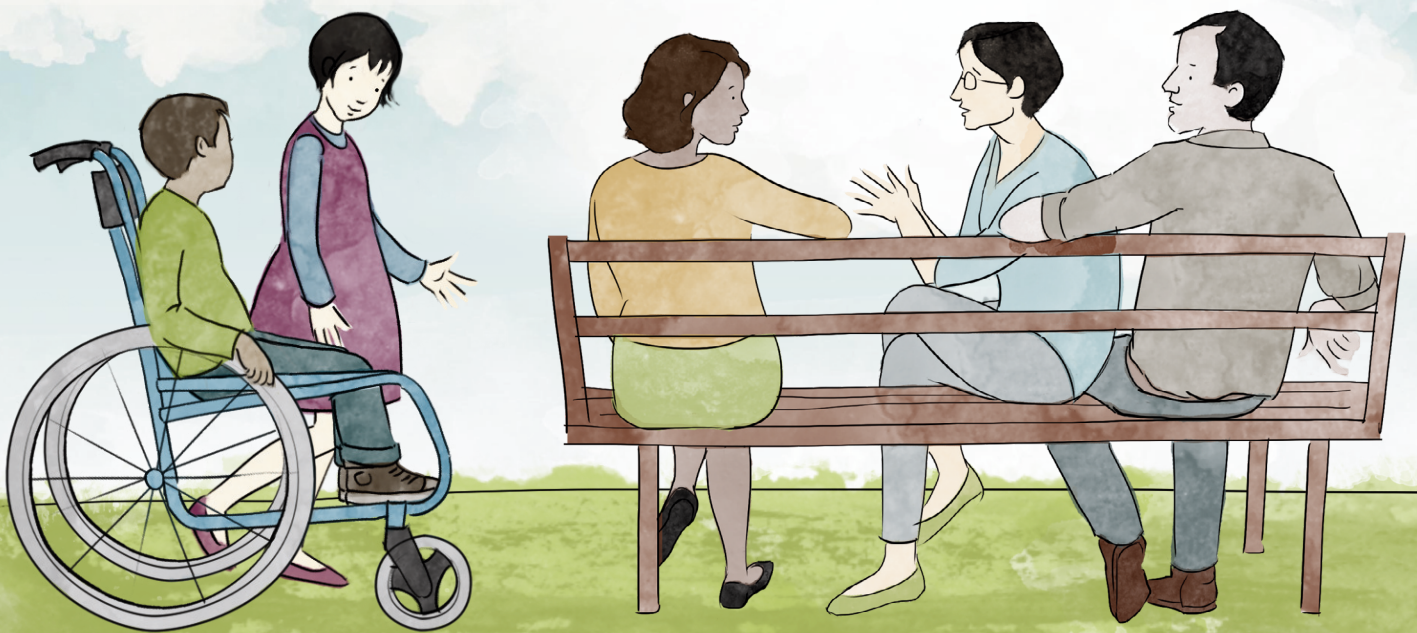




# 2025: Our year in review



**In 2025 our peer-led  
Now & Next program  
reached a 10-year milestone.  
Plumtree's expertise informed  
the design of foundational  
supports for families.**

# Nurturing stronger families & communities

**A trusted not-for-profit organisation for 40 years,  
Plumtree partners with families to build a strong  
foundation for the future**

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**2024–2025 has been a time of change across the early childhood sector. Plumtree joined initiatives that pave the way for better services for families and promote good practice in early childhood support.**

## **Support for all families**

As a community organisation, Plumtree supports young families through free playgroups, workshops and parent education programs.

During government planning of foundational supports for children with disability or delay, we were invited to advisory groups and forums to share our insights in this area, drawn from four decades of expertise. See page 4 for more details.

Our range of programs continue to grow. In 2025, we introduced Explorers Play in the Park. Held outside our centre, children can explore new skills through play and families can connect with each other and our team in a welcoming outdoor setting.

## **Plumtree Preschool**

At Plumtree Preschool, children of all abilities and cultural backgrounds learn together. Our high staff-to-child ratio lets us provide more individual support to extend each child's skills, love of learning and curiosity.

Children at the preschool worked with artist Bridget Kelly on *The World We See*, a mural on display at our centre's entrance. Funded by the Blackbird Foundation and a year in the making, 115 pieces of artwork were selected for the mural.

Kate Washington, NSW Minister for Disability Inclusion; Inner West Deputy Mayor Mat Howard and other guests unveiled the mural at an event supported by the Inner West Council on the International Day of People With Disability.



326

SESSIONS FOR  
PLUMTREE PROGRAMS

948

FAMILIES AT  
PROGRAMS

80

CHILDREN ENROLLED  
IN PRESCHOOL



## NDIS services

Every family of a child with a disability or developmental difference benefits with a clear vision for the future.

Our NDIS team works in partnership with families. Together, we use Pictability, a fun and intuitive visioning tool developed in-house to identify your child's strengths and goals. Then we develop strategies to achieve them and bring positive change.

We launched a [Transition to School guide](#) for our School & Life program. The eBook contains information, resources and links for planning a successful start at school.

