

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH LAW CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

2015 - 2016



UNSW
AUSTRALIA

Law

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MALLESONS



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Director

National Children's and Youth Law Centre

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Connect with us on

 www.facebook.com/lawstuff.australia

 www.twitter.com/Lawstuff_Aus

SECTION 1

HIGHLIGHTS

"[The information you provided] was very useful and I made a decision which I believe will benefit me more than if I did not ask for your help."

Client (young person)



*"Thank you for all your wonderful advice...
Thank you so much"*

Client (mother on behalf of child)



MORE LEGAL ADVICES



1,992

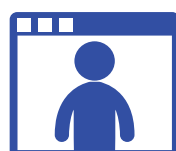
Lawmails responded to
(written legal advices)



↑ 119%

in legal advices sent
over 4 years

MORE LEGAL INFORMATION



1.2 million

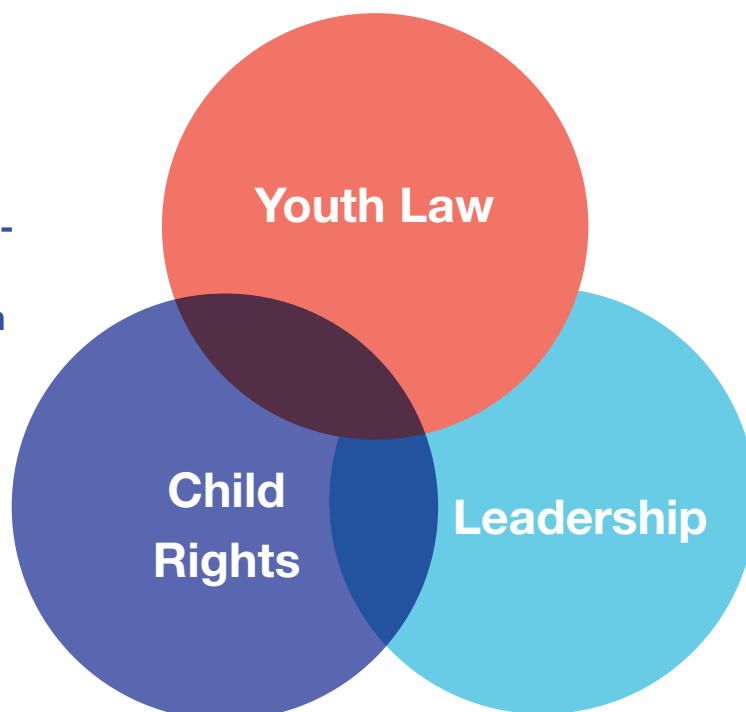
visitors to our website
(Total number of unique
visitors = 1,280,677)



2,395,564

page views on Lawstuff
(more than ever before)

We are the only
online practical
and legal problem-
solving service
for all **Australian**
children and
young people



In 2015-2016
we informed
over **1,200,000**
children, young
people and
adults across
Australia

MORE TRAINING



150+

On-site and cyber
volunteers hosted



70+

Youth law
advocates trained

MORE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



2,600+

Facebook followers



700+

Twitter followers



120+

Co-ordinated
NGO networks

CHAIR AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CHAIR AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In 1993 our centre was established to meet a clear need for a dedicated, national organisation supporting and promoting the rights of children and young people in Australia. As this report shows, our centre continues to meet this need. In particular, we have substantially increased our assistance to children and young people via our unique online legal service delivery platforms – *Lawstuff* and *Lawmail*.

Through *Lawstuff* page visits and confidential legal enquiries via *Lawmail*, we are able to track the major and emerging legal concerns of Australia's children and young people, by age and location, as we provide professional, personalised, timely advice. Our data provides a fascinating insight into the changing landscape for youth in Australia, who are grappling with a complex range of legal challenges from domestic violence to sexting, and from cyber-bullying to exploitation at work.

We have made a significant investment in our *Lawmail* platform, to better handle the continued growth in demand we are experiencing year on year.

