



# Annual Report 2023

# Our Vision

**Making Australia a better place for people living with ADHD.**

Supporting all Australians affected by ADHD through raising awareness, advocacy, education, and research initiatives, creating positive systemic change.



# Our Leaders

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matthew Tice  
**Chair**

Terri Martin  
**Vice Chair**

Vikrant Mulgund  
**Treasurer**

Prof Simon Clarke

Jane Endacott

Emmet Fay

Michael Guilday

A/Prof Melanie Porter

James Kyd  
**Secretary**

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## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Emma Harrington

Dr Karl Sebire

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## RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS 2023

Chris Bevan

Dr Patrick Concannon

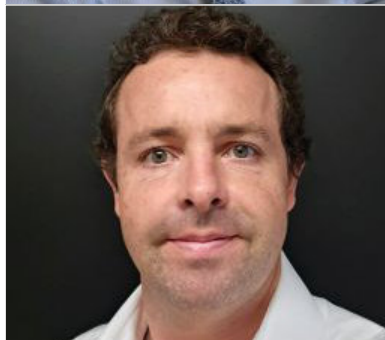
Kathy Gibbs

Professor Michael Kohn



# Our Team

**A 100% Volunteer based organisation, founded in advocacy, who strongly believe in the power of evidence, inclusivity and equal opportunities for every person.**



# From the Chair

As volunteers, we are drawn to this organisation through our experiences with ADHD, and I am no different. When I joined ADHD Australia as a member of the Board three years ago, and as a parent of two children with ADHD, my desire to help the wider ADHD community in Australia was an extension of this experience.

2023 was a big year, with many milestones for the ADHD community and ADHD Australia including the 2023 Senate inquiry, the ADHD Global Conference and significant progress on all our major programs.

Our main priority in 2023 was to build an outstanding leadership team anchored by a passionate team of volunteers to help us achieve our vision.

We welcomed our CEO, Melissa Webster, renowned for driving transformational change in

the disability sector, both nationally and overseas. As a neurodivergent individual, Mel brings vast experiences to support ADHD Australia in its mission. Melissa's tireless work and passion have been exemplary, particularly in building and cultivating her all-volunteer leadership team.

I'd like to acknowledge my dedicated colleagues on the ADHD Australia Board, all of whom champion our cause voluntarily with unwavering passion and enthusiasm.

I would also like to thank our sponsors, donors and partners for their support throughout the year, without you our mission would be impossible to achieve.

To our volunteer executive and their teams, thank you for your commitment to ADHD Australia. I thank you for all your efforts and contributions for 2023. Most importantly I would like to thank our

more than 75 volunteers working every day on our programs to help our community. You are an inspiration.

At the AGM in December, we had four of our distinguished Board members retire from the Board and I would like to express my gratitude to the outgoing Board members for their service to the community and to ADHD Australia over these many months and years. Professor Michael Kohn for his seven years of leadership as Chair and as our spokesperson, Dr. Patrick Concannon for his wisdom and his support for Board clinical matters, Chris Bevan for his sage legal guidance and Kathy Gibbs for her contribution to our education efforts during her tenure. This remarkable group of Directors steered ADHD Australia into its next phase as an organisation and will be dearly missed.

**2023 was a big year with many milestones for the ADHD community and ADHD Australia.**

## CHAIR REPORT

I would like to welcome the following new Board directors and Board advisors to the ADHD team:

- Professor Simon Clarke, Director
- Emmet Fay, Director
- Michael Guilday, Director
- Melanie Porter, Director
- Dr. Karl Sebire, Board Advisor
- Emma Harrington, Board Advisor

As we look forward to 2024 our priorities, at a high level, are as follows:

1. Develop a scalable and financially sustainable model to bring ADHDA Programs to life, with emphasis on ADHD at Home and in the Community, ADHD in Education Settings, and ADHD in the Workplace.
2. Lead the development of the ADHD National Framework in partnership with the government and the ADHD community.

