

Annual Report 2020



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Noah's Ark – Who we are, what we do

At Noah's Ark we're all about working with families to help build better futures for children with disabilities. It's something we've been doing for almost 50 years. A not-for-profit community organisation based in Victoria, the ACT, NSW, and a Registered NDIS Provider, our range of services and programs – Everyday Learning and Therapy™ – have been developed by industry professionals and specialists to support families who have a child with a disability or additional needs (aged 0 – 12).

We work closely with children and their families to focus on the services they use and the activities they participate in. We provide them with the very best information and support, enabling them to make informed decisions and meet their goals. We have grown to now employ more than 330 staff, delivering services to more than 3,500 families across Victoria, NSW and the ACT. In addition to providing training for early childhood professionals, we participate in sector events and lead policy and research nationally and internationally.

The results of this work speak for themselves. The Canadian Occupation Performance Measure indicated that almost all families reported an improvement in their child's performance against the goals identified in their Family Service Support Plan. Almost all families also reported an improvement in satisfaction with their child's performance. This shows ongoing improvement in the outcomes for children and their families. We continue to work hard to improve our support for children and families.

OUR VALUES

OPTIMISM

KINDNESS

RESPECT

QUALITY

OUR VISION

Every child develops meaningful relationships, participates and learns with the encouragement and understanding of their families, carers, educators and communities.

OUR PURPOSE

To build better futures for children with disabilities and other additional needs.

Our highlights

Like most organisations' annual reports for the 2020 financial year, the clear standout has been how Noah's Ark has managed service delivery and the workforce during such a challenging year. We have captured some key themes within the year below.



Communicating with families

Throughout the bushfires and the pandemic, communications with staff and families has significantly increased. Traditional channels for communications have been used, however the most popular with families has been using the website and social media platforms. Our analytics tell us that this is the most effective and direct way to communicate with many families – it also enables language translation systems.

Both families and staff heard directly from the CEO, Team Leaders and Key Workers on a daily to weekly basis.

Information shared included:

- Bushfire and COVID-19 breaking news and tips
- Health and Wellbeing advice and where to get help
- NDIS and Government updates
- Research and submissions
- Free online programs and activities
- Staff videos on “What’s most important about the work Noah’s Ark does?”
- Good news stories and articles about our families
- Participation in local events and expos pre-COVID
- Celebration of important cultural, disability and advocacy days
- Support of Indigenous initiatives such as NAIDOC and Reconciliation week, and our video created with Communities for Children Bendigo - *Connecting with Culture*.



Changing how we work - Telehealth

This year saw unprecedented challenges affecting how we work. Perhaps the most dramatic change required by the pandemic was the change to Telehealth. Our staff responded quickly to the pandemic and successfully transitioned to Telehealth services from March for many families.

Key Workers showed great resilience by adapting to new technology and working with families' needs on what works best for them. We continued to support children and families to reach their goals throughout the year in difficult circumstances.

New Telehealth resources were created for Key Workers:

- The Everyday Learning and Therapy Tool Kit – Virtual Visits, Recommencing Home and Community Visits
- Telehealth tip sheets to support working in this virtual environment
- Seminars about the best platforms to use in Telehealth
- Keynote presentation by Dathan Rush
- Weekly Professional Learning News resources and seminars.



Our highlights



Professional development, training, and resources

Our online professional development resources have continued to grow. Some of our most popular courses such as *Best Practice in Early Intervention* became available in live webinar formats. All our Inclusion seminars are also available in this new online platform in a live facilitated session to support educators in providing quality inclusive environments.

New graduates have a tailored induction program that based on probation reviews has been working well.

Areas we have focused on include:

- Discipline specific mentoring
- Practice coaching school-aged children and their families
- Assessments
- Group programs.



Sustaining wellbeing

COVID-19 and Government restrictions, including the closure of childcare and schools and other support services have put significant pressure on staff and families. We have supported employees with flexible working hours and encouraged staff to use leave entitlements.

Families were kept updated on news affecting them by ensuring COVID and NDIS updates were shared in a timely manner.

We shared activity ideas for families to keep busy with arts and craft and virtual events and videos. We also shared health and wellbeing advice from the industry and links to mental health support, for those who may feel isolated and have children struggling with lockdown.

