cited in
272
policy documents from
24
countries

 This includes
58 policy documents published
by Intergovernmental
Organisations,
such as the World Health
Organization, United Nations
and World Bank

 Our research
contributed to
648
publications

 Our total body of
7,266
publications gained more than
45,000
new citations

 **146**
of our articles had a
CNCI greater than two

 **46**
researchers had a
Scopus H-index
greater than 40



GLOBAL IMPACT - OUR POLICY DOCUMENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Country/Organisation	Count
INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS	56
AUSTRALIA	44
CANADA	40
USA	32
UK	21
EU	11
SWITZERLAND	11
FRANCE	8
GERMANY	8
SWEDEN	6
DENMARK	5
NETHERLAND	5
IRELAND	4
NEW ZEALAND	4
FINLAND	3
SPAIN	3
BELGIUM	2
KENYA	2
SOUTH KOREA	2
AUSTRIA	1
ICELAND	1
INDIA	1
JAPAN	1
NORWAY	1

OUR REACH

 We were mentioned
2,988 times in
the media

 Reached
2.83 million
people through our social
media channels

 We visited
68 schools

 **5,469**
students attended our
workshops and festivals

 We travelled
10,707km
delivering programs to
schools and communities

OUR PEOPLE

 **831**
Employees

 **168**
Students

 **53**
Volunteers

 **334**
Honoraries

RESEARCH THEMES



We are searching for answers to some of the most debilitating and chronic conditions that affect children. Our four research themes are Indigenous Health, Brain and Behaviour, Chronic and Severe Diseases and Early Environment.

Indigenous Health

Indigenous Health is an overarching research theme at The Kids Research Institute Australia in recognition of the priority we place in addressing the ongoing disparity in outcomes for Aboriginal children compared with other Australian kids. It is embedded across every research theme with all research expected to be inclusive in considering the specific cultural, social and economic contexts of Aboriginal families and children. We set high standards for the conduct of Aboriginal research and are committed to working in genuine partnership with community, responding to their priorities.

Indigenous kids cancer

A first of its kind research program at The Kids aims to develop new strategies to better treat First Nations children with cancer. Aboriginal children with cancer have much worse outcomes and poorer tolerance to current therapies, with very little understanding why. The new program, led by Kamilaroi woman, Dr Jess Buck from the WA Kids Cancer Centre, will aid in the development of life-saving and life-altering treatments for First Nations kids with cancer.

Gong for Dr Justine Clark

Dr Justine Clark was one of two scientists nationally to receive the Australian Academy of Science's 2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Science Award. Dr Clark is an Adnyamathanha woman and post-doctoral researcher in Indigenous genomics. Her focus on precision cancer research will contribute to international efforts to improve Indigenous cancer health equity.



Dr Justine Clark

Infection rates halved

A large-scale Australian skin study has halved the rate of skin infections experienced by Aboriginal children living in remote communities, with regular skin checks key to the stunning result. Led by The Kids and Aboriginal health organisations in close partnership with nine Aboriginal communities in WA's Kimberley, the five year SToP Trial set out to identify the best methods to See Treat and Prevent painful skin sores and scabies.



Professor Alex Brown made Academy Fellow

Trailblazing Aboriginal doctor and health researcher Professor Alex Brown was made a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering in recognition of his leadership in ensuring Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of genomics efforts nationally and internationally.

Childrens' book tackles eczema

A children's book written by community, for community, has been launched in WA's south-west to help children and families understand more about one of the common inflammatory skin conditions in children. Kaal Tackles Eczema was developed by the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin Project at The Kids after research identified nearly 20 per cent of Aboriginal children living in urban areas had eczema.

Brain and Behaviour

Brain and Behaviour focuses on the core of many issues impacting the ongoing health and wellbeing of children and young people. Our research investigates the developmental, genetic, family and environmental determinants of child wellbeing and how clinical, educational and community practices can provide every child with the best opportunity for optimal health and development.

Keeping kids active



More than 80,000 Australian children are expected to benefit as 700 childcare centres across the country trial a new program aimed at boosting declining physical activity levels. Australia is currently sitting on a D- for children's physical activity – a statistic that hasn't changed since 2015. The Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years state children aged 3–5 years should be getting three or more hours of physical activity per day, including 60 minutes of energetic play, but only one in ten young children are achieving this. The Kids Research Institute Australia-developed Play Active program – backed by 10 years of research and co-created with the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector – aims to reverse the trend by helping early childhood educators to support children to be more active while in childcare.

Big data, big results

Researchers will use cutting edge big data and geospatial modelling techniques to tackle the dramatic decline in the number of West Australian children walking or riding to school, thanks to a Healthway grant of almost \$200,000 awarded to a team from The Kids Research Institute Australia and Curtin University. Forty years ago 75 per cent of children walked or rode to school, but this has now dropped to just one in five, meaning children are missing valuable opportunities to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. To try to understand what's stopping children from 'actively travelling' to school, and what might encourage more to do so, the research team will create an innovative simulator that models different factors specific to different school zones.

Asthma mapping

Children who live in the outer suburbs of Australia's four biggest cities are twice as likely to have asthma as those living in inner city areas, according to a new study based on health data captured in the last Australian Census. The data was gathered after Australians completing the 2021 Census were asked for the first time to share information about long-term health conditions, to help researchers map patterns of chronic disease across the country. A team led by geospatial modelling expert Associate Professor Ewan Cameron – from The Kids and Curtin University – combined the data with cutting-edge statistical modelling and satellite imagery to intricately map the distribution of childhood asthma and look for environmental or other risk factors.

Dads' mental health matters

The mental health and wellbeing of new fathers whose children end up in neonatal intensive care is the focus of a new project to be led by The Kids researchers, thanks to a \$388,000 grant from Healthway. The research project will identify ways to help Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) practitioners better support fathers as part of routine preterm care, ultimately delivering better outcomes for children and families. The research will involve 200 fathers of babies admitted to the NICUs at King Edward Memorial and Perth Children's Hospitals, with the results to be incorporated into a program of materials that can be accessed both in-person and online.



Chronic and Severe Diseases

Childhood cancers, diabetes, respiratory conditions and rare diseases can be debilitating and life threatening. Our Chronic and Severe Diseases research theme interrogates effective intervention and prevention to understand the complex interactions between genetic and environmental factors, as well as better ways of diagnosing, treating and controlling disease.

