



# Playgroup SA

## Annual Report

### 2018/19







**Playgroup SA has a vision that every child will be developmentally on track.**

# Chair's Report

2019 marks the 45th anniversary of Playgroup SA and the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Playgroup SA has a vision “that every child will be developmentally on track.” This vision aligns with the articles of the convention and the right of every child to participate in unstructured play with other children, in a safe environment supported by their family and community; their right to education to develop to their full potential. Playgroups therefore provide a potentially powerful experience for children and their families, particularly where the child has additional needs or families are vulnerable.

It is with some concern, that in South Australia between 2015 to 2018 the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) shows an increase in the number of children who are developmentally vulnerable. It is therefore imperative that Playgroup SA responds to this need to ensure South Australia's children are developmentally on track. Playgroup SA will work to initiate and embed community Playgroups in areas where there are none, through the process of establishing supported Playgroups, capacity building and then transitioning to sustainable community led Playgroups.

During early 2019 the Board and staff participated in a strategic planning process to guide us over the next 2 years. Although the plan has been published on our website it will be officially launched in November 2019; with work being actively progressed over the year. The Strategic Plan communicates the focus and urgency to improve how we deliver our services and to measure the effectiveness of our actions. We are committed to developing our leadership and professional reputation in the early childhood sector for the benefit of South Australian children.

The key priorities include:

- 1 Measuring our services for quality against industry standards and improving child development outcomes.
- 2 Working with communities to ensure services and new initiatives are responsive to children, families and community's needs.
- 3 Partnering with other services to ensure sustainability, that positions Playgroup SA as a professional organisation with high quality programs and measurable outcomes.
- 4 Building organisational capability with a competent and capable workforce to achieve our strategies and sustain the organisation into the future.

In conjunction with the strategic planning process the Board and staff have undertaken an analysis of our strategic risks. These risks have been incorporated in the strategic plan and will be monitored quarterly by the Board. The CEO and staff have also completed an operational risk analysis and incorporated this into their business as usual activities.

We welcomed the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer, Mr Craig Bradbrook in February 2019. Craig's background includes leadership of complex multi-stakeholder projects, strategic planning, service design, evaluation and research, and building productive work cultures. For Playgroup SA he will be focusing on demonstrating the social impact and value that Playgroups contribute to community. This will be built on a foundation of continuous improvement and effective business practices. He brings with him a leadership style and refreshing approach that has been enthusiastically embraced by staff and the Board.

I would like to thank the Board for their commitment and energy; for their ability to celebrate the successes and opportunities, and their ability to face the challenges with integrity and professionalism.

The Board also thanks the members, service partners, volunteers, parents and children for their ongoing commitment to Playgroup SA and the Playgroup movement.

Importantly the Board would like to thank our employees for their commitment and energy during a time of significant change within the organization. They have demonstrated their resilience and professionalism, and their unwavering commitment to SA children.

Trish Strachan  
*Chair*





# 02 Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Playgroups are an essential component of early childhood and community infrastructure that supports parents and communities to ensure children have the optimal opportunity to thrive. Time, work-life balance and many other activities have contributed to declining Playgroup membership/enrolment.

The benefits and value of Playgroup is not necessarily well understood, by policy makers and the broader early childhood sector. Looking to the future, the focus within the organisation is to align all documents and material with national quality standards for early childhood education & care.

Playgroup SA provides session plans for Playgroup Coordinators, and over the coming year we will aim to improve community Playgroup Coordinators understanding of the early years learning framework. We are busy preparing online learning for the Playgroup community. All of the learning we are developing aligns with the units of competency, providing pathways for parents to pursue careers in early childhood education and care.

We are also working on implementing the Australian Service Excellence standards to improve governance, business systems, management practices and service delivery. This is the first time Playgroup SA has embarked on such a project, and we are looking forward to meeting quality standards and improvements within the organisation underpinned by aligning our programs and services with nationally recognised most effective practice.

