

Relationships.
AUSTRALIA • QLD

Annual Impact Report

2025



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Acknowledgement of Country

Relationships Australia Queensland acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, and economic connection to the Land and Seas.

The contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has shaped our knowledge of the Country and our identity. All Australians benefit from their generosity in sharing the Country and their culture. We maintain their right to utilise culture as a protective factor that supports families and embrace their right to contribute to service solutions.

Diversity & Inclusion

We celebrate diversity and value inclusion towards a society where all people experience safety and belonging. We acknowledge the complex and varying needs of people from diverse communities and commit to an organisation that is responsive and culturally appropriate.

We will deliver services that are accessible and welcoming to people from diverse communities regardless of their age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, race, culture, disability, religious belief, faith, linguistic background, or location.

Chair's Foreword

On behalf of the Relationships Australia Queensland Board, I am pleased to present our 2024–2025 Annual Impact Report.

This report reflects not only the reach of RAQ's services, supporting more than 60,000 people across Queensland this year, but the strength, integrity, and capability of the business behind that impact. In a year marked by sustained demand and growing complexity in community need, RAQ has continued to deliver safe, trusted, and evidence-informed services that support relationship wellbeing as a cornerstone of health, safety, and social connection.

At the heart of this work are the people and families who seek support during times of stress, crisis, and change. Across our services, clients report increased safety within their homes, stronger communication and problem-solving skills, improved mental health and wellbeing, and greater confidence to navigate parenting, separation, financial strain, and recovery from gambling harm. For many, early support prevents escalation into more acute systems of intervention. For others, it provides stability and hope at a critical point in their lives. This is the tangible impact of RAQ's work in communities across Queensland.

From a governance perspective, the Board is particularly proud of the business's deliberate investment in its foundations. Throughout the year, RAQ strengthened its workforce capability, clinical governance, quality and safeguarding systems, and digital infrastructure to ensure services are not only responsive today, but sustainable and accountable into the future. These investments enable staff to deliver the right support, at the right time, in the right way, while ensuring public trust, strong risk oversight, and responsible stewardship of resources.

The outcomes highlighted in this report, spanning family functioning, mental health and wellbeing, safety, community connection, and recovery from gambling harm, are underpinned by this strong business base. They demonstrate an approach that goes beyond activity and output, toward meaningful, measurable impact that endures beyond the point of service contact.

The Board also recognises RAQ's vital leadership role in advocating for relationship wellbeing across systems, policy environments, and communities. By elevating lived experience and amplifying the voices of those most affected by relationship stress, violence, isolation, and harm, RAQ continues to influence broader conversations about prevention, early intervention, and the social determinants of health.



I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Directors, the Chief Executive Officer Natasha Rae, Executive Leadership Team, and all staff and practitioners for their professionalism, care, and commitment. I also acknowledge our partners and funders, whose collaboration enables this essential work.

Together, we are strengthening the foundations for safer, healthier, and more connected communities across Queensland.

Bill Owens
Chair of the Board

CEO Foreword

At Relationships Australia Queensland, people and their relationships are truly at the heart of everything we do. Each day, we witness firsthand how positive human connections—whether with family, friends, or within our broader communities—play a vital role in our physical and emotional wellbeing. These connections are not just important; they are the foundation of safe, respectful, and thriving communities. Hope is fundamental to our work. We believe in the strengths and capacity for our clients to create meaningful change. The stories and outcomes shared in this report are not just numbers—they represent real people, real journeys, and real transformations across Australia.

A strong, safe organisational is needed to ensure our people are properly equipped and supported to meet clients' needs. Throughout this year, we made deliberate investments in our people, systems, governance, and data to ensure our services remain safe, high-quality, and responsive to evolving community need. We strengthened workforce wellbeing and capability, enhanced clinical supervision and practice oversight, and embedded robust quality, risk, and safeguarding systems that protect clients and support ethical, evidence-informed decision-making.

We listen carefully to the voices of our staff, guided by their insights and deep understanding our clients needs. We place our clients at the heart of all our decisions, ensuring we listen carefully and elevate their voices within our services. Our commitment is reflected in the way we translate that feedback into practical improvements. From refurbished service environments and reduced call wait times, to clearer clinical frameworks, stronger documentation, and more consistent practice, these changes directly improve the client experience and support better outcomes.

We also continued to build our digital and data maturity, transforming systems that were once barriers into enablers of service excellence. Improved reporting, stabilised platforms, and secure, insight-driven technology now support better planning, faster responses, and more effective use of resources, freeing our people to focus on what matters most: client care.

Our strategic priorities continue to guide this work. Through targeted and inclusive support, we respond to the diverse realities of people's lives. By investing in scalable and sustainable service delivery, we build impact that lasts beyond individual programs.

And through relentless advocacy for relationship wellbeing, we champion the critical role relationships play in health, safety, and community participation—particularly for those who are most vulnerable.

Across our services, clients reported stronger relationships, improved wellbeing, increased safety, and deeper connection to family, culture, and community. For children, families, seniors, and those affected by gambling harm, family violence, or emotional distress, these outcomes represent real and meaningful change.

None of this would be possible without the dedication, skill, and compassion of our staff and practitioners. I also thank our partners, funders, and community stakeholders who share our commitment to strengthening relationships across Queensland.

As you read this report, I invite you to look beyond the numbers to the stories they represent—each one reflecting a person or family supported to move toward safer, healthier, and more connected lives.

Natasha Rae
Chief Executive Officer



Who we are

The relationships we have with ourselves and each other have the power to influence our physical and mental health. Positive relationships keep us healthy throughout our lives, and through hard times, our connections protect and heal us.

At Relationships Australia Queensland (RAQ), we support people at some of the most important and challenging moments of their lives, helping individuals, partners, and families build and sustain healthy relationships by providing the knowledge and skills they need to feel safe and connected. We are Queensland's leading support for relationship wellbeing. Our qualified practitioners, educators, and team members are guided by research, understanding, and compassion, and we are committed to constantly expanding our knowledge.

There is always hope. We promise that together we'll...

Find a way



Our Identity

We exist to strengthen relationships, because when relationships are positive, people are safer, children thrive, and communities are more connected.