Immunotherapy sarcoma treatment

2024-2025 Cure Cancer grant recipient and The Kids cancer researcher Dr Ben Wylie and his team have developed a biodegradable gel that surgeons can apply locally during cancer removal surgery on children with sarcoma. The gel will release mRNA-based immunotherapy drugs in the surgical area, which act as messengers to activate the immune system to seek out and destroy cancer cells. As the gel is naturally broken down by the body, the drugs are slowly released over time, reducing the need for children to stay in hospital for gruelling follow-up treatments and allowing them to return home to their families sooner.

Down syndrome leukaemia study

A team of world-leading scientists secured \$5 million in funding from the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Society to advance the fight against leukaemia in children with Down syndrome. The funding will support four innovative projects that aim to develop better, less harmful treatments for these vulnerable kids.



Associate Professor Alexander Larcombe

Informing policy on vaping

The Kids formative research has helped inform world-leading vaping reforms, aiming to protect young Australians and the broader community from the harm caused by vapes. Associate Professor Alexander Larcombe, Head of Respiratory Environmental Health at the Wal-yan Respiratory Research Centre – a powerhouse partnership between The Kids Research Institute Australia, Perth Children’s Hospital and Perth Children’s Hospital Foundation – spearheaded a research program on e-cigarette contents and health impacts. His dedicated research and advocacy efforts have significantly shaped public perception of e-cigarettes and generated evidence-informed policy that delivers tangible benefits in our community.

Cancer researcher of the year



Associate Professor Rishi Kotecha

Associate Professor Rishi Kotecha, Co-Head of Leukaemia Translational Research at The Kids Research Institute Australia Cancer Centre and Consultant Paediatric Oncologist at Perth Children’s Hospital, was named Cancer Council WA’s 2024 Cancer Researcher of the Year. The prestigious award recognises Associate Professor Kotecha’s contributions to advancing leukaemia research and improving access to clinical trials and cutting-edge therapies for infants and children in Western Australia.

Fighting antimicrobial resistance

One out of every 10 children with a bloodstream infection are infected with a multi-drug resistant organism in the nation’s first-ever surveillance study investigating the prevalence of paediatric antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AGAR) Kids Report, prepared by the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases, based at The Kids Research Institute Australia, used data collected from 38 laboratories throughout the country to identify the strains of bacteria responsible for sending kids to hospital.

Early Environment

Early Environment is our research theme which examines the ways that environments early in life can affect a child's lifelong health and development. Factors ranging from infection and climatic conditions to pollutants, housing and our complex microbiome all have an impact. Understanding these exposures and their impact on early growth and development is key to preventing and treating a number of common childhood conditions.

ORIGINS milestone



Professor Desiree Silva

Australia's biggest longitudinal study of its kind, following the health and wellbeing of children from their conception through to childhood, welcomed its 10,000th and final participant. ORIGINS Co-Director and Professor of Paediatrics Desiree Silva said it was exciting to have reached the major milestone.

IRON Child study

A third of Western Australian one-year-olds and up to two thirds of three-year-olds have low iron, a study by The Kids Research Institute Australia found. IRON Child, a sub-project of longitudinal birth study ORIGINS, was undertaken with project partner, Joondalup Health Campus (JHC). ORIGINS Co-Director and Joondalup Health Campus Professor of Paediatrics Desiree Silva said the findings were concerning because low iron was potentially detrimental at such a critical stage of life and development.

Breakfast helps school results

A study by The Kids researchers revealed the clear link between eating breakfast and academic success, with students who skip breakfast some or all of the time achieving poorer NAPLAN results than children who always eat breakfast. In research published in the journal *Public Health Nutrition*, a team from The Kids studied the student-reported breakfast habits of 28,651 South Australian school children aged 8-16. They then examined how the same students performed in that year's NAPLAN tests – standardised national literacy and numeracy tests undertaken by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 – to see if there was any link between the two. Led by Senior Research Officer Dr Alanna Sincovich from The Kids' Adelaide office, the study found students who never ate breakfast were almost twice as likely to perform poorly in NAPLAN numeracy tests and 1.6 times as likely to do poorly in reading tests.

Peanut allergy trial

Mothers eating a diet rich in peanuts while breastfeeding might be helping to reduce their baby's risk of developing a peanut allergy – that's the hypothesis of a new clinical trial that has been granted \$2.29 million in funding by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Led by The Kids Head of the Early Life & Life-Course Health Program, Associate Professor Debbie Palmer, 4,000 pregnant women across Perth and Melbourne will be recruited over the course of the five-year trial.

Breast milk liquid gold



A new international study, published in *Microbiome*, has revealed that the first drops of breast milk are crucial for healthy growth at birth and can help combat chronic undernutrition, which affects 200 million children and causes more than three million deaths annually worldwide. Led by Professor Valerie Verhasselt, Director of the Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation Centre for Immunology and Breastfeeding (CIBF) at The University of Western Australia's Medical School and The Kids Research Institute Australia, the research highlights the crucial impact of diet at birth on healthy growth, independent of the gut microbiota.

OUR PEOPLE

Five outstanding members of The Kids Research Institute Australia family were named in the 2024 Australia Day Honours List. Their research has been supported over many years by significant partners including the Channel 7 Telethon Trust and by competitive grants.



Associate Professor Hayley Christian

Associate Professor Hayley Christian was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her internationally respected research on the importance of physical activity in the early years. This honour is awarded for service in a particular locality or field of activity or to a particular group. Associate Professor Christian is Head of the Child Physical Activity, Health and Development research team and Program Head of Health Behaviours and Environments at The Kids and The University of Western Australia, Co-Director of the WA Node of the ARC Centre for Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course, and a National Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellow.



Professor Fiona Wood AO

Burns specialist Professor Fiona Wood was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in recognition of her distinguished service to plastic and reconstructive surgery and medical research, and as a clinician scientist and mentor.



Professor Asha Bowen OAM

Infectious diseases clinician-researcher Professor Asha Bowen was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the King's Birthday Honours List for her service to medicine in the field of clinical diseases.



Associate Professor Hannah Moore

Associate Professor Hannah Moore

Associate Professor Hannah Moore was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to epidemiology - particularly her efforts to understand and address the burden of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and influenza. Associate Professor Moore is Program Head of Infections and Vaccines within the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases at The Kids, Co-lead of the Infectious Diseases Epidemiology Team, and an Associate Professor within the Curtin School of Population Health at Curtin University. Her primary focus is using the power of population-based data to answer critical questions around the burden, risk factors and seasonal patterns of infectious diseases in specific populations, including children and vulnerable communities.