Ensuring the sustainability of Playgroup SA relies on delivering a number of strategic projects to mitigate multiple challenges that many not-for-profits face in the current marketplace. Underpinning all of our strategic projects, is the vision that all south Australian children are developmentally on track.

Working with community we are creating pathways through play to support improved outcomes for children through the implementation of a range of programs and services. Our community development program includes the implementation of learning and professional development, taking a leadership role in early childhood networks, and mapping all Playgroups across South Australia with the aim of improving the knowledge and referral pathways for all families. We have begun to prepare a new database for recording attendance and outcomes for children and families attending Playgroup SA registered Playgroups.

We have an interest in advocating the importance of Playgroups and their contribution to early childhood development and learning and supporting parents to build social networks. Internally we recognise the importance of supporting staff well-being and making Playgroup SA an employer of choice through mentoring and positive learning opportunities. Staff have opportunities to contribute ideas and drive positive change toward realising our vision.

Across regional South Australia there are many children who are not thriving. Developmental vulnerability is up to 60% in Peterborough, 45% in Mt Gambier and similar results for Port Augusta and Whyalla. In the coming year Playgroup SA will engage in these regional communities delivering pop-up Playgroups with partners, facilitating communities of practice meetings to provide additional support for children, families and the workforce.

Playgroup SA aim to achieve a certificate level through the Australian Service Excellence process. Developing a culture and understanding of risk will be central to ensuring that staff are safe and have confidence in the services they are delivering. Understanding and controlling for risk ensures the stability of business operations, supporting insurance needs and saving unnecessary premiums. All projects being delivered identify key operational risks and strategies for mitigating the effects of the potential impact.

Craig Bradbrook  
*Chief Executive Officer*



Playgroups are an essential component of early childhood and community infrastructure.



# 03 From the Community Impact Team

The Community Impact Team have been providing ongoing support and assistance to affiliated Playgroups across South Australia. In 2018/19, 56 Playgroups had one or more visits, spanning across metropolitan and regional locations. Messy Play visits proved very popular again, along with the Lifecycle sessions of a Frog and Butterfly. Children have been observed playing “in” the slime and water play trays, and we have many great photos of children covered in slime at the end of the sessions.

Extensive research documents have been published around the benefits of Sensory Play for children, and these have been observed when the Community Impact Team visit Playgroups. The laughter and fun shown, always brings big smiles to the team’s and parent/carer’s faces. We give a huge shout out and thank you to the Playgroup Coordinators and volunteers, without whom, Playgroups would not be available for children in the early years.

The Playgroup Movement continued to grow throughout the year. 16 new Playgroups began their journeys with Playgroup SA, including 2 Ageless Play Playgroups and a new Supported Playgroup. The Angle Vale community saw a need for a Playgroup to be re-formed, after the program ceased 12 months previously. With funding provided through Anglicare SA - Communities for Children, as well as the support of the local school, kindy, Angle Vale Lions Club and Bendigo Bank (whom provided the Playgroup with a shipping container to store resources in) we were able to employ an educationally trained facilitator to run a Playgroup.

Twenty five families have registered and attend each week. There have been many friendships formed between children and families and the link to community has provided a strong foundation to grow the Playgroup in the future.





## Ageless Play

Another highlight for the Community Impact Team has been the ability to establish and support the first Ageless Play Playgroup in the Gawler region. Little Elders Playgroup is based at an Eldercare site, and the community has been excited to be a part of it. The open day, in April 2019, saw the Eldercare CEO, Jane Pickering, and General Manager, Bernard Morrison, the Gawler Mayor, Karen Redman, Playgroup SA and Eldercare staff and representatives, families, children, parents/carers and residents as well as local media, attend the morning. From day 1, Little Elders has grown in attendance every week and is the activity that residents look forward to each week. Lee-Anne, the Coordinator, has been prolific in forming and maintaining Intergenerational relationships between the children, parents/carers and residents. The Playgroup also has the joy of 4 generations of one family, attending the Playgroup sessions. We look forward to the InterGen Playgroup numbers increasing across the next few years.

