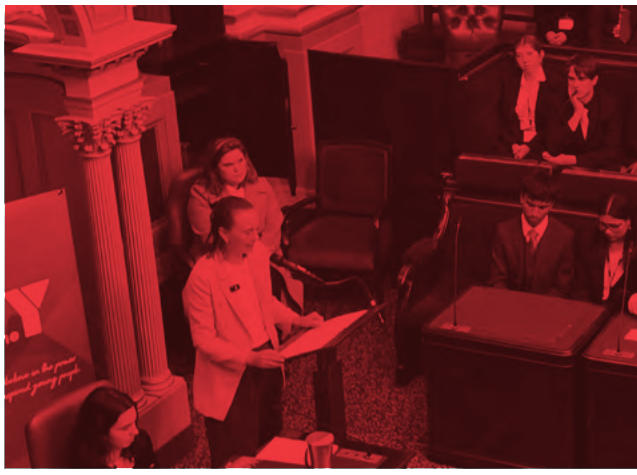

Community Impact Report | 2024-2025

the Y

Acknowledgment

The Y acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Y recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this continent and the islands of the Torres Strait.

In doing so, we acknowledge our shared history; recognise the right to self-determination; and the importance of connection to country.

Y Australia is committed to truth, treaty and justice and express this through our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Access the full RAP on our website.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

the Y

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Message from National President and CEO

June 2025 CLT Meeting, Northern Territory

The past 12 months have marked a year of forward momentum for the Y Movement in Australia. Together, we've made meaningful progress toward our global Vision 2030.

Our vision of a better world with, and for, young people is being realised through our four pillars of impact: Community Wellbeing, a Just World, a Sustainable Planet, and Meaningful Work. These pillars guide how Y programs, people and partnerships create social impact in over 680 communities - from Rosebud to Alice Springs, Perth to Mango Hill. Every community is enriched when there is a Y to serve and uplift.

The Y Australia Board has remained focused on how we can partner, amplify and showcase the work of Ys across every state and territory, while activating our people and programs alongside Member Associations to amplify our collective impact.

Our approach to Vision 2030 is guided by three Horizons. In Horizon One, we've launched key initiatives across youth engagement, brand, advocacy and safeguarding. Our Movement enablers – such as insurance, governance, IT platforms and finance - are maturing to provide a strong foundation for our shared work. These programs form an ecosystem designed to complement, not duplicate, the work of Member Associations across the country.

In Horizon One, we're proud to have reached three significant milestones:

1. Cohort 6.0 Global Change Agents launched

With Y Member Associations, Y Australia launched the most diverse cohort in the program's history - eight young leaders connecting across borders to design solutions for complex social and environmental challenges.

So far, they have honed skills in systems thinking, intergenerational leadership and storytelling for change while developing projects which range from youth-led safeguarding initiatives to creative approaches to healthy eating. Watch this space for their continued impact.

We thank every part of our Movement – our teams across the country, our customers, partners, and communities – for another remarkable year of service and impact.

Together, we continue to improve the lives of young Australians and enrich communities across the country.

Y HQ | Y Western Australia

2. A Significant Step Forward to Keep Children Safe

We continue to put the safety of children and young people at the centre of everything we do, strengthening our safeguarding approach including a 'sector first' accreditation and assurance program through QIP, not-for-profit experts in accreditation. The Y nationally is strongly engaged in advocacy to improve the safety of every Australian child.

Although we truly believe The Y is the safest place to be, we want a system where no matter where a child is cared for, there are strong and robust systems and processes to guard against abuse.

3. Evolving and Strengthening our 180-year-old Brand

This year, we began a national brand project to ensure the Y continues to connect meaningfully with diverse audiences. Through extensive consultation with staff, customers, partners and communities, we're preparing to elevate our message and the incredible impact happening every day at the Y.

In closing, we thank every part of our Movement – our teams across the country, our customers, partners, and communities – for another remarkable year of service and impact. Together, we continue to improve the lives of young Australians and enrich communities across the country.

We truly are better together.

Amelia Shaw
President, Y Australia

Alexandra Ash
CEO, Y Australia

Who we are

The Y in Australia is a vibrant, for-purpose movement that champions young people and serves the wider community, delivering cause-driven programs and valuable community services.

We create safe and inclusive places for young people, their families and communities to belong, be empowered and thrive.

The Y is part of the oldest and largest youth organisation in the world, the YMCA, which reaches 65 million people across 120 countries and has been standing with and for young people since 1844.

In Australia our 12 Associations have a combined turnover of $659,000,000. Profit we make, through services communities need, like early childhood education, out-of-hours-school care and recreation – allow us to invest in our for-purpose programs that inspire and empower Australian youth.

We invest in both programs such as Youth Parliament – our renowned civics education program, and research – ensuring we promote young people's views on important matters, which we then use to advocate for change to improve the lives of young Australians.

We work with a number of incredible partners, including Local, State and Federal governments and agencies to deliver fit-for-purpose community services to hundreds of thousands of Australians from Ballarat in regional Victoria to Bateman in Western Australia.

We are a trusted community partner and are grateful to our generous philanthropic partners that make initiatives like our Alternative School Suspension program possible for disadvantaged young people in NSW and our School Breakfast Program in Queensland, feeding over 40,000 school children every day.

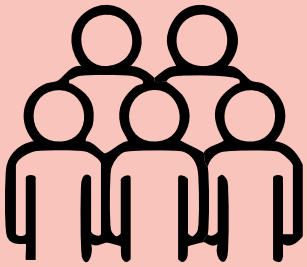
Whilst we act on behalf of young people, we also hire them and nurture them through employment and volunteering opportunities as part of our continued commitment to Meaningful Work for young people.