Our identity is defined by:

- **People-centred practice**, supporting individuals, partners and families with care, dignity, and confidentiality
- **Evidence-informed services**, drawing on research, evaluation, and practitioner expertise
- **Cultural safety and inclusion**, working alongside First Nations and multicultural communities and offering access to First Nations practitioners to support culturally safe care
- **Collaboration and advocacy**, contributing to broader system change

We recognise that families and relationships look different for everyone. Our role is not to prescribe one way of living, but to support people to find what safety, connection, and wellbeing mean for them.

Our Footprint - QLD & Beyond

We have a strong statewide footprint across Queensland, delivering services in metropolitan, regional, and remote communities through physical centres, outreach, and digital platforms.

Each year, we support tens of thousands of Queenslanders through counselling, family support, violence prevention, mental health, gambling harm, and community connection services.

Alongside our Queensland delivery, we also have national reach. Through digital services, helplines, research initiatives, and our participation in the Relationships Australia Federation, we contribute to national service delivery, policy discussions, and sector leadership, sharing insights from Queensland and learning from practice across Australia.

This combination of local presence and national connection allows us to remain responsive to community needs while contributing to broader learning and impact.

Why Our Footprint Matters

Our reach enables us to:

- support people early by providing preventative support, reducing the risk of escalation
- provide continuity of care across life stages
- respond to local context while maintaining consistent standards
- identify emerging challenges across communities
- advocate for change informed by real experiences

Our footprint is more than geographic, it reflects the trust placed in us by individuals, families, and communities, and our ongoing responsibility to deliver support that is relevant, accessible, and meaningful.

Our values, Purpose & Promise



Hope

We believe in our clients and their capacity for change. Together, we will find a way through difficult times.



Connection

We know that connected communities are safer communities and that healthy relationships - with ourselves and each other - lead to positive outcomes for all.



Inclusion

We embrace diversity, listen carefully, and treat everyone with respect, kindness, and dignity.



Courage

We are willing to make difficult decisions that lead to positive change. We speak up on the issues that matter.

Our Purpose

We're here to help people build and sustain healthy relationships by providing the knowledge and skills they need to feel safe and connected.

We'll always advocate for better relationship wellbeing because we know the health of our relationships determines the health of our communities.

Our Promise

We promise hope even during the most challenging times.

We promise that together, we'll ...

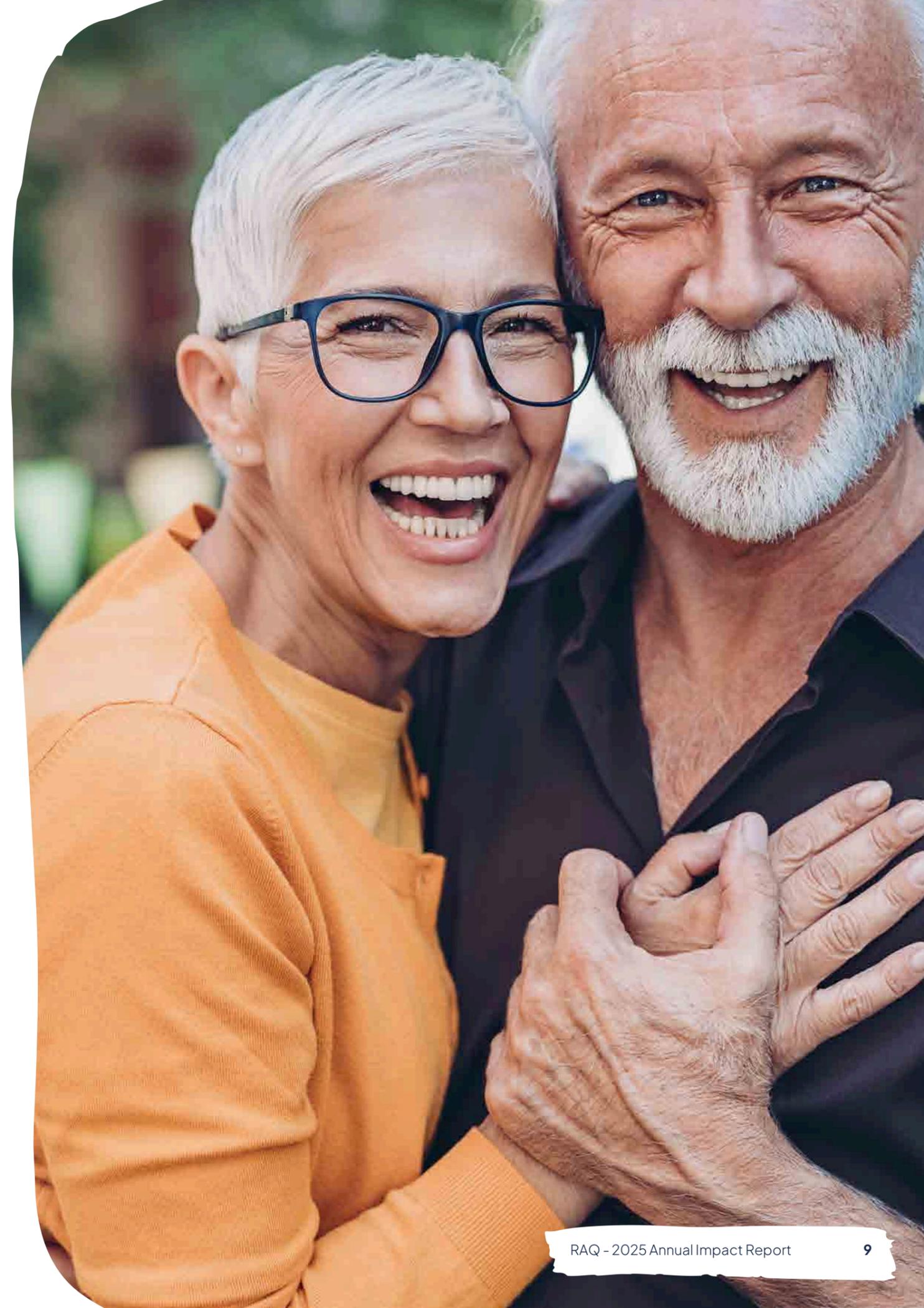
Find a way



“Our values of hope, connection, inclusion, and courage are more than principles – they are the way we walk alongside every person who comes to RAQ.”