3. Support management to continue to build a highly effective and motivated volunteer team able to achieve our objectives.
4. Continue to build on our efforts to develop a sustainable core funding model.
5. Continue to build enabling capacity (e.g., IT, Volunteers, Marketing & Communications, Alliances).



**Matthew Tice**  
ADHD Australia Chair

**As we enter our 10th year in 2024, I am full of hope for our future, and the role ADHD Australia will play in supporting those living, working, and learning with ADHD.**

# CEO Message

In 2023, the Australian population faced ongoing local, national, and global challenges, with the demand for greater access and consistency in services and support, felt across the healthcare, social assistance industry and disability sector. As the lead organisation in advocacy for a better Australia for those with ADHD, we are proud to support and represent our community.

Over the past 12 months, ADHD Australia has made significant strides in building service enhancements and developing partnerships and alliances. We have updated our digital platforms and technology to support these changes and will continue to invest in these key areas.

Early in the year and through our multi-disciplinary collaboration and research partnership with Macquarie University and OnLine Training (OLT) Australia, we delivered key insights into the translational impact of teacher training in ADHD. Our ongoing focus in educational research is to help improve teacher engagement and education and enhance levels of understanding and compassion towards ADHD students across primary and secondary schools.

In working closely with our community for a

collective Senate Inquiry Submission in August this year, our team were deeply humbled to represent over 650 members of our ADHD Australia community. We continue to work with key advocates such as Senator Jordon Steele-John in our roadmap for implementation in 2024 and beyond.

In October, during ADHD Awareness Month, we embarked on an international partnership with ADHD UK to deliver the Global ADHD Conference. A 24-hour online event, supported by like-minded organisations including; Unlocking ADHD Singapore, ADHD Hong Kong, ADHD Europe, and ADHD New Zealand. Funded by our community, reaching over 6,000 participants across 96 countries and a broadcast reach in the tens of thousands, the annual conference has established itself at the forefront of providing critical thought, research, education and lived experience to national and global ADHDers.

ADHD Australia relies on the goodwill of the community for our funding and thanks to corporate partners, community fundraising and government funding at both Federal and State levels we continue to grow our impact nationally.

2024, will see our team seek continued commitment in these areas to deliver national frameworks, research, and education programs. We greatly value all our partnerships, individual donors, and community fundraisers. We couldn't do our job without your support.

Alongside Matt, I too would like to thank our volunteer executive and team. The need for our advocacy, research and evidence-based programming has never been higher. Because of our dedicated and passionate team and engaged community, we are at the forefront of sweeping reform, bringing strategy to life, and delivering impact.

**Melissa Webster** | ADHD Australia CEO



**I am privileged to have been welcomed as CEO at ADHD Australia in 2023, where lived experience, and a passion for better, puts us at the forefront in our community.**





# Creating Connections



5,000 hours of service  
contributed by our  
Volunteers



Launched Global  
Alliance with ADHD  
partner Organisations



# 2023 Impact Summary

ADHD Senate Inquiry

**670** Individual Contributors



**100+**

Corporations engaged for ADHD in the workplace

**96** Countries Broadcast reach

**25,000** Australian Supporters reach

**6,264** ADHD Global Conference registered participants

Australian research participants

**2,111**

**17** Education Jurisdictions

**23** Geographical regions

**535** Schools and 667 learning cohorts

**97,886** Visitors to [adhdaustralia.org.au](https://adhdaustralia.org.au)

New followers **9,040**

**65K** Total Social engagement



**534K** Total Impressions

# Faces of ADHD Australia

## Micha Goldfine

Values Award recipient



### Why do you volunteer your time?

As a person with ADHD who was diagnosed later in life as a young adult, I realised how many opportunities I missed out on, especially at school, the

military, and the struggles to get in and finish higher education.

Having a child of my own with ADHD and seeing the issues in Australia, from childhood diagnosis to learning and after-school support, I understood that not much has changed since my early life experiences. Being part of ADHD Australia has been an opportunity for me to try and make some positive and pragmatic changes within our society and decision-makers towards full-circle advocacy and support for people with ADHD and their supporters.