In 2024-25 we employed 11,719 staff and were extremely grateful to have the assistance of 1,359 volunteers, making a combined 13,078 people in our organisation, working to create a better future for young Australians and their communities.

349 of our volunteers were under the age of 30, and 5,436 of our staff are under the age of 30. At Y Australia, we continue to ensure the national board includes a director under the age of 30, as a step forward in further embedding the voices of young people throughout every level of our organisation.

The Y is part of the oldest and largest youth organisation in the world, the YMCA, which reaches 65 million people across 120 countries and has been standing with and for young people since 1844.

Y People | At a glance



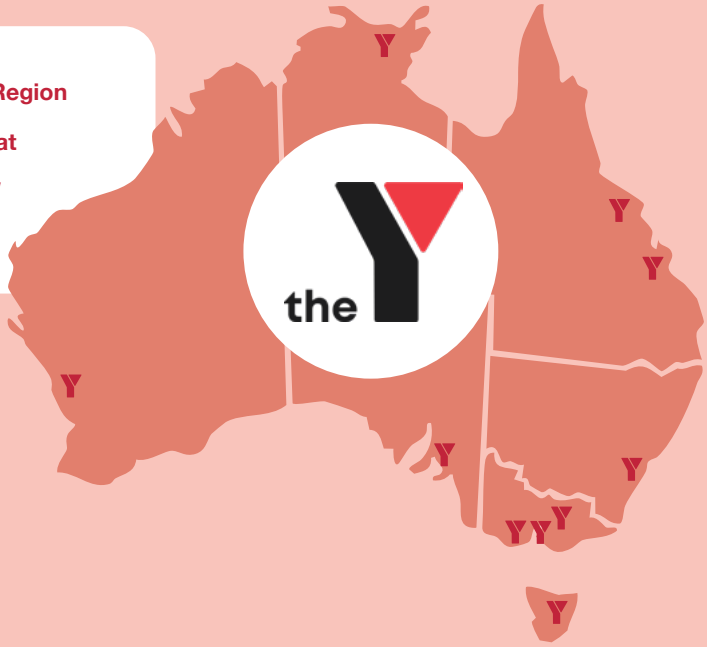
11,719
Staff

1,359
Volunteers

What we do

12 Associations

Y Whittlesea	Y Bundaberg	Y Canberra Region
Y Geelong	Y Victoria	Y Ballarat
Y Hobart	Y QLD	Y NSW
Y SA	Y WA	Y NT



690+
Locations Nationwide

29,188,274
Participations recorded 2024-2025*
*Total participations in all Y programs across the Movement.

$659,000,000
Combined Turnover

Our service offering is broad-ranging and diverse, and covers:

- Early Childhood Education, including kinder, long day care and pre-prep
- Gymnastics
- School Holiday Programs
- Before and after school hours care
- Community schools
- Recreation, such as camps, swimming pools and gyms
- Civics education
- Community services, such as Streetgym.

What we do

Youth Voice

We are first and foremost, a voice for young people. Through programs like Youth Parliament and Global Change Agents and initiatives like WHYNOT and our approach to integenerational leadership, we continue to embed youth voice in our organisation.

This last year saw Y Australia activate its Federal election advocacy strategy, undertaking significant research with polling partner Redbridge to ascertain the most important issues for young people at the 2025 Federal election.

The good work of our State and Territory Youth Parliaments saw the Federal Parliament announce the Y would deliver a National Youth Parliament in 2026, the first in many years.

We're excited to deliver this project in 2026 and give more young Australians the opportunity to experience the Federal Parliament.

Services for every Australian

We are here for every Aussie, from cradle to grave. Our service profile covers kinder, to early learning, to gymnastics and recreation for all ages, to housing for over 50s and to PrYme movers for elderly gym goers looking to increase their strength.

The Y is your place to belong and your place to grow.

National YOUTH Parliament
nyp.houseofrepresentatives.gov.au

Safeguarding

Child Safety at the Y

In 2024, Y Safeguarding went from strength to strength, uplifting significantly the knowledge and capability of our staff to continue to embed in our Ys, a culture of safeguarding. In moving from compliance to culture, we are focused on supporting and upskilling our staff, volunteers, children and young people, and even national board directors - because everyone has a responsibility to do no harm and maintain safe environments for all.

2025 has been a year of shared growth for safeguarding across the Y. While challenging events have tested trust in child-facing organisations and services, they have also reinforced our long-standing commitment to safeguarding. Together, we have strengthened our approach with courage, collaboration, and innovation, continuing to build a stronger, more trusted model for the future.

Building Assurance and Excellence

This year we began a new partnership with QIP, an experienced community services accreditation specialist to design a safeguarding assurance program that goes beyond checking rules and paperwork. Assurance means taking a close look at how we keep children and young people safe, not just once, but continuously. From 2026, pilot programs will begin across Associations. These will help us learn, improve, and demonstrate to families and communities that the Y is deeply committed to fostering a culture of safety, where safe practices and safe environments enable children and young people to thrive.

Growing Capability and Connection

At the Y, we know our approach to safeguarding is strongest when we learn and grow together. Our Community of Practice has been at the heart of this work, bringing safeguarding leaders together to share knowledge and strengthen practice across services. These conversations spark practical changes and help us build a child safe culture that improves organisational practices, staff experience and working environments. This year, discussions ranged from trauma-informed approaches and safeguarding leadership to cultural safety and insights from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study.