Our purpose reminds us that strong relationships are the foundation of thriving communities, and our promise reflects our deepest commitment: no matter how challenging the journey, together, we'll find a way.

Bill Owens
Chair



Our Strategic Direction

Our **RAQ Strategic Direction 2025–2028** is structured around three **priorities** that work together to achieve our **purpose** and **promise**. These priorities reflect the most meaningful changes people experience when relationships are supported.

Each of the three priorities includes:

- A strategic outcome that explains what success looks like for each priority; and
- Three strategic approaches that guide decision-making and service design.

Together, these strategic outcomes and approaches ensure our work remains focused on what matters most to clients, guiding consistent, evidence-informed decisions across the organisation and translating our purpose and promise into meaningful, measurable impact for individuals, families, and communities.

Our Purpose and Promise

Priority 1

Provide targeted, inclusive support for relationship wellbeing.

- 1.1 Focus our efforts where we can make the biggest difference
- 1.2 Tailor our services to meet clients' needs and create lasting change
- 1.3 Make it easy for clients to find the right help at the right time

Priority 2

Make long-term, meaningful impact.

- 2.1 Deliver sustainable services
- 2.2 Enable excellence in service delivery
- 2.3 Deliver systemic change and meaningful outcomes

Priority 3

Relentlessly advocate for relationship wellbeing.

- 3.1 Centre the voices of staff and clients
- 3.2 Champion relationships by relentlessly advocating for positive social change
- 3.3 Deliver social impact through connected communities

Our Values



Our Impact

To translate our **priorities** into the real-world impact experienced by clients, we have organised this report around three **impact domains**.

1.

Safer, Stronger Relationships

2.

Children Thriving in Safe, Supported Families

3.

Belonging and Connection

These domains represent the outcomes that matter most to the people, families, and communities we support. They provide a lens through which we measure the effectiveness of our priorities and approaches, showing how our organisational strategies translate into meaningful, measurable change for those we serve.

Throughout this report, the stories, data, and outcomes presented under each domain demonstrate how our priorities come to life in practice.

Impact is only possible when strong governance meets strong purpose. RAQ continues to deliver meaningful outcomes for Queensland communities through careful stewardship, transparency, and sustainable investment in what works.

Garnett Hollier
Chair of Finance & Audit Committee

Stronger relationships help build stronger communities. RAQ's work is especially vital in regional Queensland, where connection, safety, and access to the right support can shape the wellbeing and resilience of whole communities.

Tania Hobson
Chair of Client Services Committee



Our Impact Reach

135k+

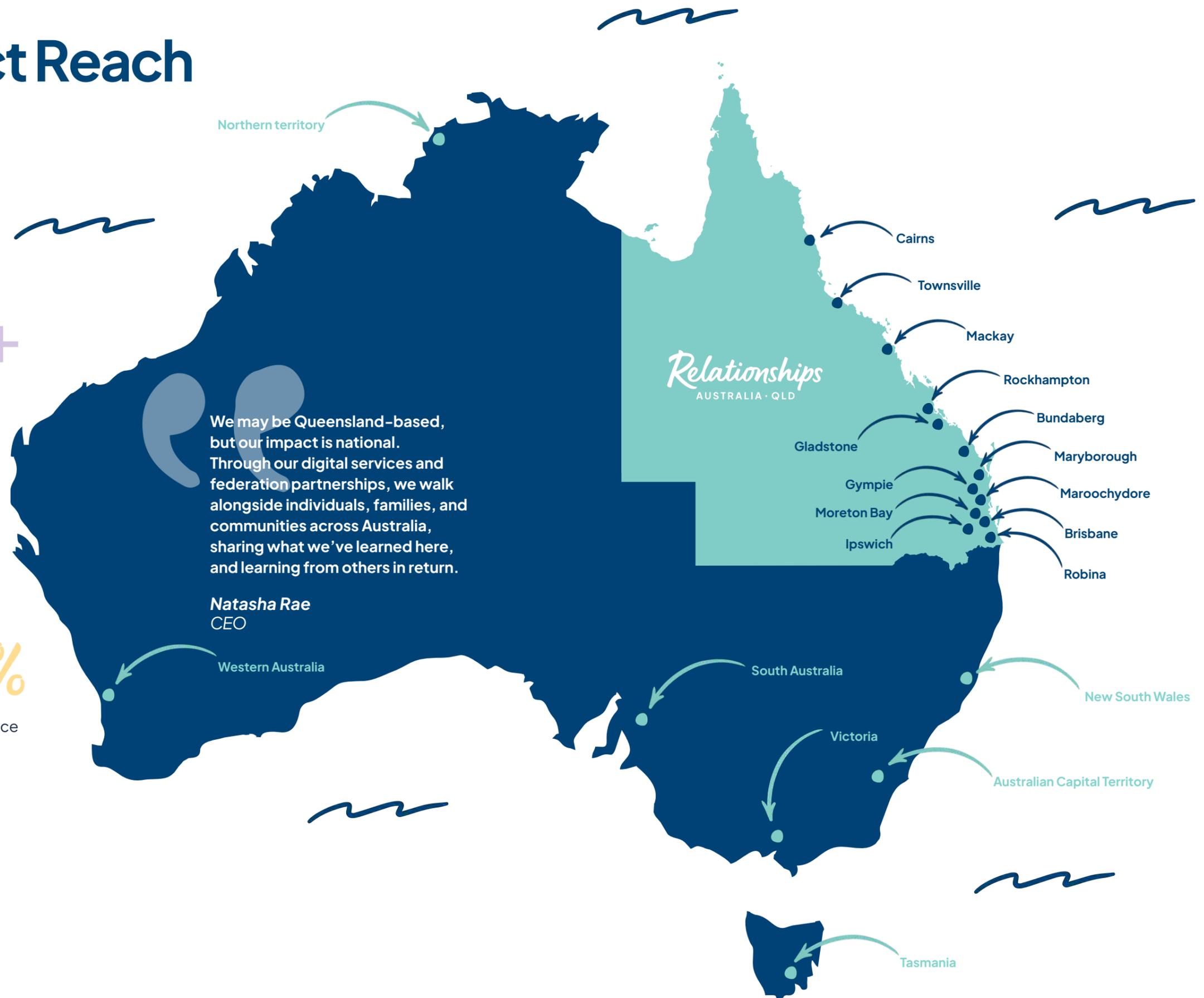
calls for help answered for clients across QLD & Australia

60k+

people helped across QLD

95.6%

of clients had a positive experience with our services



Our Impact at a Glance

In 2024–25, Relationships Australia Queensland supported thousands of people to feel safer, more connected, and more hopeful. Guided by our belief in people’s capacity for change, these outcomes reflect the real-world impact of our work in strengthening relationships, wellbeing, and community connection across Queensland.