### Having accomplished so much for the organisation, what is a key highlight?

For me, the key highlight for 2023 was reshaping the organisation into a more pragmatic, well-organised and goal-focused NFP. These changes include onboarding experienced and dedicated executives and volunteers, updating our brand strategy and visual communications, updating our operations model, running consistent social media campaigns, and establishing partnerships with other key bodies in Australia and overseas.

These changes manifested in seeing more people engaged and being aware of ADHD, what it is and what is lacking in our society to improve the lives of people with ADHD and their supporters.

### What would you say to other volunteers out there who may want to give their time?

I would say that it is important to take part in addressing issues that matter to you or have an impact on people you love and care about.

Volunteering is also a great way to meet and expand one's social circle, be exposed to more knowledge and professionals within the subject

matter and overall experience a sense of accomplishment and positive impact on society. I would also say to people who never volunteered, that volunteering is not a full-time job. Spending whatever time and experience you can provide is better than doing nothing. ADHD Australia is a great NFP to be part of, it is managed and driven by an experienced and dedicated team, and the environment is positive and engaging.

Micha has dedicated his time and effort to ADHD Australia, drawing on his lived experience and has made an enduring impact.  
Thank you, Micha!



## VOLUNTEER STORIES

### Libi Boroda

Volunteer Excellence Award recipient



#### Why do you volunteer your time?

I was diagnosed with ADHD at 7 years old, so I was lucky enough to have been diagnosed and received medication and support

from a young age. I recognise that so many women and girls don't get that opportunity.

ADHD has impacted every element of my life, even when I didn't know it. In my early 20s, I started to do my own research to learn about things like executive dysfunction, emotional dysregulation, and time blindness. The struggles I had gone through in earlier life suddenly made sense, and I felt less alone. With heightened self-awareness and better education on the subject, I've been able to develop strategies, seek support and treat myself with more compassion – I want this to be the case for everyone with ADHD. Using my skills and the power of social media, I get to give back to and empower the ADHD community.

#### What are your highlights from 2023?

Since joining the team in April 2023, so a short time at ADHD Australia - I have helped to transform the website and have built upon our social media presence, where we now have more new followers than ever before. With a goal of setting up a sustainable and engaging strategy, I've developed the key content pillars along with social media guidelines to successfully grow our reach and increase engagement.

**Libi volunteers her time as Social Media Manager for ADHD Australia, consistently delivering excellence, with unwavering passion and wholeheartedness. Thank you, Libi!**



### Michelle Joosse



**From coordinating our volunteers to Company Secretary and now Chief Financial Officer, Michelle has built teams, created governance and impressive corporate experience to the financial management of ADHD Australia.**

#### Why do you volunteer your time?

My husband and two of my three children have ADHD, so it's very close to my heart. I've seen many sides of the challenges that people with ADHD face and I know how hard it is from my own experience to get the right information and the right support. I've had to be proactive in working with my kids' schools to create the right learning environment, particularly for my daughter, and it's given me the insight to understand just how much the education system needs our help and support. Supporting this organisation is an opportunity to drive real change and ensure that over time there is less struggle and more support for everyone. I think that ADHD has come out from the shadows now and people are listening and engaged, so there's no better time to give it a platform and a voice from which to drive change.

# Impact of Teacher Education in ADHD

On average, one student in every classroom from kindergarten to Year 12, has an ADHD diagnosis. These children occupy mainstream settings and are expected to engage in undifferentiated, regular classroom learning. Despite this, Australian teachers receive, on average as little as 1 to 5 hours of training at university on children with special needs and many receive no training at all on ADHD.







Credit - A/Prof Melanie Porter, The impact of a teacher education course in ADHD on perceived teacher knowledge and confidence, and improved teacher practices: some preliminary findings, October 2023.

This lack of teacher knowledge of ADHD has a major impact on teachers, students, and families, with 92% of teachers reporting they were not adequately trained at university to identify and support ADHD Students (ADHD Australia Education Survey Report, 2021).