Aunty Millie Penny AM

Longstanding Elder cultural advisor Aunty Millie Penny was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her invaluable contributions to the Aboriginal community through a variety of roles. Aunty Millie, a Noongar Yorga woman from the Pinjarra area south of Perth, is an Elder Co-Researcher at The Kids and a Founding Member and former Senior Counsellor with the Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation. She has been an Elder cultural advisor to a range of Aboriginal research projects at The Kids since 2016, and in 2019 became an Honorary Research Associate with the Institute. Aunty Millie is pictured with Western Australian Governor and The Kids Patron, His Excellency the Hon Chris Dawson AC APM.



OUR PEOPLE

Dr Pam Laird

Respiratory health researcher and clinician Dr Pam Laird was named joint winner of the Early Career Scientist of Year at the 2024 WA Premier's Science Awards. Dr Laird was recognised for her significant contribution towards reducing the chronic respiratory disease burden in Aboriginal children.



Dr Mary Brushe

Dr Mary Brushe won the PhD Research Excellence at South Australia's Science Excellence and Innovation Awards for her work revealing the link between screentime exposure and toddlers' language development.



Dr Kefyalew Alene

Dr Kefyalew Alene was named the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes 2024 Rising Star in recognition of his groundbreaking work into tuberculosis and strategies needed to control the disease.



Professor Britta Regli-von Ungern-Sternberg

Professor Britta Regli-von Ungern-Sternberg received the Frank Fenner Prize for Life Sciences at the 2024 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science in recognition of her achievements in reducing the risks associated with paediatric anaesthesia.



Mitch Messer

Health consumer champion and The Kids community engagement team member Mitch Messer won the Community category at the 2024 West Australian of Year Awards. He was recognised for committing 40 years to bridging the gap between health consumers, the health system and policy makers.

Mitch Messer

2024 IMPACT

Research breakthrough gives hope to children with rare and undiagnosed diseases



Charlotte Patterson with her brother Josh and mother Laura West

Scientists at The Kids Research Institute Australia, together with the Undiagnosed Diseases Program and Perth Children's Hospital (PCH), combined medical expertise with laboratory investigations and cutting-edge computational biology to uncover a unique combination of cellular characteristics which pinpointed the cause of an undiagnosed disease that has puzzled doctors since 10-year-old Northam girl Charlotte Patterson was born.

The researchers then scoured literature and data from around the world to find other patients with similar traits to match the findings to the condition,

which they now believe affects less than 10 people globally.

The findings were delivered to Charlotte's family by doctors from the Undiagnosed Disease Program (UDP) at PCH.

The quest to find the cause of Charlotte's condition started in 2019 and was boosted in 2020 by a donation of more than \$1.1 million raised at that year's Channel Seven Telethon Ball.

The Kids' Precision Health Program Head and computational biologist, Dr Timo Lassmann, said discovering the characteristics of the variant gene

which caused Charlotte's disease was like finding a needle in a haystack.

"Charlotte's case was extremely complicated and challenging because of the unique characteristics of the variant," Dr Lassmann said. "Now, as a result of this work, we will be able to apply the process we used to other cases to diagnose unknown diseases more quickly."

In her short life Charlotte has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, a heart defect, intellectual disability and many physical abnormalities that until now, have been unexplained. She has had 64 surgeries, takes 16 different medications daily and requires a feeding tube.

Her mother, Laura West, said it had been extremely difficult for the family to not know what caused Charlotte's condition.

"We had no roadmap, no idea what the future might look like or what her lifespan might be," Mrs West said. "We have just had this endless and ever-growing list of things that are wrong with Charlotte and no idea what caused any of them."

The Kids' Translational Genetics Team Head, Dr Vanessa Fear, said the discovery of what caused Charlotte's condition was astounding. After a complicated process of assessing the genetic variant in the laboratory, The Kids' researchers discovered the variant was actually changing the basic machinery in cells responsible for the gene and protein expression, and altering the way the neural cells were developing.

Dr Fear said researchers had created a model of Charlotte's disease in the laboratory so they could not only determine what was causing her symptoms, but also investigate how they could modify cell pathways to improve outcomes for Charlotte.

"I am just really proud to have been a part of this process where so many people have worked every little step of the way, from collecting blood samples to analysing the cells, to finally providing this extremely valuable data we could feed back to

Charlotte's clinician and her family," Dr Fear said.

UDP lead Dr Gareth Baynam said families with a child with an undiagnosed disease were forced to live in 'limbo land' where their world was filled with uncertainty.

"You don't know what the right treatment is, and you don't know if you're receiving the wrong treatment," Dr Baynam said.

"What I hope is that through getting this diagnosis it really does help Charlotte have better health and to have more certainty about what the future brings.

"We can now unequivocally say that Charlotte is going to have a long life. She is not going to go backwards, there is a path forward."

Mrs West said receiving a diagnosis for Charlotte was life-changing for her family. "It gives us hope for the future," she said. "I think the best bit was learning that this specific gene variant has just occurred out of the blue. It was something that happened and it not hereditary and can't be passed on." This was particularly important for Charlotte's three siblings.

Dr Lassmann said the case underscored the vital role of collaboration between clinical and research teams and highlighted the value of translational genetics teams taking on the most difficult cases.

The Kids Executive Director, Professor Jonathan Carapetis, said the discovery was groundbreaking and set up a pipeline for similar breakthroughs in rare and undiagnosed diseases.

"The work The Kids' computational biology team is undertaking is world-leading," Professor Carapetis said. "They are using cutting-edge technologies and computational science to unlock some of the biggest medical mysteries and help other children with undiagnosed diseases."

Nation-leading RSV immunisation program cuts babies' hospital admissions by almost 90 per cent

An Australian-first study demonstrating the effectiveness of a new immunisation against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) for babies found it to be 88.2 per cent effective in reducing hospitalisation rates and helped more than 500 WA families avoid a hospital stay.

Led by researchers at the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccine and Infectious Diseases, based at The Kids Research Institute Australia, and funded by Perth Children's Hospital Foundation, the REVIVE Study investigated RSV-related hospital admissions following the introduction of WA's immunisation program providing babies with a long-acting monoclonal antibody called nirsevimab.