47% of our clients experienced **improved family functioning** which includes feeling closer to each other and having better skills to solve problems, support their children and manage life stressors.

96% of our clients told us that, by the time they left our service, their **personal and family safety risks had been addressed** and **action taken to improve safety** so that personal and family safety was not a major concern.

95% of our clients told us that, by the time they left our service, their family functioning was more **open and honest**, with **healthier boundaries** and **new strategies** to navigate family relationships and parenting challenges.

37% of parents and children said **child wellbeing had improved**. Parents moved from saying they were struggling with parenting to **trying out new ways of responding** to parenting challenges and supporting their children. **Children were happier and healthier**.

42% clients experienced an improvement in their **mental health and wellbeing**, which includes feeling more hopeful, positive and able to cope with hard times.

94% of our clients told us that, by the time they left our service, they could **recognise what they could do to support their children**, and where needed, children were receiving the outside support that they needed to help them with their overall wellbeing.

93% of our clients told us that, by the time they left our service, were generally **using effective self-care strategies and coping with strong emotions**, often **making good choices** and frequently **feeling good mentally and physically**.

35% of parents and children said **community participation had improved**. People moved from saying they were feeling lonely and disconnected to **finding helpful and proactive ways to find and make connections** with friends, neighbours and community.

34% of clients experienced a **significant improvement in personal and family safety**. Families who came to us with domestic and family violence and issues with addictions reported our support helped them, their children and family be safer.

95% of our clients told us that, by the time they left our service, reported **feeling connected to people in their local and cultural community**, and knew how they could **repair and rebuild relationships** important to them.

Domain 1

Safer, Stronger Relationships

This domain reflects how people build positive relationships – with themselves and others.

It includes work that helps individuals, couples, and families, no matter what they look like to:

- communicate more effectively
- reduce conflict and harm
- rebuild trust after stress, separation, or crisis
- create safer and more stable relationships

Across our services, we are helping people build safer, healthier, and more supportive relationships with themselves and with those around them. Our services support clients to move from high conflict and distress to healthier family functioning, stronger communication, and a greater sense of safety. Clients strengthen their mental and emotional wellbeing, increase their resilience and hope for the future, and overcome relationship breakdowns linked to gambling harms. Through safety plans and targeted support, clients are developing the confidence, strategies, and stability they need to foster positive, caring relationships in their daily lives.

What change looks like:

People feel heard, relationships are strengthened, and families experience greater stability and safety.

Impact at a Glance

2,300

families supported through our **Children's Contact Services**

3,292

changeovers facilitated through our **Children's Contact Services**

2,671

counselling sessions provided under our **Family Law Counselling Program**

117

men, women, and children and youth participated in our **Thriving Kinnections Program**

11,720

calls made to our **Gambling Help lines**

35,974

calls made to our **Family & Relationship Advice Line**

1,631

mediation sessions provided through our **Dispute Resolution Programs**

5,143

calls made to our **Telephone Dispute Resolution Service**

765

calls made to our **Elder Abuse Prevention and Support Service**

Key Programs & Services We Deliver

- Children's Contact Services
- Stopping Family Violence Program
- Thriving Kinnections – Men & Women
- Relationship Counselling & Education
- Family Law Counselling
- Family & Relationship Advice Line
- Gambling Helpline and Help Services
- Redress Support Service
- Family Support Service
- Intensive Family Support
- Family Relationship Centres
- Telephone Dispute Resolution Service
- Family Dispute Resolution

Supporting Courses & Workshops

- Stepfamily Realities
- Setting Health Boundaries
- Queerrelationships
- Communication in Relationships
- Building Better Relationships
- Women's B.E.S.T

Stories of Impact

Meet Tanny & Paul

Tanny and Paul, both 36, came to our **Relationship Counselling and Education program** seeking support as they navigated the complexities of creating a blended family. With children aged between four and thirteen from previous relationships, they found themselves struggling with how to parent one another's children, manage differing expectations, and build a sense of unity within their new household. Recognising the importance of creating a safe and stable environment for all of their children, they reached out to RAQ for guidance.

Through counselling sessions, Tanny and Paul explored positive discipline techniques, learning practical strategies for addressing challenging behaviour in consistent and developmentally appropriate ways. They worked on establishing healthy boundaries, both as individuals and as co-parents, which helped reduce conflict and bring more predictability into daily routines. Together, they also developed new family traditions that honoured each child's experiences while fostering a shared sense of belonging.

As ongoing change continued to shape their blended family, Tanny and Paul gained skills to manage transitions with empathy, communication, and teamwork.

Looking ahead, Tanny and Paul are committed to building on their progress, continuing to strengthen their partnership, and nurturing a home where each child feels safe, valued, and connected as part of their growing blended family.

“We came in feeling overwhelmed and unsure of how to make our family work. Now we feel like we have the tools to communicate better and support all of our kids in a way that feels fair and consistent.”



Meet Tom

Tom, 40, joined our **Stopping Family Violence** program in Brisbane. Following the breakdown of his relationship, contact with his eight-year-old daughter had shifted from regular unsupervised time to no contact. Amid court proceedings and strained family relationships, Tom recognised that difficulties managing his emotions and communicating safely were affecting those he cared about most. Motivated by a desire to be a better father and rebuild trust, he committed to making meaningful change.

“I’ve learned how important it is to stop, think, and understand how my actions affect the people I care about most.”

Through our program, Tom developed a deeper understanding of his emotions, his communication patterns, and the impact of his behaviour. He actively participated in sessions, sought additional learning, and built his knowledge of child development and child-focused communication. As a result of these changes, Tom demonstrated increased insight, empathy, and accountability.