In 2023, led by Associate Professor, Melanie Porter with Macquarie University, in partnership with ADHD Australia and OnLine Training (OLT), the research study aims to provide preliminary insights into the impact of blended learning courses (self-paced learning online plus class-led sessions) on teachers perceived knowledge, confidence and skills leading to positive changes in teaching practices.

With over 2,000 teacher participants across Australia in 17 education jurisdictions, spanning 23 geographical regions, the study was statistically conclusive. Unsurprisingly, perceived improvements were noted in attitudes, levels of understanding, and compassion towards ADHD students, with 96% of participants referring to course content to make use of what they learned in the classroom.

With these key learnings, 2024 will see the research partnership expand on focus groups and qualitative research to develop teacher guidelines, and curriculum enhancements for tertiary institutions.

Teacher training in ADHD is an area of need aligning with Macquarie University research priorities (Healthy People/ Resilient Societies) and the NSW Education and Training (DET)'s disability strategy of inclusive education, to implement in rural and regional (DET) schools across NSW. ADHD Australia thanks Macquarie University and OLT for their support in enabling a better Australia for those with ADHD.

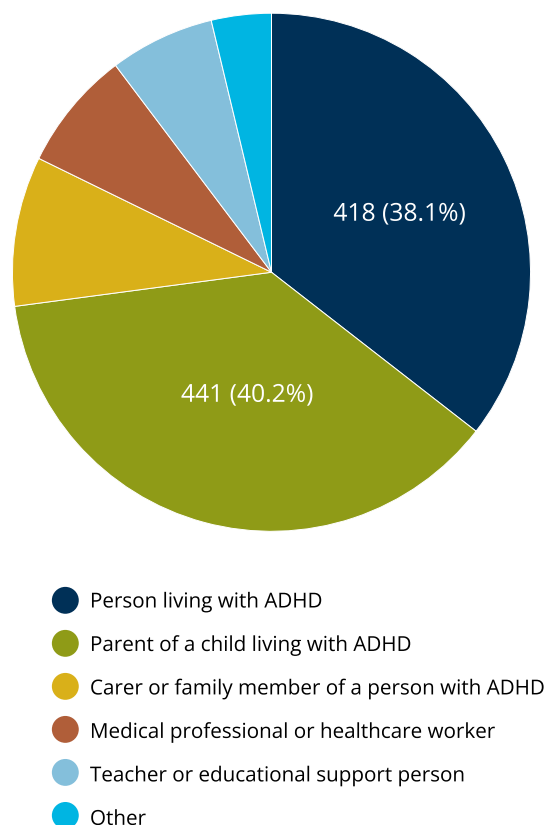
OUR COMMUNITY

# Supporting our community

Joining together to amplify our voice for the Senate Inquiry 2023



## OUR COMMUNITY



2023 saw the Senate Community Affairs References Committee lead an inquiry into barriers to consistent, timely and best-practice assessment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and support services with people with ADHD.

In response in May 2023, ADHD Australia, true to our mission, made it easier and more accessible for people living with ADHD to have their say, using an online survey. We were overwhelmed by the community support and are proud to have represented submissions from over 650 individuals.

Like us, the committee was “moved by the personal experiences and openness of the hundreds of submitters”.

The enquiry held 3 hearings, calling on 79 witnesses, and ADHD Australia was honoured to represent our community in the landmark inquiry. We amplified your voices and acknowledged the chronic underinvestment and lack of understanding about the everyday challenges and stigma people with ADHD face in this country, and recommended the Australian parliament improve access to timely, accurate and affordable ADHD diagnosis and research into unblocking care pathways and facilitating primary health networks.

We are proud to say, our collective voice was heard.

In November 2023, 15 unanimous recommendations were made by the Senate, centring on:

- A more coordinated approach
- Affordable and accessible services
- Better quality of care
- Improved awareness and reduction in stigma.