The new Wellbeing program for employees has included:

- Participation in International Women's Day, RU OK Day, and other events
- Recognition of Service awards
- Mental and physical health tips and suggested reading on the Business Library and in the RU OK Day SharePoint drive and EAP communications and announcements
- Weekly Yoga sessions
- Saying thank you – a small gift to all employees showing appreciation
- Facebook page for employees to connect – "Working Together Remotely".



Our highlights



Improving systems

Our website was refreshed at the beginning of the new year with a dedicated Parents & Carers section, and later featured a new page to help parents get started at Noah's Ark. Families can now watch a video introducing one of our Team Leaders, learn about Telehealth, how we work and our services, and find all the important information they need in one central place.

A new online registration form made it easier for families to register with us and provided an alternative to phone enquiries, making Customer Care more efficient at capturing leads during busy periods.

- Introducing new innovations
- Updated website and features
- Rolling out Chromebooks
- Video conferencing and other platforms including Jam board
- IT security
- Administration.



President's Report



In a year that started out for Noah's Ark as the continuing transition to the NDIS, we, like others, were overtaken by the coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, we finished the year having made strong progress on both fronts.

I am pleased to report that neither staff members, nor any of the families and children that we were working with, contracted COVID-19. However, it has been a difficult time in which everyone, and every family, has had to make sacrifices.

I want to acknowledge the huge effort made by everyone at Noah's Ark in March when the whole organisation needed to pivot from visiting family homes, children's services and schools to staff working at home and providing a Telehealth service.

An enormous amount of change was accomplished in weeks. There was an amazing response from families who also quickly changed to meeting by telephone or online.

The Organisation benefited from its long-term strategy to move its IT to web-based services. While this strategy started with the aim of supporting staff mobility as they visited families and services, it proved highly effective as staff switched to working from home. We will consolidate this approach by moving our remaining systems to the web and increasingly having our administration and training functions online.

I want to recognise the important contribution that the Finance Committee made during the period of rapid change. The Finance Committee met weekly with Management and its members' expertise and commitment were invaluable.

As a result of qualifying for the JobKeeper program and the work done by staff to reengage families, we finished the year in a much stronger position than it appeared we would in March. Clearly, the pandemic is not over yet, however the Organisation is continuing to develop its expertise to respond to and manage continuous change in these uncertain times.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank all our staff for the deep commitment to the children and families they work with, even while they have had to juggle managing their own family and personal situations during this difficult time.

I also want to thank the Board for their support. I think all Board members will be reassured by the way in which the Organisation has responded. I would like to thank James Garde for his leadership of the Finance Committee and Geoff Webster for his support on issues like JobKeeper. I would also like to welcome Carolyn Wilson who joined the Board this year.

We can now look forward to celebrating Noah's Ark's 50th anniversary next year.

On behalf of the Board I would also like to thank John Forster, CEO, and the Management Team for their ongoing efforts, both in the current environment and in developing the Organisation for the future.

Fintan Magee



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

FINTAN MAGEE PRESIDENT

Fintan is a qualified practising insurance broker and was a co-founder of Gallivan, Magee & Associates Pty. Ltd. The business was acquired by Steadfast Group Ltd. (ASX:SDF) in 2013 and Fintan is now consulting globally to Government, State Owned Enterprises and large corporations. He is married with three older children.



JAMES GARDE TREASURER

James Garde is a corporate adviser and non-executive director. His previous roles have been Executive Director of Spotlight Group Holdings, a major, privately owned retail, property and investment group and as a Mergers & Acquisitions and Corporate Finance partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers. James is married with three children.



ROBYN BRIGGS VICE PRESIDENT

Robyn has three children, her middle child receives services from Noah's Ark. She joins Noah's Ark with more than 9 years' experience in marketing and product management roles in Australia and in the UK across a range of industries. Robyn has a Bachelor of Business (Communications) with QUT.



VIKKI MORRIS VICE PRESIDENT

Vikki is a partner development manager with Amazon Web Services and is responsible for driving strategic initiatives together with business partners to deliver business outcomes for large enterprise customers. She has over 30 years' experience in the technology industry and skills that span account, project, sales and change management disciplines. She has worked for corporations in both Australia and the U.S. Vikki has two young children, her youngest, up until recently and prior to him starting school received services from Noah's Ark. She is passionate about ensuring that children with disabilities receive the highest quality and contemporary care while maintaining the joy and happiness of childhood.



GEOFF WEBSTER SECRETARY

Geoff is a chartered accountant and a Director of Webster Corporate Finance, he is a former Board President. He is married to a social researcher and has two children.