The positive feedback we receive about the value of the Centre's legal advice is a testament to the commitment of our staff and volunteers to providing accurate, practical and helpful advice, in age-appropriate language. This year also saw major work in the area of Child Rights through the publication of *CRC 25: Australian Child Rights Progress Report* by the Australian Child Rights Taskforce, which we continue to co-convene. *CRC 25* is an important publication that reflects on the 25 years of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child in Australia, acknowledges the significant progress made in that time, and highlights the entrenched issues that remain for the most vulnerable children and those living in exceptionally difficult conditions.

Fundamentally, the Centre's work is only made possible by an annual grant of approximately \$210,000 from the Commonwealth. In relation to other Community Legal Centres, this is a small grant and we continue to prosecute the case to governments for enhanced funding in order to continue to meet growing demand from young Australians for legal support.

This year we commenced a temporary partnership with Sparke Helmore, who provided us with four days a week of pro bono support from two secondeed solicitors for a period of six months. This support has been invaluable and we sincerely thank Sparke Helmore for their contribution towards our centre.

Particular thanks and recognition is extended to Michael Chaaya. After ten years as a Director, Michael retired from the Board at this year's AGM. Michael has been a most committed advocate for and servant of the centre and has, for a number of years, performed the role of Deputy Chair. As Deputy Chair, Michael has lent considerable support to three different Chairs. Michael, you will be greatly missed and we wish you all the best for the future!

We also thank all of the centre's Board members for their support and leadership of the centre. We commend all the centre's staff and volunteers for their tireless work towards, and commitment to, Australia's children and young people. Finally, we extend sincere thanks to our major partners at UNSW Law, King & Wood Mallesons and the Attorney-General's Department of Australia for their longstanding support of our centre.



Jackie Woods
Chair



Matthew Keeley
Director

YOUTH LAW

The centre provides quality legal advice, information, assistance and referrals to Australia's children and young people and their advocates.

*"You treated me with
respect and provided
fantastic information.
I couldn't ask for more."*

Client (young person)



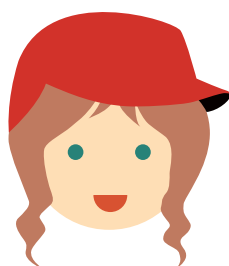
OUR SERVICE MODEL

When a child or young person in Australia has a question or problem that concerns the law, *Lawstuff* operates in the first instance as a source of quality legal information. The child or young person is directed to *Lawmail* if they require additional help such as personalised information, advice, assistance or referrals.

The two-tiered approach of *Lawstuff* and *Lawmail* works to ensure that children and young people in Australia receive the form of assistance that is best suited to their needs. *Lawstuff* educates children and young people on their legal rights, and acts as a form of primary awareness and prevention of legal issues. The 2,395,564 page views on *Lawstuff* in the past financial year demonstrate its widely recognised value as a source of quality legal information, and reflect the high demand in the Australian community for legal self-education.

There are circumstances in which a child or young person requires additional help. In these instances, *Lawstuff* directs a child or young person to use *Lawmail* for personalised information, advice, assistance or referrals. Our data shows that in the past financial year, 1,992 individuals sought help for a specific legal problem using *Lawmail*.

Through timely intervention, we endeavour to prevent and resolve all manner of legal problems experienced by children and young people across Australia.



"Thank you very much for your comprehensive reply. It is very insightful. I have all the info I needed, and everything is now looking great."

Client (young person)

Lawstuff is an online source of quality legal information and provides referrals to other helpful services. It exists to educate and inform Australian children and young people, as well as their advocates, about how the law affects them.