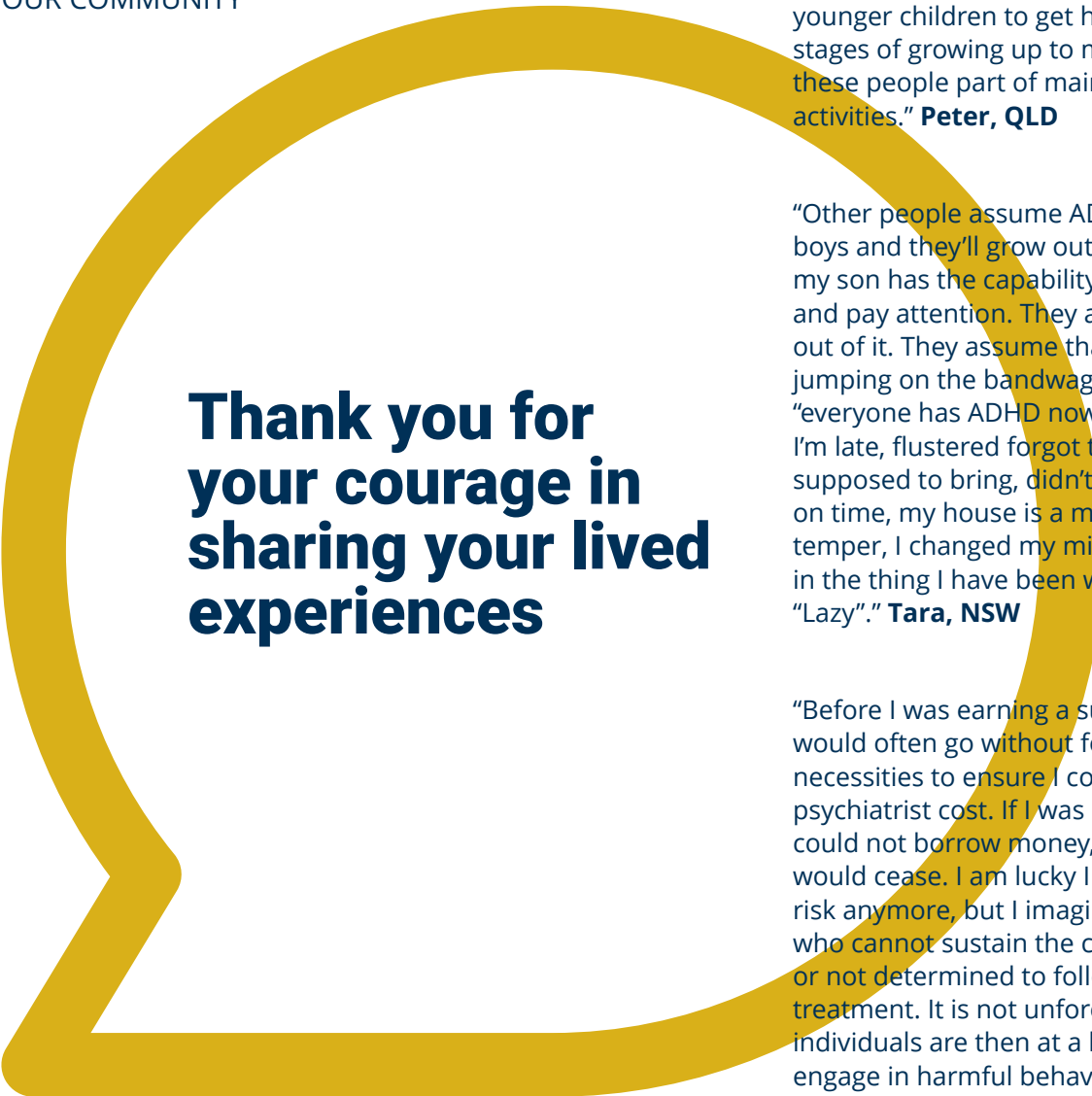
We are thankful to the Committee for their recommendation that the Australian Government consider funding and co-designing a National Framework for ADHD, together with people with ADHD as well as ADHD advocacy and community organisations.