See our [Events calendar](#) to register and learn about our workshops, playgroups and events

## Our board

Plumtree is supported by a board with diverse experience, united by their commitment to children and families.

*Over the past 12 months, Plumtree has continued to demonstrate sector leadership, influencing the emerging foundational supports system while strengthening its own sustainability. The Board acknowledges the vision and commitment of the team in ensuring children and families remain at the heart of every reform.*

Penny Bowring,  
Chair of Board

## Your family at the centre

Family-centred practice is the gold standard in early childhood intervention services. We understand that each family is unique, and parents know their child's needs and abilities best. Plumtree works in partnership with families to provide the right supports and positive outcomes

## Planning plays a part

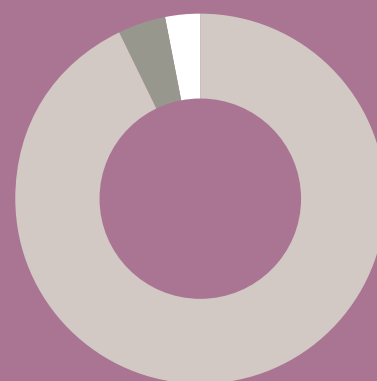
Pictability is an innovative approach for setting goals and a positive vision for children and families. Visually based, it identifies new possibilities through a fun, creative experience. You decide the goals that reflect your family's concerns and priorities.

*"Not having a set of goals is like going for a drive but not knowing your destination – you want to know where you are going."*

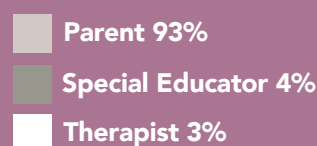
Sylvana Mahmic CEO Plumtree

## You make the difference

Families spend the most time with their child and are already making a big difference during everyday activities and routines. Children thrive in natural learning environments, such as the home and childcare, where they are a part of the community.



## TIME WITH YOUR CHILD (Mahoney 2011)



*"Professionals are a resource. Most of a child's learning happens with their family and carers between therapy sessions."*

175

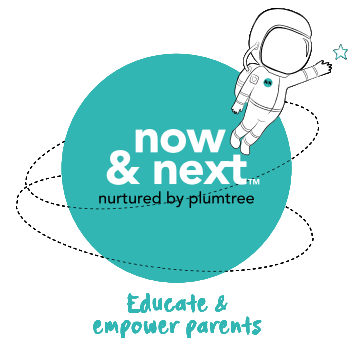
NDIS PARTICIPANT  
FAMILIES SUPPORTED

32%

MULTICULTURAL+4% FIRST  
NATION FAMILIES

# Now & Next: celebrating 10 years

**Developed by families for families, our evidence-based program for lasting positive outcomes reaches a milestone**



**Now & Next empowers parents to take charge of their child's development and create a community for families to thrive. A decade later, we're hearing stories celebrating the power of connection and family leadership.**

Extraordinary things can happen when families connect. The 10-year anniversary of Now & Next was a wonderful reminder of the strength of community.

At a celebration event, graduates shared stories of what the program has meant for their families.

"I was quite isolated as a single mum," remembers one participant. "I was overwhelmed amongst all the other things that you are going through as a carer and parent."

After connecting with families at Now & Next, she discovered the difference a strong support network makes.

"There's power in us working together, advocating, thriving, and understanding that sharing your lived experience

is so important. I'm stronger and continue to grow from this amazing community."

"Now & Next was ahead of the curve," a father stated. "It was supporting parents to thrive, so we could help our children thrive."

After finishing the program, he became an inspirational advocate for his daughter and a Now & Next facilitator to empower others.

"It starts with us changing the way we see our children and what's possible. It's about providing hope. All these things and more have been shared, so we can make the most difference for our child's development."

The program is now delivered in eight countries. Read the [Now & Next blog](#) to learn more of our achievements.



6k<sup>+</sup>

N&N PARTICIPANTS  
SINCE 2015

2k<sup>+</sup>

N&N ENROLMENTS  
SINCE 2015

158

N&N GROUPS ACROSS  
8 COUNTRIES



# Shaping the future of family supports

## Strengthening communities and promoting best practice



### Enhancing inclusive libraries

Now in its 5th year, the [Libraries as Community Connectors](#) project provides online inclusion training and resources for library staff to better welcome families.

Beloved children's entertainer Emma Memma recorded an AUSLAN video reading of *Our Library*, a children's book by Donna Rawlins created for the project that celebrates inclusion. Our team shared insights at national conferences and the Libraries Without Limits: Inclusive Libraries Summit.

### Promoting child's voice

Every child communicates and families can help that voice grow. Using our [Child Voice model](#), the Connecting with your child through photography workshop

supported families to nurture their child's self-expression and confidence as well as enhance family engagement.

### Shaping foundational supports

Drawing on decades of experience in peer-led programs and supporting families, Plumtree is a valued consultant in shaping the design of foundational supports.