CAROLYN WILSON BOARD MEMBER

Carolyn has been teaching in public and private schools for over thirty years and has an ongoing commitment to inclusive education. Currently she is Assistant Principal and a classroom teacher at a large state school in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. She has three older children.



CAMPBELL THOMSON BOARD MEMBER

Campbell is a barrister practising in the areas of native title, crime and environmental law for 26 years.



TIM MOORE BOARD MEMBER

Tim has been an educational and developmental psychologist for more than 30 years and has had a long involvement in the provision of early childhood intervention services. Currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, he is a former Board President.



NANCY BLACK, BOARD MEMBER

Nancy first joined Noah's Ark with her daughter in the 1970s and has served on the Board over many years. She works in theatre, film and television as a writer, director and teacher. She was a founding member of West Residential Association for the Intellectually Disabled (WestRaid).



CEO Report



This year the depth and commitment of teams across Noah's Ark emerged as the challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic unfolded. Under pressure, Noah's Ark became a stronger and more united organisation. A commitment to the wellbeing of the children and families remained central. This was evident in the speed with which staff adopted Telehealth so that they could continue to meet and engage with families. It was also evident in the concern about reconnecting with families who found meeting by phone or video link too difficult.

I want to thank staff across the Organisation for how they handled themselves during these uncertain times. We work with families who experience uncertainty because they have children with disabilities. Perhaps our skills in remaining calm and working through the possibilities helped us as we went into lockdown.

As an organisation, we have focused on the quality of our services. This year the focus changed to making our head office functions flexible. Ironically, we had just relocated and settled into our new Head Office building, before we shifted to working from home.

It has been an exceptional year and I want to make an exception by acknowledging and thanking all the individuals in our extended Executive group. They worked intensely to reconfigure how the Organisation could function to successfully support staff to work at home. We were fortunate that Roxanne Higgins and Kate Parsisson had brought to Noah's Ark skills in crisis management and communications. Rob Petherick supported the relocation out of offices to home and Peter Davies continually problem solved IT challenges. Gayle Twomey worked hard on ensuring we could qualify for JobKeeper. Meg Moir was the approachable face of Human Resources, supporting organisational wellbeing.

While this team worked hard, other teams were working equally hard. The Operations Managers and Team Leaders led rapid changes across the clusters. New problems required new solutions. Training and administration went online.

Coaches were refocused on supporting new staff who were working from home rather than in a supportive office.

Once we had settled the new systems, there was a chance to continue our more routine work. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed over the year to the Quality, Stakeholder and Community Engagement, Clinical Practice and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committees.

My thanks also to Dr Kerry Bull, who resigned from her position as Director of Development. Kerry is a great champion of evidence-based practice and led the improvement of the quality of our services over the last five years. Fortunately, she is remaining with us as a consultant and continuing to lead many of our submissions as we seek to inform our sector and government. Submissions this year were on the NDIS Participant Service Guarantee, NDIS Pricing and Thin Markets. We also made submissions to the Disability Royal Commission on education, to an inquiry into CALD communities and responded to the new Inclusion Support Program Guidelines.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board for their ongoing support this year. They have played a stabilising role in a difficult time, kept asking good questions, and provided practical help. My thanks to Fintan Magee for his leadership of the Board.

John Forster



Director, Services Report



Noah's Ark achieved full transition to the NDIS at the end of 2019.

In January and February, the bushfires significantly affected our regional and ACT teams. In March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic impacted all aspects of the Organisation with the requirement to move to online service delivery and resource this in an extraordinarily short period. In a year that had been planned for as a year to consolidate operational requirements to achieve ongoing success within an NDIS environment, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the need for transformational practice and business change.

The Organisation moved from delivering face-to-face home and community-based services to delivering services via Telehealth whilst working from home. The organisational pivot to achieve this was successful due to incredibly committed Key Workers, Team Leaders, Coaches and Operations Managers. This was supported by a back office that moved quickly to build new resources, establish additional communication channels and systems to support health and wellbeing. A critical component of which was the newly developed People Culture and Quality roles.

While 2020 has resulted in a year none of us expected and there is no doubt it has been tough, it has also resulted in accelerated learning across all areas of service delivery that would have otherwise taken years to achieve. This has only been possible through our Team Leaders and Key Workers commitment to supporting children and families and their incredible resilience in being able to do this while simultaneously living the COVID-19 challenges.