Going forward in 2024, ADHD Australia will continue to give the community a voice, enabling research and participation in the co-design phase for national reform.

**Recognising that the ADHD Community has diverse experiences, opinions, and views on current barriers and the best way to tackle them, we encouraged the Senate Committee to listen to many in our community.**

Credit -ADHD Community Submissions , Survey info + summary of key themes (June 2023)





## Thank you for your courage in sharing your lived experiences

"There needs to be more testing available to younger children to get help at an early stages of growing up to make caring for these people part of mainstream community activities." **Peter, QLD**

"Other people assume ADHD affects naughty boys and they'll grow out of it. They assume my son has the capability to stop his silliness and pay attention. They assume you grow out of it. They assume that an adult female is jumping on the bandwagon because "everyone has ADHD now". However when I'm late, flustered forgot the thing I was supposed to bring, didn't get my work done on time, my house is a mess, I lost my temper, I changed my mind and lost interest in the thing I have been working on.. I'm "Lazy"." **Tara, NSW**

"Before I was earning a sufficient salary, I would often go without food or other necessities to ensure I could afford the psychiatrist cost. If I was not able to, and could not borrow money, my treatment would cease. I am lucky I do not have that risk anymore, but I imagine there are many who cannot sustain the cost and as a result or not determined to follow through with treatment. It is not unforeseeable that those individuals are then at a higher risk to engage in harmful behaviours, be less effective in life, earn less (and pay less tax as a result), or require more health spending in other areas (e.g. drug-abuse, illness, injury). " **Bart, WA**

"As an adult and an already diagnosed with a disability, the cost of getting a diagnosis for ADHD and ASD is only with a psychiatrist, this is way out of my budget and affordability. As a parent of two children with ADHD our children need support in school for their ADHD." **Aislinn, SA**

"It is very hard to see a psychologist in person where I live (Alice Springs) so I had a long wait for a telehealth appointment. Even then, the psychiatrist only diagnosed me and did not offer treatment, I had to find that elsewhere." **Ashleigh, NT**

"My daughter was first diagnosed 5 years ago and we are still battling the system to get sufficient medical support. It placed severe pressure on her experience of school. Despite all the barriers she graduated Year 12 but we are still working our way through the labyrinth to achieve a reliable treatment and support regime to help my daughter achieve her work, study and life goals. When ADHD makes life so hard, why does the system torment people with endless barriers that exacerbate fragile mental health? My daughter has been suicidal at times when the system has just worn her down and led to feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness. I'm so angry." **Rebecca, TAS**

"I don't tell many people that I have ADHD because too many people dismiss it as a made up condition." **David, VIC**

Credit -Assessment and support services for people with ADHD,  
[https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportsen/RB000138/toc\\_pdf/AssessmentandsupportservicesforpeoplewithADHD.pdf](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportsen/RB000138/toc_pdf/AssessmentandsupportservicesforpeoplewithADHD.pdf)



OUR REACH

# Raising Global Awareness

**Taking our ADHD Australia  
Voices Worldwide**



ADHD Global Conference  
registered participants 6264



Broadcast reach to  
96 countries



Over 25,000 Australian  
supporters reached



**Every October, ADHD Awareness Month is celebrated around the world to raise awareness, educate, and build support for individuals with ADHD and their families.**



In partnership with ADHD UK and supporting global organisations of Unlocking ADHD Singapore, Let's Talk ADHD Hong Kong and ADHD Europe, our team delivered the Global ADHD Conference, an online 24-hour event launching ADHD Awareness Month.

The goal of the conference was to debunk stigma, improve community understanding and foster acceptance of ADHD. It was also an opportunity to spotlight the experiences, achievements, and contributions of people with ADHD in Australia, and around the world. We did this by bringing together global communities, championing our dedicated volunteers, and encouraging the wider ADHD community to share their stories.