These positive steps supported the re-establishment of contact with his daughter through supervised visits with our Children’s Contact Service, marking an important milestone in rebuilding their relationship. Tom reports that his connection with his daughter continues to strengthen; Tom is focused on continuing to build safe, respectful relationships, maintaining the positive changes he has made, and working towards a future where he can play a consistent and healthy role in his daughter’s life.

Meet Christian

Christian, 60, voluntarily self-referred to our **Stopping Family Violence program** in Cairns after breaching an active Domestic Violence Order. Following the breakdown of his marriage and career, Christian had limited contact with his children, contributing to ongoing anxiety and low mood. At intake, Christian presented as cooperative and motivated to change, acknowledging that emotional overwhelm, poor regulation, and controlling behaviours had contributed to harm in his relationships.

Through individual and group sessions, Christian explored how stress, feeling dismissed, and unmanaged emotions escalated conflict and led to aggressive and coercive behaviour. With targeted psychoeducation, he developed insight into patterns of control, including intimidation and stonewalling, and began to understand the impact these behaviours had on his family’s sense of safety. Christian worked on improving emotional regulation and learning healthier communication strategies that reduce conflict rather than intensify it.

Feedback provided through our victim’s advocate service indicates that Christian has begun to make meaningful behavioural changes, supporting greater stability and safety within permitted contact arrangements.

Looking ahead, Christian is committed to continuing his mental health treatment, strengthening respectful communication, and maintaining accountability for his behaviour. He hopes that by sustaining these changes, he can rebuild trust over time, reduce the risk of future harm, and create safer and more stable relationships with his children, grounded in respect and responsibility.

“I’m learning to slow down, regulate my emotions, and communicate without trying to control the situation.”

Meet Stephen

Stephen, 42, voluntarily enrolled in our **Stopping Family Violence Program** in Cairns following a period of incarceration related to domestic and family violence. At intake, he had not seen his 12-year-old daughter for several months and was living with his mother while navigating challenges securing stable housing. Stephen presented as motivated to change, both internally, by a desire to “be better” for himself and his family, and externally, by the hope that completing the program would allow contact with his daughter.

Through group sessions, Stephen has reflected on his past behaviour and explored strategies to manage emotions without aggression. He has examined the links between thoughts, feelings, and actions, and begun to recognise the impact of his behaviour on others. Exposure to concepts such as “man box” beliefs has helped him understand that openness and emotional expression are important for personal safety and healthy relationships.

Guided discussions and facilitator modelling have supported Stephen to challenge minimisation of abuse and build new ways to respond to frustration and conflict.

“The program has helped me understand my behaviour, manage my emotions, and create safer, stronger relationships with my family.”

Looking ahead, Stephen is committed to continuing his progress, reconnecting with his daughter, and maintaining safer and more stable relationships. His journey demonstrates the positive impact of our tailored programs in supporting change, accountability, and hope for the future.

Meet Sam

Sam, 45, engaged with our **Rainbow Services** following the breakdown of a 15-year relationship. Recently emigrated to Australia and from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, Sam had long felt unable to openly share his gay identity with his family. This history of suppression, combined with the loss of his relationship, left him experiencing grief, low mood, and diminished confidence in forming new connections. Seeking support, Sam came to us to better understand himself and to find safer, healthier ways to relate to the people around him.

Narrative and expressive therapies helped him reframe his identity and address internalised queer shame, while creating space to consider how and when to invite family into his personal narrative. Sam described this as particularly meaningful, noting that having room to safely explore these conversations reduced fear and conflict. As his self understanding grew, Sam recognised that he was not ready to enter a new long-term relationship and that focusing on his own wellbeing was essential to future relationship health.

“My counsellor is amazing and the sessions with her are always very helpful”

Through counselling grounded in person centred practice, systemic and family of origin work, attachment theory, and minority stress theory, Sam was supported to explore the stories he held about himself and his relationships.

Over time, our service supported Sam to rebuild trust and create stronger, safer relationships, most notably with his father. Open communication about his gay identity led to a deeper and more authentic connection, strengthening their relationship and reducing long-held tension. After three months of independently applying the skills and insights gained through counselling, Sam reconnected with his practitioner to share his growth and to explore a new direction for ongoing support. Looking ahead, Sam feels more confident in who he is, hopeful about the future, and equipped to build relationships that are respectful, stable, and true to himself.



Domain 2

Children Thriving in Safe, Supported Families

This domain recognises that children’s wellbeing is deeply shaped by the relationships around them.

It includes work that supports:

- parents and carers to manage conflict and communicate respectfully
- families to create predictable, secure environments
- children to feel safe, supported, and emotionally stable

Children thrive when the relationships that surround them are safe, stable, and nurturing. Through our work, we have supported families to strengthen communication, reduce conflict, and create safer home environments, allowing children to flourish. This year, our clients told us their children were no longer struggling with school, relationships, or behaviour, but were instead learning well, maintaining friendships, and managing challenges without external support. By helping parents address their own wellbeing, safety, and relational challenges, we are improving the environments in which children grow, learn, and thrive.

What change looks like:

Children are calmer, more confident, and better able to learn, play, and grow in safe family environments.

Impact at a Glance

1,616

supervised sessions delivered to children through our Children's Contact Services

81

parents participated in our Keeping Kids in Mind workshops

70

children participated in our Poppers, Pop Stars and Transilience workshops

Key Programs & Services We Deliver

- Children’s Contact Services
- Parenting Orders Program
- Supporting Children After Separation program
- Thriving Kinnections – Children & Youth
- Family Relationship Centres

Supporting Courses & Workshops

- Pop Stars
- Poppers
- Keeping Kids in Mind
- Focus on Kids
- Stepfamily Realities
- Transilience

Stories of Impact

Meet Chloe

Chloe, 14, attended our **Children’s Contact Service** after her parents separated and her mother moved interstate. Her mum wanted Chloe to move with her, but Chloe didn’t want to leave her friends and her school. Struggling to express her feelings, Chloe didn’t know how to communicate her wants and needs to her parents, which left her feeling frustrated and unheard.

Through our service, Chloe was supported to have her voice heard. She worked with a Family Support Worker to explore her feelings, identify what was important to her, and communicate these safely to both parents.

The service helped Chloe actively participate in decisions about contact arrangements, resources, and support needs, giving her a sense of control and reassurance during a stressful time.