Our insights informed 2025 initiatives such as the NSW Parliament's Select Committee on Foundational Supports, and The Foundational Supports for Children – NSW Advisory Group led by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. The Grattan Institute sought our expertise for a report on NDIS reform.

As a member of the Child and Family Supports Alliance NSW and the Early Childhood Intervention Best Practice Network, we continue to advocate for quality support for young families.

### Strengthening inclusion at early childhood services

We launched [Creating Ready Spaces Together](#), professional training for early childhood educators to co-design inclusive environments in partnership with our team.

Six packages are available that focus on different aspects of the environment or practices at early childhood centres. Every project is tailored to the service's goals and focused on strengthening children's learning, communication and participation across everyday routines.

346

LIBRARIES ONLINE COURSE  
PARTICIPANTS

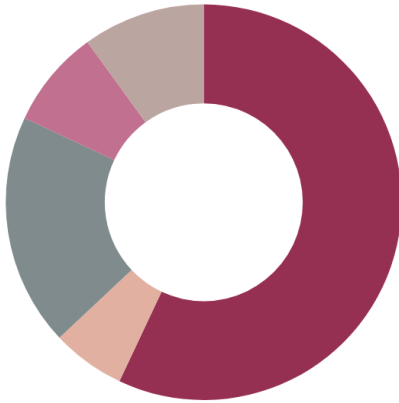
161

LIBRARIES WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPANTS

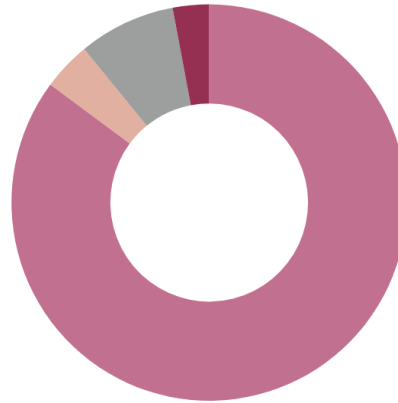
72

CHILD VOICE WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPANTS

# Our year at a glance



**Income**



**Expenditure**



**Staff**

**In 2024–2025 our income was a total of \$3,364,080 comprising:**

- NDIS revenue – 57%
- ILC grant funding – 6%
- Preschool funding – 19%
- Start Strong Pathways – 8%
- Other grants & revenue – 10%

Plumtree is a non-government, registered charity.

**In 2024–2025 our expenditure was \$3,677,038 comprising:**

- Employee costs – 85%
- Service delivery costs – 4%
- Admin/occupancy costs – 8%
- Project expenses – 3%

Financials for the 2024–2025 period were audited by Lambourne Partners and are available from Plumtree by request.

**51 total staff**

**9 speech pathologists**

**8 occupational therapists**

**4 teachers**

**2 physiotherapists**

**6 educators**

**4 behaviour specialists**

**5 peer workers**

**1 therapy aides**

**10 office support staff**

**2 project managers**

Our passionate and culturally diverse team share a commitment to helping families achieve their goals.

**Plumtree would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters, champions and donors who help us be the best we can be, every day.**



### **Service snapshot**

**1,203** children and their families supported by Plumtree including:

**175** NDIS families

**80** preschool children

**948** participants in

- » **Playgroups**
- » **Workshops & courses**
- » **Now & Next NDIS**
- » **Peer groups**

3,344 visits over 326 sessions. Some programs, such as courses, Now & Next and Music Together comprised multiple sessions.

Our team also connected with and supported hundreds of families at Inner West Magic Yellow Bus playgroup.



### **Workshops & playgroups**

**Child development:** toilet independence, school readiness, learning and play

**Let's Talk About...:** topics include advocacy, supporting children and building relationships

**Explorers Play:** a playgroup for babies and children under 3 years

**Explorers Play in the park:** an outdoors playgroup for babies and children under 3 years

**Music Together:** a playgroup for communication, interaction and musical fun

**Child Voice:** Connecting with your child through photography and having fun



### **Courses & support groups**

**Now & Next:** skills for lasting positive outcomes for the entire family

**Now & Next School:** supporting primary-school aged children for success at school

**Circle of security:** strengthening child-parent relationships

**Tuning into kids:** guiding children's emotional development

**MyTime and Vietnamese MyTime:** an informal gathering to unwind, socialise and share information

**The above are just some examples of our programs. Learn more on our [Events](#) calendar.**



**Plumtree is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation that helps families thrive.**

**Trusted for 40 years, we provide free centre-based playgroups and online parent education workshops. We also provide therapies and support for children aged birth to 8 years with a disability or developmental delay and their families. At Plumtree Preschool, children of all abilities and cultural backgrounds learn together and begin to understand the value of inclusive communities.**

**Our award-winning, evidence-based programs and resources help families take control of their own learning and achieve positive outcomes.**

**Plumtree's passionate, culturally diverse team of specialists work from the heart in a caring environment where families feel respected and informed.**

**Visit our website [www.plumtree.org.au](http://www.plumtree.org.au) and join the Plumtree mailing list or Facebook page to find out about our services, workshops and events.**



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Plumtree Children's Services  
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