Affecting the airways and lungs, RSV is a life-threatening virus responsible for sending 3.6 million children to hospitals worldwide each year. It is especially dangerous for vulnerable young babies at high risk of potentially deadly complications such as severe bronchiolitis and pneumonia.

"Western Australian researchers have had a long-term commitment to providing protection against RSV and this resulted in WA leading the way as the first Australian state to announce a government-funded nirsevimab program for all babies born throughout winter in 2024," Dr Ushma Wadia said.

"More than 24,000 doses of nirsevimab were distributed throughout April - September last year, providing coverage to 85 per cent of newborns and 66 per cent of a 'catch-up' cohort of babies in the lead-up to their first winter season.

"With the support of Perth Children's Hospital Foundation, as well as the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation for our on-going RSV research program, our team worked alongside WA Health to evaluate hospitalisation rates at Perth Children's Hospital, Fiona Stanley Hospital and Joondalup Health Campus, and allowed us to become the first place in the southern hemisphere to successfully demonstrate the major impact of RSV immunisation in young babies," Dr Ushma Wadia said.

Published in The Journal of Infection, the study also investigated the effect immunisation had on the severity of RSV cases, with nirsevimab recipients 60 per cent less likely to require oxygen or assistance with their breathing if admitted with RSV.

Carrick Robinson, CEO of Perth Children's Hospital Foundation, said the results of this groundbreaking study are extremely promising. With a dramatic reduction in hospital admissions for RSV, WA is setting the standard in protecting our youngest and most vulnerable. Not only does this ease the pressure on our hospitals and emergency departments, but it also ensures families are spared the stress and strain of hospital stays.

"Through funding innovative initiatives like this, which have the potential to make a real difference in the lives of children and their families, as well as reducing the burden on the healthcare system, not only in WA but across Australia for years to come," Mr Robinson said.

For Professor Chris Blyth, Head of the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases, it is the global significance of this work that is hugely significant.

"The data gained from the REVIVE Study aligns with outcomes from research conducted in the northern hemisphere and can now be used as evidence to inform vaccine policy throughout the world, including in lower-income countries where morbidity rates for RSV are at their highest," Professor Blyth said.

The success of WA's nirsevimab program also contributed to the rollout of a national, \$174.5 million RSV immunisation program now underway for all pregnant women and newborn babies which hopes to keep 10,000 Australian babies out of hospital each year.

"Researchers from the Wesfarmers Centre have spent the last two decades participating in global vaccine studies to develop safe and effective world-first RSV immunisations, so being able to see the outcomes of this work first-hand is certainly very rewarding for all involved," Professor Blyth said.

Riley Kent with her mum Alexandra Cogan



World-first Inklings program launches in South Australia

The Kids Deputy Director Professor Andrew Whitehouse, Inklings South Australia Program Manager Samantha Welke, Inklings SA Operations Coordinator Rachel Buckingham, Inklings General Manager Gemma Upson, Inklings Senior Manager Rebecca Langford, Office for Autism Acting Director Sarah Kemp and The Kids Chief of Staff Dr Mitch Hartman at the Adelaide launch



South Australian families with babies showing early social and communication differences will be among the first to benefit from a nation-leading early support program, as The Kids Research Institute Australia's Inklings Program officially launches in South Australia.

Thanks to a joint investment by the Albanese and Malinauskas Governments, the program will help caregivers understand the needs of babies between the ages of six to 18 months who are showing early developmental differences and build the capacity of families to better support their child.

Inklings uses short videos of the caregiver with their baby to help parents better understand their

baby's thoughts and feelings, the different ways that babies communicate, the importance of interaction, and of following their baby's focus of interest.

The \$14.8 million program is funded by the Department of Social Services and the South Australian Government, in partnership with The Kids Research Institute Australia across the state, including Northern Adelaide, Adelaide metro, regional areas, Lower Eyre, and Far North (regional and remote).

The pilot program has already seen success in Western Australia, providing families with valuable support and resources.

Professor Andrew Whitehouse, Deputy Director at The Kids, welcomed the expansion of Inklings to South Australia.

"The Inklings Program launching in South Australia means that more families will have early support at their fingertips," Professor Whitehouse said.

"Early support, when it is needed most, will help families at a crucial time in their child's development, providing long-term benefits for the child's future."

"It's a great feeling to see the translation of this life-changing research making a difference to families

who need support. This is a truly exciting moment for South Australia."

Delivery of the program was a key recommendation of South Australia's Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care.

It will focus on breaking down barriers for families from First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse, and low-socioeconomic backgrounds to access the program.

This marks the second stage of an early care initiative, building on previous efforts to support families at the earliest stages of their child's development.

Philanthropic legacy for kids cancer research

One of WA's biggest ever philanthropic gifts will transform childhood cancer research and treatment by improving outcomes for children with cancer and discovering more effective and less toxic treatments.

The Stan Perron Charitable Foundation will contribute \$135.5 million over the next decade to the multi-partner collaboration, which will build on the significant work already being undertaken by Perth Children's Hospital and The Kids Research Institute Australia.

Perth Children's Hospital Foundation (PCHF) will also make a multi-million dollar contribution over the next five years with an option to extend and The University of Western Australia will add up to \$9 million to help improve the lives of kids impacted by cancer in WA and across the globe.

The financial commitment from the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, one of WA's oldest charities, is an incredible contribution to the State and a fitting legacy to its founder, businessman Stan Perron, who died in 2018.

Child and Adolescent Health Service Chief Executive, Valerie Jovanovic said investing in childhood cancer research and care was important with 1240 Australian children diagnosed with cancer each year.

"Childhood cancer is the leading cause of death by disease for Australian children," Ms Jovanovic said.

"We have a great opportunity to do more in this space and give our children and young people access to world-leading care and research.

"This field is moving extremely rapidly with precision medicine, genomics and other science advances. The donation will not only benefit Western Australian children – it will allow our Perth Children's Hospital clinicians and The Kids researchers to contribute to these advances and lead the field in their areas of expertise."

Chair of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, Elizabeth Perron said the intent and objectives of the Comprehensive Kids Cancer Centre aligned

perfectly with the intent of the Foundation established by her father.

"The Foundation's guiding principles for giving expressly target any activity that improves the health and wellbeing of children in Western Australia," Ms Perron said.

"While the funding is significant, like all projects funded by the Foundation, we are concerned less by the amount of money donated but primarily by the impact of the activity on the lives of children."