## Events

The Community Impact Team were also busy hosting some amazing events for children and families, including Playgroup at the Zoo and Playgroup at the Railway Lands, held in March 2019, at Mt Gambier. This event coincided with National Playgroup Week. Craig, Emma, Alicia, and Beck travelled to Mt Gambier to host the event in which approximately 150-200 people attended. There were a lot of new families who came to experience the Playgroup SA movement, with many Playgroup SA Members also attending. The event included activities such as Messy Play, Baby Zone, Sensory Area, Loose Parts Play, Craft tables and the Play Trailer to support children's physical development. It was a great opportunity to engage with families and local services who also attended. Playgroup SA was honoured to have the Mayor of Mt Gambier, Mrs Lynette Martin OAM, open the event for us. This event is another great example of ways the team have supported regional children, families and communities.

## Work Across the Regions

Regional support is vital to the role Playgroup SA provides. Training and workshops are offered to coordinators and services across the state and this year, Alicia delivered a Coordinate and Play workshop to services in Port Lincoln. These workshops are tailored to organisation, attendee and community needs. They are always lots of fun and interactive. Lincoln Gardens Primary School provided the venue, with Kirton Point Children's Centre assisting behind the scenes. Thank you to all staff involved.

The future for the Community Impact Team looks to be a busy one with ongoing work in regional areas continuing in the form of Collective Impact involvement in both the Mid North and Eyre Peninsula, the provision of Pop Up Playgroups and further training and workshop delivery.

The expansion of the Ageless Play Playgroups across regional SA looks extremely promising, with future sites potentially being established in the Riverland and on the Eyre Peninsula. We also look forward to the growing numbers of children, and families attending Playgroups, new Playgroup registrations and much more support provided in the coming year.

Thank you to the children, families, coordinators, volunteers, organisations and amazing Playgroup SA team for your efforts over the past 12 months. It really does take a village to raise a child! See you all in 2019/20.







# 04 Highlights 2018 to 2019

This year the Playgroup movement continued to welcome new families and Playgroups.

## 2023

Family members

## 2579

Children

## 192

Playgroup Registrations

## 9260

Sessions

## 19

Events

There are many benefits to attending Playgroup, did you know

‘82.4% of children who attended Playgroup prior to school were adapting well to the structure and learning environment of the school compared with 70% of children who had not attended Playgroups.’<sup>1</sup>

Parents said the top 3 benefits of attending Playgroup are:



Spending special time with their children



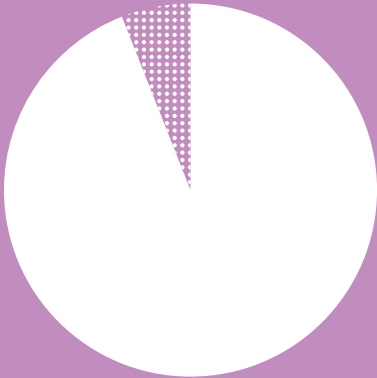
Building stronger social connections



Having fun

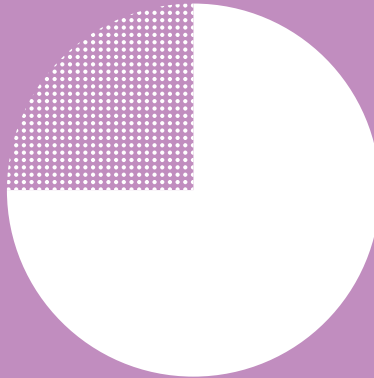
<sup>1</sup> Gregory, T., Sincovich, A., Harman-Smith, Y., & Brinkman, S. (2017). The reach of Playgroups across Australia and their benefits from children's development: A comparison of 2012 and 2015 AEDC data. Telethon Kids Institute, South Australia.