This year we have delivered 13 professional development sessions and 10 peer drop-in sessions.

2024-2025 Highlights

- Expanded training for all Y people, refreshing core modules and piloting innovative learning approaches that strengthen practical skills, and embed safe practices.
- Introduced Community of Practice Sessions for Safeguarding Leads to learn, skill share and build community in our work.
- Worked closely with our 12 Associations to understand their needs on the ground and support their requests of our national office.
- Grew capability and connection through mentoring and coaching opportunities in operational and general environments.
- Introduced a trauma-informed approach to our safeguarding practice, in moving from compliance to culture.
- A partnership with True Relationships & Reproductive Health to introduce the Traffic Lights framework, strengthening our collective ability to respond to harmful sexual behaviours.
- Tailored training for national board of directors and introduced safeguarding board sponsors to provide safeguarding leadership at governance level.
- Regional collaboration, with colleagues from New Zealand and Samoa joining learning opportunities, broadening our shared perspective and reach.

"At Y Queensland safeguarding is part of our culture, guiding how we recruit, train, and support our people, and how we create safe spaces across all services."

"During the last 12 months, Y Ballarat made significant progress through the update of our Supervision of Children Policy."

"The Y NSW's Safeguarding Excellence Program is being developed to strengthen governance, build capability, and embed consistency across the organisation."

"Y Victoria continues to uphold rigorous recruitment and deliver mandatory child safety training and welcomes the Rapid Child Safety Review by the Victorian Government."

"Y Whittlesea has introduced new safeguarding noticeboards in all centres – providing families with clear information and reassurance that safeguarding is a shared priority."

"The Y's Palmerston Youth Centre in the NT implements clear safeguarding pathways with trusted youth workers, with 93% young people who responded to a survey saying they felt the staff were always friendly and approachable."

"The Y WA imposes the same child safety obligations it has for itself, on its contractors in accordance with the Y WA's Contractor Management Policy."

"A child is never alone with one adult in our local ECEC services at Y Canberra, as part of our strong commitment to child safety."

Case Study:

Leading Together on Digital Safety

One of the most significant areas of progress this year has been our collective focus on digital safety, including the rise of AI.

As online risks and data privacy challenges grow, we came together to discuss practical ways to foster digital safety, and educate and empower children, families and communities.

The launch of the Ys new eCommitment and resources to foster a culture of digital safety have been a milestone in uplifting our child safe practices in the digital space. This work reflects how we can lead together and stay ahead of emerging risks.

Advocacy and Partnerships

We know real change comes when voices are united. This year, the Y played a strong role in national advocacy, particularly in early childhood education and care, where we contributed to the Federal Government's reference group on child safety in early childhood education and care.

Partnerships with the National Office for Child Safety, National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse, BBsafe, ICMEC, ResetTech and QIP, and other sector leaders have strengthened our ability to influence policy and practice, ensuring the Y's experience and insights contribute to broader sector change.

Y Australia's commitment is clear: being child safe is not a destination but a journey we walk together, continually learning, adapting, and striving for excellence.

Youth

Y Australia Global Change Agents Cohort 6.0

Youth Voice at the Y

At the Y, we work alongside young people to amplify their voices and drive change. We believe young people must not only be heard but also be in the room where decisions are made - shaping policies, influencing leaders, and driving change on the issues that matter most to them. Across Australia, we create platforms and pathways for young people to share their lived experiences, propose solutions, and take their seat at decision-making tables.

Whether through national campaigns or direct engagement with governments and community leaders, we empower young Australians to transform ideas into action. By championing youth voice, the Y ensures that today's young leaders help shape tomorrow's Australia - more inclusive, more just, and more responsive to the needs of all communities.

Youth Parliament

In 2025, more than 500 young Australians participated in the Y's Youth Parliament programs across every state and territory, shaping laws and policies that affect their lives. Together, they drafted and debated 69 Bills - passing 64 - tackling issues from climate action to regional transport.

This year's National Matter of Public Importance focused on Women's Health, sparking national discussion and drawing attention from policymakers.