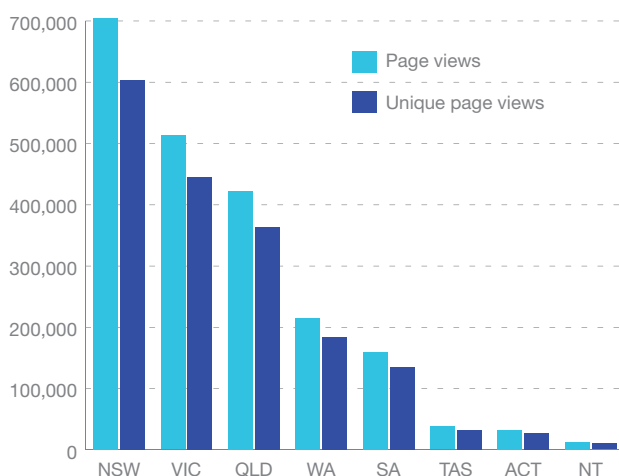
With the use of Google Analytics, we are able to monitor the national usage of **Lawstuff**. This year, we have again seen a steady increase in the total number of page views, visits and unique visitors.

Financial Year	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Total Page Views	1,691,546	2,244,239	2,395,564
Total Visits	875,489	1,365,014	1,490,777
Total Unique Visitors	763,434	1,194,171	1,280,677

In comparison to the previous financial year:

- The total number of page views increased by 6.7%
- The total number of visits increased by 9.2%
- We received 86,506 more unique visitors to **Lawstuff**.

Lawstuff views by State and Territory



"I was very stressed about the whole situation and your prompt reply made me feel at ease."

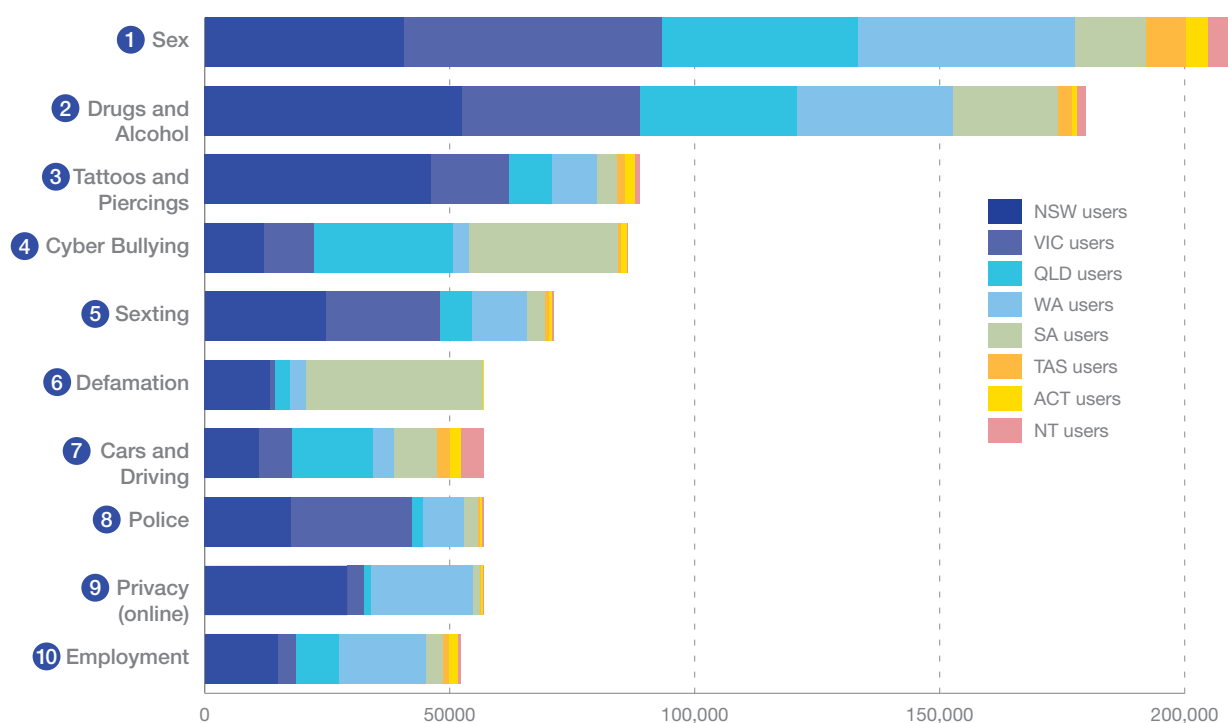
Client (young person)



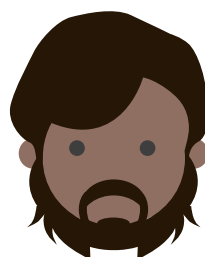
LAWSTUFF



The top ten topics viewed on *Lawstuff* nationally*



* Data was compiled by examining how many unique visits each topic received from each state and territory. Where multiple pages relate to a certain topic or area of law, these pages have been grouped together into one topic. Where pages fit into two topics, the most thematically appropriate topic was chosen.