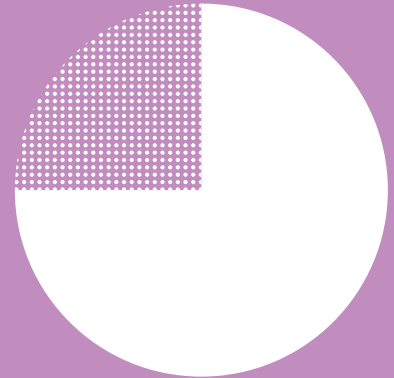
94% of  
parents

said Playgroup  
assisted their  
children's  
development.



75% of  
parents

said Playgroup  
helped improve their  
knowledge and skills  
related to parenting.



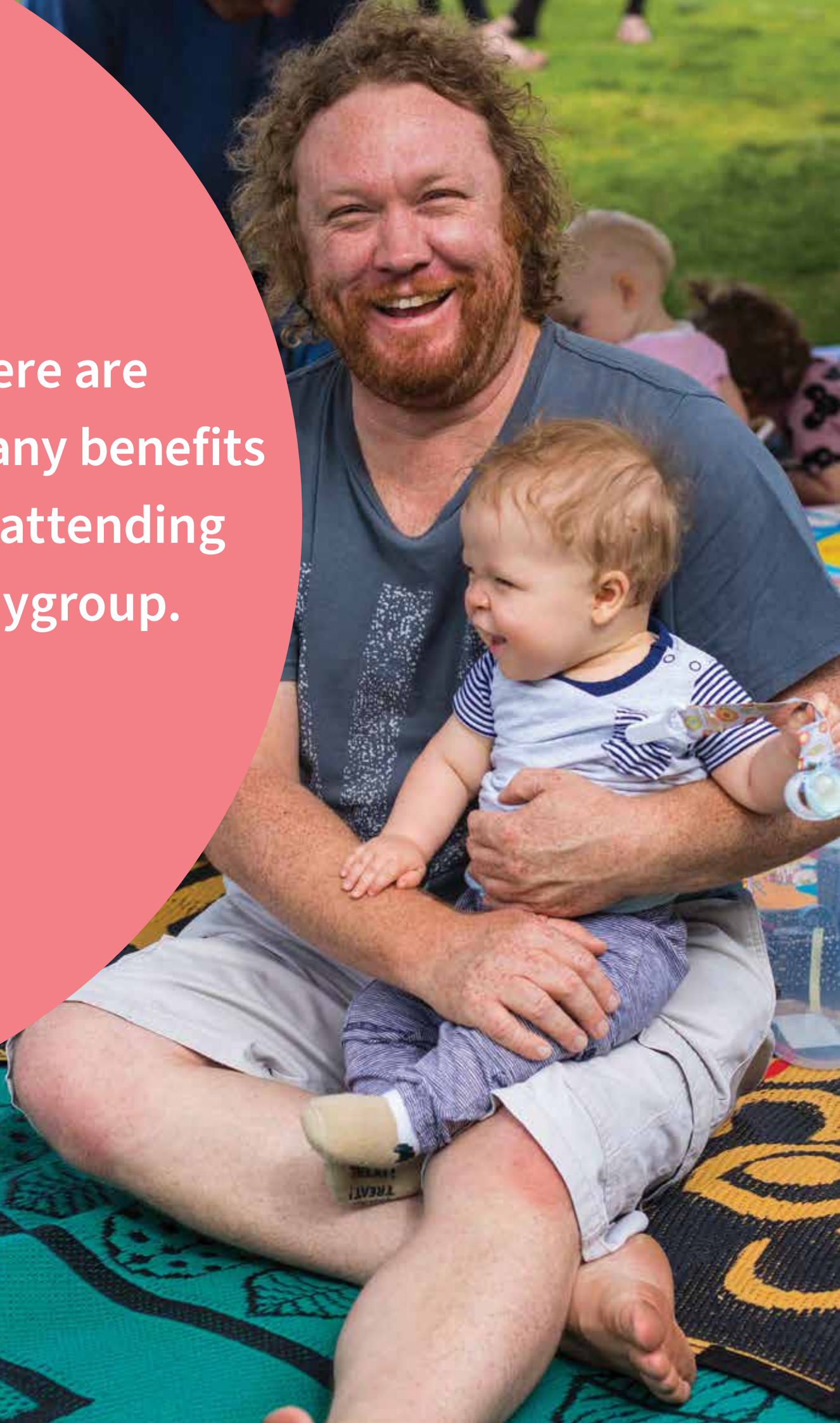
75% of  
parents

said Playgroup  
assisted in their  
parenting role.