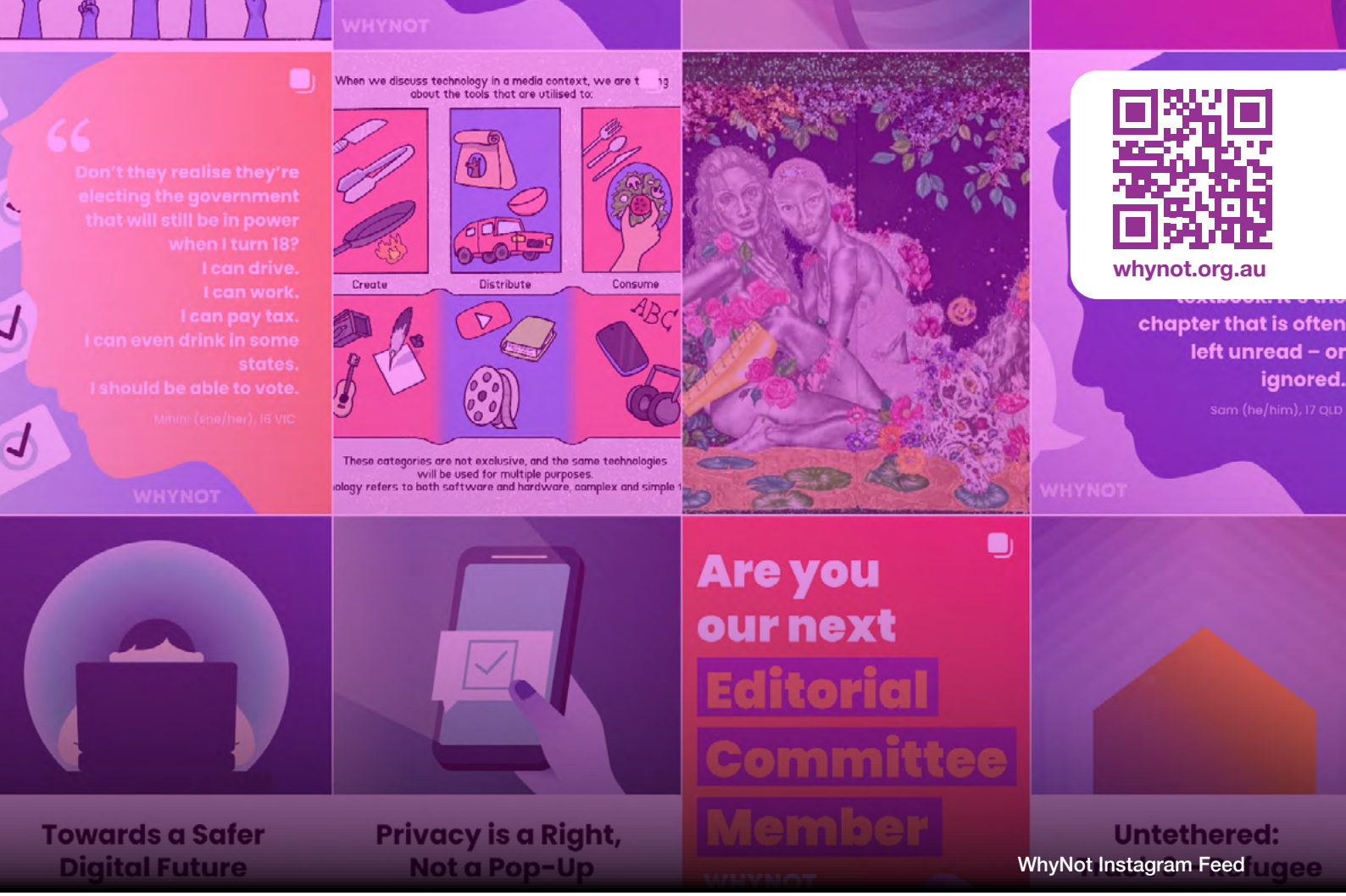
Guided by skilled volunteers and mentors, participants experienced the full legislative process while developing leadership, critical thinking, and public-speaking skills. Youth Parliament is more than a program - it's a launch-pad for lifelong civic participation and leadership. By amplifying youth voice and embedding their ideas into policy debate, the Y ensures that young people are not only heard, but actively shaping a more equitable future for all Australians.

Global Change Agents

The 2025 Australian Global Change Agents cohort brought together eight young leaders - the most diverse group in the program's history - to connect across borders and design solutions for complex social and environmental challenges.

Throughout the year they honed skills in systems thinking, intergenerational leadership and storytelling for change while developing high-impact local projects ranging from youth-driven safeguarding initiatives to turning healthy eating into a fun and adventurous journey for children. These projects are already building momentum.

By blending global perspective with local action, the Global Change Agents program equips young Australians to lead collaborative, cross-border innovation and positions the Y as a vital connector in creating a just and sustainable world.



WhyNot Instagram Feed

WhyNot Platform

In 2025, WhyNot reached more than one million people, receiving nearly 1,000 submissions and publishing over 400 pieces of youth-created content. WhyNot is a digital storytelling platform where young voices drive national conversations on issues that matter. Behind every published piece is the WhyNot Editorial Committee - a team of 20 young volunteers who shape, edit and elevate youth voices with authenticity and care.

This year, WhyNot partnered with YourTown, Reset Tech, the Alive National Centre for Mental Health Research, Y Gear, AYAC and Raise Our Voice Australia – among others – expanding opportunities for young contributors.

Submissions ranged from Unfiltered Thoughts: From the Classroom to the Polls to explorations of AI chatbots as therapists, reflecting the breadth, creativity and insights of young Australians.

Whether through written work, art, or multimedia, WhyNot remains a trusted space for authentic expression - amplifying diverse perspectives and inspiring dialogue that informs policy and strengthens community.

WHYNOT

The ALIVE National Centre for Mental Health Research Translation

Reset. AUSTRALIA

yourtown
let's create brighter futures

RAISE OUR VOICE

ayac Australian Youth Affairs Coalition

YGear

Our Impact: Stories from the Y

Our four pillars of impact

Meaningful Work	Community Wellbeing	Just World	Sustainable Planet
Empowering young people to navigate and thrive in the dynamic world of work	Building healthy, connected communities, where children and young people thrive	Amplifying the diverse voices of children and young people to shape a just world	Adapting, protecting and renewing for a sustainable planet

Y Whittlesea | Just World

Y Community School Transforming Young People's Lives

The Y Community School is growing into a place where students feel safe, supported, and inspired to grow. As one student reflected: "Before I came to this school, I was just being. Now I feel like I am living." Over 12 months in our first year of operating, staff and students have worked side-by-side to build a strong foundation for learning, connection, and community.

Students are rediscovering their passion for learning and shaping their own futures. Nine students have successfully completed work experience placements, with one student undertaking a placement with a computer reseller company. This experience was so successful that the company later welcomed the student back for a Structured Workplace Learning placement connected to their VCE VET studies.