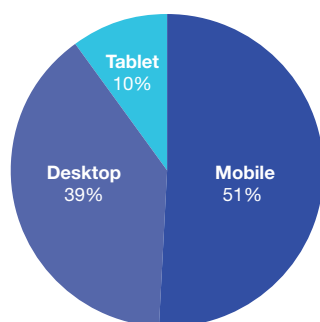


*"Thank you so much
for your swift response and for
those helpful tips. Please know
that the family and I are so
grateful and want to extend
our heartfelt thanks."*

**Client (parent on
behalf of child)**

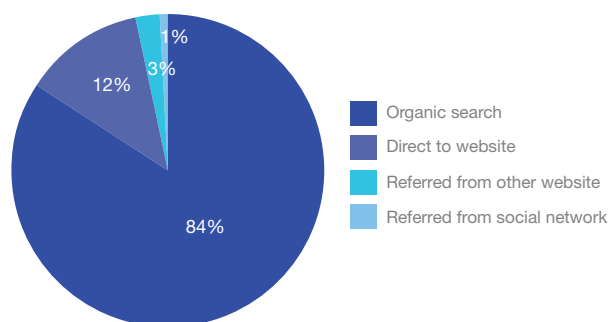
How are people using *Lawstuff*?

Device used to access *Lawstuff*



Ease of accessibility is a key feature of *Lawstuff*. In the past financial year, just over 60% of visitors to *Lawstuff* used a mobile device or tablet rather than a desktop computer, reflecting a growing preference for portable electronic devices to access legal information.

How people find us



In the past financial year, for a majority of web sessions on *Lawstuff*, users landed on the website from organic web search.

"Hi team, I just wanted to let you know I think your Lawstuff website is an incredible service."

Community member
(completing an assignment)



The centre acknowledges the work of our on-site volunteers, Social Justice Interns (UNSW Law) and King & Wood Mallesons secondees, without whom *Lawstuff* could not reach so many Australians.

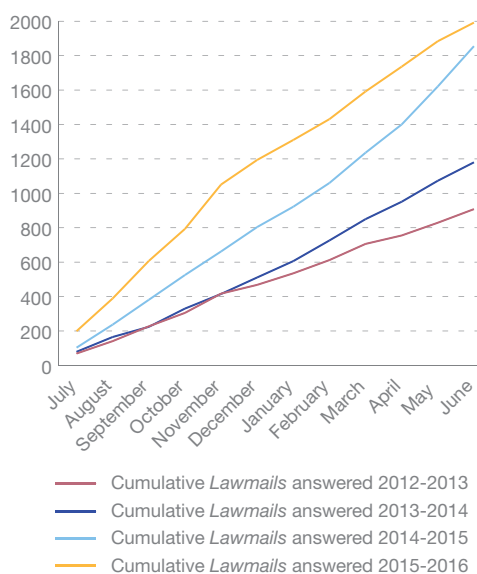
LAWMAIL



Lawmail provides children and young people in Australia with personalised legal information, advice and assistance, along with quality referrals to other services that can help them.

The centre responded to **1,992 requests** for legal advice and information in the past financial year. This was made possible with the generous assistance of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, our pro bono partners at King & Wood Mallesons, Telstra, ASIC and Microsoft, and our on-site volunteers and Social Justice Interns (UNSW Law).