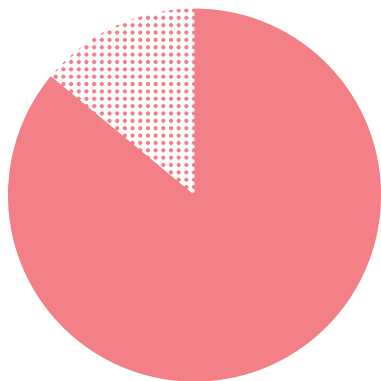




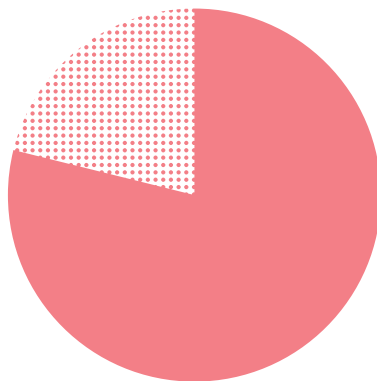
There are  
many benefits  
to attending  
Playgroup.



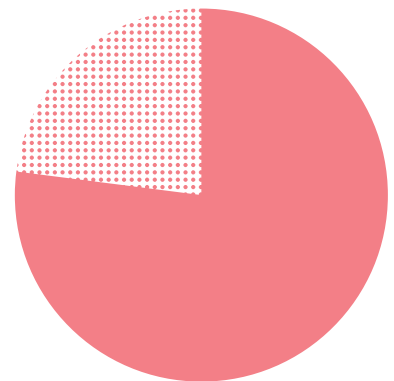
Playgroup families said that the Playgroups they attend are:



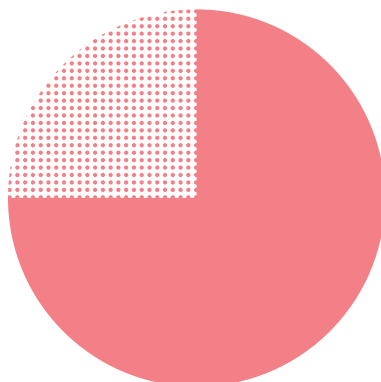
86%  
Friendly



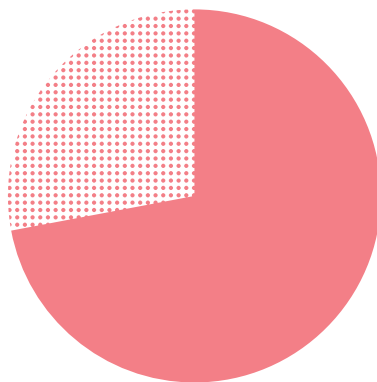
80%  
Fun



77%  
Relaxed



75%  
Safe



72%  
Affordable

Find us online

**7.8k**  
Facebook followers

**22%**  
of members  
found out about  
Playgroup SA via  
our online presence

# 05 Financials

Playgroup SA remains in a strong financial position, with cash reserves providing a strong liquidity position; we exceeded our budgeted expectations recording a small overall net profit (\$15,955).

Lower than budgeted expenses were occupancy, 16% and membership & program expenses 16%. Income for the period compared with previous financial year increased by over \$120,000 through successful grant applications.