On campus, a student expressed a desire to create an LGBTIQA+ and allies group that would continue beyond their own time at school. With support, they launched the Rainbow Club, where students meet weekly to connect and share experiences. By supporting each student as a whole person, our school is strengthening the lives of students, families and the broader community.

Y Services | Just World

Self-Expression Through Fashion

In February 2025, Y's throughout Australia proudly marched in Mardi Gras under the theme "Free to Be", led by Y NSW. The team at Y Services were proud to partner with Y Australia and Y NSW to create a bright range of t-shirts and apparel that celebrated visibility, inclusion, and self-expression.

Young people led the creative process, ensuring every design carried purpose and reflected their voices. Eighty staff, volunteers, members and carers took part, with young people leading the way – feeling proud, powerful and free to be their true selves. For many, wearing the apparel meant more than marching. It was about being recognised and respected and about carrying a sense of belonging and pride. The garments didn't just meet a brief; they carried a message, one of a more Just World.

Y Gear is the YMCA's merchandise, uniform and apparel supplier. Surpluses from Y Gear continue to be invested in supporting events and initiatives from young Australians.

Y South Australia | Just World

Access No Longer a Barrier for SA's Most Vulnerable Youth

The Y's Parks Recreation & Sports Centre partnered with the Kurlana Tapa Youth Training Centre, South Australia's only youth justice centre, to provide a transformative 10-week swimming and water safety program for some of the state's most vulnerable youth. Eighteen young people participated in the swimming program, many of whom had never been in the water before due to systematic barriers like cost, lack of transportation, trauma, and accessibility.

From nervous first-time beginners to confident swimmers, the program has built confidence in participants and broken through barriers caused by disadvantage. 100% of participants achieved water safety competency and 78% were able to swim independent laps. Youth workers reported decreased behavioural incidents and increased engagement in Centre activities. Participants also mentored peers on what they had learned, demonstrating the program's positive ripple effect throughout the Centre. We are committed to running the program in future so more of our state's most vulnerable youth can learn important life skills around water.

Y Victoria | Just World

Rolling Towards Inclusion with Adaptive Skateboarding

At Riverslide Skate Park, a new adaptive skateboarding initiative is breaking barriers for children with disabilities. The trial program, supported by Y Victoria and partners, uses a custom-built frame designed by Al Taylor to enable children with mobility and intellectual challenges to safely experience skateboarding – many for the first time.

Seven-year-old Lloyd, who lives with a rare genetic condition and uses a wheelchair, was among the first participants. For Lloyd, the experience was transformative. “He was skating. He had the wind on his face – and for that moment, he was just like any other child,” said his mother, Maya. Led by Brett Royden and supported by Drop In and Take Off and Skateboarding Victoria, the program reflects the Y’s commitment to inclusion, innovation, and community wellbeing. Expansion plans are underway to bring this opportunity to more children across Victoria, ensuring every child has the chance to belong and grow through skateboarding.

Y Western Australia | Meaningful Work

Flourishing in Early Learning with School ReadY

In WA, our School ReadY Program is supporting children aged 3-5 to build strong foundations in early literacy and language, social and emotional wellbeing, and numeracy. As part of the literacy and language component, delivered across all 14 Y WA Early Learning Centres (ELCs), educators use an early oral language screening tool to identify children who may benefit from extra support.

To meet the needs of those children, we partnered with Edith Cowan University School of Medical and Health Sciences. In a pilot program, the Baldivis ELC welcomed third-year speech pathology students to provide supervised, on-the-ground support for 12 weeks in early 2025. This collaboration provided timely intervention, built educator capability, and developed resources that benefit families and children. Research tells us that investment in early years development leads to positive long-term outcomes, including wellbeing and employment outcomes. By addressing learning challenges early, this partnership ensures more children start school confident, capable, and ready to flourish – ultimately leading to better long term employment opportunities and outcomes.

Y Hobart | Meaningful Work

Better Pay for Work in the Fitness Industry

In Hobart, we’re proud to announce a significant change in our approach to pay rates for young people – removing the sliding scale pay rates for 16-19-year-olds under the Fitness Industry Award. This move reflects our deep commitment to fairness, equity, and the value we place on young people’s contributions. The Y is often a young person’s first place of employment, and one that meaningfully contributes to the skills they go on to use later in life. We understand the vital role they play in shaping our communities and our organisation.

By listening to their voices and acting on their feedback, we aim to create an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and supported. This change represents more than just a pay adjustment – it’s a step toward ensuring young people have access to opportunities that recognise their potential and empower them to thrive.

Y Careers | Meaningful Work

Strong Futures for Young Workers

Y Careers has proudly partnered with Y Queensland to provide 20 young people with meaningful work as Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Educators. Through a combination of work and study, trainees gain valuable on-the-job experience supporting children in safe, engaging, and inclusive environments.

The Y Careers program provides each trainee with personalised career coaching and the opportunity to earn while they learn, completing a Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care. This structured support helps participants develop practical skills, confidence, and a clear pathway to long-term success in the education and care sector.