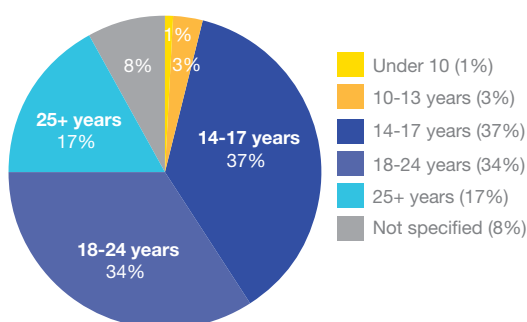
This is an **increase of 7.4%** compared to the number of *Lawmail* advices that were sent out in the 2014-2015 financial year, and reflects a growing trend in the number of children and young people using *Lawmail* annually.

Cumulative *Lawmails* answered

Kelly Tallon
Cyber Volunteer
Project Coordinator

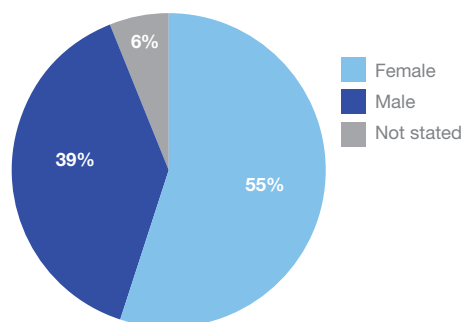
Who did we help?

Lawmail by age



Lawmail is largely accessed by children and young people themselves, with a number of adult advocates also writing to us for information and advice on behalf of children.

Lawmail by gender

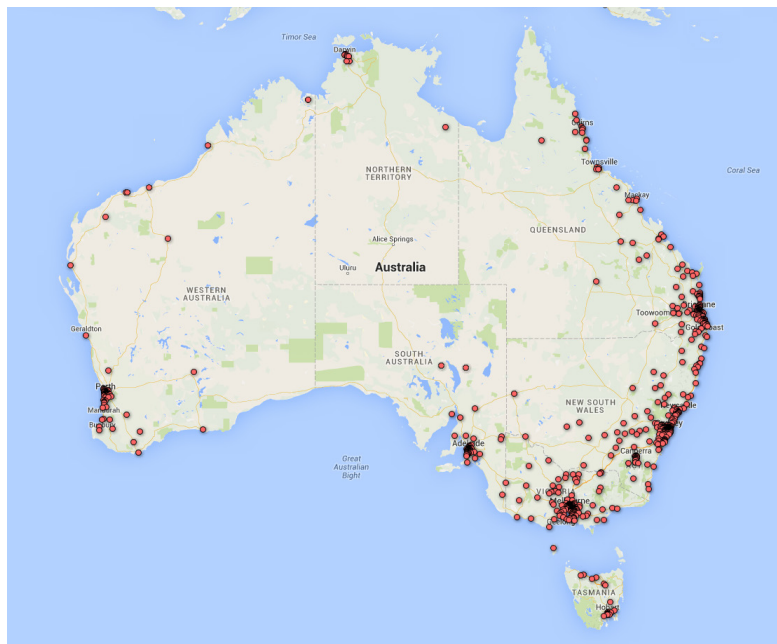


Lawmail provided advice to more females than males.

Where are our clients from?

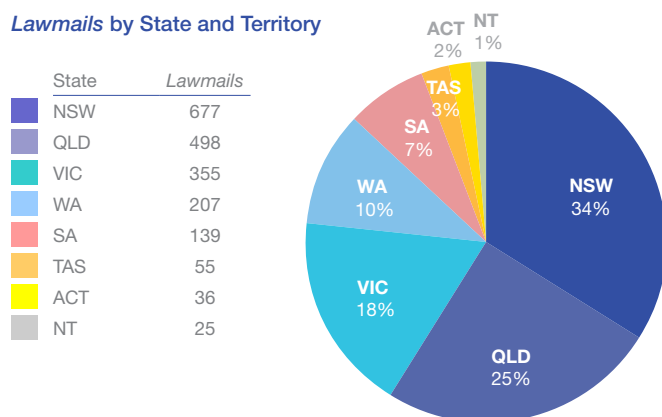
Lawmail is available 24/7 to anyone with an internet or mobile connection. This overcomes many of the barriers traditionally faced by children and young people in seeking access to legal information and advice services, such as lack of access to transport – particularly in remote, rural and regional areas.