With our support, Chloe is now optimistic about the future, feeling confident that she can maintain strong, positive relationships with both her parents.

“I’ve told more to her than anyone else who has asked about this whole thing. It’s been good... I felt like you listened.”

Meet Penelope and Atticus

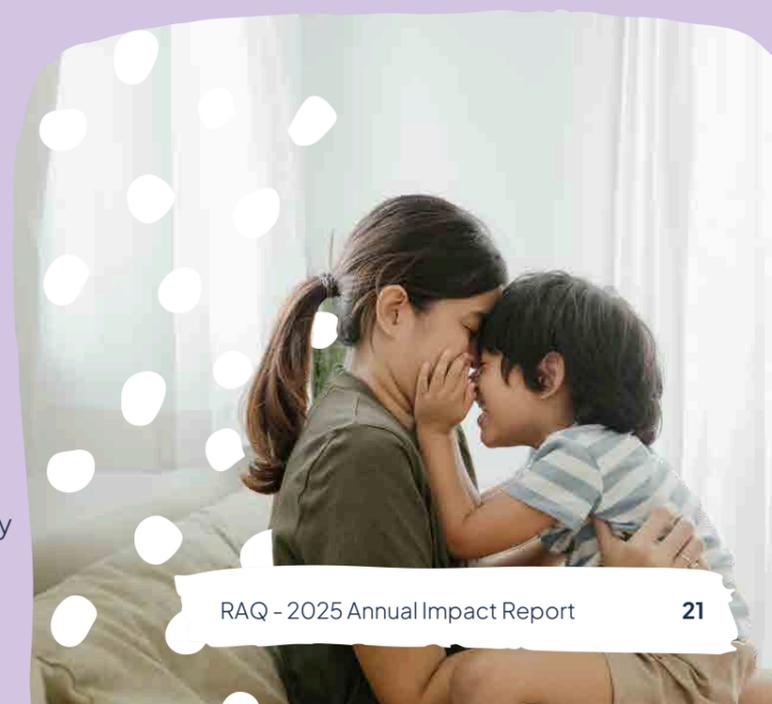
Penelope, mother of two-year-old Atticus, engaged with our **Parenting Orders Program** in January 2025 after fleeing a domestically violent relationship. At the time, Penelope and Atticus were residing at Flora House Shelter, having escaped threats to their safety from her ex-partner, Steve. Atticus’ development had been impacted by prolonged exposure to domestic violence, instability, and Penelope’s emotional distress. Recognising the need for support, Penelope joined our program to build a safe, nurturing environment and strengthen her parenting skills to better support Atticus.

By the conclusion of the program, Atticus was thriving in daycare, forming friendships, and achieving age-appropriate developmental milestones. Penelope is now exploring new relationships, rebuilding trust, and has been referred to our Thriving Kinnections Women’s Program to continue her journey of healing and wellbeing.

“I feel like I can finally give Atticus the safe, happy home he deserves.”

Through group sessions alongside other survivors, Penelope actively engaged with content on grief and loss, attachment, emotional regulation, and communication. She focused on implementing calm, consistent parenting strategies while prioritising her own self-care and joy.

Over the course of the program, Penelope regained confidence, established stable housing, and created consistent routines for Atticus. She applied tools and visual supports in the home, and with assistance from our practitioner, implemented appropriate safety measures. Individual sessions also supported her emotional regulation during a challenging period when she was managing legal matters initiated by her ex-partner, which were ultimately resolved in her favour.



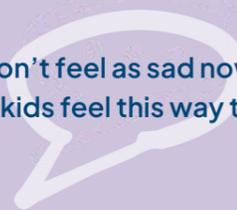
Meet Lucas

Lucas, 8, and his older brother Henry, 10, became involved with our **Parenting Order Program** following their parents' separation. Over time, Lucas's parents noticed he was increasingly flat and low in mood, and his teacher reported he was disengaging at school and struggling to concentrate. Concerned, his father took him to the GP, who suggested Lucas may still be experiencing unresolved feelings about the separation. With support from both parents, Lucas re-engaged with a counsellor he had previously worked with through us.

Through individual counselling, Lucas was able to safely explore feelings of sadness, confusion, and missing both parents when apart from them. He also participated in our Poppers and Popstars group program, where he connected with other children from separated families.

Knowing that others had similar experiences helped Lucas feel reassured and normalised his emotions.

With guidance from the counsellor, both parents learned how to provide consistent reassurance and positive support across households. Over time, Lucas reported reduced feelings of sadness, improved emotional regulation, and greater engagement at school. He now feels calmer during transitions between homes and more capable of managing big feelings.



"I don't feel as sad now; other kids feel this way too."

Meet Liam and Noah

Liam, 8, and Noah, 5, became involved with us following their parents' separation. Their parents, Janie and Drew, were court-ordered to complete our **Parenting Order Program**, after the children had been exposed to ongoing verbal conflict. Janie reported that Liam had expressed feelings of self-blame and even told her he wanted to "die," prompting both parents to link him into counselling for support.

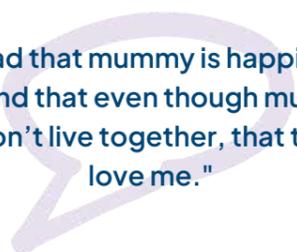
Communication between Janie and Drew had broken down, creating challenges in co-parenting and daily care arrangements, and both parents were seeking guidance to prioritise their children's wellbeing.

Through our program, Janie was supported individually to complete the course, with facilitators helping her navigate the material in English which was her second language.

She gained insight into normal grief responses following family breakdown and learned strategies to respond calmly and consistently to her children. Janie reported that she felt empowered as she began working and studying, while Liam and Noah engaged in counselling and began adjusting to their new family arrangements.

A particularly meaningful outcome was seeing Liam recognise that both parents still loved him.

As a result of the program, communication between Janie and Drew improved, and they are now able to coordinate care and decision-making in the children's best interests. Both parents report feeling more confident in supporting Liam and Noah, and they continue to work collaboratively through court-ordered mediation.



"I'm glad that mummy is happier and I understand that even though mummy and daddy don't live together, that they both love me."