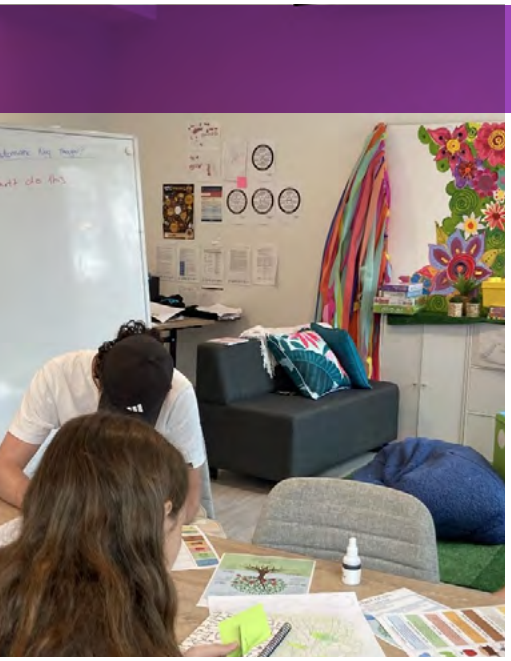
Together, Y Careers and Y Queensland are empowering the next generation of education and care professionals to shape positive futures for children and families.

Y Ballarat | Community Wellbeing

Y Kinders Give Children a Head Start with Pre-Prep

Pre-Prep is being introduced In Victoria, with Y Kinder services in Ararat Rural City among the first in the state to offer 30 hours of fully funded free kindergarten for 4-year-old children in 2025. The implementation phase has brought both learning and innovation to Y Kinders' teams and communities are benefitting. We've listened to our staff and families and developed a variety of session timetables designed to provide genuine alternatives when selecting a kindergarten. For many, the 30-hour free program opened up employment hours and options, significantly reducing cost for families.

The benefits for children have also emerged, with consolidation of learning, stronger relationships with peers, greater social skills and enjoyment from attending more days over the week. Additionally, staff have found that communication between teams has been strengthened. Y Kinders, known for its commitment to innovation and quality, has been a pioneer in early childhood education for over 20 years. We continue to be at the forefront of sector changes, setting children up for the best future.



Y New South Wales | Community Wellbeing

Alternative Suspension Encourages Wellbeing

When 14-year-old Caleb* arrived on the Central Coast with his mum, he carried with him the weight of family violence, homelessness, and a history of gang involvement. School had rarely been safe or consistent, and his literacy and numeracy skills suffered. Caleb was referred to the Y NSW's Alternative Suspension program after an incident of poor behaviour and walked in with a swagger masking deep uncertainty.

But what stood out to Y staff wasn't aggression, it was his humour, his manners and willingness to show up. The team worked with Caleb and enrolled him in a smaller school where learning felt more achievable, connected him with casual work, and linked him with ongoing mentoring through an Aboriginal youth service. Personal development workshops gave him tools to build confidence and keep his anger in check. Today, Caleb is doing well at school and chasing a scaffolding apprenticeship. His mum says she's beyond grateful, that for the first time, her son can see his own potential. When we listen, include, and walk alongside young people, the whole community benefits.

*Names changed to protect privacy.

Y Queensland | Community Wellbeing

Growth Beyond the Gym with Cancer Survivor Program

At just 24, Jackson is facing the immense challenge of living with Germinoma, a rare brain cancer. His journey has involved constant medical appointments, fatigue, and major life changes, but through the YMCA Cancer Survivor Program he has found strength, confidence, and community. Over two rounds of the 12-week program, Jackson has taken part in twice-weekly guided sessions with exercises tailored to his pace and ability.

Beyond physical progress, the program has provided connection and encouragement for Jackson. “It’s such a friendly group of people, and all of the staff here are very welcoming and supportive,” he says, demonstrating the impact going beyond the four walls of a gym. Not only has Jackson’s endurance and energy improved – helping him enjoy meals out, contribute at home, and spend more time with friends – his family have noticed his growth in confidence and resilience, calling the program a “catalyst to normality.”

Y Nothern Territory | Community Wellbeing

Mind Bubbles Program Builds Emotional Regulation

The Y believes that children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety and wellbeing. This year, our early learning educators have taken an important step in strengthening that commitment by training in an evidence-based program called Mind Bubbles.

The program is designed to build emotional and mental resilience in pre-schoolers and equips educators and families with playful, practical strategies to support children’s self-regulation, mindfulness, and wellbeing. Through affirmations, movement, and creative activities, children learn tools to navigate big feelings, transitions, and everyday challenges – all while having fun. Educators have access to an online portal filled with resources, which families can also use at home.

Parents have positive feedback, remarking that there is a noteable difference beyond the classroom. Izzy, Room Leader of the Kangaroos pre-school group, says that “Mind Bubbles has been really beneficial for educators across the centre. We’ve seen huge improvements in children’s ability to regulate their emotions and move through the day with more confidence.”

Y Canberra Region | Community Wellbeing

Young Hearts, Wise Minds

The Y Canberra Region’s Belconnen Early Learning Centre is strengthening community connections through a unique intergenerational program that brings preschoolers and aged care residents together in a heart-warming and impactful way. First introduced in 2013, the program is now embedded into the preschool curriculum and continues to thrive a decade later.

Each week, up to 22 preschool children aged three and five join aged care residents from Kangara Waters Retirement Village to spend time with each other in a structured, joyful environment. The program, led by a dedicated Early Childhood Teacher, introduces children to the natural process of aging and supports them in forming respectful relationships with people who may have physical or cognitive differences. The benefits are mutual. For residents, the weekly visits ease feelings of loneliness and social isolation, and a renewed sense of purpose. For children, the experience fosters social and emotional skills leading to all having a greater sense of connection and community.

Y Geelong | Community Wellbeing

Gymnastics a Home for Young People to Heal and Grow

The Y Geelong Gymnastics Club provides tailored support and guidance as well as instruction. At just nine years old, Lila suffered a severe injury that developed into Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), leaving her in intense pain and unable to walk for years.