From effective ways to build a neuro-inclusive workplace with EY, Melba Support Services and Microsoft, to the daily journey of parenting,

diagnosis and treatment and insight into approaching ADHD within the education system.

Viewed in 96 countries with over 6,000 registrants worldwide, reaching through broadcast to over 25,000 Australian supporters, our thanks are to the speakers, experts, and leaders of their field who gave their insights, shared knowledge and most importantly courageously shared their lived experiences.

Thank you to our volunteer team across the globe, for helping to amplify the voices of the ADHD Australian Community globally. With special mention and thanks to Kristy Thomas, who received the Chair Award, for leadership in coordinating our conference in record time.

## OUR REACH



## With thanks



USA  
UK  
UAE  
France  
Pakistan  
Poland  
Somalia  
Guam  
Netherlands  
Tunisia  
India  
Israel  
Denmark  
Switzerland  
Greece  
Lesotho  
Sri Lanka  
Cyprus  
Ireland  
Belgium  
Scotland  
Germany  
South Korea  
Indonesia  
Hong Kong  
Seychelles  
Ghana  
Brazil  
Ethiopia  
Uganda  
Malaysia  
Malta  
Myanmar

Puerto Rico  
Kenya  
Hungary  
Timor Leste  
Cambodia  
Australia  
Eswatini, SA  
Portugal  
Mexico  
Saudi Arabia  
Brunei  
Colombia  
Estonia  
Argentina  
Namibia  
Luxemburg  
Turkey  
Romania  
Sweden  
Trinidad & Tobago  
Czech Republic  
Haiti  
Slovakia  
Sudan  
Rwanda  
New Zealand  
Spain  
Bangladesh  
Georgia  
Armenia  
Mauritius  
Mongolia  
Greenland

Croatia  
Canada  
Philippines  
Egypt  
Norway  
Lithuania  
Belarus  
Guatemala  
Thailand  
Sierra Leone  
Singapore  
Guyana  
Italy  
Nigeria  
Japan  
Finland  
Panama  
Jamaica  
Morocco  
Malawi  
China  
Algeria  
Bhutan  
Vietnam  
Zambia  
Botswana  
Papua New Guinea  
Nepal  
South Africa  
Bahamas

# Working together

## WITH THE ALL STARS



**Real People. Real Emotion. Real Adventure. We're working to make a difference, with the Adventure All-Stars.**

A socially conscious travel show, combining philanthropy and adventure.

In 2023, the second season, the cast members, raising funds for the charitable cause, set out to secret locations to uncover the most exciting experiences on the planet.

A leader in Australia and one of the biggest TV show donors in the world, our ADHD All Stars have raised over \$50,000 in 2023.

We are grateful to be included in the adventure All-Stars program. And to all the All-Stars ambassadors, a very heartfelt thank you.

With special mention, to Ann-Maree Bond, our ADHD Innovation Award recipient. Her efforts supporting ADHD Awareness Month as well as All-Stars, showed great innovation with a Gala Event held in Brisbane.

## WITH OUR COMMUNITY



**Our engaged community, play a large part in our advocacy and raising awareness throughout ADHD Awareness month in October.**

Throughout October, our content focused on debunking stigma and advocating for positive changes, such as strengthening employment and education outcomes.

We also spotlighted our Board and volunteers, which amplified their voices and prompted important conversations in the community.

Creating sharable media for individuals, employers, teachers, and parents to share positive messages of ADHD awareness and support on their channels. These posts were shared by individuals and organisations across industries. It was inspiring to see the support of allied health services, schools, non-for-profits, businesses, government, entrepreneurs and advocates.

Thank you to our community!



# Thank you

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## PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS



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## COLLABORATORS



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## SUPPORTERS



# Our Financials

**ADHD Australia is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) and complies with all reporting requirements.**

For more information, and to view our Annual Information Statement 2023, please visit [acnc.gov.au](https://acnc.gov.au)





[info@adhdaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@adhdaustralia.org.au)

[www.adhdaustralia.org.au](http://www.adhdaustralia.org.au)

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Donate to ADHD Australia

Donate