Meet Alex

Alex, 27, joined our **Stopping Family Violence** program in Brisbane following the finalisation of his divorce as he had not had contact with his four-year-old daughter since January 2025. While attending the program was a condition of his parenting plan, Alex also recognised the importance of reflecting on his past behaviour so he could reduce harm and build safer relationships moving forward. At intake, discussions about abuse supported Alex to begin identifying behaviours he had previously minimised and to consider how conflict, stress, and separation had affected not only his former partner but also his daughter.

Through individual and group sessions, Alex explored how his thoughts, beliefs, and emotional responses influenced his behaviour. He developed greater awareness of how conflict escalation, intimidation, and poor communication can undermine a child's sense of safety and stability. By learning alternative ways to respond to anger, distress, grief, and loss, Alex began building skills in calm, respectful communication and conflict de-escalation. At his midpoint review, he demonstrated a high level of accountability, openly acknowledging the impact his behaviour had on his daughter and recognising that taking responsibility is a critical step in rebuilding trust and reducing future harm.

Looking ahead, Alex is focused on continuing to strengthen his communication skills, create safer and more stable relationships, and support his daughter's wellbeing as she grows. He hopes that by maintaining these changes, he can rebuild trust over time and be a calmer, more reliable presence in his daughter's life.



"I don't feel as sad now; other kids feel this way too."

Meet Billy

Billy, 10, was referred to our **Thriving Kinnections for Children and Youth** program after long-term exposure to violence and manipulation by his father, which affected his emotional regulation and contributed to conflict with his sibling. His counselling focused on reducing sibling violence, building emotional regulation skills, and learning safe, respectful ways to express love.

Through child-centred, strengths-based sessions, Billy developed practical tools to manage big emotions, including creating his own Healing Toolkit. A standout moment came during a family session called "What Love Looks Like," where he and his family explored safe ways to show love. Billy also helped create sibling play-safety agreements, which he and his brother have maintained, and engaged in reflective activities that clarified the person he wants to become: kind, considerate, respectful, and the best soccer player.

Billy now approaches life with confidence and hope. He has stopped fighting at school, strengthened his relationship with his brother, and understands that love does not involve fear or violence. His mum shared she feels proud and optimistic about his continued growth. Billy left RAQ smiling, carrying new skills, confidence, and a clear vision for his future.



"It was good and fun."

Domain 3

Belonging & Connection

This domain focuses on connection – to people, community, culture, and place.

It includes work that helps people:

- overcome loneliness and isolation
- reconnect with family and community
- build supportive and healthy relationships across generations and backgrounds

Belonging and connection are essential to wellbeing, and this year many clients experienced a renewed sense of community, safety, and social engagement. More than 500 clients moved from isolation to experiencing the level of connection they want with friends, neighbours, and cultural or faith communities. Seniors also saw meaningful improvements: 18% began trying new activities and meeting new people, while 15% gained the skills, supports, and adaptations they needed to feel safe in their homes and communities. By helping individuals rebuild trust, maintain boundaries, strengthen wellbeing, and participate in meaningful relationships, we are fostering deeper connection to people, culture, and place.

What change looks like:

People feel less alone and more included

Impact at a Glance

109

Chat & Connect session held across Maroochydore, Gympie and Nambour

57

Music Makers sessions held across Maroochydore and Maleny

27

Savvy Seniors session held on the Sunshine Coast

180

participants in our Transcendence support group

2,300

families supported through our Children's Contact Services

Key Programs & Services We Deliver

- Senior Social Connection Program
- Rainbow Services
- Children's Contact Services

Supporting Courses & Workshops

- Transcendence
- Chat & Connect
- Music Makers
- Savvy Seniors
- Women's B.E.S.T

Stories of Impact

Meet Ricky & Thomas

Ricky attends our Children's Contact Service to support safe changeovers for his four year old son, Thomas, following separation from Thomas' other parent, Jodee. With court orders in place, our service provided a neutral and child focused environment that allowed Thomas to spend quality time with both parents while they worked towards improved communication and independent changeovers. Both Ricky and Jodee shared a strong commitment to Thomas' wellbeing and want him to feel secure, supported, and free to enjoy his relationships with each parent.

Just before Christmas, Ricky was informed that Thomas was too unwell for a scheduled changeover, meaning he would miss out on planned holiday time with his extended family. The disappointment was significant for both father and son. In response, our team undertook a case consultation and worked flexibly with both parents to explore safe options that prioritised Thomas' needs.

A revised changeover date was agreed, allowing the service to remain child focused while responding compassionately to the family's circumstances.

On the rescheduled day, Thomas arrived well enough to attend. As he ran into his father's arms and held on tightly, the strength of their bond was clear. Our staff observed laughter, relief, and joy as father and son left together, ready to spend meaningful time reconnecting. Through responsive and thoughtful support, our Children's Contact Service helped ensure Thomas could continue to thrive within safe, supported family relationships.

"Knowing the service was willing to be flexible meant everything. It wasn't just about me, it meant my son could feel safe, happy, and supported to spend time with his dad."

Meet PJ

PJ accessed our Queerrelationships program, a five-week workshop designed to create a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQIA+ people, to feel heard, connect with others, and explore their lived experiences. They joined the program seeking belonging, validation, and the opportunity to share their journey with like-minded people in a supportive group setting.

"It has been incredibly valuable and there is nothing similar available within Brisbane. The acceptance, validation, and reflection have had such a positive impact on me that no other therapy or counselling has achieved."

Throughout the workshop, PJ engaged in sessions focused on understanding queerrelationships, their relationship with self, minority stress, and the dynamics of healthy and unhealthy queerrelationships. They also developed communication skills and explored how to set boundaries that support safety, respect, and authenticity. PJ found the acceptance, reflection, and shared learning within the group deeply meaningful, describing the program as unique within Brisbane and unlike any other counselling or therapy they had accessed.

As a result of participating in Queerrelationships, PJ feels more confident in who they are and their place in the world. They are focused on seeing themselves reflected in society and building strong, safe connections within their community where they can be fully themselves.

Meet Sue

Sue, 68, lives alone in Maroochydore. After retirement and changes in her family life, her days had become quieter and more isolated than she ever expected. With fewer opportunities to connect and a growing sense of loneliness, Sue found herself missing regular conversation and the feeling of belonging that comes from being part of a community. Although she was unsure about joining a group program, she decided to attend our **Chat & Connect** sessions delivered as part of our **Senior Social Connection Program** in the hope of finding some connection.