## Income

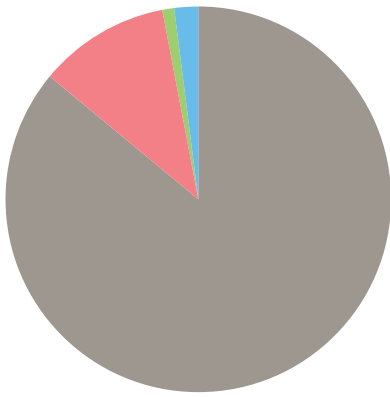
Grant Income	89.52%
Membership and affiliation fees	8.27%
Interest received	0.71%
Other Income	1.50%

## Expenditure

Administrative expenses	17%
Occupancy expenses	11%
Employment expenses	65%
Memberships & program expenses	7%

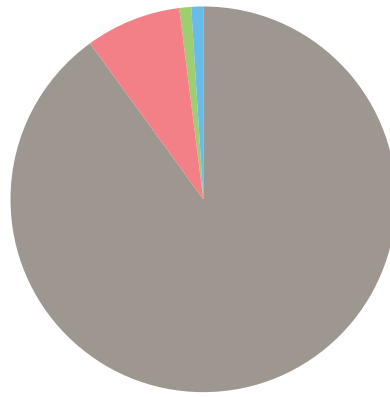


Income 2018



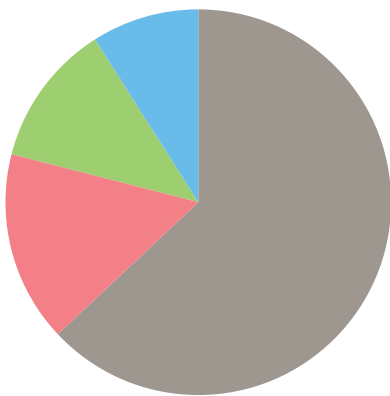
- 86% Grant Income
- 11% Membership and Affiliation Fees
- 1% Interest received
- 2% Other Income

Income 2019



- 90% Grant Income
- 8% Membership and Affiliation Fees
- 1% Interest received
- 1% Other Income

Expenditure 2018



- 63% Employment Expenses
- 16% Administrative Expenses
- 12% Occupancy Expenses
- 9% Membership & Program Expenses

Expenditure 2019



- 65% Employment Expenses
- 17% Administrative Expenses
- 11% Occupancy Expenses
- 7% Membership & Program Expenses

## To our valued Donors Sponsors & Partners

West Beach Parks  
 Adelaide Zoo  
 Bunnings  
 Codesnap  
 Crayola  
 Department for Education and Child Development  
 Department for Social Services  
 Educational Experience  
 Foodland (Prospect)  
 Libraries SA  
 Mad Hatterz Parties  
 Modern Teaching Aids  
 Multiple Birth Association of SA  
 Raising Literacy Australia  
 Scholastic  
 Colourbox Print  
 El Ritmo  
 HeartKids SA  
 Inclusive Directions  
 The Amazing Magic Mike

## To our valued Life Members

Di Connew  
 Deane Palmer  
 Elizabeth Giola  
 Gloria Palmer  
 Helen Holland  
 Helen Miller  
 Jennie Fenton  
 John Harley  
 Leslie Ratcliffe  
 Lorry Jordan  
 Maralyn Blake  
 Pam Witton

## Playgroup SA Board of Management

Trish Strachan, Chair  
 Dr Sally Brinkman, Deputy Chair  
 Ann Perriam, Treasurer  
 Chris Nash, Secretary  
 Rose Deane, Board Member  
 Gaynor Ramsey, Board Member  
 Ben Birch, Board Member  
 Tania Potts, Board Member

## Playgroup SA Team

Craig Bradbrook, CEO  
 Alicia Beames Community Impact Specialist,  
 Rebecca Blunn, Community Impact Officer  
 Teresa DiBartolo, Senior Business Administrator  
 Amy Elliott, Informatics Officer  
 Emma Sordillo, Marketing Manager  
 Sarah Zullian, Digital Officer  
 Rachael Stroud, Program Coordinator  
 Jemima Althrope, Program Development

## Program Facilitators:

Alison Blake  
 Nicki Hume  
 Tracy Vine  
 Sherrie Abdilla  
 Narrelle Retallack







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