Cutting-edge laboratory and clinical research have been shown to improve short, medium and long-term patient outcomes through seamless operational and cultural integration between researchers and clinicians.

Importantly, it can immediately translate into improved treatment, survival and whole-of-life outcomes for patients.

While this is already happening at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) and The Kids, the initiative will give the work a longer-term future, underpinned by sustained funding instead of short-term, project-based grants. It will also mean no Western Australian child will miss out on the best treatment available.

Professor Nick Gottardo, head of the Oncology and Haematology Department at PCH, said in the past 70 years only 50 new drugs had been approved to treat paediatric cancers, whereas for adults 60 cancer drugs were approved every year.

"Current treatments for kids cancer cause severe and often life-long side effects including problems with emotions, reproduction, growth, development, hormones, learning, memory problems, heart, lung, digestive system, hearing, vision and most strikingly, can cause secondary cancers," Professor Gottardo said.

"This amazing donation will give us the chance to build on the world-leading research we are already undertaking and ensure kids in WA can be treated right here in WA.



Announcing the game-changing donation (left to right): UWA's Professor Anna Nowak, Child and Adolescent Health Service Chief Executive Valerie Jovanovic, Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson, Tracey Hollington, Angus Hollington, Professor Nick Gottardo, Medical Research Minister Stephen Dawson, Elizabeth Perron, Associate Professor Joost Lesterhuis, The Kids Executive Director Professor Jonathan Carapetis, Perth Children's Hospital Foundation CEO Carrick Robinson

"It will mean that kids with cancer will have access to the best treatment options without needing to leave the State and kids diagnosed with cancer in the future will benefit from transformative discovery research.

"It will advance our pre-clinical discovery pipeline to significantly improve outcomes for kids yet to be diagnosed with cancer, to discover more effective and less toxic treatments that will be adopted worldwide and to improve the lives of kids impacted by cancer globally.

"Our vision is for all kids with cancer to survive and thrive."

The Kids Executive Director Professor Jonathan Carapetis said the initiative was a research model exemplar where researchers, clinicians and families

with lived experience had charted a course for what would be needed in kids' cancer research and treatment in the next decade.

"This is research reimagined. Nothing about this work is business as usual. It has been borne out of genuine partnerships with kids and families at the heart of the plan.

"This funding is a game-changer for childhood cancer research and treatment in WA.

"It will bring together 'Team WA' – an interdisciplinary team of clinicians and researchers; it will also attract and retain the brightest minds in this field from around the world and facilitate the purchase of the most advanced equipment needed to ensure game-changing research breakthroughs," Professor Carapetis said.

Key local partners also include the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Linear Clinical Research and the Cancer Council of Western Australia.

THANK YOU

PHILANTHROPIC SPECTRUM

What powers the work of our talented researchers every day is the community's support in helping us to achieve our mission. Our incredibly generous and passionate donors have been critically important in our success as one of Australia's leading child health research institutes. That success sees us deliver real-world impact to kids and families who need it most.

Each supporter's story is unique. Some people choose to support us through fundraising efforts coordinated by local schools or clubs. Some families choose to make a gift at the end of the tax year. A group of visionary supporters have joined our Fiona Stanley Circle by leaving a gift to the Institute in their Will to sustain our work for generations to come. We have partnered with Trusts, Foundations and corporations who support our research with multi-year commitments to fund transformational and world-leading work. Our staff are also a special part of fundraising and generously give through workplace giving, raising tens of thousands of dollars a year to champion the work of their colleagues, including grants to help early career researchers get vital funding at the beginning of their research career.



PITCHFEST

Philanthropy kickstarts science careers through innovative awards

Philanthropy is empowering early to mid-career researchers to kickstart their innovative projects thanks to a unique initiative introduced at The Kids Research Institute Australia.

Now in its third year, Illuminate Pitchfest challenges emerging scientists to pitch their research to a room of donors and inspire them to fund their projects. Launched in 2021 by The Kids former Chair, the Hon Julie Bishop, the awards have supported 29 early to mid-career researchers and raised more than \$760,000.

For Dr Jane Choi the award gave her the opportunity to start her research into the role body clocks have in improving the lung health of premature babies and to find simple, safe and affordable therapies to avoid adverse health consequences.

“The Illuminate Awards have helped me to connect with the community, my donors and to kickstart my project with confidence,” Dr Choi said.

Dr Vincent Mancini, senior research fellow in the Human Development and Community Wellbeing Team, said his award provided him with the seed funding he needed to start a project making a difference to the lives of Australian babies and their families.

Thanks to the funding, Dr Mancini has been able to continue his work focussed on empowering fathers and father figures to improve the health and wellbeing of children, particularly babies admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit.

Fathers are a critical source of support for mothers and babies during this period, but they don't have access to suitable services to help them navigate



The 2025 Pitchfest finalists from left to right - Dr Laurence Cheung, Dr Jack Brett, Dr Thomas Nevill, Dr Sonia McAlister, Dr Laura Coleman, Board Chair Naomi Flutter, Pitchfest mentor Professor Jane Pillow, Dr Brittany Dewdney, Dr Renee Ng, Dr Zahra Abbas, Dr Jua Iwasaki, Dr Sharon Clark



Dr Sonia McAlister and Naomi Flutter

such a difficult time. Dr Mancini's research is seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of NICU babies by helping fathers in their role as a primary source of support for mothers and babies.

The Awards provides participating researchers with three minutes to literally sell their research project to prospective donors.

Acting Director, Partnerships and Engagement Alecia Benzie, said the concept had proven extremely successful not just for the researchers but also for donors.

“It is actually an extremely personal way of connecting researchers with the donor community,” Ms Benzie said. “Often their research stories have personal significance, for example, from an illness that impacted them as a child or may have impacted a close family member or friend, and that had influenced their career path.

“The process also means that the researchers learn how to clearly articulate what can be quite complicated projects, in a way that is easy to understand to members of the public.

“At the same time, donors get to know the researchers whose work they are contributing to, and it really personalises their generous gift and perhaps gives them a greater sense of purpose.

“Donors are kept informed about the projects' progress and we have ongoing thank you events throughout the event to keep the donors and researchers connected. The awards really are very special.”

Other projects supported by Pitchfest have included research into the toxicity of the aerosol inhaled by vape users, initial work on a clinical trial to provide timely and effective management of early lung disease in Indigenous children, new therapies to improve the recovery and survival for children with high-risk leukaemia and developing phage therapy to combat antimicrobial resistance in children.