Roxanne Higgins



Senior Manager, Marketing & Communications Report



Customer proactive communications driven from an emergency and immediate need for staff and family's safety and wellbeing were the two main objectives for this financial year.

Providing clear, concise and timely information on the bushfires and COVID-19 took priority for the year.

Key messages and consistency across all communication channels was key, with evaluating all messages that were disseminated across families and staff. Digital and social channels played a big role in our communication strategies, especially with the fast-paced nature of updates needed, and analytics available to measure and evaluate the communication were successful.

As well as the Communication strategies for the bushfires and for COVID-19, another project called the Customer Onboarding project has been implemented throughout 2020. This project looked at enhancing the customer journey from joining Noah's Ark through to transitioning a client to another service and ensuring this is a quality experience for the family.

Kate Parsisson



Senior Manager, Corporate Services Report



In a year dramatically affected by many crises including bushfires and COVID-19, the Noah's Ark Corporate Services team were able to vindicate a lot of our strategies that we had worked on in the previous few years.

The relocation of the new head office to Wattletree Road, Malvern occurred over the January/February period. We now have a smaller more dynamic office space with hot desks and a variety of different work spaces for Key Workers and other admin staff to work in. Little did we know at the time that our planning for how the office would operate would be tested almost immediately when the COVID-19 virus hit... and it has passed with flying colours!!

Our IT strategy in recent years had placed a clear focus on mobility within the workplace with an emphasis on cloud applications such as Office 365, Echidna, online training and the implementation of online reporting systems.

When COVID-19 hit we were again ahead of the curb and were able to support our Key Workers to keep performing their role but in a different way.

Key Workers were able to quickly adapt to Telehealth as our key service offering and use online platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom and Microsoft Teams to communicate with clients and maintain a connection with other team members. It also gave us an opportunity to try things within IT leading to us becoming a more agile organisation.

The challenges that we have faced are ever present and it is apparent that into the future the way we work will have changed significantly. However, we are confident that we will be able to adapt quickly to any challenges thrown at us as we now have an agile platform and workforce that is able to respond to change.

Robert Petherick



Manager, Finance & Payroll Report



The Noah's Ark Finance Team has welcomed some new members to our team over the past twelve months. This has given rise to the opportunity to reflect on the needs of the Organisation in terms of the roles of the Finance team given that Noah's Ark has now fully transitioned from block funding under the Victorian Government Department of Education and Training to the National Insurance Disability Scheme (NDIS).

As a newly formed team we have taken on new approaches too and have reviewed our processes and procedures. One major issue is that our current Finance system is currently maintained on a server and requires an upgrade to give us the functionality we require for the Finance team to be able to become more efficient and effective to meet the needs of the Organisation. We will begin a project to upgrade our Finance system over the next 12 months.

The onset of the Coronavirus, COVID-19, also brought further challenges as we had to adapt to being more flexible in our working arrangements while still working together as a team. The team adapted brilliantly and productivity and communication with each other was maintained.

The Administration Business partners who are our link with the service teams across the Organisation continue to play an integral role to ensure that our client processes remain accurate and responsive. Their part in assisting Finance during COVID-19 was integral to the continued support of our service staff and clients with changes to the NDIS funding and guidelines.

I would like to thank Anne Chiu, our previous Accountant, who was with our Finance team for just over 13 years, for her contribution to Noah's Ark.

Gayle Twomey





Treasurer's Report – 30 June 2020

Noah's Ark had a surplus for the year of \$1,939,010 (2019 surplus \$2,023,952). This includes \$401,350 (2019 \$785,070) of interest and dividend revenues. In addition, Noah's Ark had net realised and unrealised losses from its investments of \$390,540 (2019 \$164,477 gain).

Noah's Ark's has now completed the final transition of our clients from the Victorian State Government Department of Education (DET) and Training block funding to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). We thank DET for all the support it has provided to Noah's Ark and our clients over the past years in Early Childhood Intervention. We continue to have a significant relationship with DET supporting those children and their families that are not eligible for NDIS and with the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program.

TOTAL REVENUE
\$22,933,563

▲ The total revenue of Noah's Ark was **\$22,933,563**, an increase of \$2,111,466 (2019 \$20,822,097) or **10.1%** compared with the 2018-19 financial year.