In this financial year, the highest number of *Lawmails* originated in New South Wales. This was followed by Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia.



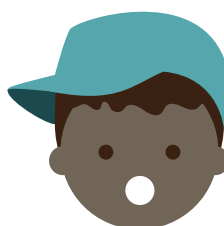
The map shows *Lawmail*'s geographic reach with each circle representing a postcode in which at least one advice was given in the financial year.

Lawmails by State and Territory



"Thank you so much for taking the time to explain where we stand and how we can work to resolve these issues. I really, really appreciate your response and will be following up on your advice."

Client (young person)



What did we help with?



376
people

helped with
family law and
family/domestic
violence issues



280
people

helped with cyber
law, including sexting,
defamation, stalking
and exploitation



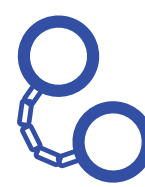
512
students

helped in relation to
suspension, expulsion,
discipline and
discrimination matters



164
questions

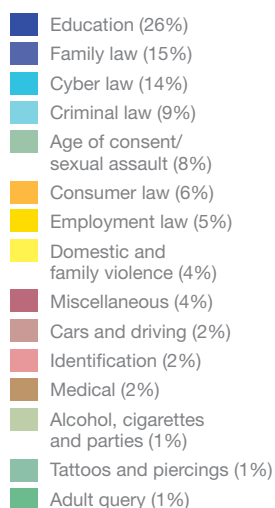
answered about
the age of consent
and sex, including
sexual assault



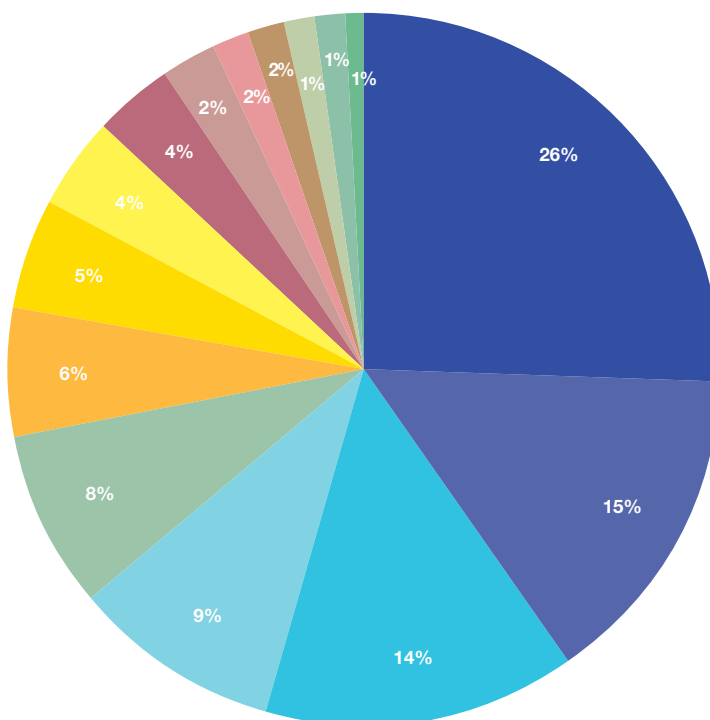
187
people

helped with criminal
law, as both victims of
crime and children in
conflict with the law

Lawmails by topic*



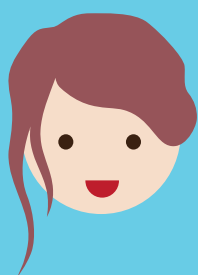
* Lawmails have been grouped into the most thematically appropriate topic where they related to two or more topics. Some topics, such as criminal law, would see a substantial increase if topics with criminal aspects (eg. sexting) were categorised as criminal law.



CHILD RIGHTS AND LEADERSHIP

www.childrights.org.au

The centre promotes the realisation of human rights for Australian children and young people.