Dr Jua Iwasaki pitching her research to donors

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Katrina Allen

Bri Altmann

Paula Alvarez

Jason Amaya

Geoff & Dawn Anderson

Sharon & Dylan &rews

Perry Angela

Snehal Angre

Jeni Anning

Helen Appleby

Annie Arnold

David Arrowsmith

Linda Arscott

Sarah Ashe

Rebecca Atkinson

Hiroyuki Atsumi

Azam Azimi

Nikki Azzaro

Svetlana Badin

Jennifer & Roy Bailey

Loretta Baker

Brett Baker

Marilyn & Rod Baker

Blair Ballantyne

Kelly Jane Ball

Chris Barker

Travis Barnes

WH & BH Bartley

Calandra Baynham

Amanda Bearcroft

Kevin Bearcroft

Dawn Beaton

Sarah & Colin Beckett

Liam Bedford

Fiona Bellazzini-Eiszele & Scott Eiszele

Frances Bell

Daniel & Rita Bellotti

Joanne Bender

Jamie Bennett

Alecia Benzie

Matthew Beresford-Long

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Michelle de Rooy
Anique De Vries-Turner
Rachel Dews
Joel Dimasi
Sharon DiMauro
Hadeel Doehler
Jeff Douglas
Kate Downie
Tim Downing
Ben Drabik
Lisa & Pierre Dreyer
Sabine Driesser
Lara Ducie
J & D Ducrow
David Duncan
Nick Dyer
Francesca Earley
Jackson Eaton
Kelly Eckel
Megan Edwards
Pamela Eldred
Carol & Mick Elias
Cath & Craig Elliott
John Elliott
Kerrie Elliott
Danielle Ellis
Kristine & Alan Ellis
Amanda Ellison
Brooke Elphick
Kellie Elphick

Jess Emery
Max Emmerton & Hannah Lowther
Stephanie Enkel
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Ying Fan
Greg Farrell
Ashleigh Feleppa
Debbie Felgate
Thea & Ron Ferguson
Luisa Fernanda
Ella Fieldhouse
Denise Fisher
Kirsty Fishlock
Elle & Dom Fitzsimons
Grace Fleay
Dani Fleiser
Kobi Fleming
Sue Fletcher AO
Yvonne Fletcher
Marshall & Sue Flower
Margaret Flynn
Alan Foley
Erin Fong
Nicole Foot
Alex Forbes
Karen Forde
Debbie & Maurice Ford
Shaun & Kristin Ford
Katya Forster
Judith Foster
Darlene Fox
Lisa & James Frankis
Brett & Kerry Franklin
Carmen Frendo
Carol Frieling
Kate Frusher
Harlie-Rose & Tatum Garcia
Lorraine Gauci
Theo Gaunt
Rommel Geronimo
Karen Getchell
Amelia G
Tammy Gibbs
Emma & Scott Gillespie
Marie Ginbey
Diarmuid Gleeson
Barbara Gniewek

Thomas Godsall
Girard Good
Richard Gordon
Michael Gore
Bradley Gosling
Chiquita Goss
Alan & Gillian Grace
Mary & Hugh Grace
Jenni Grace
Nikki Graham
Ben Gray
Nicole Gray
Stacey Gray
Ralph Green
Benjamin Greenhow
Amy Greenly
Jen Grove
Karl & Paula Gruber
Jamelia Gubgub & David Wallace
Samara Gumina
Mark Gummer
Daphne Hahn
Marlene Hall
Rhys Hall
Sarah Hall
Diandra M Harapan
Paul Hardy
Glenda Harnett
Trish Harris
Amy Harrison
John Hawke
Ruth Hayter
Emma Hayward
Mark & Jemma Hector
Beth Hender
Adam Henry
Elise Henry
Flick Henry
Linda Henry
Nathan Henry
Rachel Henry
Shauna Henry
Vanessa Hernandez
Mary Hickey
Colin Hill
David Hillier
Sandy Hinchcliff

Fletcher Hinton
Jack Hipwood
Luke Hipwood
Michael Hipwood
Anh & Dan Hoang
Mike Hobley
Tracy & Justin Hollington
Devon Hollywood
Karen Holmes
Samantha Holmes
Joel Horgan
David Horne
Meegan Howlett
Michael Hudson
Catherine & Greg Hughes
Rachel Hu
Jed Hunter
Shane Hutchinson
Dan Hutt
Rachel Hutt
Laurence & Nicola Iffla
Reinaldo Jaimes Quintero
Millie James
Pat & Nick Jameson
Gemma Jameson
Marco Jansen
Anita Jaswal
Stuart Jeffery
Martin Jermy
Jai Jeyaraman
Georgina Johanson
Rachel Johns
Aaron Johnson
I & K Johnson
Mia John Toru
Amanda Jones
Irene Jones
Peta Jones
Sonia Jones
Carla Jose
Rhys Katich
Andrea Kavanagh
Georgia Kelly
Jackie Kelly
Steve Kelly
Damian Kenny
Sylvia Kershaw



Taya Kesby
 Mark Kester
 Eva Khung
 Frith Klug
 Heddy & Alfred King
 Michael & Katherine King
 Shane King
 Simone Knox & Samuel Zaknich
 Alexa Ko
 Ed Kopsen
 Kyle Kriskovich
 Megan Kriskovich
 Joanne & Ignatius Kwee
 Michael Lai
 Sue & Nigel Laing
 Kylie Lambert
 Alexander Larcombe
 Juna Latheef
 Calum Lawson
 Tony Leca
 Courtney Leeder
 Jordan Leedham
 Fanny Lefert
 Deborah Lehmann AO & Michael Alpers AO
 Tam Le
 Tung Minh Le
 Tamlyn Lennox
 Ellie Lenny
 Mat Lenz
 Abby Lethlean
 Amanda Lewis
 Simon Lim
 Callum Lincoln
 Ryan Lincoln
 James Little
 Shannen Lloyd
 Nelson Loh & Tee Ching Hun
 Francis J Longhurst
 Jan & David Lord
 Tania Lourensz
 Karen Lown
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 Samuel Luke
 Jodie Lundy
 Kyle Lyons
 Horst Maberly
 Andrew Macgregor