The impacts on the increase in revenue included:

- Increase in revenue from Program Fees and Operating Grants due to growth in our NDIS client base
- Additional funding for the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program we provide in the Loddon Mallee region
- JobKeeper payments from the Australian Government received from April 2020 to June 2020.

Noah's Ark was eligible to receive the JobKeeper payments up until 27 September 2020. From the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, our revenue was impacted by the need to change our service delivery from home and community-based services to Tele services. Over the ensuing months Noah's Ark and our clients continued to adapt, and services were delivered that enabled Noah's Ark revenue base to return to a level where we no longer were eligible for JobKeeper support.

TOTAL EXPENSES
\$20,994,553

▲ Total expenses were **\$20,994,553**, an increase of \$2,196,408 (2019 \$18,798,145), a **11.7%** increase compared with the 2018-19 financial year.

The increase in expenses was due primarily to an increase in Employee Benefits of \$1,897,564 to \$17,752,620 (2019 \$15,855,056), a 10.1% increase. **Employee Benefits expenses represent 84.6%** of total expenses (2019 84.3%).



Treasurer's Report – 30 June 2020



In these Financial Statements, AASB 16 Leases has been adopted from 1 July 2019. This has impacted on comparisons for several expense lines including Occupancy and depreciation expense. The Balance Sheet also now includes the Right of Use Asset and current and non-current Lease liabilities.

The global pandemic created volatility in the markets both locally and overseas. This year our portfolio results ended with a net loss of \$390,540 (2019 gain of 164,477). The Board continues to monitor the investment strategy and asset allocation through the Finance Sub-Committee on a regular basis.

There were no other significant changes in the state of affairs of Noah's Ark Inc. during the financial year.

On a sad note, Noah's Ark and particularly the Finance Team and the Board, would like to acknowledge the sudden passing of Lee Wong in March 2020. Lee was the Audit Principal and a Director of Morrows and previously at MSI Ragg Weir and has managed the audit of Noah's Ark for more than 15 years. Lee was a great supporter of Noah's Ark and we acknowledge his contribution.

James Garde



Financial Overview

Summary of Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Income		
Government Grants	3,931,717	10,685,601
Program Fees	16,668,537	8,778,777
Training and Professional Services Income	271,502	340,292
Donations and Fundraising	4,674	55,543
Interest and Investments	401,350	785,070
Other Revenue	1,655,783	176,814
	22,933,563	20,822,097
Expenses		
Employee Entitlements	17,752,620	15,855,056
Depreciation and Amortisation	680,577	410,144
Occupancy	421,535	613,905
Other Expenses	2,139,821	1,919,040
	20,994,553	18,798,145
Net current year surplus	1,939,010	2,023,952
Net gain/(loss) on remeasurment of investments in listed shares available for sale	(390,540)	164,477
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,548,470	2,188,429



Financial Overview

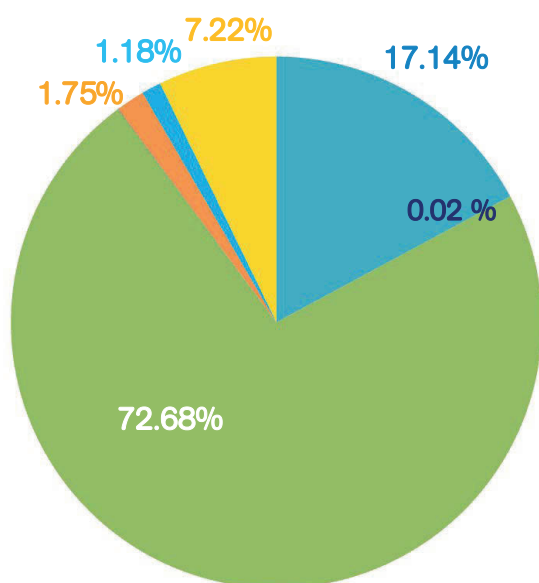
Summary of Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank & Deposits	5,677,240	3,525,921
Debtors and Other Receivables	1,551,550	1,163,316
Other Current Assets	169,849	113,101
	7,398,639	4,802,338
Non Current Assets	19,239,968	16,670,019
Total Assets	26,638,607	21,472,357
Current Liabilities		
Payables & Provisions	5,148,076	5,177,973
Non Current Liabilities	3,877,278	577,105
Total Liabilities	9,372,858	5,755,078
NET ASSETS	17,265,749	15,717,279
EQUITY		
Retained Funds	14,579,028	12,640,018
Realisation Reserve	1,006,321	1,006,321
Financial Asset Reserve	1,680,400	2,070,940
TOTAL EQUITY	17,265,749	15,717,279