From her first session, Sue discovered a welcoming and inclusive environment where she felt comfortable being herself. Through shared activities, conversations, and laughter, she began forming new friendships and rebuilding her confidence to connect with others.

What started as a tentative step quickly became something she looked forward to, offering structure, purpose, and genuine human connection each week.

“You made it so much fun, and I didn’t want to miss any of it. Thank you for making the groups warm and inviting. I thought I would hate going to groups, they are now the highlight of my week.”

For Sue, the Senior Social Connection Program has transformed her week and strengthened her sense of belonging, reminding her that meaningful connection can be found at any stage of life.

Meet Olive

Olive, 71, from Maroochydore, was experiencing profound loneliness following the passing of her husband. When he was alive, they shared a love of music, often playing and listening together, and she deeply missed that connection. Olive longed for opportunities to engage with other musicians and rekindle the joy music had brought to her life.

Looking ahead, Olive is focused on continuing to engage with her musical community and nurturing the connections she has formed. She hopes to keep playing the violin regularly and to inspire others through her passion for music.

“Being part of Music Makers has brought the music back into my life and reminded me that connection and joy can still be found, even after loss.”

Through our **Music Makers program**, Olive was able to connect with a supportive community of fellow musicians. She began attending group sessions where she could play the violin, share her experiences, and collaborate creatively. These sessions helped her rebuild confidence, form meaningful friendships, and rediscover the sense of joy and purpose music had always brought her.



Partnerships

National Partnerships & Collective Impact

We are part of the Relationships Australia Federation, a nationally connected network working collaboratively to strengthen relationship wellbeing across Australia.

Through this federation, we contribute to and benefit from shared initiatives that extend beyond individual services. These include national research partnerships and community-level movements that support collective responses to complex social challenges such as relationship stress, loneliness, and family pressure.

Key federation initiatives include the Relationship Indicators Survey, which provides a shared evidence base on relationship wellbeing, and Neighbours Every Day, a national movement focused on strengthening belonging and reducing social isolation through everyday acts of connection.

These partnerships enable us to remain locally responsive to Queensland communities while contributing to national learning, shared practice, and system-level approaches to prevention and early intervention.

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Together, we'll

Find a way

National Spotlight: Neighbours Every Day

Growing Belonging, One Connection at a Time

Neighbours Every Day is a national social connection initiative led by the Relationships Australia Federation. The initiative focuses on strengthening belonging and reducing loneliness through everyday acts of connection - recognising that small interactions can have a powerful impact on wellbeing.

The campaign provides practical tools, resources, and ideas that support people, communities, and organisations to:

- create welcoming, inclusive spaces
- strengthen neighbourhood and community connections
- reduce isolation and loneliness
- build everyday opportunities for belonging

Why Neighbours Every Day Matters

Loneliness and social isolation are increasingly recognised as significant risks to mental health, wellbeing, and community resilience. Neighbours Every Day responds to this challenge with a prevention-focused, community-based approach that complements direct service delivery.

The initiative has received national and international recognition, including:

- endorsement within the National Suicide Prevention Strategy as a preventative approach to wellbeing
- recognition by the World Health Organization for its evidence-informed focus on social connection

Our connection to the movement

As part of the Relationships Australia Federation, we contribute to and align with Neighbours Every Day as a shared national platform for learning, evidence, and advocacy.

The initiative strongly aligns with our Belonging and Connection impact theme and reinforces the importance of community connection as a foundation for:

- individual wellbeing
- family stability
- safer, more inclusive communities

By connecting local experience in Queensland with national evidence and momentum, Neighbours Every Day strengthens our advocacy for prevention-focused, relationship-centred approaches to wellbeing.

Research & Evaluation

Evidence to Understand Relationships, Families, and Connection

Our approach to research and evaluation is informed by both local service data and national evidence developed through the Relationships Australia Federation.

The Relationship Indicators Survey provides population-level insight into how Australians are experiencing:

- relationship satisfaction and conflict
- emotional wellbeing and stress
- loneliness and social connection
- pressures on families, particularly those with children

These national insights help contextualise our local outcomes and reinforce the relevance of the organisation's three impact themes: Safer, Stronger Relationships; Children Thriving in Safe, Supported Families; and Belonging and Connection.

Together, these evidence sources strengthen our understanding of why people seek support and where prevention and early intervention can make the greatest difference.

By linking local outcomes with national research, we contribute to a shared evidence base that supports continuous improvement, learning, and impact reporting.

Advocacy & Policy

Contributing to System Change Through Evidence and Prevention

Through the Relationships Australia Federation, we contribute to advocacy and policy discussions that position relationship wellbeing, connection, and prevention as central to long-term social and mental health outcomes.

Federation research and evidence - including findings from the Relationship Indicators Survey and independent national reviews such as the Metcalf Review - have highlighted:

- rising loneliness and social isolation
- increasing pressures on families and relationships
- the importance of community-based, preventative approaches alongside crisis responses

This evidence has informed national policy conversations and contributed to the recognition of social connection as a protective factor for wellbeing. Initiatives such as Neighbours Every Day have been endorsed within the National Suicide Prevention Strategy and recognised by the World Health Organization for their evidence-informed approach to addressing loneliness and isolation.

By aligning with this national work, we help ensure that Queensland experiences inform broader policy discussions and that relationship wellbeing and connection are recognised as critical foundations for safety, mental health, and community resilience.

Acknowledgements

Relationships Australia Queensland gratefully acknowledges the support of the Australian Government and the Queensland Government. Their investment enables us to deliver vital services that strengthen relationships, support families, and build safer, more connected communities across the state. We recognise that the reach and impact of our work is made possible through this ongoing commitment to improving the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities.

We also extend our appreciation to the many partner organisations, community groups, and service providers who work alongside us. Their collaboration enhances the breadth and quality of our programs, ensuring that people across Queensland can access the support, safety, and connection they need to thrive.



Australian Government



Queensland Government

Together, we'll find a way.

We will always be there. RAQ is a constant and reliable presence when the community needs us, providing **hope** through challenge and change.

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