Jonah Macliver
 Wendy Macliver
 Leonardo Macri
 Jaleesa Maher
 Patrice Maher
 Vincent Mancini
 Jaime Mangano
 Astral Mansfield
 Francisco Manuels
 Sherianne Marbus
 Marisa & Ian March
 Minerva Martin
 Moya Martin
 David Martino
 Julie Martino
 Adam & Holly Mason
 Rebecca Matsen
 Ashley Matthewman
 Toni Matthews
 Adam Maxwell
 Brooke Mayger
 Lianne May
 Baz & Kate McConkey
 Matthew McConnell
 Zara McCormack
 Michael McCormick
 Liam McDonagh
 Alec McDonald
 Sam McDonald
 Alison McDonnell
 Jacqui McGovern
 Jayden McKenna
 Scott & Gillian McKinlay
 Helen McLean
 Jaime McMullan
 Diane Meader
 Sue & Lindsay Medalia
 Elaine Meighan
 Emily Merillion
 Tina Merry
 Marcia Messer
 Kelly Mezger
 Kim Miles
 Linda Millar
 Ryan Miller
 Shaun Millett
 Brad Milner
 Graham Minchin

Adrian Miola
 Maxine Miolini
 Mitchell Miolini
 India Miolini
 Elena Monaco
 Ingrid Moolman
 Greg & Dixie Moore
 Liz Mortimer
 Paul Morton
 Mitchell Mott
 Trish & Sandy Moyle
 Paul Mulder
 Gracen Murphy
 Karla Murphy
 Kate Murphy
 Sandra Murphy
 Ken & Rosslyn Myers
 Ahmi Narkle
 Robyn Nastas
 Vaishnavi Nathan
 Steve Naylor
 Helena Nel
 Cally Nelson
 Violet Newcombe
 Christina Newman
 Juliana Newman
 Estelle & Roy Newport
 Shaun Ngere
 Anthony Nguyen
 Lauren Nicholson
 Zac Niedrich
 Kendall Nikoleaff
 Sofia Nobensi
 Sonia Nolan
 Margaret Nowak
 Jacqueline Nunnerely
 Kate O'Brien
 Nicole O'Connor & Ped Ristic
 Jason O'Donnell
 Katie O'Donnell
 Shani O'Donnell
 Steve O'Neill
 Jane O'Reilly
 Michael Oakland
 Connor Ockwell
 Ylva Olsen
 Lizbeth Ong
 Alkim Ozaygen

Belinda Page
 Lorraine Palmer
 Jayshraj Paneer Selvam
 Louella Paramor
 Sudip Pariyar
 Anne Park
 Andy Parr
 Leeanne Parsons
 Linda Parsons
 Brooke Paterson
 Emma Paterson
 Natalie Paton
 Paula Patorniti
 T Paul
 Geoffrey Paull
 James Payne
 Peter & Suzanna Payze
 Glenn Pearson
 Steven Pearson
 Milka Pearson
 Ben & Tyler Pearson
 Jehan Peddar
 Frank Pellizzari
 Melissa Penny
 Jack Pepper
 Heather Percy
 Hana & Richard Peres
 John Perrella
 Claire Perrozzi
 Linda Perry
 Sharon Pestana
 Stuart Pestana

Sheedy Pete
 Shelley Petruzio
 John Dewar Phillips
 Matthew Phillips
 Rob Phillips
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 Don Pinto
 Peter & Nathalie Pires
 Vladimir Piscetek
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 Alison Potter
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 Maureen & Mel Rhoden
 Joseph Richardson
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 Chandra Roebuck
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 Budhwani & Ranya Roofi
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 Mirella & Krys Sadkowsky
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 Ganesh Saminathan
 Andrea Sampson
 Brooke Sanderson
 Ashley Schoof
 Nikki Schultz
 Stephanie Schumer
 Natalie Scibilia
 Paula Scott
 Steve Scudamore AM & Anne Last
 Amanda Scully
 Jackie Scurlock
 Paul Serukai
 Tarni Shalders
 Disa Shallue
 Simone & Michael Sharp
 Bill Shaw
 Graeme & Lillian Sheard
 Angela Sheedy
 Vicki Sheedy
 Ben Siford
 Michelle Silver
 Michael Simojoki
 Jodie Sims
 Kanwarbir Singj
 Kyle Slack
 Marjorie Sloan
 Danial & Emma Smart
 N Smith-Birch
 Anette & John Smith
 Brad Smith
 Cassidy Smith
 Cathal Smith
 Dan Smith



Diane Smith
 Grant Smith
 Nathan & Kim Smith
 Sharon Smith
 Adam Sofoulis
 Kevin Sok
 Janine Spaeni
 Justina Sparks
 Karen Sparling
 Rachel Speirs
 Stephen Spiteri
 Antony & Emma Spradbery
 Sue & Ross Stanfield
 Fiona Stanley AC
 Tanya Staude
 Ashton Steele
 Shayla Stefanetti
 Marika Stefaniw
 Ciara Stephenson
 Stephen Stick & Deborah
 Andrews
 Margy Still

Kat Stillitano
 Jennifer Stokes & Robert
 Wales
 Frances Strahan
 Terri Strong
 Lavanya Subramaniam
 Claudia Sullivan
 Daniel Sultana
 Natalie Sumich
 Joann Swailes
 Caitlin Sweeney
 Karen Swift
 Andrew Symons
 Joseph Takacs
 Robyn Tamke
 Jan & Dave Tarplett
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 Carly Terzanidis
 Angela Testa
 Peter Thackray

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 Sam Thomas
 Georgie Thomas
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 Jacqui Thomson
 Lyn Thomson
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 Adelina Uniewicz
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 Maeve van Drunick
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 Jessica Vassallo
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 Caleb Verbruggen
 Vincenzo & Jenny Vesnaver
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 Rena Vithiatharan
 Brandi Wahl
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 Lucy Weber
 Kay Webse
 Michael Webster
 William Webster
 Tala Weiss
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 Alwyn William Werrell
 Karen Whitely
 Nicole Wickens
 Bonnieville Williams
 Luke Williams
 Jo Willox
 Geordie Wilson
 Sarah Wilson
 Decima Wilson

Lisa Wolfe
 Margaret Wood
 Margaret & Brendan Wood
 Clare Wood
 Noel Wood
 Samantha Wood
 Gillian Woods
 Joanne & Anthony Woods
 Alison Woodward
 Alix Woolard
 Adrian & Riana Workman
 Phil Worrall
 Max Wung
 Korin Wyatt
 Shane Wylie
 Zvi Yom-Tov
 Shaun Young
 Steve Zera
 Linda Zhang
 Dennis & Emily Zuvela
 Anonymous (241)