A full set of financial reports, prepared by Morrows Audit, is available from Noah's Ark.
Please telephone 1800 819 140



Revenue & Expenses

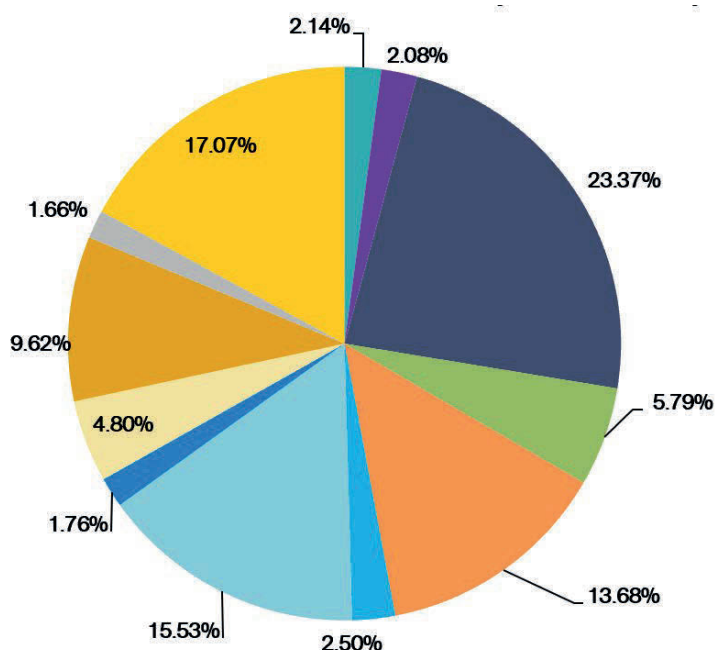
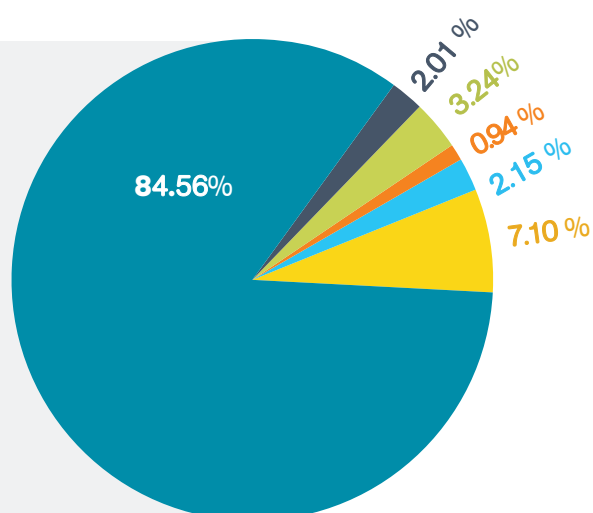


Sources of Income – 2019/2020

- Victorian Government Grants
- Donation
- NDIS
- Interest & Dividends
- Training & Resource Sales
- Other income

Expenditure by Type – 2019/2020

- Employee Expenses
- Depreciation and Amortisation
- Occupancy
- Consultancy
- Information Technology & Communications
- Other



Expenditure by Region – 2019/2020

- ACT
- Central Operations
- Gippsland
- Loddon Mallee
- Hume
- West Metro
- Ballarat
- Barwon
- Northern
- Grampians
- Southern Metro
- NSW



Thank you to our donors

\$40,000	Ian Potter Foundation - Grant
\$2,000	William Angliss Charitable Fund
\$600	Kiwanis Geelong
Small Donations	<p>Lord Mayor's Children's Fund</p> <p>Jim's Test & Tag Bendigo</p> <p>Grill'd Plenty Valley</p> <p>Donations through Givenow from families</p> <p>Message from Givenow donor - Maria</p> <p>"Your support of my daughter in her early years helped her amazing social growth and settle well in school. Your good work needs to continue."</p>





1800 819 140



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www.noahsarkinc.org.au/contact-us



[@NoahsArkAus](https://facebook.com/NoahsArkAus)



Building better futures
for children with disabilities



Noah's Ark Inc. acknowledges the Traditional Owners
of country throughout Australia and recognises their
continuing connection to land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures;
and to Elders both past and present.