Throughout her recovery, the Y Gymnastics Club worked closely with Lila's physiotherapist, pain management specialist, and coaches to design a personalised program that gradually reintroduced her to gymnastics. They adapted training sessions to her physical needs, monitored her progress carefully, and provided consistent encouragement, ensuring she could safely regain strength, mobility, and confidence in the gym.

With the Y's tailored guidance and encouragement, Lila successfully returned to gymnastics, earning the Gymnastics Victoria Spirit Award in recognition of her determination. Her journey shows how the Y Geelong goes beyond teaching and provides adaptive support programs that prioritise wellbeing and empower young people to overcome challenges and follow their dreams.

Y Northern Territory | Sustainable Planet

Sustainable Shopping at the Pre-Loved Market

What started as a simple idea from Elena, Recreation and Aquatics General Manager, who wanted to sell her pre-loved items quickly and easily, instead of waiting on slow Facebook Marketplace sales, has grown into a thriving community event at Kilgariff Recreation Centre (KRC).

Launched in July 2023, the Pre-Loved Market is now held every quarter and has become Alice Springs' first regular indoor market. With 40 stallholders filling the stadium, 300–400 community members attending, and Yaya's Café buzzing alongside, the event has quickly become a favourite on the local calendar.

The Pre-Loved Market offers more than bargains. It's a creative response to the limited shopping options in Alice Springs and a chance to embrace sustainable choices. By encouraging second-hand shopping, the initiative helps reduce waste and challenges fast fashion – one of the world's biggest environmental issues.

Y Geelong | Sustainable Planet

Food Composting at Camp Wyuna

Camp Wyuna has recently installed a new Food Composter to help reduce food waste going to landfill. Each week, the composter processes over 100kg of food scraps, collected from both the kitchen and campers, turning them into valuable compost instead of waste.

With a third of the world's food going to waste, Y Geelong is doing its part to tackle this growing problem locally.

Y Careers

Launched in 2022, Y Careers is a social enterprise that creates new career pathways for young people and helps employers build a future-ready workforce.

With a focus on the Meaningful Work pillar of Vision 2030, Y Careers works with young people to build towards their career goals, facilitating training and paid traineeships that lead to purpose-driven careers.

"Young people want to be able to work in organisations where they feel valued and they feel their work is meaningful, and it is contributing to a purpose."

— Amaresh Devanesen CEO, Y Careers

In 2025, Y Careers launched the Possibl+ Accelerator Program. Powered by innovative education partner HEX, this 12 week program is designed to equip the next generation of leaders with the tools they need to thrive in the education and care industry.

Y Careers supports the work of Y Member Associations, and has recently partnered with Y Queensland to build future capacity in their early childhood education workforce. Trainees receive personalised career coaching and the chance to earn while they learn, completing a Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care.

ycareers.org.au

ymcagear.com.au

Y Services

Y Services Pty Ltd has supported the Y Movement in Australia since 2003, providing custom uniforms, recreation apparel and promotional products through Y Gear, and procurement support through Y Procurement. Today, Y Services partners with more than 50 organisations across Australia, New Zealand and beyond.

In 2025, Y Gear was officially recognised as a social enterprise, meaning every purchase helps strengthen the Y Movement's work with and for young people.

"Being recognised as a verified social enterprise reinforces what Y Gear stands for, using business as a force for good. This accreditation not only validates the work we do but strengthens our ability to create meaningful impact through every sale."

— Tim Burmeister, CEO YMCA Services Pty Ltd

2024-2025 also saw the launch of Forty Four Collective, an athleisure brand shaped by the values of the Y Movement and the goals of Vision 2030. Its clean design, quality and accessible pricing reflect a commitment to both inclusion and environmental care.

Key Acknowledgments

Y Australia would like to acknowledge its dedicated, hardworking staff and passionate and generous volunteers. The Y is nothing without its people – you are the reason we are able to achieve so much and make a difference to the lives of children and young people everywhere.

To our early childhood educators, lifeguards, youth teams, safeguarding leads, marketing staff, corporate and business staff, volunteers and teachers in schools, our educators and camp staff and everyone in between – thank you very much for your contribution to our Movement!

It would be remiss of Y Australia to not recognise our CEO Leadership Team, our Presidents Forum and all Y Australia and Y Association Board Members – thank you. For your wise counsel, strategic guidance and passion in driving impact.

To our retiring board members, thank you very much for your contribution to our organisation.

We wish you success in your future endeavours.

Our 2025 National Board and Committee Members

We acknowledge the contributions of our Board, Safeguarding Board and Committee members celebrate their dedication and leadership over the last 12 months.

Y Australia Board:

Amelia Shaw
President

Leigh Johns OAM
Vice President

Tom Stephenson
Treasurer

Christopher Lewis
Director

Kendall Moss
Director

Gaurav Sareen
Director

Aaron Froud
Director

Roger Sharpe
Director

Lucinda Gibson
Director

Renee Hancock
Director

Brandon Howard
Director

Safeguarding Board:

Chris Lewis (Chair)
Jenny McCombe
Prue Warrilow

GPC:

Leigh Johns OAM (Chair)
Rosanna Hammond
Chris Lewis
Lucinda Gibson

RFLC:

Tom Stephenson (Chair)
Marcus Booth
Aaron Froud
Brandon Howard
Kendall Moss

SOC:

Gaurav Sareen (Chair)
Renee Hancock
Roger Sharp
Chris Lewis
Louise Perry

Y Australia Life Governors

The Y Australia celebrates our Life Governors and their impactful service to the Y Movement.