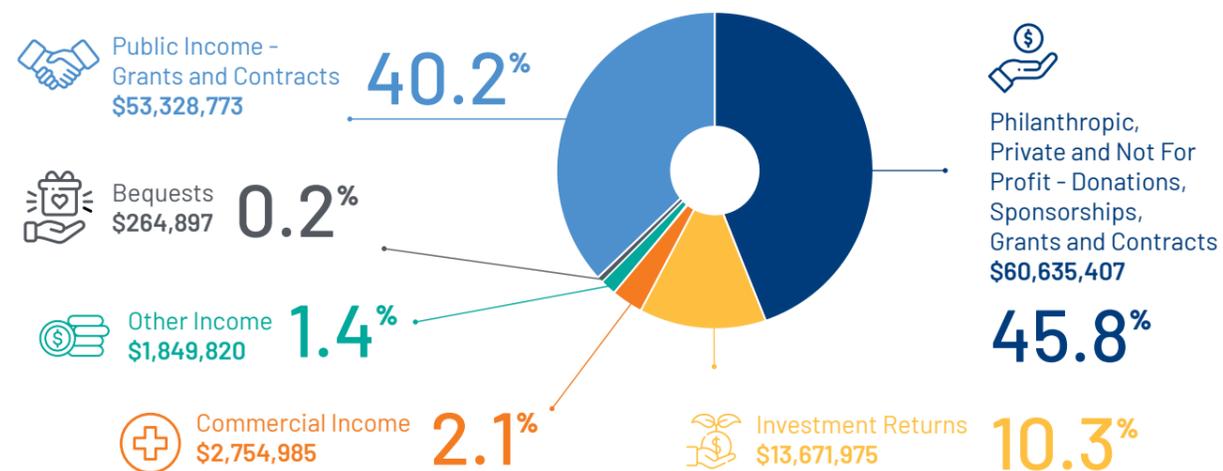


Identical twins Henry and Archie Cooper were hospitalised early in their lives with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)



OUR FINANCES

TOTAL INCOME \$132,505,857

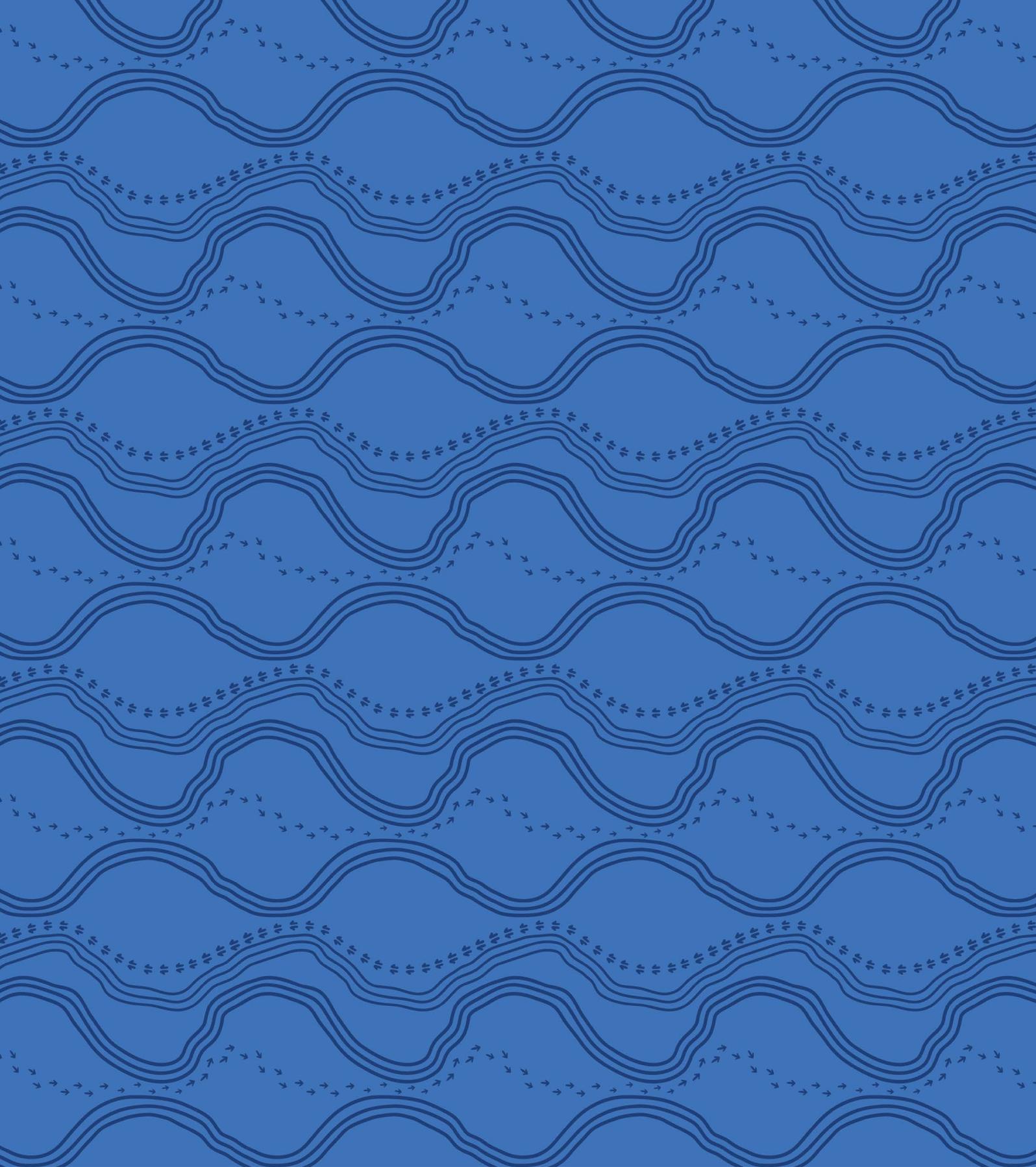


TOTAL EXPENSES \$121,642,698





Pre-term baby Finn Ross is part of a study led by The Kids investigating whether an inexpensive set of eye masks and ear plugs could hold the key to better outcomes for babies born too soon.



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