*"The reply was amazing,
it was really detailed and
they made me feel like they
cared about my situation."*

Client (young person)



AUSTRALIAN
CHILD RIGHTS
TASKFORCE

CRC 25: AUSTRALIAN CHILD RIGHTS PROGRESS REPORT

This year, the Australian Child Rights Taskforce published *CRC 25: Australian Child Rights Progress Report*. This report marked the 25th Anniversary of Australia's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

NCYLC and UNICEF, as co-conveners of the Child Rights Taskforce, shared responsibility for preparing and publishing the report. In total, the Report included input from thirty contributors, including human rights agencies, community organisations, academics, experts and young people from across Australia.

The purpose of the report was to reflect on the aspirations that existed at the time the CRC was ratified in Australia in 1990; identify and highlight key, significant policy, legislative or rights progress in the last 25 years; and articulate at a high level the ongoing breaches of children's rights, including the use of up-to-date statistics. The Report also presented recommendations for policy solutions or strategies to address these ongoing issues.

The Report will be used as an evidence base for child rights and child focused community service organisations, including as a platform for policy discussion with Government. It will also be used as an important educative tool to build awareness of critical

issues with the public. In addition, the report will be an important resource for the next NGO report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, in 2018.

The Report was officially launched at the Australian Human Rights Commission on Friday 10 June 2016. The launch was incredibly successful, with 160 registered attendees. It featured addresses by the Honourable Alistair Nicholson, former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia; National Children's Commissioner Megan Mitchell; and Professor Deborah Brennan of the Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

A copy of the CRC 25: Australian Child Rights Progress Report can be accessed from: www.childrights.org.au/



Ahram Choi
Operations & Legal
Projects Manager

2016 SPECIAL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS EDITION OF *RIGHTS AGENDA*

Each year, in partnership with King & Wood Mallesons and the Human Rights Law Centre, we publish a special edition of the Human Rights Law Centre's Monthly Bulletin, *Rights Agenda*, which focuses exclusively on human rights and legal issues affecting children and young people.

This year, the bulletin reported on significant issues affecting children across Australia, including voting rights, age of consent laws, child sexual abuse, incarceration rates for indigenous youth, and children and consumer protection laws.

To read the Special Children's Rights Edition, see:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/580025f66b8f5b2dabbe4291/t/5850a7f4e58c6215bc4fb2a2/1481680890496/HRLC_Bulletin_April_2016.pdf
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/580025f66b8f5b2dabbe4291/t/5850a7f4e58c6215bc4fb2a2/1481680890496/HRLC_Bulletin_April_2016.pdf

SECTION 2

GOVERNANCE

BOARD

Transparency and trust are integral to the relationship between the Board and the centre.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1 JULY 2015 TO 30 JUNE 2016



Jackie Woods
Chair
2013 to present



Michael Chaaya
Deputy Chair
2006 to present



Sarah Winter
2007 to present



Dr Kyllie Cripps
2012 to present



Nina Funnell
2011 to present



Adam Gordon
2012 to present



Moira Saville
2009 to present



Roger Christie
2013 to present



Fionn Skiotis
2013 to present



Garner Clancey
2015 to present

FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

National Children's and Youth Law Centre ABN 73 062 253 874

**The centre displays accountability,
responsibility and integrity in its operations
and use of resources and funding.**

*"It's so refreshing in the
midst of our situation to have
had such professional, courteous
and sensitive emails from
NCYLC, we really do appreciate
the service you offer."*

**Client (parent on
behalf of child)**



DOBBS VUMBACA & CO

Chartered Accountants

Partners:
 NEIL A. DOBBS CA
 GEORGE VUMBACA CA
 HELEN YIANNIKAS CA

SUITE 202 LEVEL 2 83-87 YORK ST SYDNEY NSW 2000
 POSTAL ADDRESS: GPO BOX 2590 SYDNEY NSW 2001

PH: (02) 9299-6824 FAX: (02) 9290-3168
 EMAIL: admin@dobbsvumbaca.com.au

The Board of Directors
 National Children's and Youth Law Centre
 University of New South Wales
 SYDNEY NSW 2052

Dear Board Members,

In accordance with Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 and in accordance with the requirements of Subdivision 60-C of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, I am pleased to provide the following declaration of independence to the directors of National Children's and Youth Law Centre.