Peter Malone
Alan Morton
Jenny McCombe OAM
Bob Nicholson
Bruce Harris
Richard Edwards OAM
Caz (Carol) Bosch
David Davis OAM
Grahame Wheeler AM

In Memoriam

We wish to honour and celebrate the lives and valued contributions of our Y colleagues who have passed away in 2025, including:

Bob Lee
Y Queensland

Lin Doust
Y Western Australia

Ron Belcher
Y Queensland

The Y extends its sincere sympathies to families and friends affected.

2024-2025 Y Awards

Recognising Commitment and Excellence at the 2024 Y Awards

In 2024, Y staff who made invaluable contributions to programs, places and communities, were recognised with national awards.

Volunteers of the Year Awards

Our 2024 Volunteers of the Year Award recognises individuals who have made a direct and meaningful impact in their local communities, reflecting the Y's long history of volunteerism. This award honours an outstanding volunteer who has gone above and beyond in their service to the Y's Vision and Strategy. These recipients exemplify dedication, passion, and a commitment to community service.

The winners of the 2024 award:

Karen Major - Y Whittlesea
Georgia Cutujar – Y Victoria
Gayle Burrell – Y Geelong
Susan Houlahan – Y Ballarat

Hero Award

The Hero Award honours individuals who have made a direct and meaningful impact on their local communities by demonstrating the Y's values, extraordinary courage, and/or leadership in response to challenge, an emergency or critical incident.

The winners of the 2024 award:

Olivia Bardon – Y Geelong
Donna Cartledge – Y Whittlesea
Sammi Ryder – Y WA
Akansha Narang – Y Victoria
Rachael Frassenei – Y Ballarat
Angela Pearce – Y South Australia

Michael 'Della' Delaney | 2024 IC Howard Scholarship Winner.

IC Howard Scholarship 2024

Michael 'Della' Delaney is the 2024 IC Howard Scholarship Winner. Michael has been volunteering and working for the Y for over two decades as part of Y Victoria's Youth Services and is currently the Youth Leadership and Development Manager. Michael is using the funding to further his professional development, to continue strengthening his mentorship of young people.

Named after former Life Governor Ian Howard, the scholarship began in 1989 to support personal and professional development of the annual recipient with a $5,000 grant.

Ian Howard volunteered for the Y, helping establish a superannuation fund for YMCA employees, which helped ensure thousands of YMCA staff, were able to retire with dignity, after a life of service to the Y. Ian was a giant of the Y Movement in Australia and passed away at age 98 in October of 2021.

Clockwise from top left: *National Youth Parliament is launched by Speaker Hon Milton Dick MP, Y Australia Global Change Agents Cohort 6.0 visit Essendon Fields, Y Australia CEO Alexandra Ash addresses 2025 Victorian Youth Parliament, Outdoor fun at Y Whittlesea Kirrip Kindergarten, Y Australia staff join the Little Long Walk led by Yorta Yorta elder Aunty Pam Pedersen, Interview with artists Thelma Austin and Kiewa Austin Rioli, Y People from across Australia march in Mardi Gras.*

Our Global Impact and Reach

Image credits: World YMCA (www.ymca.int)

The YMCA (now known as the Y in many countries including Australia), was founded by George Williams in 1844 to help young men find wellbeing, connection and community in industrial London during difficult times.

The Movement spread to 120 countries, reaching 65 million people and continues to advocate for the wellbeing of young people and their communities to this day.

This year we strengthened our partnerships with several Ys around the world.

Our involvement in World YMCA's meetings across regions increased, with attendance and presentations given at World Communications Network meetings and international Advocacy Meetings.

We also worked closely with YMCA England and Wales, and World YMCA to express support across the seas for lowering the voting age.

Canada and Australia also worked closely together to provide skill sharing opportunities on Canada's efforts to better communicate the Ys impact for young people and communities. Our safeguarding team has also connected with New Zealand to work to uplift work with our friends across the sea.

We are looking forward to taking part in the 2026 World Council in Canada and meeting and partnering with more Ys from around the globe.

Clockwise from top left: *YMCA National General Secretaries meet in Dusseldorf, Olive Tree Campaign - East Jerusalem YMCA, F2 GreenPathy flower recycling project - Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong, Strategic Alignment and Movement Strengthening meeting in Chicago Y USA, Change Agent Dibora Tameru (YMCA Ethiopia) attends Africa Skills Week, Global Change agents cohort 5.0, YMCA Cameroon Recycling Agency Project, Global Change Agents cohort 5.0, Generation Peace project delegates meet at IFRC headquarters in Geneva, Youth empowerment advocate Nalisoa Andrianarivo at YMCA Madagascar.*

Our world YMCA movement is the largest youth movement in the world, reaching:

+65
Million people

120
Countries

"We have gone from strategy to infrastucture to implementation. We've earned seats at important tables."

Carlos Sanvee,
World YMCA Secretary-General

6
Continents

World YMCA Vision 2030
Vision 2030 is the YMCA's first global strategy aligning our YMCAs across 120 countries.
It is based on driving impact across four key pillars - **Meaningful Work, Community Wellbeing, A Sustainable Planet and a Just World.**

WORLD YMCA

ymca.int

Asia Pacific Alliance of YMCAs
Y Australia is part of the Asia Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY). APAY is a Federation of YMCA movements in 24 countries across the Asia and Pacific region. Its aim is to support and promote cooperations among YMCAs in the region and worldwide.

VISION 2030

Y Australia

2 Bristol Street, Essendon Fields
Victoria, Australia 3041

contact@the-y.org.au

ymca.org.au