As audit partner for the audit of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 30th June 2016, I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit, and no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, or any applicable code of professional conduct, in relation to the audit.

Yours faithfully,

DOBBS VUMBACA & CO



George Vumbaca CA
 Partner

23rd September 2016
 Sydney, NSW

DOBBS VUMBACA & CO

Chartered Accountants

Partners:
NEIL A. DOBBS CA
GEORGE VUMBACA CA
HELEN YIANNIKAS CA

SUITE 202 LEVEL 2 83-87 YORK ST SYDNEY NSW 2000
POSTAL ADDRESS: GPO BOX 2590 SYDNEY NSW 2001

PH: (02) 9299-6824 FAX: (02) 9290-3168
EMAIL: admin@dobbsvumbaca.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH LAW CENTRE ACN 062 253 874 ABN 73 062 253 874, THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION AND THE OFFICE OF LIQUOR, GAMING AND RACING

We have audited the accompanying financial report of the National Children's and Youth Law Centre, which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30th June 2016, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes, including disclosures required for the purposes of compliance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 & associated regulations, and the Directors' Declaration, as set out in pages 3 to 12.

Directors Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 & associated regulations, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. We confirm that a written independence declaration was provided to the directors of the National Children's and Youth Law Centre on 23rd September 2016, a copy of which is included in the financial report and would be in the same terms if given to the director at the time of this auditor's report.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of the National Children's and Youth Law Centre is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- i) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30th June 2016 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
- iii) complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013; and
- iv) the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and associated regulations.

DOBBS VUMBACA & CO



George Vumbaca CA
Partner

Date: 14th December 2016

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	2016 \$	2015 \$
REVENUE	463,272	515,412
Employee Costs	(309,891)	(365,782)
Consultants	(10,575)	(17,211)
Depreciation and Amortisation	(1,914)	(3,472)
Insurances	(2,881)	(3,619)
Computer and Website Expenses	(15,044)	(18,652)
Auditor's Remuneration	(3,750)	(3,650)
Accounting & Bookkeeping Expenses	(25,212)	(24,472)
Design, Printing and Production Costs - Publications	(1,700)	(12,218)
Travelling & Staff Development	(15,704)	(20,761)
Administration and Overhead expenses	(6,260)	(5,277)
Profit/(Loss) before Income Tax	70,341	40,298
Income Tax Expense	-	-
Profit/(Loss) for the year	70,341	40,298
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the year	70,341	40,298

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from grants, donors, projects & customers	510,726	492,401
Payments to suppliers and employees	(561,893)	(411,114)
Interest Received	4,265	3,932
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	(46,902)	85,219
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchases of Property, plant & equipment and Intangibles	(103,016)	-
Disposals of Property, plant & equipment and Intangibles	-	-
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities	(103,016)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	(149,918)	85,219
Cash at the beginning of the year	407,551	322,332
Cash at the end of the year	257,633	407,551

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Replacement Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1st July 2014	150,163	11,676	161,839
Profit/(Loss) for the year	40,298	-	40,298
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-	-
Balance at 30th June 2015	190,461	11,676	202,137
Profit/(Loss) for the year	70,341	-	70,341
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2016	\$260,802	\$11,676	\$272,478

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	2016 \$	2015 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	257,633	407,551
Trade and other receivables	12,729	11,748
Inventories	2,000	2,000
Other current assets	10,457	5,053
Total Current Assets	282,819	426,352
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	1,795	3,709
Intangible assets	103,017	-
Total Non-Current Assets	104,812	3,709
Total Assets	387,631	430,061
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	115,153	176,178
Total Current Liabilities	115,153	176,178
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	-	51,746
Total Current Liabilities	-	51,746
Total Liabilities	115,153	227,924
Net Assets	\$272,478	\$202,137
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	260,802	190,461
Asset Replacement Reserve	11,676	11,676
Total Equity	272,478	\$202,137

